

# 2024 FET Colleges Ireland Conference

## FET – Transversal Skills 2024

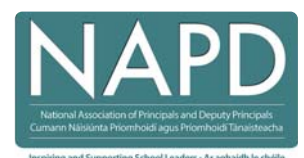
10 & 11 April 2024


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# Welcome from NAPD Director



Paul Crone  
NAPD Director

The song "The Times They Are a-Changin'" was written by Bob Dylan in 1964. I can only imagine the thought process of people in 1964 as they moved to a new world where automation of process was changing their lives. Things that were traditionally done by hand were being done by machines, appliances such as the food processor and the microwave had people worried about the status quo and where they would fit in to this new world. Add the increase of information available to people in 1964, with the wireless radio and the television, and I am sure they would have their abilities to cope challenged. Fast forward to 2024 and there is one similarity to 1964 and is constant in our modern times, times they sure are a-changin' and continuing to change at an increasing pace.

"Change is good", some would say, others say "if we are not moving forward and we stand still, we are in effect moving backwards", dissenters will reminisce about how great things used to be and talk about protecting what we already have. Further Education and Training in 2024 is in a space where opportunity presents. Opportunities to be best in class, to meet the education and training needs of the learner while delivering the necessary skills to support them both in the workplace and in their daily lives. Opportunities that we can grasp or ignore, opportunities to innovate and opportunities to future proof Further Education and Training as a cornerstone in the Irish education landscape.

Almost 20 years after Bob Dylan wrote the famous song referred to above, some Irish post-primary schools were beginning to experience change. Some saw the population move out of the cities to the suburbs and consequently their student numbers began to fall. Some experienced increased demand for learning that was outside of the post-primary curriculum. They saw that times were a-changin'. What happened next was transformational for Irish education. The teachers, along with innovative school leaders, began to experiment, maybe firstly to protect jobs but it quickly became about meeting the needs of their learners. The mid 1980's saw the advent of the Post Leaving Certificate course which quickly became the marquee programme for the forerunner to Further Education and Training.

Almost 40 years later, we find ourselves in a similar position. FET is ready to innovate, the concept of the unified tertiary sector is ready to explode and the FET college for "now" is needed more than ever to lead the FET sector into the future. It is my assertion that, as we look to innovative leadership to lead FET, the current Principals and Deputies of the FET Colleges are ideally placed to lead the FET sector into the next phase of their development. My reasons for this are clear, they have done this before and the best predictor of future performance is past achievements.

The cornerstone of the FET learning organisation is Andragogy, the Principal and Deputy are highly skilled in this area, having trained to post graduate level and they are also experienced practitioners in the classroom. In addition, Principals and Deputies are innovators, they are problem solvers and they unite people. Their experience over many years is of empowering people. They are embedded with the learner experience, prioritising the quality of teaching and learning in their team for the benefit of their students. Finally, Principals and Deputies understand the landscape of linking from post-primary into the tertiary world. Linking students to courses that suit their aptitudes, abilities and interests, be that, the tertiary degree, apprenticeships, traineeships or any other FET course, the Principal and Deputy have the experience to take the overview and unite FET provision.

FET is the future, the future is now and we will deliver the future. Come with us on this journey as together we will go further. I thank Michael Murphy for his leadership of the FETCI committee and his leadership in preparation for this conference. I thank all of the members of the FETCI committee who work tirelessly on behalf of NAPD and FET. I also thank Geraldine Gibbons who represents FET excellently on our National Executive Committee. We are looking forward to an excellent conference and I trust you will benefit professionally and personally from participation in the FETCI conference 2024.

Ar aghaidh le chéile

Paul Crone



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# Introduction to the Conference



Michael Murphy  
*Chair of FET Colleges of Ireland*

I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to all Principals and Deputy Principals within the realm of Post Primary Schools and Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges in Ireland. As Chair of the Further Education and Training Colleges Ireland (FETCI), it is my honour to introduce the upcoming conference, which promises to be a pivotal event in our ongoing professional development.

The National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD) is the professional association for educational leaders across Ireland. Within its fold, Further Education and Training Colleges Ireland (FETCI), formerly known as the NAPD FET Committee, serves as a vital committee representing Principals and Deputy Principals from over 100 FET Schools and Colleges. We operate under the auspices of three managerial bodies: ETBI, JMB, and ACCS.

