

INFORMING THE FUTURE

CDETb

Review of CDETb's COVID 19 responses and their impact on QA,
Teaching, Learning and Assessment





FOREWORD BY CAROL HANNEY – CHIEF EXECUTIVE

As we come to the end of one of the strangest academic years of most of our working lives, and pause to reflect on all that we have achieved over the last few months, I would like to thank staff for the huge effort they have made, and are making to ensure that all of our learners could progress in their development and receive appropriate certification.

The period since early March has shown the very strong spirit of CDETb as everybody united as a collective in the interests of the learners we serve. Staff came together to share knowledge and expertise, within schools, colleges and centres and across the scheme. New and innovative ways were sought to reach both the enthusiastic and the reluctant learners - emails were sent; teaching was conducted online and repeated telephone calls were made. FET centre staff made every possible effort to ensure that learners received certification as teachers converted exams to alternative assessments and eased learners through the process.

Community educators through the adult education services have provided a lifeline to many of their learners, Youthreach staff have kept some of the most vulnerable of our students on a path to an improved life and prison educators have concentrated heavily on keeping their learners safe and have developed innovative ways of engaging their learners. A huge effort has been made by training centres and colleges to ensure the continued progress of apprentices. The youth services and the Psychological Services have also continued to support young people through this time of crisis.

I have had numerous meetings of principals and heads of centres over this period and the recurring comment from all of them was how staff had worked as a community in the interests of the learners. The speed with which staff transformed themselves into remote workers was phenomenal and the manner in which staff maintained that enthusiasm has been admirable. I know that it has been a very tough time, but staff continued to perform in a collegial and professional manner. There was extremely high level of collaboration between teachers, and also across the different parts of the ETB. The development of both staff and learners has been supported by the commitment and dedication of the IT staff and of the administration, finance and maintenance staff.

The next few months will also be crucial in preparing for the 2020/2021 year. Recruitment of staff and students is progressing very well. During this period the staff in SUSI have been working very hard setting up the scheme for 2020/2021 and have already assessed and awarded students who will be entering PLC courses and Third Level courses next September. This is the busiest time of the year for them and they will be working steadily throughout the summer to ensure that all students are paid on time.

I would like to thank the Directors and the Head of SUSI for all the long hours they have spent finding solutions to problems to ensure that the organisation continues to function delivering a high quality education service across Dublin City and an excellent and efficient grant awarding service across the country.

The ETB is committed to delivering high standard courses and over the summer we will continuously review our modes of delivery for next year. We will deliver face-to-face where safe and appropriate, but we may have to continue remote learning to some extent. In doing this we will aim to make the learner experience as positive as possible.

This summer we will continue to offer upskilling opportunities to staff in the area of Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL), which will continue to help teachers in devising and developing modes of online delivery. Staff have responded in very high numbers to this initiative, which demonstrates their level of professionalism and their deep commitment to delivering the very best education and training to our learners. CDETb has also shared its Blended Learning and TELMS experience with other ETBs to assist them in developing similar approaches to remote learning.

I believe that CDETb staff can afford to be very proud of how we have faced the recent challenges and how very well we have coped in a time of extreme uncertainty. The ETB will be stronger as a result of the efforts and commitment our staff and the greatest beneficiaries of this new strength will be the learners.

Feel Proud, Stay Safe and Keep Well.

Carol Hanney

**Chief Executive
CDETb**

CDETb Mission Statement

“To provide professional high quality education and training services for people in Dublin City that contributes both to the personal development of the individual as well as to the overall social, economic and cultural development of the city – think people, think service, think Dublin City”

CDETb

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ACRONYMS

AES	Adult Education Service
CDET B	City of Dublin Education and Training Board
CTC	Community Training Centre
CDU	Curriculum Development Unit
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DoJW	Department of Justice Workshops
EA	External Authentication
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland
ERTLA	Emergency Remote Teaching, Learning and Assessment
FESS	Further Education Support Service
FET	Further Education and Training
HSE	Health Service Executive
IV	Internal Verification
ITEC	International Therapy Examination Council
LTI	Local Training Initiative
LO	Learning Outcomes
NCGE	National Centre for Guidance in Education
PLSS	Programme Learner Support System
QA	Quality Assurance
QASPC	Quality Assurance Strategic Planning Council
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
RAP	Results Approval Panel
STP	Specialist Training Providers
TEL	Technology Enhanced Learning
TELM	Technology Enhanced Learning Mentor
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
VLP	Virtual Learning Platform
WE/WP	Work Experience /Work Placement

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Action Research: is a disciplined process of inquiry conducted by, and for, those taking the action. The primary reason for engaging in action research is to assist the “actor” in improving and/or refining his or her actions

Blended learning: Where technology is fused with the traditional form of face-to-face learning to enhance or complement the learning experience. This fusion can take place in the classroom setting or can combine face-to-face teaching with remote or online teaching/resources to deliver the curriculum

Co-production: people who use a service or process being consulted, included and working together from the start to the end of any project that affects them

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is the term used to describe the learning and training activities which professionals engage in to develop and enhance their teaching abilities

COVID 19: is a disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus. 'CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for virus, and 'D' for disease

Emergency Remote Teaching Learning and Assessment: refers to the methods adopted in response to the crisis where the curriculum was moved rapidly to an online setting

Freethink: a technique to support a group to solve specific problems, amassing information, stimulating creative thinking, developing new ideas, etc.,

Flipped classroom: process where the learner views the class content (e.g.a video or presentation) at home or in work first then joins the classroom, either virtually or face to face, to analyse and discuss the content

Iterative process: A process for arriving at a decision or a desired result by repeating rounds of analysis or a cycle of operations

Quality assurance (QA) is a term generally used to describe the processes that seek to ensure that the learning environment (including teaching and research) reaches an acceptable threshold of quality. QA is also used to describe the enhancement of education and training provision and the standards attained by learners

Remote or distance learning: when learners don't attend centres directly, instead receiving instruction to study and learn at home, with the aid of printed or online resources and supported by telephone or online teaching

Semesterisation: is the division of the academic year into two equal periods, called semesters. A certain number of modules are taken in each semester and are examined at the end of the semester.

Universal Design for Learning: is an educational framework that guides learning goals, materials, methods and assessments including the policies that support these, with the diversity of learners in mind

Virtual Learning Platform: an integrated set of interactive online services that provide trainers, learners, and others involved in education with information, tools and resources to support and enhance education delivery and management.

Webinar: a class where the learners view the same content at the same time. The teacher facilitates the class and learners can communicate through chat or facilitated discussion



[Click](#) to hear Blake Hodkinson, Director of FET give a brief overview of the report

INTRODUCTION

In late May and early June CDETb centres and services in Further Education and Training paused, and

- **reviewed its responses** to support its learners to stay engaged and continue their learning, and to develop its staff and infrastructure to teach, assess and quality assure that learning during the COVID 19 emergency phase
- **assessed the impact** of COVID 19 on teaching, learning and assessment in recent months and into the future
- began to **identify what would be needed** to develop and sustain high quality education and training that will contribute to social and economic life of Dublin city.

This is a summary of that process and includes feedback and case studies from centres, staff and learners outlining what they did, what worked, and what did not, and what turned out to be so effective that it should be retained and developed into the future.

SECTION 1

Context, Background and Emerging Themes



CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

[Presentation of Section 1](#)

What will the ‘new normal’ be for teaching, learning and assessment across FET provision in CDETb? That is the key question that the organisation is collectively trying to answer. On March 12th 2020 when the government announced a 2-week closure of centres of education across Ireland to delay the spread of COVID 19, very few could predict the extent of the closures or the impact that this would have on teaching, learning and assessment. While the centres closed, the work with learners continued and on May 1st 2020 CDETb published its [contingency plan](#) to support learners to complete their courses and any outstanding assessments as part of a quality assured process. In late May and early June, CDETb paused to reflect on the actions taken at both centre and organisational level, the processes and principles underpinning those actions, and to consider the learning from its response for the future.

Diversity of provision

CDETb provides educational opportunities through 60+ centres across five service spheres, operating under four [QQI](#) agreements. The five spheres are -

- 1 Colleges of Further Education – 17centres
- 2 Youthreach- in various locations across the city
- 3 Adult Education Services – 5 regional areas
- 4 Education to Prisons - 7 centres
- 5 Training centres – 2 centres managing second providers –
 - Community Training Centres (CTC)
 - Local Training Initiatives (LTI)
 - Specialist Training Programmes (STP)
 - Department of Justice Workshops (DoJW)

At the time of the lockdown there were **21,866 learners registered on 24 different programmes** with specific objectives, with an additional 6,000 (approx.) part time learners on self-financing personal improvement and hobby courses. The provision and the learners under the CDETb FET umbrella is diverse, for example at the time of writing the youngest FET learner was 16 years of age on a Youthreach programme while the oldest learner was 91 years of age and enrolled on a community education programme through the Adult Education Service (AES).

COVID 19 has affected and will continue to affect teaching, learning and assessment slightly differently in each of the service spheres. [Section 2](#) provides an overview of what worked, the enabling forces, the challenges encountered and the lessons for teaching, learning and assessment for each of the spheres.

QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) is an independent State agency responsible for promoting quality and accountability in education and training services in Ireland, providing a framework for the quality assurance of FET awards in Ireland. QQI issued guidelines to support FET providers to respond to COVID 19, with these guidelines informing and underpinning the contingency strategy being implemented by CDETB. [QQI COVID-19 guidance](#)

QQI is currently undertaking a review of the impact of COVID 19 on teaching, learning and assessment this review will be submitted to QQI along with the Contingency plan, QA guidance document for centres and service spheres and the risk mitigation strategy to contribute to this broader review process.

PURPOSE OF REVIEW

What is the purpose of the CDETb review?

The purpose of the CDETb review is to support and contribute to evidence-informed decisions about teaching, learning and assessment in the post-emergency phase of the COVID 19 pandemic by reviewing and capturing CDETb's 'immediate reflections' of its response to COVID 19 and identifying lessons learned across the service spheres.

It will reflect on the actions outlined in the CDETb contingency plan and be used alongside the risk mitigation discussion document, national guidance and international research to help inform practice in CDETb and its FET centres from autumn 2020 onwards.

Objectives of the review

- To further **embed a culture of reflective practice and continuous improvement in CDETb** and its FET centres and service spheres
- To facilitate FET centres and service spheres to **reflect on their response and identify lessons for future delivery**
- To identify **lessons to inform the strategic direction** of CDETb and further education in Ireland
- To gather and share **examples of good practice** in QA, teaching, learning and assessment
- To review the **effectiveness of the QA changes implemented**
- To **identify areas for improvement** and the **challenges** associated with those, including **resource implications**
- To **contribute to the QQI paper** 'Evaluation of the Impact of the Covid-19 Modifications to Teaching, Learning and Assessment'

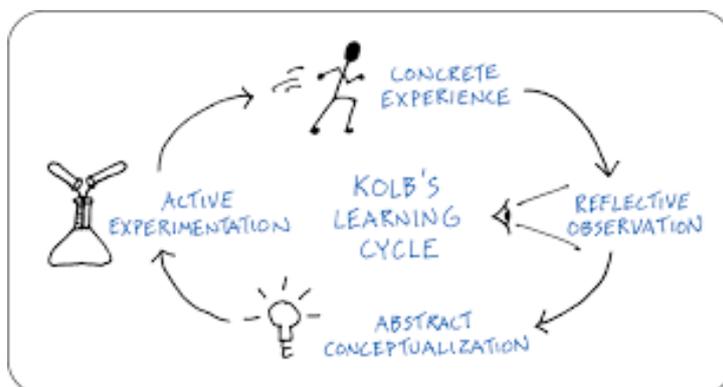
When did the review take place?

It was carried out in May / June 2020 with a view to supporting decisions and actions needed to safely reopen centres, insure the integrity of awards and to prepare for any future local or national lockdown and to .

What approach was used to gather and analyse the information?

In recognition that COVID 19 will have long lasting implications the approach to the review is underpinned by **action research methodologies**. It applies Kolb's learning cycle on a micro level and macro level by encouraging '**reflective observation**' among learners, tutors, centres and across service spheres, on the **concrete experience** of COVID 19 with each centre and service sphere reflecting on their actions to

identify **what went well, what could be improved, and what can be built on after reopening**. As the 2019 / 2020 academic year ends, this document captures the collective reflections of the CDETb and its centres. This report contributes to the '**Abstract Conceptualisation**' phase within the process and uses case studies and short videos to demonstrate and share what worked well and what could be enhanced into the future.



