



lmetb

*Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Lú agus na Mí*

Louth and Meath Education
and Training Board

Louth and Meath Education and Training Board

Official Language Scheme 2021 - 2024

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

The Official Languages Act 2003 provides for the preparation by public bodies of a language scheme detailing the services which they will provide:

- through the medium of Irish,
- through the medium of English, and
- through the medium of Irish and English

and the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not currently provided by the body through the medium of the Irish language will be so provided within an agreed timeframe.

In accordance with section 14(3) of the Act, language schemes remain in force for a period of 3 years or until such time as a new scheme is confirmed by the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, whichever is the later.

1.2 Preparation and Content of the Scheme

In the preparation of this scheme, due regard has been given to the Guidelines issued by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. In addition, there has been a comprehensive process of consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) is guided by the principle that the provision of Irish language services should be based on:

- the underlying level of demand for specific services in the Irish language
- the importance of a proactive approach to the provision of such services
- the resources, including human and financial resources, and the capacity of the body concerned to develop or access the necessary language capability

This scheme complements the principles of Quality Customer Service and our Customer Charter. This scheme has been formulated with the intention of ensuring that all relevant obligations under the Official Languages Act by **LMETB** will be fully addressed on an incremental basis, through this and future schemes.

1.3 Commencement date of the Scheme

This Scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. It commences with effect from 01 September 2021 and shall remain in force for a period of 3 years or until a new scheme has been confirmed, whichever is the later.

Chapter 2: Overview of Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB)

2.1 Mission Statement

“Louth and Meath Education and Training Board is committed to excellence and innovation in the education of young people and adults through the provision of dynamic services delivered by professional staff”

2.2 Main Functions

LMETB was established under the Education and Training Board Act, 2013. The Further Education and Training Act 2013 established SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority. This Act also provided for the transfer of the former FAS training functions and staff to the newly formed ETBs, and on the 1st July 2014, the former FAS training centre in Dundalk came under the governance of LMETB.

LMETB is the largest educational provider in the North East with extensive responsibility for the delivery of education and training across Louth and Meath. LMETB provides professional patronage to seventeen Post Primary Schools, four Community National Schools and two PLC Colleges.

LMETB also has a Further Education and Training Service offering flexible and inclusive educational programmes throughout the two counties including one Training Centre, an Advance Manufacturing and Technology Centre of Excellence, Adult Learning Services, Community Education, Back to Education Initiative, Adult Guidance Service, VTOS and Night Classes.



LMETB has eight Youthreach centres.

LMETB is patron to six Community Schools.



2.3 Key Services

Schools and Colleges			
	Beaufort College, Navan		Bush Post Primary School, Dundalk
	Colaiste De Lacy, Ashbourne	 Colaiste Chú Chulainn Cúram. Forbairt. Feabhais.	Colaiste Chú Chulainn, Dundalk
	Colaiste na hInse, Laytown		Colaiste na Mí, Navan
	Colaiste Pobail Ráth Chairn		Dunshaughlin Community College
	O'Carolan College, Nobber		O'Faich College, Dundalk
	Ratoath College		Scoil Uí Mhuirí Dunleer
	St. Fintina's PPS, Longwood		St. Oliver's Community School, Drogheda
	St. Peter's College, Dunboyne		St. Oliver PPS, Oldcastle
	CES Dunshaughlin		Enfield Community College

Primary Schools

	Ard Ri CNS, Navan		Faughart CNS, Dundalk
	Ashbourne CNS		Dunshaughlin CNS

PLC Colleges

	Drogheda Institute of Further Education		Dunboyne College of Further Education
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Further Education and Training

Regional Skills and Training Centre				Dundalk
Advance Manufacturing and Technology Centre of Excellence				Dundalk
VTOS	Drogheda	Dundalk	Navan	
Youthreach	Drogheda	Dundalk		
	Navan	Trim		
	Kells	Ashbourne		
	Laytown/Bettystown	Ardee		
Adult Learning Services Adult Guidance Back to Education Initiative Community Education	Drogheda	Dundalk	Navan	
	Trim	Kells	Oldcastle	
	Mosney	Laytown/ Bettystown	Dunshaughlin	
	Dunboyne	Athboy	Ashbourne	
	Ardee			
Evening Course Provision	9 centres in Louth and Meath			
Music Generation	Louth	Meath		
Youth Services	Louth	Meath		
Quality Assurance	Louth	Meath		

Patronage of Community Schools

Ardee Community School	Ashbourne Community School	Athboy Community School
St. Ciaran's C S, Kells	Boyne Community School, Trim	Ballymakenny College