I wish to express our sincere appreciation to Mr. Andrew Brownlee, CEO of SOLAS, and his team, whose generous support as the main sponsors of our annual conference enables us to convene and advance our collective goals. We extend our gratitude to all speakers, and we recognize the invaluable support of our colleagues and sponsors in making this conference possible. Special acknowledgment is due to Mr. Paul Crone, the Director of NAPD, and Ms. Regina Butler, the President of NAPD, for their unwavering commitment to the mission of FETCI.

Since 2007, NAPD: FETCI has been at the forefront of organising an annual FET Conference, each addressing critical themes shaping our educational landscape. This year, under the theme "FET – Transversal Skills 2024," our conference will provide a platform for the remarkable graduates of our FET Colleges to showcase their successes. Moreover, it will serve as an opportunity for Principals and Deputy Principals to network and contemplate the significance of transversal skills in the modern educational landscape. We will delve into insights on leveraging the Erasmus+ program and the emergence of new Tertiary degrees to foster the development of essential skills among our students.

I am confident that this conference will be a catalyst for meaningful dialogue, collaboration, and innovation within our community. Together, let us chart a course towards excellence in further education and training.

Warm regards,

**Michael Murphy**

***Chair, Further Education and Training Colleges Ireland (FETCI)***



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### To find out more contact:

Bernadette Walsh  
Education & Guidance Liaison Manager  
[bwalsh@careersportal.ie](mailto:bwalsh@careersportal.ie)



# Timetable for the conference

## FET – Transversal Skills 2024

Wednesday, April 10th

Session 1

2.30pm Conference Registration/Tea & Coffee

3.30pm Panel Discussion  
Where now for FET?

**David McDonnell (MC)**  
Principal Drogheda Institute

*Speakers on Panel:*

**William Beausang**  
Assistant Secretary in the Department of  
Further and Higher Education, Research,  
Innovation and Science

**Nessa White**  
Executive Director,  
Transformation – SOLAS

**David Forde**  
Principal, Carlow Institute of Further  
Education and Training

**Martin O'Brien**  
CE Louth Meath Education and  
Training Board

**Dr Joe Collins**  
Director of Further Education and  
Training ETBI

**Holly O'Brien**  
Drogheda Institute Graduate

**Sean Tannam**  
Dunboyne College

7.30pm Dinner and Networking

Thursday, April 11th

Session 2

9.00am Conference Registration

9.30am Conference Launch  
**FETCI Chair** Michael Murphy & Paul Crone  
**Opening Address:** Chelsea Lyons,  
Student, Colaiste IDE  
Daithi O'Toole, Student,  
Ballyfermot College of Further Education

10.00am Keynote Address:  
Andrew Brownlee, CE Solas

10.30am Panel Discussion  
**Panel:** Cecilia Munro (MC),  
Andrew Brownlee,  
Sadie Ward McDermott,  
Chelsea Lyons & Daithi O'Toole

11.00am Networking Break/Tea & Coffee

11.30am Keynote Address: Deirdre Finlay, Head of  
Sectoral Programmes – Education and  
Training – Léargas Using the Erasmus+  
Programme to Develop Transversal Skills

12.15pm Panel Discussion  
Student Address, Evian Holt,  
Student Bray Institute Of Further Education

12.20pm Keynote Address: Dr Fiona Maloney,  
Director NTO

1.05pm Panel Discussion  
David Forde (MC), Fiona Maloney,  
Deirdre Finaly, Pat Maunsell & Evian Holt

