

## **AONTAS Submission to FETAC**

### **European Credit Transfer System for Vocational and Educational Training (ECVET)**

AONTAS is grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the discussion on the European Credit Transfer System for Vocational and Educational Training (ECVET) and welcomes any proposals, which might encourage the transfer, accumulation and recognition of credit for VET within Europe. However, AONTAS has outlined a number of suggestions for FETAC's further consideration on this matter. We hope that these suggestions will inform the drafting of a national response for submission to the Department of Education and Science.

1. Since only four out of the 32 countries participating in this process, including Ireland, have a National Qualifications Framework and other European countries have traditionally viewed VET as relating to apprenticeships only, the transfer of credits may prove unworkable unless a broad, transparent and shared understanding of VET is agreed upon. Is a plan currently in place to devise a set of shared principles on VET?
2. The transfer of units and awards would be made easier by the adoption of a shared framework. However for this to happen, existing differences among levels of qualifications must be addressed. For example FETAC levels 1 and 2 are currently equivalent to EQF level 1. Before any exchange between countries can take place ECVET must first address these discrepancies. Once a common framework has been established it should follow that a learner wishing to study abroad for a qualification could do so successfully in any country signed up to ECVET.
3. The current background paper is unclear regarding the systems, which will be put in place for recognising and measuring non-formal and informal learning outcomes for the purpose of transferring credits.

AONTAS feels strongly that this is a vital area for further research, as any opportunity for learners to experience other cultures and visit other countries would result in learning outcomes.

4. Regulation and monitoring should be undertaken by an independent body in order to ensure parity of esteem within the credit system. All member countries involved should agree upon comprehensive guidelines for the awarding and validation of credits to ensure credits are awarded in a fair and consistent manner across the programme.