2.4 Customers and Clients

- All of the community of Louth and Meath
- Students, parents/guardians who constitute the learning communities/neighbourhoods of all our schools
- Recognised centres of education and all other services provided by LMETB
- Community Education services and Youth work services
- State Departments/Semi-State agencies, voluntary agencies, community groups and individuals
- LMETB's Employees

Chapter 3: Details of services currently being provided in English only or bilingually

Details of services currently being provided in English only or bilingually in Irish and English; **including services in Gaeltacht areas.**

Current Provision of Services		
Services (General)	In English only	Bilingually, in English and Irish
Post-primary schools	All non-Gaeltacht schools are administered in English.	Teaching is provided through English in Coláiste Chú Chulainn with the exception of the Aonad in the school in, which teaching is provided through Irish.
Further Education and Training Centres	English Only	
LMETB's Administrative HQ: 1. Abbey Road, Navan 2. Chapel Street, Dundalk	English Only	

Services in Gaeltacht Areas	In English only	Bilingually, in English and Irish
Coláiste Pobail Ráth Chairn		Irish Only

Chapter 4: Enhancing the provision of Irish Language Services

The provisions shaded in grey in the table below are **mandatory requirements** under the Official Languages Act 2003.

Means of communication with the public		Commitment	
Recorded Oral Announcements		<p>The following recorded oral announcements will be in Irish or bilingual:</p> <p>(a) Recorded oral announcements provided on the telephone when the offices of the public body are closed;</p> <p>(b) Recorded oral announcements transmitted by a public address system;</p> <p>(c) Recorded oral announcements created and transmitted by means of a computerised messaging system or a computerised telephone answering system.</p> <p>This provision relates to 'recorded' announcements rather than 'live announcements'.</p> <p>Where a Place names Order is in force, a public body is required to use the Irish language version of the place name specified in that Order in recorded oral announcements made by it or on its behalf.</p>	Mandatory
Written Communication	Letters and Electronic Mail	All written communication will be responded to in the official language in which it was received.	Mandatory
	Stationery	Headings of stationery, including notepaper, compliment slips, fax cover sheets, file covers, and other folders, labels and envelopes are provided in Irish or bilingually.	Mandatory
Signage	Signage	All signage placed by Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) or on its behalf must be in Irish or bilingually, in accordance with the regulations (S.I. No.391/2008).	Mandatory
Publications	Publications	Documents setting out public policy proposals, audited accounts or financial statements, annual reports and strategy statements will be published simultaneously in Irish and English.	Mandatory
	Circulars/Mailshots	Where a public body communicates in writing or by electronic mail with the general public or a class of the general public for the purpose of furnishing information to the public or the class, the body shall ensure that the communication is in the Irish language or in the English and Irish languages.	Mandatory
An Ghaeltacht	Gaeltacht Place names	The official place names of Gaeltacht areas will be used by the public body.	Mandatory

Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) will also undertake the following lists of actions under each service:

Means of communication with the public	Commitment	Timeline By end Yr 1/ Yr 2 / Yr 3	
Oral /Written Communication	<u>Reception</u>	<p>A service through the medium of Irish will be available in LMETB's Administrative Offices in Abbey Road Navan, Co. Meath, and in Chapel Street, Dundalk, Co. Louth. A service through the medium of Irish is available in Coláiste Pobail Ráth Chairn.</p> <p>A service through the medium of Irish will be available in Drogheda, Co. Louth when new Head Office is constructed.</p> <p>Reception staff are familiar with basic greetings in Irish.</p> <p>The choice of language of the customer will be established and he/she will be directed to the appropriate official. If the official is unavailable, the following options will be offered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calling back when an Irish speaker is available • Conducting business through another member of staff providing a translation service • Or, continuing to conduct business in English 	By the end of the first year of the scheme.
	<u>Face to Face/Counter Service</u>	An up to date list of staff members who can provide a service through Irish will be made available in LMETB's Administrative Offices in Navan and Dundalk.	By the end of the first year of the scheme.
	<u>Switchboard</u>	Switchboard staff will give the name of the public body in Irish and English in Head Offices in Dundalk and Navan.	Will continue to be delivered.
	<u>Recorded Oral Messages</u>	Staff will have their pre-recorded personal telephone greetings in bilingual format.	By the end of the first year of the scheme.
	<u>Information Leaflets/ Brochures</u>	A bilingual or Irish version of the information leaflets and brochures most commonly used will be available for services provided by Coláiste Pobail Ráth Chairn.	By the end of the first year of the scheme.
	<u>Application Forms</u>	There will be a bilingual or Irish version of the most commonly used application forms available e.g. Application forms for all Teacher positions in schools and application forms for all positions in Gaeltacht Schools.	Will continue to be delivered.
Media	<u>Press Releases</u>	Press releases in relation to the Gaelcholáiste (and any other Gaelcholáiste which commences during the life of the scheme) operating under the Board's remit will be issued bilingually simultaneously.	Will continue to be delivered