The report was prepared, researched and edited by the FET Development Unit using the following methodologies

- Reviewing reflection reports submitted by centres and service spheres (template issued by review team)
- Submission of [case studies](#) followed up by phone or virtual interviews to identify key lessons learned
- Questionnaires to principals and heads of centre about QA supports provided
- Results Approval Panel (RAP) reports
- Learner feedback reports
- Contributions and submissions to the
- learner and course data on PLSS
- Focus groups with staff across the service spheres

The case study templates, review guidance and focus group template is contained in [Appendix 1](#)

COVID 19 TIMELINE

12 TH March	Minister Mitchell O'Connor announces 2-week closure of schools, pre-schools and further and higher education settings
12 th March	Centres and service spheres begin preparation and implementation of COVID 19 contingency plans, with regular meetings of CDETb's Quality Assurance and Strategic Planning Council (QASPC) to approve plans and approaches
15 th March	QASPC begins reviewing and where appropriate recommending the acceptance of COVID 19 contingency plans from centres and services spheres to the senior management team in CDETb
24 th March	Minister Mitchell O'Connor announces that all schools, pre-schools and further and higher education settings will remain closed to students until 19 April 2020
26 th March	Learners in Colleges of Further Education are sent copies of Alternative Assessments or outline of the assessment processes to be used in order to facilitate completion of programmes in time for CAO round 'O' offers
08 th April	Minister Mitchell O'Connor thanks the tertiary education sector for implementing alternative assessment arrangements
27 th April	Minister Mitchell O'Connor welcomes continuation of SUSI funding for students as well as increased access to laptops, desktops and other supports for disadvantaged learners
1 st May	CDETb publishes its contingency plan and a co-produced guidance document for centres on assuring the quality and integrity of certification achieved by learners during the COVID 19 emergency
	Government produces its 'roadmap to reopening' confirming that FET centres will remain closed until Autumn 2020
2 nd May	CDETb publishes its risk mitigation discussion document, developed from scenario planning submissions from across the FET service spheres
18 th May	Under roadmap - Teachers permitted to access school buildings to facilitate remote teaching and learning
18 th May	Appeals process takes place for learners
12 th June	QQI certification date

Key Themes, Challenges and Guiding Principles

DIVERSITY OF LEARNER AND PROVISION

The diversity of provision and learner groups is one of the strengths of CDETb, it reflects the further, second chance and vocational education and training needs of the city's population. During the COVID 19 crisis, being able to share learning and pool ideas and resources to respond to learners needs proved invaluable. Each service sphere developed expertise to mitigate the negative impacts of the lockdown that will be invaluable to share across the scheme. One of the key challenges for the next phase is to ensure that the cooperation, innovation and shared vision is further developed within and across the organisation.

However, that same diversity of provision also posed challenges during the lockdown, especially in support areas that span the FET provision areas, namely quality assurance, CPD, IT support and access to scarce resources like laptops and mobile phones. In line with CDETb's agreed contingency plan and national guidelines, learners seeking to avail of CAO offers were prioritised for those scarce resources and the staff in all service spheres found creative solutions to address the challenges their learners were facing. From mid-May as the learners in the colleges of further education completed their awards, the organisation's central supports for FET teaching, learning and assessment prioritised the learners in the other service spheres.

MOVING FROM EMERGENCY REMOTE TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT (ERTLA) TO BLENDED LEARNING

The move to emergency remote teaching and learning was swift with very little preparation time for learners or staff. CDETb had developed and implemented a blended learning policy and some of its of further education colleges were already in the preparatory stages of planning for a shift to blended delivery mode for some of its programmes at the time of the closures. However, the scale of remote delivery was unprecedented and required every member of teaching/Instruction staff to develop skills and competencies in this area. Access to technology (hardware and software) and digital literacy skills were the primary obstacles to be overcome for both staff and learners. CDETb centrally acquired laptops and mobile phones to complement the supplies in some centres and services spheres and provided access to Microsoft 365 and Moodle for some staff and learners that had not previously used these. The availability of unlimited data on mobile phone packages also greatly supported the capacity of CDETb and its learners to engage in ERTLA.

Once staff and learners began to get access to technology the focus was then on how to use it. In the first weeks of the lockdown TEL mentors and other staff with an interest and ability in Technology Enhanced

Learning (TEL) proved invaluable. By early April the CDU through the Professional Development coordinator had begun directly providing workshops and webinars in the use of virtual learning platforms (VLP) such as Zoom, MS teams and Moodle to FET staff.

The review has highlighted that across all service spheres from Prison Education to FE Colleges, teachers and learners are seeing some benefits in the online approach. Notwithstanding the challenges and barriers posed by blended and remote learning among specific learner cohorts, each service sphere has expressed a desire to integrate some aspect of technology enhanced learning where appropriate, into their contingency plans for reopening. But more importantly, many are expressing the desire to integrated it into their longer-term course offerings.

While this is an extremely positive sign and reflects well on the experience of ERTLA, this has significant implications for PD, quality assurance, TEL resources and related policies and procedures across the scheme. A TEL coordinator will be appointed by CDETb this summer who will work alongside the PD coordinator. CDETb's [CPD response](#) reflects these demands with courses this summer moving on from the technical aspects of using VLP, to a focus on online pedagogies and universal design principles. The QA guidelines and contingency plan handbooks are constantly updated and the CDETb [Quality Assurance and Strategic Planning Council](#) will continue to meet over the summer to prepare for the changes in delivery mode.

GAINING THE COMPETENCIES NEEDED TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP

While many of the courses offered through CDETb enable learners to progress to Third Level, a high proportion of learners engage in full or part-time programmes to enhance their employability skills. As the world of work changes so must how CDETb prepares learners for that world. This has resulted in implications in three areas for CDETb over the review period:

1. **Alternative assessments** and Identifying 'core', 'regulatory' and 'essential' learning outcomes in line with QQI guidelines. To date the development of alternative assessments within CDETb has been for learners towards the end of their courses including those on PLC courses, 2016 apprentices and traineeships, with the development of alternative assessments primarily focused on adapting exams and practicals that had already been developed. As a result, CDETb only adapted a small number of assessments to remove incidental learning outcomes. If the need to develop alternative assessments continues further exploration and guidance will be needed on , **identifying core, regulator and essential outcomes..**

2. **Developing class content to prepare learners for a changed third level life and changed industry –** COVID 19 has changed, and will continue to impact on how industry is operating in areas like childcare, hairdressing, construction and even office-based roles as more and more staff will be expected to work from home into the future. Course content has to change and staff are reviewing industry guidelines in order to be prepared. However, to do this CDETb will need to review its validated programmes and where appropriate, make amendments. In some cases, staff will need to upskill in new industry techniques.

3. **Developing soft skills, life skills and employability skills remotely -** getting learners ready for their next step whether that is progressing to further or higher education or securing employment involves more than the technical or cognitive skills embedded within the learning outcomes. These competencies are developed by ‘how’ the course is delivered, the expectations set, the interactions between staff and learners, and between the learners themselves. This was particularly difficult to do remotely especially for learners near the beginning of their courses or learners in need of additional support including learners in specialist programmes. Capturing and sharing practices that worked for different learner groups would be a useful contribution.

IMPACT OF THE LOCKDOWN ON ‘TEACHERS’ AND ‘LEARNERS’

Due to the time restraints, this report concentrated on the impact of the COVID 19 lockdown on ‘teaching’ and ‘learning’ without explicitly gathering feedback on the impact on of COVID 19 restrictions on those who were ‘teaching’ and ‘learning’. However, the impact on both of those groupings came up repeatedly in focus groups, case studies and project reviews including [staff](#) and [learners](#) choosing to submit personal reflections on the process. Some of that impact is captured alongside the other [themes emerging](#) in [Table 1](#).

The lockdown has been challenging for both learners and teachers. However it appears to have disproportionately affected more disadvantaged learners and those in need of additional support to achieve their learning goals. Most learners in full time PLC provision were able to complete their awards in time to progress, with additional supports provided to more disadvantaged learners. However, some learners in second chance and adult basic and community education found remote teaching and learning harder.

The rolling entry dates in this provision meant that some learners had just begun courses and had not yet ‘gelled’ with the staff or other learners. Education provision in these sphere have objectives that extend

beyond curriculum delivery and learners often need specialist supports to achieve their educational goals. Lock down made this extremely difficult with some centres reporting that only about one third of learners were continuing with their studies with a higher proportion still engaged but focusing on wellbeing and wider programme objectives.

Staff in second chance education provision spoke of trying to **balance the welfare of their learners with the achievement of learning outcomes and awards** with some centres reporting that despite putting in more effort and working harder than ever to engage learners they were still behind where they would hope they would be. The importance of creating specific national, regional and local approaches for disadvantaged learners in future lock downs or COVID 19 response was highlighted as we move to the next phase. CDETb were an active member of the COVID 19 mitigating educational disadvantage for students group and conveyed this message to the Department of Education.

CO-PRODUCTION PROCESS – EMBEDDING A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT MODEL INTO PRACTICE

CDETb has always been committed to involving stakeholders in decisions that affect them; this is a very important, but time-consuming process. However, one of the unexpected benefits of the COVID 19 experience is the ability to bring staff from across the service spheres together to free think, problem solve, reflect and plan using online platforms. The use of MS teams and Zoom for team meetings, focus groups, webinars and forums has proven to be a very valuable addition to the quality assurance of teaching, learning and assessment.

At the time of the lockdown each CDETb centre /service sphere prepared contingency plans for submission and approval through the CDETb governance structures and operated, or updated their critical incident plans in preparation for what the COVID 19 emergency may mean for the staff and learners. The contingency plans were circulated across the centres, service spheres both for comment, and to share expertise, ideas and approaches before being approved through the CDETb governance channels. This process contributed to the co-production of the CDETb [COVID 19 contingency plan](#) and related guidelines published on May 1st 2020. These outlined how CDETb would assure the quality and integrity of certification achieved by learners during the COVID 19 emergency. In the survey of principals and heads of centre carried out in June 2020, 100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that having an overarching CDETb COVID 19 QA handbook was a useful support during the COVID 19 emergency.

The same co-production and sharing of ideas process was followed to develop a '*risk mitigation discussion document*' published on May 7th. This used a Freethink methodology where centres and service spheres discussed and added to documents outlining 5 potential scenarios and contributed solutions at a centre

/service sphere level, a CDETb wide and a national approach to addressing COVID 19-based scenarios. In the same survey, respondents found the weekly QA forum, scenario planning exercise and discussion document useful in planning for re-opening, with one respondent capturing the mood of the process and weekly QA forum meetings

'a huge thank you to each of you for helping make this process easier and not feeling like we were trying to figure it out for ourselves. A great feeling of being part of a team'.

FE College Principal North City

Building on the experience of the first two processes, the same approach was utilised as part of this CDETb wide reflection process beginning with a presentation to Principals and Heads of Centres, leading to reviews being led locally and findings submitted along with case studies to the FET Development unit who compiled the report. The submissions were followed up with online or phone interviews with staff to complete the case studies. Themed and sphere-specific focus groups were also used to gain a deeper understanding of the impact. The findings of this review process combined with national guidance and international research will help to shape teaching, learning and assessment across CDETb in the next phase.

The co-production of documents and QA processes reduced duplication, increased consistency and helped to maintain the integrity of awards offered through the CDETb during the COVID 19 emergency. This approach to the development of policies, procedures and processes builds on existing practices and should be continued after the emergency, starting with the production of a CDETb-wide QA handbook that incorporates elements of the COVID 19 contingency document.

KEY THEMES ACROSS ALL PROVISION

Despite the diversity of both learner and provision, a number of key themes emerged across every educational sphere. Each of these themes had challenges that were addressed, at least in part, by the hard work, creativity, innovation and dedication of staff and learners. However, the issues emerging will require further development, resourcing and national guidance over the coming months and years as we move towards the 'new normal'. These include:

1. Access to technology and specialist equipment for staff and learners
2. Ability to use available technology (staff and learners) including protocols for what to use when, best practice etc.
3. Skills and competence of staff in teaching, assessment and quality assuring remotely

4. Providing 'safe' learning environments remotely or supporting learners to stay engaged and complete programmes
5. Staff: commitment to learners, work/ life Balance; family commitments, child care issues, home schooling, managing the sudden change, significant extra effort needed to deliver ERTLA
6. Developing 'soft skills' – key life and employability skills embedded within programme objectives which are key to getting learners 'job ready' the educational experience and the learners development journey
7. Planning for the next phase – managing uncertainty, supporting learners to progress as the way we teach, learn and work changes
8. Responding to emerging needs

TABLE 1 THEMES EMERGING

EMERGING THEMES

Theme and key considerations	Impact on Learning	Impact on teaching	Emergency mitigation	Potential long term mitigation measures identified
<p>Access to Technology hardware, software and equipment</p> <p>Home access to a work mobile phone, reliable internet access, laptops etc. will be essential for teaching and learning in a blended or emergency remote teaching and learning future.</p> <p>In the case of FE colleges moving more to blended learning, having access to technology and IT literacy may become a prerequisite that could further disadvantage some learners. Local and national strategies to address this need to be developed. This may include higher focus on blended learning and use of technology in second level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With no or limited access to technology, some learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • could not continue their learning over the lockdown phase (esp. true in adult and community education) • can only engage sporadically or send in papers every now and again (Youthreach, CTC, more disadvantaged learners) • Some learners needed specialist equipment and without it could not produce the type of standard of assignment to meet essential learning outcomes (apprentices, arts and TV production) • Some learners needed access to IT packages to complete assessments (accounting, word processing packages etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many staff relied completely on access to phones, computers, printers, software available to them in the workplace for lesson planning so struggled to produce work suitable for emergency remote teaching • Some staff had to use their private phones to stay in contact with learners • Due to the hands-on, face to face aspect of courses, some centres and staff hadn't used Moodle and staff or learners were not set up to access this • In the absence of national or CDETb policy on what platforms/packages could be used staff were confused about what could or could not be used, resulting in mutable platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDETb technology was loaned to staff and learners where available (limited availability) • Mobile phones were purchased for staff to stay in contact with learners / continue classes / demonstrations etc • Assessments were postponed until after lockdown to better facilitate some learners • Paper-based resource packs sent to learners • Advocated with third level institutions on behalf of learners • Reserved places on PLC courses for learners progressing from level 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a tax incentivised 'technology to work' scheme • Technology grant for FE sector to purchase and upgrade equipment • Include a technology allowance as part of the SUSI grant • Structured technology lending service for each centre/service sphere • Scheduling of practical or technology reliant modules or assessments early in the reopening phase where appropriate and prepare plans for how some of the impact of these could be mitigated in cases of local or regional lockdowns • Address issues arising as part of TEL strategy