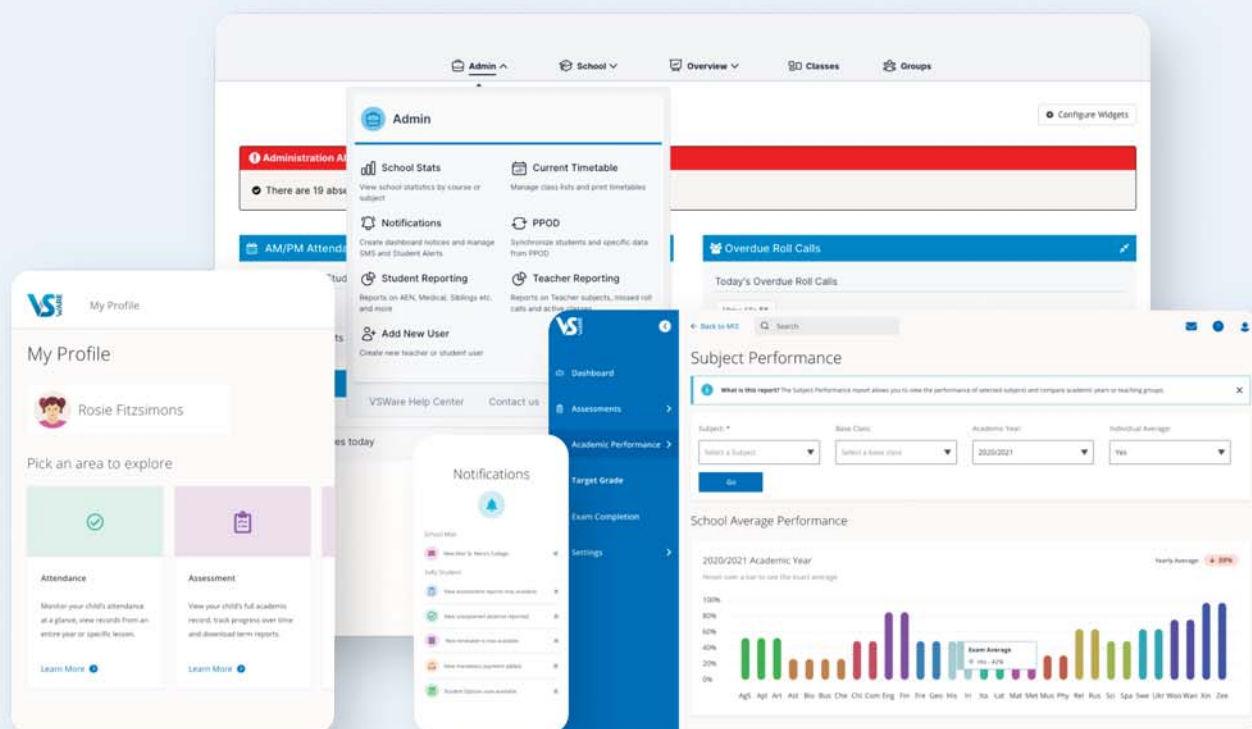
1.45pm Close of Conference

2.00pm Lunch



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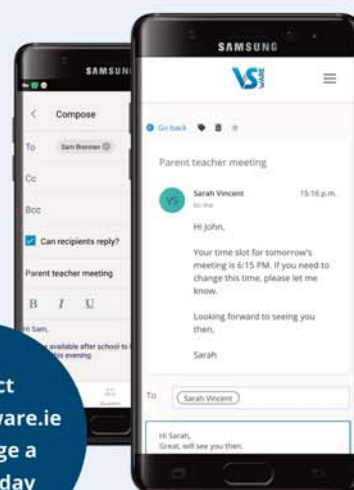
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# Conference Speakers



William Beausang

**William Beausang** is an Assistant Secretary in the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science with responsibility for Further Education and Training, Apprenticeship and Skills Policy as well as the development of a more unified Tertiary Education System. He holds a Bachelor's in Public Administration and Masters in Economic Science, both from University College Dublin and completed the Graduate Programme in Economics at the University of Tilburg. He has previously working in the Department of Education, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Department of Finance.



Nessa White

**Nessa White** is Executive Director for Transformation in SOLAS, the Further Education and Training (FET) Authority. Since taking up the role in 2020 she has led out on a range of FET sector funding and capital projects, such as the FET College of the Future. Nessa works closely with a range of key partners and stakeholders ensuring effective implementation of the current FET Strategy, *Transforming Learning*. Nessa previously worked in the Department of Education as a Project Manager for the Education and Training Board (ETB) -SOLAS Project Management Office leading out on initiatives focused on reform in areas of communications, legal services and governance. In her previous roles in Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) she played a key part in driving ongoing change and shared vision and was appointed to the role of General Secretary of ETBI in May 2018. Nessa has 20 years' experience across Senior Management roles in the Education and Health sector. She has a wealth of experience and expertise in the areas of change management, strategic thinking, leading people, collaborating and communicating with conviction, high performance and delivery of results, drive and resilience, expertise, self-development and self-awareness.