	<u>Social Media</u>	Irish Language posts shall be used to promote the Irish Language in Ráth Chairn.	By the end of the first year of the scheme.
	<u>Media Spokespersons</u> <u>Speeches</u>	An Irish speaking spokesperson/s will be available for interviews with the Irish language media. We will include Irish content in English speeches, such content shall include opening and closing greetings in Irish, and reference here and there in Irish to the subject matter of any such speeches and/or to the occasion in hand, as a minimum.	Will continue to be delivered. Will continue to be delivered.
Information Technology	<u>Email</u>	Standard email messages such as disclaimers will be bilingual. We will publish a dedicated email address for queries in Irish on LMETB's website.	Will continue to be delivered. By the end of the first year of the scheme.
	<u>Websites</u>	The LMETB website shall include a bilingual statement from the Chief Executive affirming the Board's determination to implement the commitments entered into in the Board's language scheme. There will be a contact name published on our website to direct queries to those in head office who can provide the appropriate service through Irish. Message from the CEO, and information on ETB Board Members, will be bilingual on the LMETB website. The LMETB website shall include policies and static content in Irish.	Will continue to be delivered. By the end of the first year of the scheme. Will continue to be delivered.
	<u>Computer Systems</u>	LMETB will ensure that new computer systems being installed which deal with the public (email, internet, online payments) will be fully capable of handling the Irish language within procurement guidelines, bearing in mind that in some cases LMETB is restricted in the systems available, e.g. there may be a nationally procured framework of providers or the system may be fully procured on a national basis. LMETB will continue to actively use technology to improve provision of bilingual services.	Will continue to be delivered.
	Teaching through Irish	LMETB continues to provide teaching through Irish in the Aonad within Coláiste Chú Chulainn, Dundalk and is liaising with the Department of Education and Skills regarding future provision.	Will continue to be delivered.
Gaeltacht	<u>Meetings</u>	Meetings held in the Gaeltacht will be conducted in Irish.	This will continue to be delivered.

	<p><u>Speeches</u></p>	<p>Contributions in Irish or English will be welcome at public meetings organised by or on behalf of the public body.</p> <p>Meetings organised by the public body that deal with Irish language issues will be held in Irish.</p> <p>All speeches pertaining to the Gaeltacht/taking place in the Gaeltacht shall be in Irish only.</p>	
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Chapter 5: Enhancing the Provision of Irish Language Services in Gaeltacht Areas

Enhancing the provision of Irish language services in Gaeltacht areas and ensuring that Irish becomes the working language in offices located in Gaeltacht areas by a certain date.

Commitments in Gaeltacht Areas

Description of services in Gaeltacht areas	Commitment	Timeline By end Yr 1/ Yr 2 / Yr 3
<p>Adult Education classes are available from time to time.</p> <p>Schooling in Coláiste Pobail Ráth Chairn is through Irish only.</p>	<p>LMETB recognises that Gaeltacht communities have very specific linguistic requirements. The Board will make every effort to ensure that all services pertaining to the Gaeltacht shall be so delivered through the medium of Irish, commencing during the first year of its language scheme.</p>	<p>Will continue to be delivered.</p>
	<p>No new LMETB policies/initiatives/programmes will impact adversely on, or do damage to, the specific cultural and linguistic characteristics of the Gaeltacht. The Board shall do all it can to nurture and strengthen those characteristics.</p>	<p>Will continue to be delivered.</p>
	<p>Regarding Gaeltacht place names, LMETB shall use the official version at all times, in accordance with Statutory Instrument No. 872 of 2004 – The Place names Order (Ceantair Ghaeltachta), 2004.</p>	<p>Will continue to be delivered.</p>
	<p>The Board shall ensure that the Irish language shall be the working language in its school/centres/offices in Gaeltacht areas where such is not the case presently.</p>	<p>Will continue to be delivered.</p>
	<p>LMETB shall endeavour to appoint secretaries and all other employees in its Gaeltacht offices (schools and other recognised centres of education) who will be capable of dealing with members of the public who wish to conduct their business with the Board through Irish.</p>	<p>Will continue to be delivered.</p>
	<p>All documentation pertaining to Gaeltacht regions shall be provided in Irish only, or bilingually.</p>	<p>Will continue to be delivered.</p>
	<p>LMETB shall endeavour to convene all of its meetings for the Gaeltacht community through the medium of Irish.</p>	<p>Will continue to be delivered.</p>
	<p>With regard to LMETB's schools and recognised centres of education in the Gaeltacht, the Board shall endeavour, in every way that it can, to appoint teaching staff who are capable of providing the full curriculum subject choices effectively through the medium of Irish.</p>	<p>Will continue to be delivered.</p>