Theme and key considerations	Impact on Learning	Impact on teaching	Emergency mitigation	Potential long term mitigation measures identified
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessed the appropriate licences for staff and learners to complete studies • Registered staff on the Moodle platform • Provided CPD training in Zoom and MS Teams to encourage the use of these platforms across the spheres during lockdown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure MS 365 for all staff and learners and provide training in its use for teaching and learning • Secure temporary licences for learners in accounting and other specialist packages where needed • Expand the use of Moodle platform
<p>Knowledge, skills and competency in using technology for teaching, learning and assessment</p> <p>Knowledge skills and competencies in using TEL will be essential for teaching and learning in a blended or emergency remote teaching and learning future.</p> <p>If Blended Learning and Technology Enhanced Learning is the future of FET delivery it could put additional expectations on</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some Learners had to develop digital literacy skills in order to engage in learning or complete online assessments and demonstrations • Some learners joined classes for social aspect and didn't want to engage in remote learning or learn new technologies • limited access to technology some learners could not continue their learning over the lockdown phase (esp. true in adult education services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The move to emergency remote teaching meant a lot of staff had to learn to use new technology, VLP, software packages etc. for the first time • Some staff concerned about the use of Zoom, teams etc. and didn't engage with learners using those platforms 'I didn't sign up for this' • Staff, esp. those working with under 18s concerned with the child safety aspects of using certain packages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPD plan developed and training plan implemented • Peer to peer support in developing IT skills (TEL mentors and experienced others) • IT skills training and support provided for some learners where needed • Produced learning packs for learners who could not engage on line followed by phone calls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategy for moving from ERTLA to Blended Learning (national and CDETb) • Develop a code of behaviour and practice for teaching and learning from home • Provide IT training and use of VLP as part of student inductions processes • Provide CPD opportunities in both the use of software packages / VLN and developing competencies in teaching and assessing remotely to support

Theme and key considerations	Impact on Learning	Impact on teaching	Emergency mitigation	Potential long term mitigation measures identified
<p>learners taking up FET places, as they will need a level of digital literacy and ability to self-motivate and work remotely in order to commence their studies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning from home changed the boundaries and norms of acceptable behaviours, attire of learners, recording and misuse of lessons etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No explicit code of behaviour exists for teaching from home this caused anxiety for some staff 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organisational move to blended learning Address issues arising as part of TEL strategy Review child safeguarding statement to include teaching and learning remotely Provide training /clarifications on GDPR and data management requirements for staff and learners Increased focus in teacher training programmes on methodologies for engaging learners using remote teaching and learning techniques
<p>Emergency remote teaching, learning and assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some learners developed additional IT skills and enhanced their resilience Some learners missed out on opportunities to use specialist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moving to ERTLA was stressful and time consuming Supporting learners remotely, developing content to be accessed remotely and preparing alternative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPD Technology lending library VLP QA guidance Commitment of staff Virtual meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline CDETb and national policies on use of VLP and resource materials during ERTLA in future lockdowns

Theme and key considerations	Impact on Learning	Impact on teaching	Emergency mitigation	Potential long term mitigation measures identified
<p>Significant effort will be needed to reengage more marginalised learners</p> <p>Staff reported that when working with learners with complex needs remote teaching and learning requires greater investment of time to achieve equivalent results</p> <p>Consideration to developing an alternative plan for disadvantaged learners and learners in need of additional support in future COVID 19 responses</p>	<p>equipment to enhance portfolios or learn new techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some learners, especially the more marginalised learners found it difficult to engage or to benefit from remote TLA learners on allowances have remained somewhat engaged (but this has been difficult to achieve) centres working with more disadvantaged learners report that more than half of learners have disengaged from learning Apprenticeships and other practical programmes postponed until restrictions lifted 	<p>assessments was more stressful and time-consuming than the planned delivery would have been</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In many cases the alternative assessments required more input and feedback from staff than exams do The capacity of staff to use VLP and technology to enhance learning has increased All service spheres identified a desire to maintain some element of TEL in future provision ERTLA is not the same as blended learning and staff and centres need support and investment to continue to build on lessons learned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross centre cooperation Co-development of plans and solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update safeguarding statement to reflect changes in practices Provide templates and training in converting face to face programmes to blended learning models Develop local and regional contingency plans for addressing future local, regional or national lockdowns with specific consideration for disadvantaged learners
<p>Providing a safe learning environment/impact of remote teaching and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners in need of additional support struggled without the extra support provided by face to face provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners with additional needs required significant additional support and input from teachers to achieve the same or poorer results 	<p>To provide a safe learning environment staff -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established and maintained contact with learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look at how vulnerable learners can be supported or exempted from lockdown during future lockdown periods

Theme and key considerations	Impact on Learning	Impact on teaching	Emergency mitigation	Potential long term mitigation measures identified
<p>learning / keeping learners engaged</p> <p>Youthreach, CTC, prisons, training centres, adult and community education provide physically , psychologically and emotionally safe spaces for learners to develop. With the educational attainment supported alongside broader developmental supports.</p> <p>During COVID 19 the buildings that aid the physical safety aspect were closed, and the routines and relationships that aid psychology and emotional safety altered. This affected the ability to learn for many participants and would need to be a consideration in future lockdown periods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some learners living in unsafe or unsuitable accommodations (domestic violence, addiction, homelessness etc.) Weather effected attendance esp of more vulnerable learners – sunny days – difficult to get engagement, cold days issues with having warm room to work in) Difficult to create routine, structures or relationships needed for learners remotely In some services/centres working with the most vulnerable over half of learners have disengaged (June 2020) Stronger relationships developed between staff and learners in some centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some staff reporting feeling overwhelmed or upset and not being able to support learners to achieve their goals as well as usual Maintaining boundaries harder with learners contacting staff outside of working hours/week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> established predictable routines – called when said they would, For younger learners established relationship with the family Created routine and made expectations of learners clear Carried out risk assessments and implemented support plans Engaged with staff from other agencies to provide wrap round service (CAMHS, addiction councillors, probation, social workers) Assigned key worker to more vulnerable learners (Youthreach and CTC) 	
<p>Wellbeing of staff and learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balancing learning with Childcare/home schooling /working from home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working from home disturbed work life balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team meetings using MS teams / zoom Newsletters and update emails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on wellbeing of learners as they return to centres

Theme and key considerations	Impact on Learning	Impact on teaching	Emergency mitigation	Potential long term mitigation measures identified
<p>childcare issues, supporting changes asked of staff, or returning to buildings</p> <p>The wellbeing of learners and staff will be an important consideration for the reopening of centres in the Autumn.</p> <p>Supporting mental health and wellbeing will need to balance with the desire to complete the curriculum early in case of further lockdowns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some social aspect of learning lost for learners • Without the structure of the programme and the support of staff and other learners, some learners especially those on second chance or community education programmes re-engaged in unhelpful practices that limited their ability to learn. • At times blurred boundaries between learner and teacher as teacher taught from home. • Engaging with learners family esp if they had young children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blurred boundaries – hard to switch off. • New skills developed • Increased co-operation between staff – stronger sense of comradery • Increased co-operation across CDETb service spheres • Zoom/ MS Tteams made meeting up and working together easier • Parental responsibilities – home schooling and childcare issues arising due to lockdown • Social isolation – staff living alone • Developing new ways of working/unclear expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision sessions between heads of centre/coordinators and teachers/tutors/instructors to reassess expectations and prioritise • Including social aspects to classes • Virtual classes / check in phone calls • Flipped classroom model applied in some centres / classes • Working in virtual teams/faculty to develop solutions, new content etc. • Co-production of policies and documents • Provision of wellbeing courses for staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for social engagement for staff and learners • Counselling • Wellbeing programmes

Theme and key considerations	Impact on Learning	Impact on teaching	Emergency mitigation	Potential long term mitigation measures identified
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using personal equipment, phones etc. to engage with learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phone numbers hidden while using own mobile to contact learners Securing mobile phones and other technology for use by staff to carry out their roles 	
<p>Developing soft and essential skills / being 'work ready'</p> <p>adapting teaching, learning and assessment to respond to changes in work practices and new industry norms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ERTLA not ideal for developing essential life skills or preparing learners to be work ready – focus remained on teaching the curriculum, completing assessments and keeping learners engaged Some centres prioritised engagement and focus on life skills to support learner engagement until returning to centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to design programmes to do this remotely while also focusing on the delivery of the curriculum. Some good examples emerged for example – flipped classroom and MasterChef competition, joint assessments Focus moved to completing award Focus moved to keeping learners engaged and developing essential skills until lockdown ended and learners could return to classroom 		
<p>Planning for the next phase</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncertainty underpins reopening for each of the FET services spheres with more clarity needed. They are also reopening to a new normal where the medium and long term impact of COVID 19 on the delivery of education, the economy, society and the world of work is unclear. Key challenges are that centres are currently trying to address are: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reaching hygiene standards required (no cleaning staff employed in many of the centres) Recruiting learners 			

Theme and key considerations	Impact on Learning	Impact on teaching	Emergency mitigation	Potential long term mitigation measures identified
<p>All centres and service spheres are currently planning for reopening their buildings.</p> <p>FE college learners have completed their courses/year and will return in Autumn in line with national guidelines. .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-engaging more marginalised learners • Accessing technology in case of future lockdowns or need to continue ERTLA • Developing new techniques for recruiting and engaging more marginalised learners in case of future lockdowns • Upskilling staff in blended learning – how to use VLP and how to teach and assess • Upskilling staff and learners in use of technology • Changing in FET and 3rd level practices – preparing learners to progress and be ready for the next step up • Changing work practices and in new normal – preparing learners to be able avail of employment opportunities 			
<p>Emerging needs</p>	<p>Responding to emerging needs has been a key feature of the COVID emergency in CDETb from accessing technology, upskilling staff, finding creative solutions to overcoming barriers to learner progression and completing QA processes remotely. In addition to these tasks which were primarily about ‘keeping the show on the road’ centres have also worked to address new issues arising for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways prisoner reintegration programme expanding their services to support learners to ‘home school’, • Workplace education unit developing courses for the staff of Debenhams who were made redundant at the beginning of lock down or • the Employer Engagement Unit’s conversion of the QQI Level 5 5N3734 <i>Infection Prevention & Control module</i> to an Online/Blended delivery course to support the reopening of crèches and other industries. 			

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In a scenario planning exercise carried out in early May 2020 by CDET B to help inform contingency and risk mitigation strategies across the scheme, 19 submissions covering all 5 service spheres were received outlining ideas and approaches that could be applied from autumn 2020 onwards. While these were developed to deal with unknown and unknowable futures, a number of key principles underpinned many of the ideas put forward. The same key principles also emerged through the review process and will be considered as part of the next development phase.

- **Ensure the safety of learners, staff and visitors by complying with public health advice**
 - Adhere to [HSE guidelines](#) and government instructions in relation to reopening centres
 - Develop and implement hygiene and social distancing plans in every centre include for example
 - COVID-19 signage on floors, walls for wayfinding e.g for one-way traffic signage on entering and exiting buildings, along corridors. Reminders of 2 metre distance.
 - Establish cleaning stations throughout the building
 - Provide training and protocols for staff responsible for cleaning and hygiene at centre level
 - Provide wellbeing opportunities for staff and learners

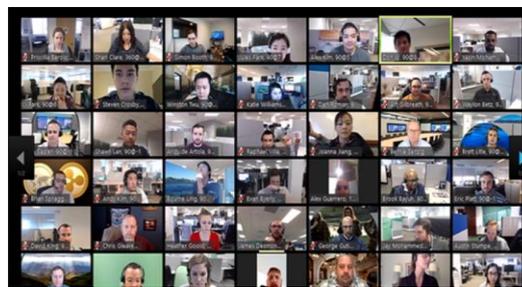
- **Maximise learning opportunities for staff and learners in preparation for changes to teaching, learning and assessment arising from COVID 19**
 - Provide opportunities for staff to reflect on changes to teaching, learning and assessment and the impact of COVID 19 on the world of work and its implications for further and vocational education and training
 - Provide learning opportunities for up-skillers, career changers and newly unemployed
 - Provide CPD opportunities of staff to upskill in preparation for the new demands arising from COVID 19, including blended learning, developing alternative assessments and changes to work practices across industry
 - Semesterisation of some programmes in FE Colleges to support learners to take modules part time or to join courses at various periods throughout the year
 - Develop and quality assure plans for remote emergency teaching and learning across the service spheres
 - Update guidelines and codes of behaviour to include remote and online teaching, learning and assessment

- Develop blended learning programmes, where appropriate
- Develop and implement CPD and TEL strategies across the scheme
- Review 2020/2021 course offers at centres and restructure offer to best respond to emerging needs
 - Add a third cycle of FET FORM applications to respond to COVID-19 impacted learners needing upskilling along with new emerging upskilling needs for industry and blended learning [COVID-19 FET FORM Application on website](#)
- **Contribute to national developments to support teaching, learning and assessment**
 - Contribute to national discussion on changes to TLA to develop national best practice and respond to new industry requirements
 - Contribute to the updating of QQI awards to reflect industry changes
 - Share the CDETb blended policy with all ETBs (and ETBI) to help them on their new digital journeys
- **Establish emergency plans in each centre/service sphere for responding to additional infection waves and potential local, regional or national lockdown**
 - Frontload core, essential and regulatory learning outcomes where appropriate in balance with wellbeing needs of staff and learners
 - Prepare online content to be used
 - Induction training for staff and learners that includes tutorials on emergency remote teaching and learning technologies
 - Continue to operate in line with CDETb's COVID 19 QA guidelines
- **Recognise the disruption brought about by COVID 19 and implement strategies to support the academic, social and emotional impact of the virus on our staff and current/new learners**
 - Provide CPD opportunities in wellbeing
 - Provide grief counselling for staff and learners where needed
 - Develop response plans in each centre for responding to deaths among staff, learners or their families
 - Develop response plans for staff or learners in quarantine

- **Develop central resource banks, upgrade IT and corporate services and to prepare for emerging changes**
 - Source equipment for IT loan service for staff and learners
 - Develop, distribute and share resource materials, sample assessments and teaching tools to support blended learning across the scheme
 - Develop online payment system for fees, deposits etc.
 - Secure MS 365 for staff and learners, including learner email addresses and assistive technology
 - Expand the use of Moodle across the service spheres
 - Reduce the dependency on paper based systems (online signatures, online submission of assignments, virtual teachers IV box)
 - Co-produce guidelines and policies to support required changes

- **Maintain the integrity of all awards**
 - COVID 19 QA guidance document and procedures produced and implemented
 - Embed action research processes to support the continuous improvement process across the scheme
 - QA contingency plans developed for every service sphere and evolving in line with national guidance and best practice
 - Quality assured measures in place for our teaching, learning & assessment processes
 - Changes to programmes, including increasing online delivery, processed through QA structures to ensure appropriate supports, resources and governance structures are in place
 - Publish reports and changes in a timely manner

- **Ensure learners with fewer opportunities are not further disadvantaged by COVID 19**
 - Operate a technology lending service – make laptops, mobile phones and dongles available for use by students to undertake their studies
 - Provide opportunities for learners in adult and community education, Youthreach, CTC, who because of COVID 19 were unable to complete all assessments to access PLC places where appropriate
 - Provide CPD opportunities for staff engaging with learners in second chance or specialist education and training programmes



This section outlines the changes undertaken by colleges, centres and service spheres to engage learners, enable learners to gain accreditation, respond to new challenges and opportunities arising from COVID 19 and to ensure that educational and training opportunities and progression routes remained viable for learners

CDET B SERVICE SPHERES

In May 2020 there was almost 22,000 learners registered on 24 different programmes across the CDET B with an additional 6000 (approx.) part time learners part time learners on evening personal improvement and hobby courses. These programmes and courses were delivered across the five service spheres which operate within CDET B across the city of Dublin namely:

1. Adult Education Services – 5 regions
2. Colleges of Further Education - 17 centres
3. Education Service to Prisons - 7 centres
4. Training Centres - 2 centres inclusive of
 - Community Training Centres (CTC)
 - Local Training Initiatives (LTI)
 - Specialist Training Programmes (STP)
 - Department of Justice Workshops (DoJW)
5. Youthreach – throughout the city of Dublin

This section outlines the changes undertaken by colleges, centres and services spheres to engage learners, enable learners to gain accreditation, respond to new challenges and opportunities arising from COVID 19 and to ensure that educational and training opportunities and progression routes remained viable for learners.

Colleges of Further Education (CFEs)



Presentation of the CFE Section

There are 17 Colleges of Further Education (CFEs) operating across the city of Dublin. The CFEs provide specific programmes and courses that attract learners from across the city in areas such as Business Administration, Health and Welfare, Services, Arts and Humanities and Information Technology. At a local area level CFEs are an integral part of the communities in which they are located and engage with a broad range of local second level schools, employers, INTREO offices and community organisations. Central to the approach of CFEs is to provide learners with quality assured learning experiences, which can deliver opportunities for progression to employment, higher education or further training. Programmes and courses provided by CFEs range from Level 4 to 8 on the NFQ with the majority of provision at level five.

CFEs work in partnership with the other service spheres in CDETb and provide progression routes for learners emerging from Youthreach centres, second level schools, Adult Education services, second providers and specialist provision. They also provide educational opportunities for learners in need of additional support for example through the VTOS and Skills to Advance programmes and also deliver Traineeships and 2016 Apprenticeship programmes. However, the major provision of CFEs are full time Post Leaving Cert (PLC) courses at NQF 5, with many school leavers or adult returners choosing PLC programmes and courses to help them develop and demonstrate an aptitude for a particular career. Some learners undertake vocational courses where they expect to begin their working life at the end of their academic year or are upskilling to help change career or progress in their industry. CFEs primarily operate an academic year with almost 7,000 post leaving certificate learners enrolled and working towards certification in June 2020.

Ensuring that these learners and others engaged in PLC programmes and courses could avail of progression opportunities under the CAO '0' and '1st' round offers was identified as a priority in the CDETb contingency plan. By the end of the academic year 2020

- All programmes and courses had moved to remote teaching and learning

- Alternative assessment options were developed to ensure that over 99% of learners could complete their awards and be eligible for certification
- Awards had been quality assured in line with the CDETb COVID 19 QA contingency arrangements

These tasks were successfully completed with many lessons learned and resources developed. The journey to achieving these outcomes for learners differed from centre to centre. Local IT infrastructure both software and hardware differed from centre to centre and college to college depending on the number of learners, types of programmes and courses offered, available budgets, administration practice and previous experience of using virtual platforms. However, regardless of the challenges faced by individual centres/colleges and their staff, they were all successful in supporting learners to complete their awards. The leadership, commitment, adaptability, integrity and hard work of staff and learners across the CFEs and their ability to offer support and advice to each other on how to best address the challenges they were facing, was key to achieving this.

Transferring the lessons learned during COVID 19, including the development and quality assurance of the alternative assessments to other service spheres is a key development area in the next phase of CDETb’s COVID response. Table below 2 highlights some of the challenges faced and changes undertaken by CFEs during the COVID 19 emergency. It also identifies the lessons learned for teaching, learning and assessment.

TABLE 2 COLLEGES OF FURTHER EDUCATION

Topics	What worked /what is happening now	What made things easier?	What were the challenges?	Lessons learned for teaching, learning, assessment and Quality Assurance
Colleges of Further Education – General	<p>All FE college courses completed with less than 1% of practical assessments outstanding /unable to be completed due to social distancing or unable to be converted because of essential nature of learning outcomes.</p> <p>All courses leading to CAO completed in time for offers.</p>	<p>Working collectively to respond and co-production of documents and processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff within CFEs working to address issues and design content and assessments suitable for remote teaching learning and assessment • Weekly QA contingency meetings for Principals and Heads of Centre to share good practice and problem solve issues arising 	<p>Access to IT – equipment and knowhow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of access to technology for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learners • staff • Lack of TELMs mentors in some centres, TEL co-ordinator post vacant • Mixed use of email addresses and modes of contact for learners • Limited staff knowledge in the use of online platforms and virtual meeting spaces 	<p>Securing sufficient equipment to reduce the need for sharing (hygiene and social distancing measures)</p> <p>Use of platforms, virtual submissions and online IV processes reduced printing and storage of files – friendlier to environment</p> <p>Access to technology (hardware and software) for staff and learners</p>

<p>Quality Assurance processes implemented in line with COVID 19 QA guidelines</p> <p>Preparations for reopening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centres are developing materials and content to support the implementation of blended learning courses Plans are being developed and implemented for the safe return of staff and learners Staff are reviewing industry guidelines and preparing learning plans to ensure that learners are in receipt of the most appropriate education and training Staff are engaged in CPD in areas to support remote and blended teaching, learning and assessment Developing the infrastructure to support online administration processes Securing access to technology (soft and hardware) for staff and learners Developing contingency plans for preparing for future closures of centres Developing new course offerings for learners that may have lost their jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-production of CDETb contingency plans, guidance notes and risk mitigation strategies <p>Experience of staff and centres in developing assessments and TEL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed, innovative staff Experience of developing assessments assisted in the development of alternative assessments Having TEL mentors trained and in place <p>Good communication channels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual team meetings in CFEs Cross CFE meetings with senior Management Peer reviewing of alternative assessments, learning plans and college contingency plans Staff and learner email addresses Online systems that allowed access to learner contact data Virtual exam boards and RAP meetings <p>IT infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to technology Access to platforms (e.g. Zoom, google classroom) MS 365 available for staff and learners Access to Moodle and guidance on resources to use for teaching, learning and assessment 	<p>Remote teaching learning and assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited staff knowledge or experience in remote teaching, learning and assessment – especially in practical programme areas Access to specialist equipment for some learners to complete assessments Completing assessment where the Learning Outcomes are dependent on using college resources i.e. TV, Film, Animation and Games related hardware and software Not physically being in the building, both for staff and learners – emotional as well as practical impact <p>MORE/ longer/ harder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More emails more time to prepare classes and give feedback – learning new technologies Harder to contact learners - technology Took time to set everything up Harder to motivate learners, harder to motivate self <p>Less</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banter or craic Time to spend on non-curriculum/work interactions Less connections between staff and learner <p>Recruiting for 2020/2021</p>	<p>Prepare emergency remote teaching, learning and assessment plans to enact in case of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suspected or positive COVID 19 case Centre based lockdown Regional or national lockdown <p>Some course/practical assessments may be unsuitable for running in short to medium term until new industry protocols have been developed</p> <p>The social distancing measures, quarantine and potential of further local or widespread lockdowns may mean contingency plans, and adaptations granted by QQI may need to be extended until end of academic year 2021 including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> emergency remote teaching and learning Inclusion of professional development module as part of work experience/work placement Alternative assessments for some practical exams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further clarity from QQI on core, essential and regulatory learning outcomes in case of future lockdowns. Specific consideration to be given to modules that need to use specialist equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modules, learning outcomes and indicative content may need to be
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	<p>during COVID 19 or for emerging industries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiting learners for 2020/2021 Usual recruitment processes were affected by COVID 19 (e.g. open days, visits to schools) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff with experience in blended learning Having online admin processes in place <p>Timing of the lockdown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lockdown came towards the end of the academic year so relationships had been formed, most of the curriculum was covered and a lot of the assessments had been completed <p>Implementing COVID 19 Quality Assurance processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-producing alternative QA process to ensure they were fit for purpose and implementable by the CFEs Development and usage of templates for IV, EA, meeting agenda Virtual 'teachers IV box' Virtual exam-boards and RAP meetings <p>Support, guidance and CDP offered from CDETb corporate and FET Development Unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to CDP opportunities for staff Guidance – documents, phone support, meetings IT support Access to Moodle resources Staff and learner email addresses Virtual platforms and meeting spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normal recruitment processes (visiting schools, open days, engaging with guidance teachers and year heads in local school to identify potential learners could not take place) 	<p>updated to allow flexibility to achieve assessment through remote learning</p> <p>Moving from emergency remote teaching and learning to properly resourced blended learning approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QA support to CFEs to convert programmes and courses to blended learning approaches Development of resources to support blended learning Upskilling staff in use of IT Upskilling staff in best practice remote teaching Upskilling of staff in flipped classroom methodologies <p>Look at standardising the platforms utilised, the software used across the service sphere and upskilling staff in the use of agreed packages</p> <p>Some module descriptors and awards may have to be updated to reflect changes in work practices</p>
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Reviews took place within the CFEs with case studies and review reports submitted to the FET Development Unit. The personal reflection and quotes from colleges across the city capture many of the challenges, changes, successes and areas for development highlighted by staff.

CASE STUDY 1 REFLECTIONS OF THE A CFE TEACHER

Reflections of a CFE Teacher

'I am a teacher in [Inchicore College of Further Education](#) (ICFE), which is located near the historic and cultural heritage sites of Irish Museum of Modern Art, the Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Kilmainham Gaol, Collins Barracks and the Phoenix Park. The college offers a wide range of full-time and part-time courses in the areas of business, computers, childcare, creative and performing arts, health and social care, sports, tourism and adult and community education. This self-reflection report is based on my own personal experience, in addition to feedback and discussions with colleagues and learners prior to and throughout the emergency'.

What were the main differences between how you normally operate and how you operated since the beginning of the emergency?

Pre 13th March 2020:

- The vast majority of course delivery took place in a **classroom based environment** within the college. Teaching methods included power point presentations, videos, case studies, discussions, group work, pair work, individual work, inquiry based learning, interactive online quizzes and problem solving.
- **Moodle was used as a reference for students to refer to class notes** and supporting material and students tended to use Moodle only when preparing assignments.
- The **teaching and learning culture** within the college is strongly based on **building relationships with the students** and ensuring that the classroom provides a **relaxed, friendly and enjoyable experience**. A large amount of **interaction would take place between students and teachers** both within the classroom and throughout the college.
- There is a **large emphasis on interaction with students** within the college and across different courses for activities including fundraising, increasing awareness of various issues, industry days, open days and so forth. As a result, there was a **great deal of sharing and cooperation across different courses and students get to interact with students from different disciplines**.
- **Assessment took place mostly in paper / hardcopy** with students receiving printed assignment briefs and submission of their assignments in paper / hard copy also. **QQI procedures required that all hardcopies are stored and placed into individual student folders which resulted in a substantial amount of paper being used for each subject**.
- Many modules have an **end of year examination** which would take place in the college in mid/late April.
- Some assignments required **presentation work** and were video recorded.

'Keeping students engaged was a challenge. I think we all realised over the last few months that human contact is so important to all of us and I think some students missed that and drifted away. Personally I found it depressing looking into a screen where ordinarily we might be going on a trip or something so I can't really blame the learners'

(CFE Principal -North City)

- *Staff meetings, course team meetings and exam boards took place face to face in rooms within the college and paper documentation was used and distributed for agendas, meeting material and exam results.*

Post 13th March 2020:

- ❖ *Students were all advised by their Course Directors to ensure that they had access to Moodle. Course Directors were asked to ensure that they had contact details for their students and to ensure that students had internet access and were able to send and receive emails. Students who did not answer emails were contacted by phone by the college management / office or teacher (if the student had given their telephone number to the teachers for this purpose)*
- ❖ *More blended learning took place and in many instances, flipped classroom activities replaced the original delivery methods. There was an increased use of Moodle by both students and teachers. There was more of a requirement for students to access Moodle for course content and there was an increase of course materials uploaded to Moodle by teachers. Communication with students took place by email and also via the 'Announcements' facility on Moodle. Assignment submissions took place via Moodle or directly to the teacher's email account and some exams were held online via Moodle.*
- ❖ *Many teachers continued their teaching schedule online with students via Zoom. Initially, some teachers taught themselves how to use Zoom software and then a training course and training materials was developed by a teacher to train other teachers within the college.*
- ❖ *The IT Department was very quick and responsive to all queries and also provided training in Adobe Connect for teachers to use.*
- ❖ *Students were very responsive to online training via Zoom. Some student participation had increased and feedback from students was extremely positive. Some students were more engaged and interactive on Zoom. Some students appeared less introverted and more confident in asking questions and interacting – this could be the result of their familiarity of using technological devices for communicating. In other cases, Zoom allows students to type questions or comments and this also increased interaction from some students. Students*

*'Thanks for everything, for your kindness, patience and hopefully getting me over the line'.
Richard – student from Cabra Community College*

*'It's amazing the length staff went to help their learners, one teacher in our college even went into the local Garda station to get access to a computer so her student could finish the course'
Brenda Earle Teacher Liberties college*

seemed to enjoy the novelty of the interaction on Zoom and enjoyed talking with their classmates again. In cases where a teacher taught the same module to two different classes, both classes were invited to the same Zoom session and as a result there was further cross cooperation between students in different classes.

- ❖ *Assessment took place via email or Moodle. Teachers were able to correct the assignments online and record the results online also. Feedback was emailed back to the student.*
- ❖ *QCI procedures were adapted so that One Drive was used to store all learner marking sheets and master results for each subject. Many End of Year examinations were converted into End of Year Assessments. Students' feedback on this was largely positive as many preferred assignments to exam based assessment.*
- ❖ *Some assignments requiring presentation work continued to be video recorded as students could record themselves and submit or the teacher could record the student online.*
- ❖ *Staff meetings, course team meetings and exam boards took place face to face in MS Teams and documentation was shared to*

the relevant participants on MS One Drive.

What worked well?

- **Increased use of Moodle** was welcomed by many students and teachers. **Students valued the central availability of information** that they could refer to for learning and for their assignments.
- **Zoom** was found to be the most user-friendly software to use for class delivery and seemed to be the preferred option by both students and teachers. As mentioned above, **students gave very positive feedback on Zoom** (although, it must be considered that the use of Zoom was new and some of the satisfaction could be associated with the novelty factor).
- **Many students preferred the online submission of assignments** as some students noted that they previously had to queue in the library to print assignments which would take time and there would be printing costs involved. Additionally, some students and teachers were conscious of the environmental impact of using so much paper within the college and they were more satisfied with the online submission as a result.
- **Students reported increased satisfaction with end of year assignments rather than exams.** (Note: It would be interesting to analyse if there was a difference in student performance due to the change in end of year assessment).
- From the teacher perspective regarding the receipt of online assignments, generally this was positive and much more preferred to the substantial amount of paper that is normally received. It also provided proof of an assignment being submitted and **reduced clutter in the teacher's home / office area.** Occasionally, pre-13th March 2020, students may mistakenly suggest that they had submitted an assignment to the teacher in hardcopy. The email or Moodle receipt resolves this uncertainty and provides confirmation of delivery and receipt of an assignment. However, in some cases, students had to send images via email and this resulted in many separate emails being sent by the student to the teacher (e.g. Work Experience – photos were taken of work placement documents and in some cases emailed individually to the teacher resulting in large numbers of emails being received)
- **MS Teams was used for Course Team Meetings and Exam Boards. Zoom was used for All Staff meetings.**

'I feel that my greatest strength was the positive relationship that I gradually built up with my students before the College closed on 12/03 /2020. There was a lot of mutual respect and co-operation on both sides. This relationship helped me to help, assist, encourage, cajole, inform, mind and guide all my students through a very difficult few months'

(CFE Teacher North city)

What could be developed further and/or improved?

- ❖ Due to the immediacy of the school closure announcements, there was little time to **prepare students** (However, management did hold an all staff meeting that week to discuss and make preparations for contingency planning arrangements which was helpful). Once the announcement came, some Course Directors were able to meet with their students to discuss the plans, however, due to the short time frame, this may not have been possible for all. **A developed contingency plan** that is established and provides **clear guidelines on communication with students** would be beneficial, especially in the event that a similar situation occurs in the future.
- ❖ Many teachers struggled with the **increased workload** that they were presented with in terms of trying to **use the existing technology, learn new technology, liaise with students online** in addition to the requirement to **create new End of Year Assessments to replace exams.** The timeframe to adapt to converting from paper to uploading marks and completing Learner Marking Sheets online was tight and challenging for some teachers. **More training for teachers on technology** would ease this workload. Additionally, **ensuring that students are aware that teachers may not respond immediately to emails and an expected response timeframe** could be agreed in order to resolve this. A **bank of centralised assessment briefs** that teachers can access in the future so that they are not required to draft new assignments in short time periods would also be beneficial.
- ❖ **MS Teams** was found by many to be difficult to use and manage for meetings. In some cases, it reduced the quality of the meeting. Other aspects of MS Teams / MS Office were also found to be difficult to use and it would be helpful for teachers to have **further training in this software.**

- *Communication between college management and staff was extremely prompt, relevant, informative and effective.*
- *Teamwork and collaboration was always strong within the college. However, there was a **deeper connection and strength felt as colleagues went above and beyond to answer queries and help each other with challenges.***

How were the changes to Teaching Learning and Assessment overseen, coordinated/quality assured at your centre/service sphere?

- *All changes and proposed changes were communicated via email from the management of the college.*
- *The IT Department were quick to respond to queries and to provide or arrange support to teachers. The IT Department also provided immediate support to students from 12th March to facilitate access to Moodle.*
- *Ongoing communication took place from management to check in with teachers and to offer support and guidance.*
- *The management of the college advised of changes to assessment in terms of end of year exam conversions. An internal verification of the assignments was carried out and any suggestions / recommendations for changes to ensure adherence to the QQI standards were advised.*
- *The college QQI team communicated information of the new process involved for accessing and completing learner marking sheets, uploading results. Clear and detailed guidelines were provided on the process and the timeframe.*
- *College management confirmed modules for internal and external verification and confirmed all documentation required to be uploaded by the teacher/assessor. Internal and external verification took place on a smaller scale than in previous years. Internal verification was carried out by an assigned member of staff and any issues reported.*
- *From a personal perspective, I was extremely satisfied (and felt confident and reassured as a result) with the level of communication, support and guidance in relation to all changes regarding Teaching, Learning and Assessment.*

'I feel, after today, that the cardboard boxes have gone the way of the floppy discs and cassette tapes!'

(Teacher, [Crumlin College of Further Education](#))



VIDEO LINK 1 TEACHER SINEAD SOMERS AND STUDENT CIARA SANDFORD

[Click](#) to hear Teacher Sinead Somers and Student Ciara Sandford from [Rathmines College of Further Education](#) speak of their experience of COVID 19

VIDEO LINK 2 TEACHER GERALD CUNNINGHAM – DIGITAL LEARNING TEAM

[Click](#) to hear Gerald Cunningham a teacher in both second level and FET provision speaking about how the digital learning team in [Plunket College of Further Education](#) supported the move to emergency remote teaching, learning and assessment

**VIDEO LINK 3 TEACHER BRENDA EARLE – SUPPORTING LEARNERS**

[Click](#) to hear Brenda Earle from [Liberties College](#) speaking about engaging with learners on the Trinity Access programme through lockdown.

Adult Education Service (AES)



Presentation on Adult Education Service Section

City of Dublin ETB is the largest provider of adult education in Dublin city. The main programmes provided under the auspices of the [Adult Education Service](#) are Adult Literacy, Community Education, ESOL, ITABE (Intensive Adult Basic Education), Back to Education Initiative, basic workplace education and voluntary literacy provision. In addition, the AES operates a free, impartial and confidential Information and Guidance Service to adults living in the catchment areas of its regional services. These programmes and services are provided across each of the five regional adult education services to approximately 15,000 learners annually. In addition to its own directly-funded programmes for learners, CDETb provides grant aid to community-based centres and organisations.

The Adult Education Service provides a year-round service, operating a staggered intake model with courses starting and ending throughout the year. Its primary purpose is to provide basic education programmes to adults who are returning to education, many of whom are at risk of, or are experiencing, social exclusion.

Adult education works from a learner-centred perspective, prioritising the need to work with learners from where they are at in terms of their personal and social circumstances. As such, education is viewed in a broad and holistic way. Adult education can provide progression routes and pathways leading to accreditation (mostly at NFQ Levels 1-4) across each of the strands. However, accreditation is not a motivating factor for most learners enrolled in programmes in the Adult Education Service.

The priority for CDETb's Adult Education Service during COVID 19 was to maintain contact with learners and where possible to continue to engage them in learning using a variety of methods. For the vast majority of programmes and courses, completion of QQI accreditation was postponed until the autumn term.

Table 3 below highlights some of the challenges faced by the AES, changes made in provision and lessons learned for teaching, learning and assessment.

TABLE 3 ADULT EDUCATION SERVICES

Area/Service sphere	What worked/what are you doing now?	What made things easier?	What were the challenges?	Lessons learned for teaching, learning, assessment and Quality Topics Assurance
Adult Education Service	<p>Overall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The commitment of staff and tutors in responding quickly to using different media and new technologies to maintain contact with and engage learners <p>Teaching and learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of modes and media were deployed depending on learner needs and abilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> learner packs posted out telephone tuition videos and other content posted on AES YouTube channels, websites and Facebook pages email, Zoom, Edmodo Some learners reported an increased awareness of the Adult Education Service Staff and tutors cognisant of maintaining GDPR protocols when engaging with learners on-line Remote engagement with learners provided them with structure and contact point/s during a difficult and stressful period 	<p>Teaching and learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tutors who use textbooks (e.g. ESOL) found the transition to online teaching easier Provision of work mobile phones to tutors facilitated telephone teaching and engagement Learners who were already using technology and social media prior to closure Learners who had family support in the home were supported to use technology, (e.g. smart phones, Zoom) The availability of CPD on TEL tools from the early stages of the closure Centre-level guidelines for tutors on working/teaching remotely (including wellbeing and safety) provided structure and support Dividing groups into smaller groups or 1:1 to facilitate telephone and/or online teaching Team teaching on multi-module and/or online courses facilitated preparation and creativity and enhanced collegial support and sharing 	<p>Barriers to participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The absence of the face to face and social aspect of adult and community education courses for learners. This was/is particularly acute for older and vulnerable learners and learners whose motivation for learning is driven by the social dimension of learning The digital divide was noticeable within and across learner groups and prevented many learners from engaging with continued delivery Learners who are most vulnerable and in need of basic education were unable to participate Some learners circumstances, living space and domestic arrangements inhibited their on-line learning The closure of public libraries and lack of access to their IT facilities impacted learners 	<p>Face to Face</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The classroom-based face-to-face approach and group setting is central to the AES The importance of the face-to-face and social dimension of adult and community education for learners needs to be maintained <p>Co-operation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good-will and cooperation were central to the CDETb response to the Covid 19 emergency The shared response by CDETb staff and services blurred and lessened silo approaches to the Covid 19 emergency <p>Blended learning /remote teaching and learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blended learning could be seen as a “sticky tape” solution for adult and community education programmes (e.g. in ICT) Need to consider solutions for learners for whom remote learning is not viable Telephone teaching worked well but all tutors would require

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AES staff and tutors were required to be structured and organized in their engagement with learners <p>Communications with staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular online tutor meetings were established helping to overcome the logistical barriers that have existed to date The meetings enabled tutors to feel more engaged in the planning and development of the service to and for learners There was an increase in communications regarding Quality Assurance <p>Teamwork</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff worked together as a more cohesive team 	<p>Quality Assurance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FET Development Unit engagement and support, including Contingency QA guidelines <p>Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure remote access to learner details on database to contact learners from the outset The roll-out of Office 365 to tutors in the AES prior to COVID 19 enabled use of collaborative tools (e.g. MS Teams platform) Networking and linking with other services and supports (e.g. key workers in community services and Dublin City Council) enabled continuity of delivery in community education settings Established learner networks (e.g. Facebook group for learner groups) found the transition to remote learning easier 	<p>Teaching and learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content creation of quality learning materials for online and remote delivery proved time-consuming Tutor access to, and ability to use technology Not being able to maintain the volunteer-led aspect of the literacy service 	<p>CDETb mobile phones and this could be a costly undertaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for funding to secure IT equipment and devices for learners and tutors where appropriate <p>Next phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need to review outdated elements of validated Importance of engaging in outreach initiatives over the summer as the process of recruiting learners is not linear amongst groups facing or experiencing social exclusion In the context of COVID 19 spacing and health requirements and their impact on programmes and courses a case could be made for increased tutor hours. This is particularly the case for learners completing QQI modules
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[Click](#) to watch the learners from [Doras Bui's](#) Drama group perform a lockdown parody of 'Drive By' by Train with their CDETb adult education tutor Cormac Walsh

CASE STUDY 2 SOUTH INNER CITY ADULT EDUCATION SERVICES

Adult Education Service

South Inner City Adult Education Service

The CDETb South Inner City Adult Education Service (AES) caters for areas of the south city including Rathmines, Ringsend and the Liberties. The literacy service which is part of the AES provision focuses on accredited and non-accredited part time programmes from Levels 1-4 on the NFQ.

Communications Module

A group of learners aged between 40 and 80 years, many with unmet literacy needs, had been working towards a full award at Level 2 on the NFQ when the Covid 19 restrictions came into place. Some learners were retired and some were attending mental health support services. All were resident in the Dublin 6 and 8 areas. For the period of the Covid 19 lockdown the tutor of the group decided to focus on the minor award Non-Verbal Communication M2C04.

In order to facilitate the delivery of the module all learners were provided with a pack of materials when they finished their last face to face class on March 12th. The pack contained a variety of activities relevant to the minor award in Non- verbal communications. All learners had smart phones but only used the basic functions for calling and texting. Only one learner had an email address but was unable to access it independently. It was clear therefore that online resources could not be of educational benefit to the group during the lockdown period.

Approach

"Creative ideas and collaboration will be necessary to address digital poverty which has made learning an even bigger challenge for many in marginalised communities"

(Tutor, south inner city)

The Adult Literacy Officer (ALO) sought permission from each learner to share their contact details with the group tutor. The tutor contacted learners individually by phone during class time to support them in their learning. The tutor introduced WhatsApp and www.freeconferencecall.com to learners as options for group conversations and work. The tutor built on learners' knowledge of gardening and interest in outdoor life to build their portfolio of work. The tutor was aware that as level 2 learners the group were not independent learners. Therefore the tutor ensured individual support was given to each learner in response to their learning needs.

Outcomes/Results

Through the delivery of the module the following outcomes were achieved:

- Contact was maintained with a group of learners
- Learners are completing the non-verbal communications module
- All learners are looking forward to returning to class room settings to complete their portfolios and continue on their learning journey
- Learners value their prior knowledge as a resource in their learning
- Learners have a greater appreciation of the value of learning

Benefits

The benefits for learners of the module and the approach adopted by the tutor included:

- Learners receiving individual contact from the tutor
- Tailored course work that suited learner needs
- Providing a welcome distraction from the health crisis
- Being introduced to new technology in a user-friendly way
- Learners feeling more confident to use technology as part of their learning
- The classes provided regular communication and supported those learners living alone or who had mental health issues

'When considering options for the future provision during unforeseen centre closures it must be noted that the real value in our service comes from face-to-face tuition and interaction in a welcoming adult learning environment. There is no substitute for this hands-on-engagement when it comes to the development of the learners' confidence, self-esteem and personal skills'

(Adult Literacy Scheme, north city)

'I fear the warm welcome, the cup of tea and the face-to-face empathy that is so crucial to encouraging adult learners back into education and training is often lost via technological alternatives for many of our clients or are not even possible for those experiencing Digital poverty'

(Adult Education Guidance Officer)

Lessons for teaching, learning and assessment

From the experience of delivering the module a number of lessons arise namely:

- Learners at Levels 1-4 on the NFQ require individual support in order to achieve new learning goals
- Technology needs to be embedded in all classes so as to make it more familiar to all learners
- Creative ideas and collaboration are necessary in order to address digital poverty which has made learning an even bigger challenge for many in marginalised communities
- Assessment tools need to be designed based on Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Traditional written assignments can be replaced with more creative and inclusive options
- Learning outcomes can be met while demonstrating the strengths and skills of learners

CASE STUDY 3 COOLOCK DARNDALE ADULT LITERACY PROVISION

Coolock Darndale Adult Literacy Provision

The [Coolock Darndale Adult Literacy service](#) is based in Colaiste Dhulaigh CFE, Dublin 17 and supports learners with reading, writing, maths, computers, and other basic skills to help them achieve their learning and life goals. Working across 10 different centres, fully trained and supported volunteers provide learning opportunities in both accredited and non-accredited courses at NFQ Levels 2 to 4. Depending on the learning needs of the student courses are provided on a one to one or small group basis (4 - 8 learners) providing opportunities for 500 learners annually. The history hub is one of those opportunities.

History Hub :

During the Covid 19 lockdown and the closure of Colaiste Dhulaigh CFE a mixed group of learners chose to work on a non-accredited learning course during the period of closure.

Participants were drawn from existing courses that were being delivered by the Adult Literacy service such as

- QQI 4 Historical Studies, Exploring History (class 1), Exploring History (class 2), QQI 4 Personal Effectiveness, QQI 3 Digital Media

Purpose of the Course

The purpose of developing the course was to:

- 1) Maintain contact with learners
- 2) Continue and celebrate learning
- 3) Improve digital skills where possible by building capacity for life and for future remote engagement towards QQI certification,
- 4) Provide an opportunity to input work in various forms for publication on the website, social media and print publication of Dublin Lives 2020
- 5) Share accessible resources and content with the general public
- 6) Develop an asynchronistic and flexible learning environment whereby there was no need for learners to engage at specific time/s

**Approach**

A **History Hub** was established on the CoolockALS.ie website. This approach provided an interesting, accessible, asynchronistic learning environment with the flexibility to adapt to learners abilities, needs and circumstances. Engagement with learners was undertaken via WhatsApp, post, email, Facebook, text message and telephone.

Challenges

In order for learners to participate on the course a number of challenges had to be faced including:

- Access to technology,
- Time and space within the home/place of residence for course participation
- Mixed literacy and digital literacy levels within the learner group
- Maintaining engagement that works for learners as returning to education can be a very difficult step for many

Outcomes/Results

The outcomes and results accruing to learners and the wider community from the establishment of the History Hub included the following:

- Increased digital literacy skills amongst learners
- Continued sense of community for learners
- Learners writings and audios submitted for publication on the website <http://www.coolockals.ie/dublin-lives-2020/> and in Dublin Lives 2020 print publication
 - 22 learners participated with 12 consistently engaging through various media including: WhatsApp, [Social Media](#), Email, Text Message and Post

Benefits

Providing a supportive space for the learners to explore how they engage with learning was really valuable. Learners had control over how and when they accessed and responded to course material. This encouraged greater self-direction and was an empowering experience for learners.

'Nothing really compares to the hands on teaching, learning and social impact that takes place in the kitchen. However, there has been learning to both tutor and student over the last few weeks in regards to the possibility of delivering mainly theoretical material online, discussions on zoom calls, video making and how learners can be more independent when required and allowed to be

(Adult Education Tutor, south city)

There was a real sense of play and collaboration in learner engagement. Opinions and expression were encouraged and skills were developed without pressure for certification. Learning was embedded and took place in real life situations. Given that there was varying levels of literacy and digital literacy amongst the learner group, participation on the course was very high. In cases where there was limited or no access to technology, post and telephone calls were used to communicate and engage with learners.

Lessons for teaching, learning and assessment

Good communication and collaboration and remaining learner focused were key aspects of the course.

Team Teaching was instigated early on and was invaluable in ensuring tutors could support one another and share experiences and challenges.

The use of **Microsoft Teams** had been ongoing in Coolock Darndale Adult Literacy Service and it made the transition to remote working much simpler. While working remotely, many tutors experienced better communication between the team and each other than would normally be the case, although this obviously has to be weighed against the difficulty and challenge of ensuring continued learner engagement.

The History Hub emerged within a framework of supports and approaches that were developed by the whole team at Coolock Darndale Adult Literacy Service in response to the Covid 19 emergency. These included:

- *Remote Learning Project Team*: Whole team collaboration and record keeping space on Microsoft Teams
- *Guidelines for Remote Teaching & Learning*: Providing tutors with structure/s for working through significant change
- *Remote Registers*: Enabling tutors to consider new approaches to working with learners outside of the established environment
- *Tools & Explainers*: Enabling tutors to share resources and methods

Precursors within the service that inspired the development of the History Hub included:

- *WhatsApp Class Delivery approach*: Team Teaching approach where lesson is chunked into short WhatsApp messages including video, reflections, questions and exercises (Watch, Think, Re-tell, Write) followed up with phone calls to participants
- *ESOL Literacy read along materials and exercises*: <http://www.coolockals.ie/portfolio-item/a-day-out-in-dublin/>
- *CoolockALS.ie website*

Training Centres



[Presentation of the Training Centre Section](#)

The CDETb has responsibility for two Training Centres (TC), one based in Ballyfermot, Dublin South and the other in Finglas, Dublin North. They are open all year round operating a staggered intake model with courses starting and ending throughout the year. The Training Centre's primary purpose is to get learners 'job ready' through the provision of vocational training for unemployed, employed and career changers with many of them referred directly by statutory employment services or employers. The primary delivery model of the training centres is to provide learners with the opportunity to develop work related skills and competencies in environments as close to the industry 'real life' experience as possible. Prior to the COVID 19 lockdown, this meant primarily utilising practical and experiential learning methodologies, for example workshop demonstrations and practice using specialist equipment for courses like Aircraft Maintenance Technician, Hairdressing or carpentry apprenticeships. Both Training Centres also offer evening courses and have oversight responsibility for a large number of community-based centres throughout the City of Dublin.

The priority for training centres during COVID 19 was on keeping learners engaged, adapting and adopting technologies to support the training experience and providing opportunities where appropriate for learners to complete their programmes and progress to employment. The majority of courses offered through the training centres in March fell into the category of work that the Government roadmap referred to as roles that 'cannot easily be done remotely'. Despite this the centres managed to keep on delivering many of their courses. In addition, learners were all at different stages in their courses, some having just started their learning journey and completed very little of the course curriculum. Facilitating this required a lot of conversion of curriculum to online or emergency remote teaching and learning.

Table 4 below highlights some of the challenges faced by the two training centres, changes made in provision and lessons learned for teaching, learning and assessment.

TABLE 4 TRAINING CENTRES

Areas/service spheres	What worked/what are you doing now?	What made things easier?	What were the challenges?	Lessons learned for teaching, learning, assessment and Quality Assurance
TRAINING CENTRES	<p>Many courses are being delivered remotely through online platforms</p> <p>Learners are in regular contact with a member of staff</p> <p>Plans are being developed for the safe return of staff and learners</p> <p>Staff are engaged in CPD in areas to support training, learning and assessment</p> <p>Processes are being developed to reduce the administrative burden</p> <p>Engaged with the FET Development Unit to develop and update assessments, using universal design principles some of which may be used remotely</p>	<p>Stage of the learner group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a class advanced did help compared to classes that had just started <p>Experience among staff in the use of TEL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Centre had already engaged with a TEL programme prior to COVID 19 closure Staff willingness to engage with new technologies and initiatives <p>IT infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquiring laptops and dongles for learners Acquiring access to software packages (MS 365 for example) Mobile companies allowing unlimited data for customers/removal of data usage block <p>Capacity building –teaching learning and assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of CPD and specific tailored training Availability of advice and guidance from CDU and FET Development Unit <p>Willingness to engage/openness to change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff commitment to supporting learners Staff commitment to upskilling Learners willingness to participate in online classes 	<p>Being centre based</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not physically being in the buildings both for staff and learners – emotional as well as practical impact Most admin and teaching systems built for staff and learners being physically in the centre (e.g. none of the PCs could work outside of the building) Running staff payments became very complex as contracts and claim forms were in the centre while staff operated remotely. Huge amount of paper-based work to be completed for QA, payments, attendance which was time consuming and almost impossible to do remotely Major elements of TC courses are practically delivered and assessed, and can be difficult to teach, learn or assess remotely – potentially dire consequences of certifying elements of courses remotely (plumbers, electricians) <p>Resistance/fear of the changes required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resistance from some learners to engage with technologies ‘didn’t sign up to learn this way’ 	<p>Remote learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remote teaching and learning not appropriate for all learners Practical elements of delivery will need to continue to take place in a physical centre Learners with additional learning support needs were harder to support remotely – harder to offer one to one support during ‘remote’ class times Teaching remotely/online is not a good medium for building ‘soft’ skills required by employers <p>Blended learning approach very useful addition to some programmes - Staff already indicating their interest in becoming champions of TELMS</p> <p>Industry norms have changed rapidly this will require upgrading of content, approach and assessment of courses and modules to stay in line with employer requirements</p>

Innovation supported

The crisis nature of COVID 19 encouraged innovation and solution driven approaches

- Tutors 'did not sign up for teaching this way

Lack of experience among staff in some of the competency areas required to comply with CDETb QA contingency plans

- Due to training model, learner profile and nature of programmes offered, remote teaching and learning was not well developed in training centres prior to lockdown
- The staggered intake approach meant that learners were all at different stages, more curriculum to cover for those at the beginning of their courses
- Not enough tutor experience with developing assessments

- Involving staff in decision making in relation to next step invaluable for creating innovation, reducing emotional stress and quality assuring programme delivery

FINGLAS TRAINING CENTRE – CASE STUDY 4

[Finglas Training Centre](#) is located just off the M50 and is four miles from both Dublin Airport and O’Connell street. It provides vocational training for unemployed, employed and career changers offering courses across a range of programme types that include Apprenticeships, Traineeships and Specific Skills Training programmes. Courses delivered at Finglas Training Centre have rolling start dates with course events commencing at different times of the year. Learners attending full time courses attend for 33 hours per week. At the time of the COVID 19 closure, the following courses were being delivered involving approximately 250 fulltime learners across daytime provision and 190 part-time evening training learners engaged in a range of modules that include skills specific Theory and Practice, Transversal Skills Modules, Work Experience and On-the-Job Practise.

Apprenticeship including Apprenticeship 2016 +

- ICT Software Developer
- ICT Network Engineer
- Electrical x 3 Class Groups
- Plumbing x 2 Class Groups
- Carpentry/Joinery x 1
- Motor x1

Evening Training:

- ECDL x 2 Class Groups
- Manual and Computerised Payroll x 2 Class Groups
- Bookkeeping
- Supervisory Management
- Barbering Techniques x 2 Class Groups
- Creative Styling
- Guarding Skills and Door Security

Traineeships

- Front End Web Development
- Office Administration
- Graphic Design
- Legal Administration
- Revit Technician
- Aircraft Maintenance Technician x 2 Class Groups

Specific Skills Training

- Multimedia Facility
- Hairdressing

TRAINING CONTINUANCE

At the time of the emergency lockdown courses were at varying stages of progress; some well-established with learners capable of independent performance, while other classes or class groups were not so independent. The impact of the closure was an unknown but quickly manifested itself with instant issues arising. The issues impacting remote training delivery affected both learners and staff and can be categorised under two distinct headings of Physical and Emotional considerations.

Physical Considerations

Access to

- Equipment / Labs
- Laptops / iPad
- Software and Systems
- Wi Fi / Broadband capacity

Practical assessments requiring machinery and equipment meaning they could not be conducted remotely

Access for staff in training in

- The use of technologies such as Zoom and Teams
- Alternative Assessment processes and how to achieve valid outcomes

Actions to address the Physical challenges

Conducted a needs audit on a class by class basis

Procured a supply of Laptops and arranged for IT Support Provider (an essential supplier during lockdown) to set up the Laptops for use by staff and learners.

Liaised with IT Department and FET Director to acquire CDETb accounts and access to Office 2016 as appropriate for identified class groups.

Procured a small supply of Dongles in consultation with IT Department for learners without internet facilities.

Delivered one to one training where needed to individual learners on the **use of** Zoom and Teams to enable them to engage in class sessions and class meetings and discussions.

Instructors engaged with very valuable CPD opportunities on using the following Zoom, Teams, Moodle, Blended Learning and other TEL topics organised by the FET Development Unit

Emotional Considerations

Lack of IT Skills and fear of teaching remotely using unfamiliar technology

Work Life Balance; Family commitments, Child Care issues, Home Schooling,

Inability/unwillingness to engage remotely

Unrealistic expectations of self and learners

Learners' expectation of face-to-face training in a learning institution

'I didn't sign up for this'

In order to address these Finglas Training Centre did the following:

Actions to address Emotional Considerations

Conducted weekly Instructor Team meetings to keep staff connected and to facilitate sharing of experiences and solutions

Encouraged and facilitated staff access to CPD opportunities which increased confidence and self-reliance of staff

Reset expectations in terms of learner reaction, engagement, pace of learning and outcomes

Encouraged innovation and discussion among Instructing staff regarding:

- Course delivery during the reactive unplanned phase of lockdown
- Planning for reopening and future of course delivery. (This approach is purposely slow and intended to open discussion and evolve creativity, planning, sharing and reflection involving staff in the changes that will need to take place

OUTCOMES OF THIS APPROACH

- Learners now have the resources required for continuation of learning. Feedback was very positive with many expressing appreciation for the “care” afforded to them in the prevailing circumstances.
- Learners have for the most part adapted to the new delivery methodology and have learned new IT Skills
- Learning and exposure to subject matter is continuing but with a very real expectation of completing training in the learning establishment
- Instructors now endeavour to structure delivery and have come up with ways of keeping learners engaged and where possible on track
- Innovation on conducting valid assessment is collaborative and on-going.
- Instructing staff have embraced the challenge of remote and blended delivery and have engaged in learning opportunities to this end. A number have committed to the NUI Galway TEL Courses.
- TELMS will be innovated in the Finglas Training Centre with staff already indicating their interest in becoming champions of TELMS.
- We have learned to be solution driven because “we had no choice”

OBSERVATIONS GOING FORWARD

- Remote learning can be a positive experience provided the correct structure, resources and supports are in place. Such an approach could achieve a positive impact on learner self-reliance and autonomy for their own learning. Setting clear expectations of provision, delivery methodologies (i.e. Blended or remote) must be clear and unambiguous from the outset for all new learners engaging in our training courses
- Learners must be trained during induction on the use of the technologies as an operational tool in preparation for the remote or blended learning experience.
- One size does not fit all. Individuals learn in different ways with many requiring the structure of the physical environment to best learn. This must be considered going forward if we are to provide learners with the skills, knowledge and competencies to compete for available jobs and to obtain and sustain employment.
- As the ‘workplace’ changes because of the impact of COVID 19, the content and mode of delivery of the courses offered by CDETb has to match expected industry standards
- Many practical courses do not lend themselves to full remote learning. In a vocational context, it is critical to consider the development of competency and fluency of tasks that can only be achieved in the physical environment on a face to face setting. Due to social distancing requirements this may result in less learners on site at any one time
- How learners are assessed must be considered in terms of reliance on paper based written assessment with solutions that line up with assessment integrity and QA provision

'The COVID 19 lockdown has catapulted FET provision into a realm for which it was never intended, but the impact has opened up a new way of doing things; a new way of supporting learner access, a new way of doing our business. It is important to build on the experience and our learning without losing sight of our audience.'

*Teresa Cheevers-Gibbs,
Assistant Manager*

Youthreach Centres, Community Training Centres (CTCs) and the YES Programme



[Presentation of Youthreach, CTC and YES section](#)

Youthreach centres and CTCs offer second chance education and training opportunities to unqualified school leavers aged 16 to 21 years of age. They provide tailored opportunities in a safe, structured and supportive learning environment created by trainers, teachers and specialist staff. Participants on these programmes must be unemployed and out of school and are paid an age related training allowance. Youthreach centres and CTCs operate in various locations across the city according to demand. At the time of the lockdown there were almost 600 learners engaged in these programmes, all centres were located in, or primarily engaged with young people living in geographical areas with a deprivation score of -10 or below.

[YES](#) (Youth and Education Service for Refugees and Migrants) works with young people (12 – 25 years old) from refugee and migrant backgrounds. The main education programmes are the Migrant Access and Step Up programme. These are ESOL and Basic Education Programmes in preparation for mainstream school or FET provision. Certification (minor awards) is offered for Step Up learners in ESOL (level 3), Maths and Computer Skills (level 2/ 3). For the YES target group the social impact of isolation, loneliness, not seeing friends / peers in school and concerns about family members in other countries has been significant and is negatively affecting online engagement. Learners are missing out on the social aspect of face-to-face learning, peer work, group work and the non-academic learning.

During COVID 19 the centres all moved to emergency remote teaching and learning. Staff reported that in situations where devices were available to the young people many adapted to the technology quickly. Access to laptops, tablets, mobile phones or internet connections was an issue for many of the learners so paper based exercises and assignments were posted to learners with self-addressed envelopes. This enabled some alternative assessments to take place and ensured that those learners ready to progress to CFEs would be in a position to make that transition in September. However, due to learners limited access to technology the decision was taken that the completion of most of the courses would wait until exams and practical/skills demonstrations could be offered. This was deemed to be in the best interest of learners while also ensuring the integrity of the awards.

Many of the learners on Youthreach and CTC programmes come from disadvantaged backgrounds with some living in chaotic home circumstances, including hostel and temporary accommodation. Under normal circumstances learners would receive a breakfast, lunch/ dinner in the centre they attended. During the COVID 19 lock-down this was not the case and was a loss for most of them, as was the lack of access to a safe learning environment and positive interaction with their peers. The priority for this service sphere during the lockdown was on:

- maintaining a routine for the learners and keeping them engaged in their own learning
- creating a safe learning environment for young people especially for those who may not feel safe in their homes or place of residence
- trying to prevent the development or re-emergence of habits and practices that are counterproductive to improving their lives
- Continuing to engage with social services, CAMHs, youth justice services or other providers in the young person's life to support actions plans and contribute to a wrap round support service for these learners

Finding the balance between the wellbeing and welfare of learners and the focus on completing the course curriculum and assessments was a struggle across the centres especially as the lockdown continued and the weather improved. Staff estimated that they were putting in more effort to teach remotely but achieving less return. Many of the learners struggled to engage without the physical, psychological, emotional safety, stability and routine that face to face engagement in Youthreach centres and CTCs provide.

In line with government guidelines for essential services, some centres were able to continue to engage with learners to provide social supports to this vulnerable target group. (For example, one Youthreach centre used its carpark space to provide support to their learners and the family of a former learner after the accidental death of a graduate). As the lockdown is lifting centres with suitable premises have set up outside to facilitate small group engagement and support. The need for specific national, regional and local plans to support disadvantage learners during future COVID 19 mitigation measures was identified in order to prevent them becoming further disadvantaged.

Table 5 highlights some of the challenges faced by Youthreach Centres, CTCs, and the YES programme the changes made in their provision and lessons learned for teaching, learning and assessment.

TABLE 5 YOUTHREACH CENTRES, CTC AND YES

Areas/service spheres	What worked/what are you doing now?	What made things easier?	What were the challenges?	Lessons learned for teaching, learning, assessment and Quality Assurance
<p>YOUTHREACH Centres and Community Training Centres (CTCs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All centres moved to emergency remote teaching and learning with a focus on engaging the learner, maintaining contact and encouraging pro social choices Developing and sharing content for delivering remotely Staff accessing CPD and upskilling in relevant areas (use of VLP, universal design, identifying core and essential learning outcomes for alternative assessments, blended learning) <p>The following is in place across a number of centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socially distancing supports offered outdoors for young people Key working and regular contact between staff and learners 	<p>Feeling part of something bigger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youthreach centres are all delivered directly by CDETB with an appointed head of centre, this supported a coordinated response and reduced the isolation of individual centres or staff CTCs are independently managed community entities and some are part of part of larger community organisations and or responses to learners use of Teams and Zoom increased communication across centres and created a strong sense of team <p>Communication and sharing knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment of staff to professional development, upskilling and sharing knowledge in order to support the learner Sharing best practice across the centres – using Teams and Zoom meetings facilitated quick catch up between staff and centres and collectively problem solve 	<p>Safety of the learner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a ‘safe learning environment’ for learners who may not feel safe in their homes or places of residence Learners living in accommodation not conducive to a good learning environment (Direct Provision, shared rooms, homeless accommodation, etc) Learners having to take responsibility for younger siblings and household. Maintaining a ‘routine’ for the learner Best practice guidelines in child protection not yet in place for remote teaching and learning with this cohort of learners Balance between wellbeing of learner and delivery and completion of course curriculum <p>Moving from face to face delivery to remote teaching and learning</p>	<p>Remote and blended learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remote and blended learning works very well for teaching some aspects of the curriculum Online teaching worked reasonably well for teaching the curriculum but has not worked as well as face to face interaction in creating a routine, safe space or in developing the ‘soft skills’ of the learners Remote learning not suitable at all for ESOL and Basic Education Programmes with Refugees and Migrants <p>Specific plans needed for marginalised learners to avoid further disadvantage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific national, regional and local plans to support disadvantage learners during future COVID 19 mitigation measures in order to prevent learners becoming further disadvantaged Some Learners will need to extend the period they are on the

Areas/service spheres	What worked/what are you doing now?	What made things easier?	What were the challenges?	Lessons learned for teaching, learning, assessment and Quality Assurance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with parents to assess learners support needs Networking with other agencies and services engaged in the young person's life to provide a wrap round support to the learner YES youth work service operational in line with national guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication across centres, across staff and between staff and learners Staff expertise and specialist knowledge shared <p>IT knowhow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working remotely with the target group Subject matter expertise Creating safe spaces for young people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Printing and posting out packs. This has been one of the most useful interventions, literacy students need to have physical packs / books to work from <p>IT infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of technology (mobile phones, laptops, tablets and dongles for staff and learners Lending services operated in most Youthreach centres but took a while to access the technology Availability of MS 365 for some staff and learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear of technology /lack of knowledge or experience in online technology Staff uncomfortable or worried about doing videos for circulation to learners Putting more effort into teaching and learning and getting lower results for some learners than face to face delivery <p>Too much choice on platforms, tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff feeling bombarded regarding the best sites or platforms to use Some staff needing to learn to use different tools and platforms if they taught across centres <p>Access to technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to technology (software and hardware) for both staff and learners Some smaller CTCs feeling isolated as not part of larger community organisation or wider Youthreach response <p>The weather</p>	<p>programme in order to achieve their educational goals (not as advanced as would normally be expected at this stage of the programme)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners progressing CFE provision may need additional learning supports to benefit from the experience <p>Benefits of virtual meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual meetings have improved the engagement between Youthreach staff in different centres and increased their ability to work collaboratively, problem solve and share good practice

Areas/service spheres	What worked/what are you doing now?	What made things easier?	What were the challenges?	Lessons learned for teaching, learning, assessment and Quality Assurance
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colder days at the start of the lockdown – heating at home • Harder to keep learners engaged especially after the secondary schools ended in May 	



VIDEO LINK 4 TEACHER AND RESOURCE PERSON FOR YOUTHREACH LEARNERS IN

[Click](#) to hear Eilish Whelan, Teacher and resource person in Youthreach shares some of her experiences during COVID 19

BALLYMUN

Ballymun

'young people on this programme are from a marginalised and disadvantaged populations and this has been exacerbated through the circumstances that COVID has brought about. However, in general it must be stated clearly that for this learner group, online / remote teaching cannot and should not replace face-to-face teaching and learning!'

