



Role Specification

Title:	Manager (FET Colleges Integration)
Grade:	6
Unit:	FET Colleges
Reporting to:	Director of FET Colleges
Location:	SOLAS, Block 1, Castleforbes House, Castleforbes Road, Dublin 1
Reference:	623
Closing Date:	28 May 2026

Role Overview:

The successful applicant will manage a variety of sectoral transformation and associated funding activities across the portfolio of FET Colleges unit responsibilities. Working closely with the Unit Director and management team, this person will support SOLAS's execution of its function as the authority setting direction for FET system's approximately €1.2b annual budget.

The role-holder will be responsible for liaising with relevant stakeholders across SOLAS, in multiple business units within DFHERIS, across the sector - both with ETBs and agencies, and with a wide variety of external parties. These duties listed below reflect current unit responsibilities, which may change over time in response to organisational and sectoral need.

Key Tasks/Responsibilities

- Leadership of the development and implementation of sectoral transformation initiatives in alignment with:
 - the 2022 FET Funding Model Review's recommendations
 - the policy direction as set in the FET Strategy, Tertiary Strategy (forthcoming), Sectoral Investment Plan, and other initiatives under Project Ireland 2040.
- Leadership and management of data-informed, strategic programme harmonisation and of sectoral funding optimisation against available funding and in alignment with policy – change management.
- Leadership and management of FET sector responsiveness to enterprise, regional, national, social, and direct learner needs, including through consideration of relevant research from, for example, the National Skills Observatory, Skills and Labour Market Research Unit, OECD, and ESRI.
- Requirement to build up and maintain strong collaborative working relationships with colleagues across all functions of SOLAS, in particular the Finance; System Performance; Enterprise, employees and skills; Construction, quality, climate strategy and skills; Learner support and ESG, and Apprenticeship units. This will include the flexibility to work with these Business Units on a collaborative basis and promote a 'one-team' ethos across the Business Units.
- Provide direction and support to team members and all other relevant stakeholders in the completion of specific, time-limited projects.
- Management of an annual calendar of funding activities associated with a variety of stakeholders across the FET sector.
- Responsive management of self, others, and resources to deliver against changing priorities at short notice with high levels of professionalism, sectoral expertise, and a 'can do' attitude.

- Manage the continuous improvement of processes associated with the funding of the FET system including through the appropriate use of AI, automation, and quality systems.
- Management of risk associated with FET system funding, including on responses to audit queries, Parliamentary Questions, Requests from DFHERIS, and stakeholders, both internal and external.
- Make efficient and effective use of all resources in planning, organising, executing, and monitoring the unit's activities.
- Working across the unit, support the Director and management team in development and delivery of annual business plans and in effective utilisation of allocated budgets, consistent with the overall FET strategy, the SOLAS Corporate and Annual Business Plan, and other relevant national policies.
- Establish and maintain positive and proactive communication and liaison structures within SOLAS, to DFHERIS, and across the FET sector.
- Line management and leadership of a small, dedicated team with a focus on performance and development.
- Deputise for the Director as required from time-to-time.
- Any other duties which may be specified from time-to-time.

Requirements:

Essential:

- Minimum 5 years of experience of working in lead professional or managerial roles with responsibility for significant budgets, of teams of persons at varying levels, and of collaboration with stakeholders both within and outside your direct line management control.
- A business, legal, finance, leadership, social, sustainability, or education qualification that meets one of the following requirements:
 - NFQ level 9 postgraduate certificate, postgraduate diploma, or Masters qualification in one of the above-listed areas; **or**
 - NFQ level 8 qualification in one of the above-listed areas; **or**
 - NFQ level 7 qualification in one of the above-listed areas with demonstrable experience equivalent to either a level 8 or level 9 award; **or**
 - A demonstrable track record across one or more of the above-listed areas that can be evaluated through Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning and/or Recognition of Prior Academic Learning.
- A demonstrable track record of leadership, management, and implementation of change involving a diverse range of directly and indirectly managed stakeholders – evidenced by detailing the before and after status of the change activity, including full specification of the individual role undertaken.
- Results focused and demonstrable knowledge of current and future trends in the FET and Tertiary education sectors.

Desirable Requirements:

- Demonstrated adaptability, flexibility, resilience, and ability to work effectively under pressure to consistently meet targets.
- A strong commitment to continuous improvement both in general and specific to education and/or funding contexts.

- Proven record as an excellent communicator with highly developed interpersonal and influencing skills.
- Substantial experience of project and programme management with an associated track-record of excellence in timely execution and successful completion.
- A demonstrable record of and commitment to relevant, current Continuing Professional Development and or personal development in relevant and/or aligned fields of study.
- A willingness to undertake upskilling as required to fulfil the changing requirements of the role over time and in response to internal and external stimuli.
- Demonstrated experience of engaging productively as team member and team lead with internal and external stakeholders, individually and collectively, in operational and project settings.
- Knowledge of public sector financial and procurement procedures.
- Demonstrable and effective proposal writing, technical research, and report writing skills, including for Boards, C-suites, and management teams.
- Proven ability in leading teams, providing direction, support, and mentoring for development.
- Familiarity with using AI, business intelligence, and other tools to enhance business processes or stakeholder outcomes.