David Forde

**David Forde** was appointed Principal at Carlow Institute in July 2023, having previously been Deputy Principal, and is a member of the NAPD FETCI committee. At Carlow, David has been instrumental in the diversification of the college offering, both in occupational range and delivery type. Prior to his appointment in Carlow, David worked in the UK, latterly as a Department Head at Bridgwater College in Somerset, one of England's top-performing Further Education colleges. David is a keen promoter of developing FET colleges with a comprehensive offer for students, and is diversifying the curriculum reach at Carlow, including the introduction of new work-based learning approaches to support better engagement with industry for fulltime provision at Carlow. Whilst in the UK he piloted the first 'new apprenticeship' for Creative Industries in the South-West, and was a writer-reviewer of the National Occupational Standards for Creative and Cultural Skills in the UK. Outside of his work in education, David continues his involvement in music as a choral conductor, is Organist and Director of Music at Waterford Cathedral, and is pursuing a PhD in Music with MTU Cork School of Music.



# Conference Speakers



**Martin O'Brien**

**Martin O'Brien** has an established track record in Further Education having taught at O' Fiaich College Dundalk where he established a very successful PLC Engineering course. He has extensive experience in educational leadership having served as Principal of Bush Post Primary School, Dundalk prior to accepting the role as Chief Executive Officer of Co Sligo Vocational Education Committee in 2005. His industry experience in Gypsum Industries PLC and later at Wellman International has influenced his leadership and management style throughout his career. Martin has extensive experience of leading major projects and initiatives nationally in training and skills development. He is a former member of the Apprenticeship Council and developed the OEM Traineeship in consultation with Combilift, where he later supported the development of the OEM Apprenticeship. He is presently developing Ireland's first all Island apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation. He has 19 years' experience as Chief Executive having served as Chief Executive of Sligo VEC, Monaghan VEC, Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board and since 2016 in Louth and Meath Education and Training Board. Martin headed up several very significant projects during his tenure including the Monaghan Education Campus €40m. He currently oversees a staff of approx. 3,000 and a budget of €238 million annually. His work designing and overseeing the construction of Ireland's first purpose built Further Education and Training College – Monaghan Institute is a flagship project for the FET sector in Ireland.

He has led the establishment of the Island of Ireland Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence (AMTCE) in Dundalk, which is one of the global leaders in advanced manufacturing skill training for current and future manufacturing workforce and is the largest of its type in the EU. He has spent several years working on various peace projects and has recently signed several very significant MoU's with various partner organisations including Catalyst Connection in Pittsburgh, Institute of Manufacturing Research, **the AM Group** (a partnership between 3DGBIRE, Create Education, Inspire 3D) and Portview Trade Centre in Belfast.

He is currently leading the development of a number of key initiatives including the establishment of Ireland's first 'Pathfinder' Further Education and Training College of the Future in Dunboyne and last year he opened an all-Electrical Apprenticeship Training Centre in Drogheda. Several further initiatives are currently under construction across Louth and Meath, these initiatives are reflected by an increased spend last year in the region of €50M. Martin oversees in excess of 117 building projects several of these involve non-ETB schools.



**Dr. Joe Collins**

**Dr. Joe Collins** is the Director of Further Education and Training at ETBI. The role is wide and varied but ultimately very rewarding as it facilitates the education of people and fosters a culture of lifelong learning for personal, community and professional development. He works with different statutory, voluntary, community and industry & enterprise organisations to fulfil ETBI's strategic goal of leading "the strategic growth of the sector". He is a strong advocate of education and training as a means of promoting human agency for personal and collective empowerment. He has a deep interest in policy development in education and training and lifelong learning. Involvement with different communities and widening participation to non-traditional students are two areas of his work for which he has a passionate interest. However, it is not enough merely to recruit students into education, and he considers the main purpose of education is to accommodate the student's ability to engage with their own life world and to allow the student to succeed and flourish in an array of domains.



# Conference Speakers



Holly O'Brien

**Holly O'Brien** is originally from Skerries Co. Dublin, Holly O'Brien attended Skerries Community College where her love of studying English helped navigate her interest in Law. Like many students, her Leaving Certificate results did not reflect the hard work she put into her Leaving Certificate subjects. Holly knew she wanted to study Law and enrolled in the Pre-University Law with Criminology course at Drogheda Institute of Further Education. She excelled in DIFE achieving Distinctions in all her modules, being elected as a student representative on the DIFE Board of Management and culminating in being awarded overall DIFE student of the Year.

This provided her with a place to study LLB Bachelor of Law at Trinity College where she is now in her final year. She has immersed herself into student life in Trinity College holding roles such as the Careers Officer for the DU Law Society, Secretary of the first ever Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Public Relations Officer of Trinity Women in Law and Further Education and Training Ambassador.

Holly has commenced her FE-1 exams which she will finish after her final year in college and has secured a training contract with a leading corporate law firm in Dublin. She intends to go to Blackhall Place and qualify as a Solicitor.



Seán Tannam

**Seán Tannam** is currently a student in Dunboyne Institute of Further Education studying Journalism, Digital Media & Public Relations. In 2019 he was enrolled in college prior to Dunboyne, however decided that the course at the time was not exciting to me. He worked for three years full time and decided to apply to Dunboyne. Studying in Dunboyne has been a wonderful decision, giving me the experience necessary to adapt and thrive in a college setting. The lecturers are inviting and helpful, and I have greatly appreciated the tools they have given me to be a great Journalist, such as word processing, researching and media analysis. Attending this course I have an insight into the industry and have a clearer vision for my future, and more importantly how to get there. After this year, I will be enrolling in DCU or Maynooth to pursue Journalism and earn my degree.



Chelsea Lyons

**Chelsea Lyons** is a student of Business Administration in City of Dublin Further Education and Training Finglas Campus (Formerly Colaiste Ide CFE)

Hailing from Finglas, Chelsea embodies a deep commitment to justice and education, making her a beacon of inspiration for her peers. As a dedicated Youth Advisor for Finglas and Cabra Drugs Task Force, Chelsea actively contributes to the well-being of her community.

Furthermore, she serves as member of the Student Council of the college and was elected as the student representative to the Board of Management. Her active involvement and vision contribute to shaping a brighter future for the college.

She has been invited to present to this conference following her inspirational article and presentation to the college which validated why Further Education is so important for learners.





# Conference Speakers



Daithi O'Toole

**Daithi O'Toole** is a final year Media Production Management student at Ballyfermot College of Further Education and DCU. To date Daithi has completed a QQI level five, BTEC Higher National Certificate and a QQI level six focusing on the vast landscape of business.

Daithi is a proud member of the Washington Ireland Programme class of 2024 which aims to develop young leaders across the island of Ireland through community service, policy debates and a job placement in Washington D.C. This is the third year that FET is eligible for the programme and Daithi is the third FET student to have been selected.

Outside of his professional and academic commitments, Daithi is an avid sports fan and has dedicated personal time to various sports. He found particular enjoyment in coaching his local school's athletics team in his final year of his leaving certificate studies. Daithi hopes to further his skills in the media industry, where he has a keen interest in the areas of advertising and communications.



Andrew Brownlee

**Andrew Brownlee** is CEO of SOLAS, the Further Education and Training (FET) Authority. Since taking up the role in 2019, he has led an ambitious FET Strategy: *Transforming Learning* that has driven significant change and development across the sector including funding reform, diversifying pathways for learners, and ensuring that FET can respond to the evolving needs of the economy. He has helped to negotiate the challenges of COVID in providing access to adult education, and supported the growth of apprenticeships, construction skills schemes and other Further Education and Training to the point where one-in-ten participated in some way in 2023. Andrew joined SOLAS from the Higher Education Authority where he was Head of System Funding and led the development a new funding model for Higher Education. Through his career, Andrew has gained extensive experience in areas such as management consulting, advising public and private sector clients on investment appraisal, strategy development, operational performance and change management. He has a Masters in Economics and Accounting from the University of Edinburgh.



# Conference Speakers



Cecilia Munro

**Cecilia Munro** is Principal of Ballyfermot College of Further Education (BCFE), prior to this appointment in May 2019 was Principal of Dún Laoghaire Further Education Institute, from 2011-2019. BCFE provides dedicated Further Education and Training courses in the following areas, Art and Design, Animation, Business and Tourism, Digital Media, Health and Social Care, Media, Music, Television, Film and Visual Effects. Cecilia has worked from the ground up in Further Education and Training for over 27 years, in a variety of positions, dealing with students from diverse backgrounds attending many different programmes. She is a former member of the Board of Directors of SOLAS and a former member of the National Executive of the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals in her previous capacity as Chair of the NAPD Further Education and Training Committee. Cecilia specialises in strategic policy, governance, and risk as it relates to Further Education and Training. Within SOLAS she has served as Chair of the Strategic Development Committee, the National Apprenticeship Advisory Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee. Cecilia currently represents the City of Dublin ETB on the Dublin Regional Skills Fora.



Sadie Ward McDermott

**Sadie Ward McDermott** formerly qualified as a post primary school teacher. Sadie has held senior management positions in the Education sphere for many years. Currently, Director of Further Education and Training with Louth Meath Education and Training Board. This role encompasses working in partnership with other state and community-based organisations/agencies, to deliver interagency, cross community and cross border initiatives which enable and support provision of FET opportunities and Youth service provisions in the region. A strong advocate of lifelong learning and innovative practice which supports access and engagement opportunities in both FET and Youth Services for all in our community.



Deirdre Finlay

**Deirdre Finlay** is Head of Sectoral Programmes for Education and Training at Léargas. Having worked across various roles in the public, private and nonprofit sectors, Deirdre holds specialisms in institutional funding, programme development and strategic management within the context of formal and nonformal education. As a senior manager at Léargas, she oversees the implementation of the Erasmus+ programme across the Schools Education, VET and Adult Education Sectors, while also managing other EU initiatives related to those sectors such as the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE) and the eTwinning platform for schools. Deirdre is a graduate of Trinity College Dublin and has a Masters in International Relations from DCU. She undertook her own Erasmus+ mobility at the Sciences Pos (IEP) university in Strasbourg, France.



# Conference Speakers



**Dr. Fiona Maloney**

**Dr Fiona Maloney** is the Director of the National Tertiary Office which was established with the goal of creating a more unified tertiary education system and is part of a wider reform agenda aimed at ensuring that Ireland's further and higher education system is well-equipped to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Fiona's role includes leading the development of the office's strategic plan and overseeing its implementation as well as providing strategic direction and leadership in the development of tertiary programmes and arrangements.

A key element of her role focuses on maximising the impact of initiatives aimed at enhancing the pathways for students from Further Education and Training to Higher Education. Fiona's role has responsibility for creating and strengthening strategic and regional partnership arrangements between Education and Training Boards and Higher Education Institutions to allow learners to progress in a clear, seamless manner between FE and HE with pathways that are clearly defined and easily accessed.



**Pat Maunsell**

**Pat Maunsell** is the Director of Education at Accounting Technicians Ireland (ATI) where he spearheads the strategic development of Accounting Technicians Ireland's Education function with a view to developing and enhancing accounting qualifications in an all-island and international setting. Leading a team of approximately 15 staff, Pat oversees various functions including Curriculum Development, Apprenticeships, Teaching and Learning, Quality Assurance and Assessment. With a strong foundation in educational leadership, he previously served as Principal of Limerick College of Further Education and has a deep knowledge and understanding of the challenges facing Principals and management teams of today's further education colleges.

As an accomplished education leader, Pat has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to empowering teachers and learners and driving innovation in teaching and learning, programme development and overall college enhancement. As a former active member of FETCI, his strategic vision and collaborative approach has made a notable contribution to the development of the further education and training landscape.

As an advocate of lifelong learning and professional development, Pat is dedicated to ensuring that individuals have access to high-quality educational opportunities that align with the evolving demands of today's society. With a passion for fostering growth and nurturing a culture of continuous improvement, he is poised to share valuable insights and perspectives at this year's FETCI Conference.





# FETCI

## Committee Members

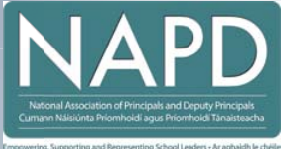
### FETCI COMMITTEE

**Michael Murphy**, *Chairperson*  
Principal Mayo College of Further Education  
and Training.  
E: Michaelmurphy@msletb.ie


**Cecilia Monroe**, *Vice-Chairperson*  
**Catherine O Sullivan**, *ACCS / JMB Representative*  
**David McDonnell**, *Principal Representative*  
**David Forde**, *Principal Representative*  
**Sorcha Nic Dhonnacha**, *Dual Provision*  
**Alison Ward**  
**Geraldine Gibbons**  
**Noreen O'Reilly**  
**Paula McCarty**  
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**Jean Fitzgerald**

### CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

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**David McDonnell**  
**Geraldine Gibbons**  
**Alison Ward**  
**Noreen O'Reilly**  
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agat as QQI.**

# Evian Holt

## Immersive Media Production

**H**i, my name is Evian Holt and I am currently a student at BIFE. I am a first year student on the Immersive Media Production degree course which is a four-year course in collaboration with BIFE, BCFE and IADT.

I went to secondary in Kilcoole for 6 years, until I finished my Leaving Cert. I knew I was passionate about Game Design. I've loved analysing video games since I was young. I had my sights set on a college course in this department as I wanted to work my way into the game development industry.

I had my CAO choices set up rather incorrectly due to a misunderstanding on my own behalf and lack of guidance. My first choice on the CAO list was the Game Design course in TU Dublin. There were only 24 places on this course, so competition for places is quite high, and I was given my second choice on the list. I had received a place in a Games Development course, but I would have to move from home over 100 kilometres to Dundalk. When I researched the costs, I realised attending this course was unfeasible. The facts were that it was too far away from where I lived.

Then one of my close friends mentioned that they were going to BIFE. I immediately got in contact with BIFE, and they accepted me onto their Games Design course. I thoroughly enjoyed and gained lots of skills and knowledge in that Game Design course. I even made my first 3D FPS game in Unity as a part of the course. It was one of my favourite learning experiences I have ever had, as it taught me a lot about my passion.



While there I heard about a new degree course being offered at BIFE with IADT called Immersive media and I decided to apply for this new course. This course is incredibly impressive, not only specialising in the same topics that the Games Development course would have covered, it opened up a whole new world of knowledge to me, looking into cameras, filming, storytelling and editing. Not only is it fun and extremely educational but it is a four-year long course that will get me a Level 8 degree.

The new degree pathway has given me a chance to study locally for this level 8 degree and I have been able to progress in a way that otherwise would not have been possible because of the difficulties that would have arisen with costs of travelling and accommodation. It's been a great development for me.



**The new degree pathway has given me a chance to study locally for this level 8 degree and I have been able to progress in a way that otherwise would not have been possible because of the difficulties that would have arisen with costs of travelling and accommodation.**



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## **“Erasmus+ VET Mobility as a Route to the Acquisition of Transversal Skills”**

**Author: Marie Cleary**

**Commissioned by Léargas (National VET Team) in 2023**

### **Report Overview**

- This report explores the increasing importance of Transversal Skills as a way of navigating our complex and rapidly changing world.
- It highlights the opportunities for Vocational Education and Training (VET) organisations to enhance Transversal Skills through participation in Erasmus+ funded mobility projects.
- It examines the value of Erasmus+ mobility opportunity as a mechanism for the acquisition of Transversal Skills for VET learners and staff.

Transversal Skills have been defined by UNESCO (2019) as: “Skills that are typically considered as not specifically related to a particular job, task, academic discipline, or area of knowledge and that can be used in a wide variety of situations and work settings; for example, organisational skills. They refer to an individual’s ability to communicate, problem-solve, build and maintain relationships and adapt in times of uncertainty”.

### **Rationale**

There is currently a lack of research at VET level and more empirical research needs to be conducted on how transversal competences can be acquired. This report aims to investigate and explore the concept of Transversal Skills, establish any consensus in terms of definition and identify priority Transversal Skills needed to succeed in the new world of work. It also seeks to start the conversation on Transversal Skills within VET, establish what they are understood to be and their level of importance at this juncture.

### **Audience**

This report is intended for Irish VET organisations interested in exploring the area of Transversal Skills and identifying priority Transversal Skills to support VET learners and staff to navigate an increasingly complex world. It is also aimed at new entrants to Erasmus+ programme, undertaking mobility opportunities under Key Action 1, to demonstrate and showcase the transformative benefit of engaging in Erasmus+ mobility for the acquisition of Transversal Skills.

### **Findings**

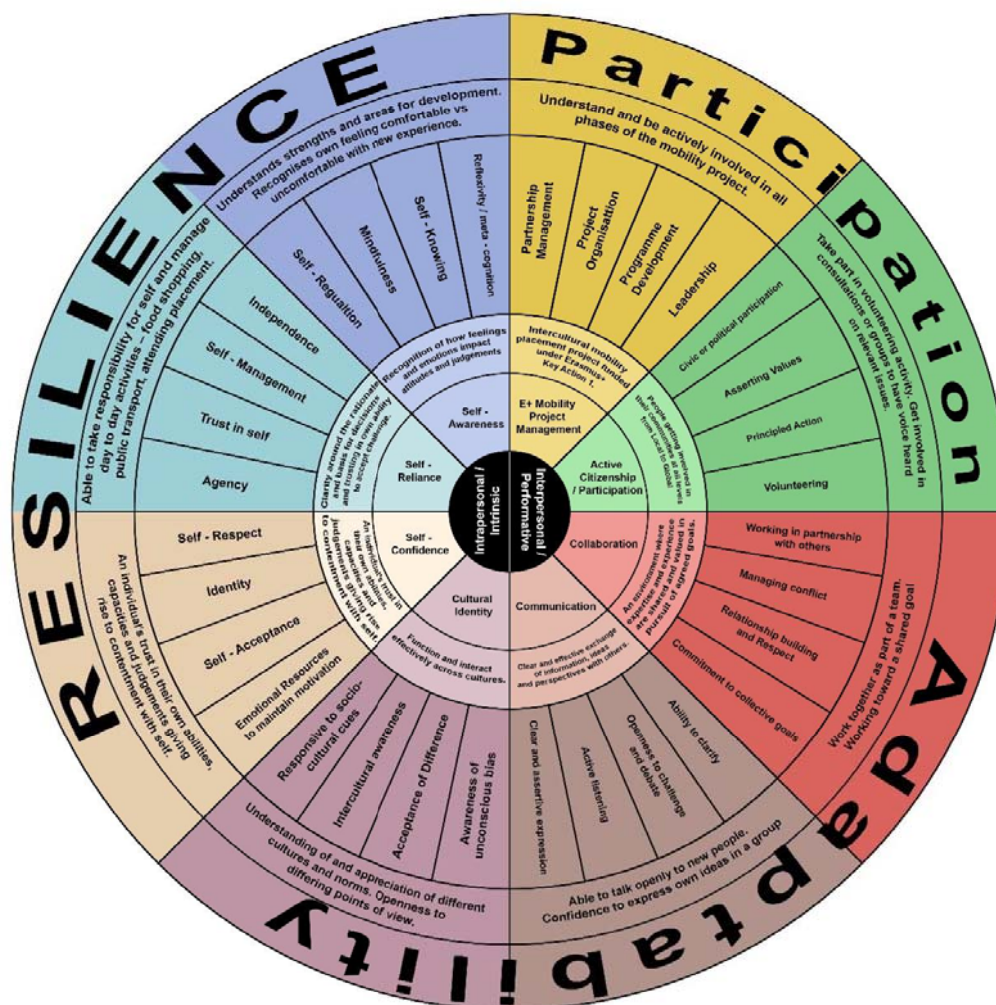
It has been continuously reported by past participants of Erasmus+ mobility projects that Transversal Skills are those most valued deriving from the VET placement experience, and that the transformative benefit of these skills impacts the individual in their life and work. Confidence, self-awareness and independent functioning were those skills most reported as valuable from participation in Erasmus+. Post the disruption caused by COVID, the identification of priority Transversal Skills has shifted from inter-personal (between people) such as collaboration, teamwork and communication to Intra-personal (within self) and include mostly those relating to Emotional Intelligence such as, resilience, self-confidence and self-regulation.



## Conclusion & Recommendations

The principal conclusion from this report is that Erasmus+ mobility is a very effective mechanism to support the rapid development and acquisition of Transversal Skills. The competency framework highlights the key Transversal Skills obtained and strengthened through the European work-based placement within VET programmes.

## COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSVERSAL SKILLS



The framework is divided into two key sections – Intrapersonal skills and Interpersonal skills. There are four key skills falling under intrapersonal skills: Self-awareness, Self Confidence, Adaptability and Creativity. The four key interpersonal Transversal Skills highlighted are: Communication, Collaboration, Active Citizenship and Empathy.

A key recommendation is that VET organisations make intercultural work placement and Erasmus+ mobility participation an integral part of their programmes and make it a strategic priority for their organisation.



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