Chapter 6: Improving Language Capability

6.1 Recruitment

The recruitment of staff with the appropriate level of competence in the Irish language in each area of work of **Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB)** will be the primary means of optimising the availability of services through Irish. Our recruitment policy, which is subject to the framework of agreed national recruitment procedures, will have regard to the need to improve Irish language capability on an incremental basis.

All new staff will be provided with an induction pack containing a copy of our agreed scheme in order to ensure that they are made aware of our commitments under the legislation.

6.2 Training and Development

Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) is committed to making available opportunities for staff to attend appropriately accredited Irish language training courses, as resources permit. All staff will be advised of facilities/opportunities to improve their competency in Irish.

		Commitment	Timeline By end Yr 1/ Yr 2 / Yr 3
Improving Irish Language Capability	<u>Recruitment</u>	New staff will be provided with an induction pack containing a copy of our agreed scheme.	By the end of the first year of the scheme.
	<u>Training</u>	<p>Opportunities to develop the Irish language competence of staff will be provided. Appropriate arrangements will be made for the provision of Irish language training and proficiency testing certification for staff in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support staff in maintaining and developing their proficiency in the Irish language. • Enhance the capacity of staff to meet their Irish language obligations in the conduct of their duties, and • Provide an accredited proficiency testing regime for staff. <p>Staff will be made aware of language resources such as: www.tearma.ie, www.focloir.ie, www.teanglann.ie and www.abair.ie, as well as WinGléacht, the electronic version of the Ó Dónaill Irish-English dictionary.</p>	By the end of the first year of the scheme.

6.3 Designated Irish Language Posts

The posts listed below have been designated as having an Irish language competency requirement. It is the intention that holders of these posts will have achieved specified accredited standards in the Irish language, commensurate with the responsibilities of the post. When designating these posts, particular consideration has been given to posts located in Gaeltacht areas and to posts located outside Gaeltacht areas but whose customer base consists largely of Gaeltacht and/or Irish language speaking communities.

Title of Post	Location	Gaeltacht/Irish speaking community served	Indication of standard of Irish required (choose from basic, intermediate or advanced)
Principals, Deputy Principals, Directors, managers, co-ordinators and all teaching posts in a Gaeltacht area.	LMETB's schools, recognised centres of education and its other services in the Gaelcholáiste and any other Gaelcholáiste which commences during the life of the scheme.	The Gaeltacht community of Co. Meath and the communities of the Gaelcholáiste (and any other Gaelcholáiste which commences during the life of the scheme) operating under the Board's remit.	Advanced desirable
Secretaries, caretakers and other administrative positions in a Gaeltacht school and the Gaelcholáiste (and any other Gaelcholáiste which commences during the life of the scheme).	LMETB's schools, recognised centres of education and its other services in the Gaelcholáiste and any other Gaelcholáiste which commences during the life of the scheme.	The Gaeltacht community of Co. Meath and the communities of the Gaelcholáiste (and any other Gaelcholáiste which commences during the life of the scheme) operating under the Board's remit.	Advanced desirable

Chapter 7: Monitoring and Review

The implementation of the scheme will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis by **the Chief Executive of LMETB and the Senior Management Team**. The contact person for the scheme will be Frank Smith, APO, Corporate and Education Services Department.

A formal system for monitoring requests to administrative offices, schools and centres for services through Irish will be available and recorded in our Annual Report.

Chapter 8: Publication of Agreed Scheme

This scheme will be published on the LMETB website and staff SharePoint. A bilingual version of the scheme will be made available on our website and circulated to all staff and appropriate agencies. Other means to publicise the scheme may also be used.

In addition, we will take every opportunity in our day to day interaction with customers to promote and publicise the services we provide in Irish through the following means:

- directly informing customers on a proactive basis of the option of conducting business with us through Irish, for example, by the display of notices at reception areas indicating the Irish language services that are available;
- prominently listing these services on our website;
- signifying on selected guidelines, leaflets and application forms that these documents are also available in Irish, unless presented bilingually;
- giving equal prominence to Irish and English language materials.

A copy of the agreed scheme will be forwarded to the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga.