

Role Specification

Title: Assistant Manager – FET College Co-Ordination
Grade: 07
Unit: FET College of the Future Unit
Ref: 604
Closing Date: Wednesday, 25 February 2026



Overview

SOLAS has responsibility for providing strategic leadership to the further education and training sector and for implementing a significant transformation programme to deliver 21st century, high-quality education and training programmes to a diverse range of learners. SOLAS is charged with a range of responsibilities including:

- Supporting the development and implementation of the further education and training strategy, including through aligned capital investment and sustainable management of the FET property estate;
- Funding of the further education and training (FET) system to maximise the impact of state investment;
- Overseeing the development and implementation of the Strategic Performance Agreements between SOLAS and each Education and Training Board (ETB) which set out 5-year plans to further the ambitions of a strategic and integrated FET system within the national Tertiary system;
- Statutory responsibility for the apprenticeship system;
- Analysing the labour market and identifying and anticipating key skills needs; and
- Promoting the standing of Further Education and Training.

FET College of the Future

The Capital Development and Estates Management team (CDEM) within the FCT unit is responsible for the management and oversight of budgets for capital investment from the National Development Plan and the National Training Fund to the FET sector, including for the National Apprenticeship Office. The team carries out strategic FET estates management and planning, capital programme planning and development; construction project evaluation and delivery support, investment approval, and recommendation functions under the Infrastructure Guidelines (IG) and Capital Works Management Framework (CWMF).

The team, working with units and teams across System Transformation, Strategy and Performance, and Support divisions of SOLAS, through management of and strategic capital investment in infrastructure, is supporting the FET Strategy and College of the Future goals of creating integrated colleges of FET. These FET Colleges will deliver best-in-class learner experiences across the National Framework of Qualifications from levels 1 to 6 and across the full FET learner profile from early school-leavers to lifelong learners. Increasingly, FET Colleges (of the Future) will also focus strongly on supporting enterprise through delivery of national and regional Centres of Excellence and Centres for Specialist Skills Development.

In addition, the team is responsible for the following Estates portfolio-related activities within ETBs and in liaison with a number of capital and policy business units within the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS):

- Annual and multi-annual strategic planning of capital investment across the 540+ properties, 16 ETBs, and 10 funding streams, including the €700m College Major Capital Programme, and annual capital budgets exceeding €100m *per annum*;
- Strategic and technical appraisal of new build, repair, renovation, expansion, retrofit, and expansion programmes and projects from application, through development, to delivery in alignment with the requirements of the IG and CWMF stages, and with reference to the Department of Education and Youth's Design Team Procedures, where appropriate;
- Strategic and technical management of funding requisition and disbursement for capital building projects across a range of funding streams;
- National Training Fund investment planning, evaluation, and management in the context of Government and enterprise priorities within the holistic national skills and research ecosystems;
- National FET Estates Strategy development, direction, and implementation, including FET Estates Data collection, validation, and analysis;
- GIS and BIM implementation within SOLAS and supporting the sector;
- Lease management;
- Public Sector Climate Action Mandate and Sustainability support; and
- Property selection, purchasing, and disposal.

Role Summary

The successful applicant will assist in the project management, co-ordination, and administration of a range of construction and property portfolio work across areas of Climate Action, Sustainability, Procurement, and Digitalisation within the FET College of the Future unit. Working closely with the unit Director and Managers, as well as all unit staff, this person will assist in management of the unit's activities in respect of FET capital and estates including specifying, planning, developing, delivering, and monitoring performance against internal SOLAS and external targets and requirements.

The role-holder will assist the unit managers and will lead-out on a range of activities that require liaison with relevant stakeholders in SOLAS, the Education and Training Boards, DFHERIS, other agencies, the FET sector, and across the Public Sector in respect of the FET estate's critical function as a key enabler of achievement of the FET strategy's goals of delivering for Ireland's economy and society.

A strong commitment to sustainability and climate action in the built environment is essential to all unit activities and will be an essential trait of this role holder.

Key Tasks/Responsibilities

- Assist with **professional management and project management** of the sector's capital funds and funding streams including Devolved Capital Grants (Standard and Green), Emergency Health & Safety Works, Minor Capital Works, Energy Efficiency and Decarbonisation Pathfinder Programme, Strategic Infrastructure Upgrade Programme, the FET College Major Capital Programme, and the Specialist Equipment Grant/NTF Surplus funding.
- Assist with **professional management and project management** of the sector's property portfolio and estates management activities for the FET sector.
- Assist with **managing the continuous improvement, standardisation, and digitalisation of processes** associated with the strategic management and funding of the FET property portfolio, including through **supporting the specification, procurement, and implementation of enterprise-level systems** including GIS (Geographic Information Systems) and BIM (Better/Building Information Management/Modelling).
- Assist in **managing the development and utilisation of procurement frameworks and tendering processes**, including through full implementation of Public Sector Green Procurement, in collaboration with the SOLAS Finance unit.
- **Engage effectively with key stakeholders** within and outside SOLAS, particularly in the parent department (Approving Authority/Sanctioning Authority), Education and Training Boards (Sponsoring Agents), and representative groups and bodies such as Education and Training Boards Ireland, SEAI, Energy Bureaus, and other Government Departments and Agencies.
- Assist the unit's technical team and associated consultants in **managing engagement around specification, review, and appraisal of work executed within IG and CWMF stages** with Design Teams, Contractors, and other parties, including other public sector bodies.
- 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 capital budgets, consistent with the overall FET strategy, the SOLAS Corporate and Annual Business Plan, and other relevant national policies.
- Supporting governance, compliance, financial reporting, legal, and audit requirements for the unit in respect of internal SOLAS and external requirements, including the Parliamentary Questions, C&AG, Internal Audit, and the SOLAS Board.
- Work effectively with team members and all other relevant stakeholders in the completion of specific, time-limited projects.
- Establish and maintain positive and proactive communication and liaison structures within SOLAS.
- Deputise for unit Managers as required from time-to-time.
- Any other duties which may be specified from time-to-time.

Requirements

Essential:

- NFQ level 7 qualification in a project management, business administration, sustainability-related, or associated discipline; a level 6 qualification in a similar discipline with equivalent experience will also be considered. Other qualifications may be considered where experience in the relevant areas can be considered via Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning.
- Minimum 5 years knowledge and experience in a project management, assistant management, or equivalent role with a focus on operational activities. Equivalent experience in related teaching, research, or funding roles will also be considered.
- Demonstrated experience of engaging productively in a team with internal and external stakeholders, individually and collectively, in operational and project settings.
- Demonstrable and effective track record of technical, financial, or policy-related research, reporting, monitoring, and report-writing for internal and external audiences.

Desirable:

- Demonstrated adaptability, flexibility, resilience, and ability to work effectively under pressure to consistently meet targets.
- A strong commitment to continuous improvement of processes, workflows, and all activities.
- Experience of assisting with project and programme management with an associated track-record of excellence in timely execution and successful completion.
- Knowledge of public sector financial and procurement procedures.
- Demonstrated capability in the management and alignment of diverse stakeholders towards strategic goals.
- A record of implementation of IT systems, as a client or business/process owner.
- Demonstrable knowledge of current and future trends in Construction, Energy, Built Environment, Climate Action and/or Sustainability including public sector requirements of the Infrastructure Guidelines, EU Buildings, Energy, and Circular Economy Directives, and Office of Government Procurement construction-related mandates.
- Experience in assisting with the management of project budgets.
- Proven record as an effective communicator with developed interpersonal and influencing skills.
- Proven ability in providing direction, support, and mentoring for development of peers or junior staff.
- A demonstrable record of and commitment to relevant, current Continuing Professional Development.
- 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.