



FURTHER EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICE
Seirbhís Tacaíochta don Bhreiseoideachas

**Shared Programmes:
Setting up a
Consortium**

Shared Programmes: Setting up a Consortium

“FETAC will enable Providers to develop programmes for use across a range of registered Providers in order to facilitate the sharing of validated programmes, to maximise resources and avoid duplication of effort” (*FETAC, Validation of Programmes: Policy 2006, p9*).

In order to share a programme Providers must come together and form a consortium at the programme development stage. The following information may be of use when forming a consortium:

Why establish a consortium?

- Optimise resources
- Avoid duplication of effort
- Capture a broad range of experience and expertise
- Develop detailed content and related assessment for the programme
- Enrich the programme development experience

Who could be involved?

Providers with:

- shared vision
- similar Learner profile
- similar curriculum and/or vocational area
- similar service/provision type
- shared view of programme development

What is involved?

A group of Providers come together to form a consortium with the aim to develop a programme that can be shared either between the members of the consortium or with other named Providers or a particular Provider type such as all VECs or all Youthreach Providers.

The consortium work together to develop a programme in accordance with FETAC's *Programme Validation Guidelines for Providers*.

The programme developed by the consortium must be submitted to FETAC for approval.

Following on from this each Provider must have the programme validated before they can deliver it to their Learners.

What is required for shared programme development?

- Members of the consortium should be familiar with the process of programme development and the validation application procedure (see www.fess.ie for details of Programme Development seminars and see www.fetac.ie for Programme Validation Guidelines for Providers)
- Providers nominate individuals to work as consortium members with experience in teaching/training, assessment and curriculum development
- The consortium will agree the various roles and responsibilities including:
 - Consortium lead (responsible for submitting the programme to FETAC for approval)
 - Chair
 - Secretary
 - Other Roles
- The consortium should agree terms of reference for the consortium (see overleaf) including scope, timeframe and approach to development work

How is the shared programme validated?

- The consortium lead applies to FETAC for an application form for the validation process
- The consortium lead completes the application for validation and submits the programme to FETAC for approval. The application indicates the names of the consortium members or lists the named Providers by type who can use the shared programme.
- All Providers with permission to deliver the programme (agreed by the consortium) must submit additional programme delivery information. FETAC evaluates this information and validates the programme in the context of each individual Provider.

Suggested Terms of Reference for a Programme Development Consortium

In establishing the programme development consortium it is good practice to consider outlining some terms of reference for the group. The following may be useful:

Membership

- List the members (organisations and individuals)
- Decide on the number of representatives per organisation
- Decide on how other organisations/groups/individuals that may contribute to the development of the programme may be invited to join the consortium

Purpose

- Determine the purpose of the consortium
- In pursuing this purpose the consortium may wish to ensure certain practices are adhered to, such as:
 - Minimising duplication of resources
 - A coherent approach to the work
 - Implementation of best value for money practices

Scope

- Decide the scope of the work, i.e. how the process is going to be defined, developed and completed. This should allow for ensuring for the integration of the development process – so even if pieces are done by different people the entire programme is checked for coherence
- Determine the list of Providers who can access the programme once approved
 - just the members of the consortium
 - a longer list of Providers who the consortium agree can use the final product
 - a Provider type, e.g. a VEC or all Special National Schools

Meetings

- Decide where meetings will be held (the venue to be agreed by the group and reflective of the membership)
- Decide how often the consortium will meet
- Decide on the duration of the meeting/s

Chair

- Choose a chairperson with the agreement of the members prior to meeting.
- Decide whether to appoint a chairperson for the whole process or to have a rotating chairperson

Records

- Assign a secretary/note taker
- Decide on how notes will be circulated

Timescale

- Agree a timescale for the work
- Build in time for reviewing progress

Amendments to these terms and references can be made at any time with the agreement of the consortium



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