(Jessica Farnan, Manager, [YES for Refugees and Migrants](#))

CASE STUDY 4 KILMORE YOUTHREACH

Kilmore Youthreach

The Kilmore Youthreach project (KYP) operates from temporary premises in Colaiste Dhulaigh's, Kilbarrack Campus in Dublin 5. The centre provides second chance educational opportunities for young people aged 13 to 17 years of age in the Kilmore area. At the time of the COVID 19 lockdown, 10 learners were engaged in a **level 4 general learning award** programme. The young people on this Youthreach programme benefit from the 1:1 connection, tuition and encouragement they receive daily from the direct contact with teachers and other learners as well as informal engagements that build positive relationships. This supports the learners to succeed in education where previously they have struggled to achieve.

Kilmore Youthreach is very committed to technology enhanced learning. Last year two staff members completed Level 6 on the NFQ in Technology Enhanced Learning and one staff member will complete a Level 7 in TEL, with other staff members attending workshops and actively incorporating what they have learned into daily practice. These skills and practices helped when the lockdown occurred and Kilmore Youthreach moved to emergency remote teaching and learning. However there were a number of challenges to be overcome by the centre and its learners including;

- Loss of daily face to face connection between staff and learners
- Access to technology and internet connections (learners only had phones/phones with cracked screens)
- Practical elements of the courses which are difficult to teach remotely (it is possible to show a demonstration but difficult to correct wrong technique for holding a knife)
- Building and maintaining positive, supportive and developmental relationships between learner and staff member (informal interaction which builds trust and respect is difficult to do remotely)
- Enhancing the personal and interpersonal skills, teamwork skills and life skills of a young person is much more difficult to achieve online.

Prep for lockdown

The centre began planning for a potential lockdown in early March and held meetings with learners to prepare them. Staff and learners were set up with Google accounts and staff trained in how to use ZOOM. Laptops were ordered and when the lockdown commenced, the centre sent all learners home with resource packs, passwords and a timetable for online classes. On Monday 16th March the newly ordered laptops were delivered to some staff to support teaching. When the centres could be accessed by staff on May 18th, laptops and Chromebooks were delivered to learners. "I personally find it easier to learn in a classroom with a pen and paper instead of a keyboard but for the time being it is a great way for staying connected." "It's helpful that we can use technology to do our work from home during this pandemic." (learner feedback on use of Chromebook and laptops)

General Learning L4
 Information Technology
 Communications
 Mathematics
 Work Experience
 Personal and
 Interpersonal Skills
 Teamwork
 Painting
 Drawing
 Health Related Fitness
 Short Order Cooking

Using TEL to engage learners, complete curriculum and deliver practical elements of the course:

- **Google Hangouts:** can keep in contact with a group through chat, voice, and video calls. Used to link with learners as per timetable and support with assigned work. Links for other TEL resources are posted in Hangouts during online classes.
- **Gmail:** for email correspondence to assist with assigned work. For feedback on completed work. For sending additional assignments and supports. For example, learners take photos of completed written work and email to teacher which allows teacher to correct and give feedback.
- **Google Drive:** for sharing files, for example, PowerPoints and assignments.
- **Google Forms:** for quizzes.
- **Code.org:** for informational videos sent via Gmail and 'An Hour of Code' activities, link sent via Gmail and Hangouts. On completion of 'An Hour of Code' a certificate is generated.
- **Kahoot:** for quizzes. Links for Kahoot can be placed in Hangouts and Kahoot gives feedback to learners on completion of quiz.
- **Microsoft Forms:** for assignments, for example the theory section of information technology and for reflection on mock interview for work experience. Forms are submitted to teacher at the touch of a button and can be set up to give immediate feedback or more detailed feedback can be given via Gmail.
- **Zoom:** a conference tool where you can host meetings. It can be used as a teaching aid as you can share your screen and so use it for sharing information and demonstrations. As it is live you can check for understanding and get immediate feedback from learners. Used for linking with learners for QQI support, teacher check-in with students, for mock interview, sessions can be recorded and used as evidence for QQI. Links for Zoom meetings can be posted via Gmail, Hangouts or text messages.
- **Khan Academy:** an online tool that is being used for mathematics, for activities and allows for tracking progress. All learners are setup on Khan Academy.
- **Nearpod:** a student engagement platform, allows teacher to create presentations that contains quizzes, polls, videos, web content. Used in Personal and Interpersonal Skills online class on the topic of mental health and body image.
- **Screencastify:** screen recorder, used to support learners. For example, teacher recorded themselves reading out worksheet and explaining what needed to be done. This was emailed and used to support learners with literacy difficulties.
- **YouTube:** used for tutorial videos, Ted Talks. YouTube videos were made, uploaded, and shared with learners in art and cooking.
- **Mindfulness in Schools Project:** online support for learners' wellbeing.

I think working from home isn't the best cause I'd rather be with people actually talking and I'd get much more done in class. Work online is much harder' Learner

*'It is almost impossible to read an emotional state online'
(Tutor)*

Communication

Kilmore Youthreach Centre has a clear structure and roles for communications i.e. staff, learners', and parents' liaisons. The coordinator texts learners each morning to remind them of the classes for the day. Weekly phone calls are made to all learners by

the learner liaison persons. These communication channels have worked well and maintain positive connection between the learner and teacher. Weekly Zoom staff check-ins organised by the staff liaison persons have also helped to keep staff connected.

Despite all the planning and the experience of staff in using TEL, they still found that engaging and motivating learners to complete their studies was difficult to achieve. It was achieved somewhat easier with learners who were ready to progress. In the absence of the physical building and daily routine learners sleep patterns changed. Learners missed going to the centre and the social interaction with staff and fellow learners. They missed their lunches, the emotional support, the mentoring and felt the loss of the the casual access to staff.

Staff reflections on the benefits of the approach they took

- Good to have the support and space to learn, create and use TEL. Supported by staff and management in transfer over to digital.
- Some digital tracking of QQI work and use of websites to enhance learning.
- Keeping in contact with other staff was a huge help.
- The TEL resources created during this period can be used to support learners going forward.
- It gave us the opportunity to think outside the box and try new TEL approaches.

*'I personally find it easier to learn in a classroom with a pen and paper instead of a keyboard'
(Learner)*

the

Lessons for teaching, learning and assessment:

- Reducing the actual paperwork and the learners having ongoing access to laptops and Chromebooks will work well for some.
- In order to try to keep writing skills; a mixture of online and pen work is a necessity for literacy and learning
- Going forward learners need to get TEL classes, develop their TEL skills so as to encourage learners to take more control over their own learning.
- Tracking the finished QQI requirements onto a digital format, (e.g. worksheets completed online, photos and videos of work)

CASE STUDY 6 DISCOVERY CENTRE CTC

Discovery Community Training Centre

'MasterChef'

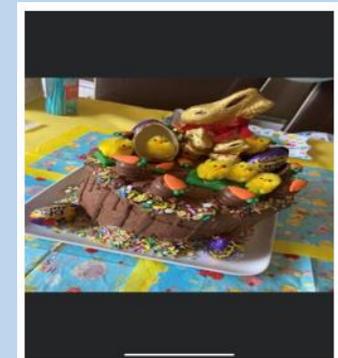
[The Discovery Centre](#) is a Community Training Centre providing vocational support to disadvantaged early school leavers in the Belcamp/Priorswood area of Dublin 17. In accordance with Government guidelines, the centre closed on Friday March 13th 2020 but the work with the learners continued remotely. The situation occurred suddenly without warning which made preparation for home-schooling challenging and required the Discovery staff to quickly develop different methods to support emergency remote teaching and learning during the COVID 19 lock down.

The learners on the centre's catering programme learned best from a practical holistic approach using Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic (V.A.K) learning methodologies. Printed workbooks were posted for learners to complete at home and several virtual learning platforms (VLP) were attempted to engage learners, including Google Classroom, Zoom and Edmodo with varying degrees of success. Technology presented particular challenges due to a lack of resources available to the learners along with their technical ability. It became apparent to the centre staff that they would have to come up with a platform they could all use, something that would catch their attention and use VAK learning methodologies remotely.



The learners all had access to email and were familiar with YouTube, so it seemed a logical platform to use. During the normal face-to-face sessions the practical classes were favoured by the majority of learners and typically received better engagement. Based on these two observations the staff of the centre came up with a plan to motivate the learners. They ran the "Master Chef Competition" with the intention of engaging the learners and providing them with a way to maintain and develop their cooking skills while creatively expressing themselves. Each week the learners had to research a new dish that they could produce at home, using whatever ingredients were available to them. To motivate and reward learners for their efforts, catering equipment relevant to the course and future career development were given as prizes. To support the competition while delivering the course curriculum, centre staff set up a You Tube channel to give the learners guidance and to try to inspire their weekly submissions. To aid learners instructional cookery demonstrations were tailor made to cover the learning outcomes of individual modules on the catering programme.

The response from the learners to this initiative was very positive and they performed the set tasks extremely well. Based on this the staff in the Discovery Centre have gone on to develop training videos in other course areas including Tourism, Hair & Beauty, Health Related Fitness, ICT and Wood Work.



Education Service to Prisons, Pathways, Justice Workshops & Foundations Project



Presentation of Education Services to Prisons, Pathways, Justice Workshops and Foundations Projects

Education Service to Prisons

The CDETb [Education Service to Prisons](#) is a partnership between the City of Dublin Education and Training Board and the [Irish Prison Service](#). It operates in 7 Dublin prisons, providing education opportunities ranging from basic education level to Junior Cert/ Leaving Cert, ECDL, MOS and Degree Level (Open University) with a particularly strong emphasis on Literacy and Creative Arts e.g. Art, Music, Drama, Writing etc. Prior to COVID 19 CDETb teachers delivered all courses on a face-to-face basis in the prisons. Many of the programmes offered are short courses allowing the learner to build up their skills and interests and acquire certification in a manageable and empowering way. In the academic year 2019/2020 there were 3,228¹ learners registered on courses in the 7 prisons and the Pathways prisoner re-integration programme.

After the announcement on 12th of March, this group of learners became extremely difficult to engage with because they cannot use mobile phones, tablets or similar devices. This limited the academic support to the development and distribution of educational materials and resources in hard copy. Not ideal, particularly for learners at level 1 and 2 on the NFQ. To address this all teachers were assigned to one of 10 virtual faculties and developed a series of programmes that can be streamed via the prison TV channel directly into the rooms of the prisoners.

In the pilot phase of the initiative, the learner target group are those at Levels 2 and 3 on the NFQ. Based on the feedback from learners and stakeholders later phases will focus on developing materials for students at higher levels. These programmes are being designed in line with CDETb's QA guidance document to assure the quality and integrity of the awards and if successful will move from emergency remote teaching to full blended learning programmes.

¹ Due to the short course nature of many of the prison education programmes, some learners will be registered on a number of courses in the same year

As both learners and teachers are becoming familiar with this new method of delivery, the format of each 'lesson' is being standardised. This format entails a 10-minute PowerPoint presentation with embedded video/photos voiced over by the teacher and accompanied by a literacy-friendly hard copy booklet of the complete course which allows the learner to revisit and revise the content when necessary and to also complete a number of self-assessment tasks. It is envisaged that for Level 2 and 3 learners, five or six of these bite-sized lessons will make up each short course, and post COVID 19 these may be incorporated into a blended approach to education within the prison service in the future.

On completion of the pilot phase in late June, a number of teacher and student evaluations will be carried out to establish the changes needed to improve on the pilot model. This will also allow teachers and other stakeholders explore additional models and strategies which can augment the work done to date. It will also allow the Service to continue to develop delivery methodologies and practices, which ensure CDETb prison learners can continue to have access to a quality education service despite the limitations imposed by both the prison and COVID 19 context.

Pathways – Prisoner Re-integration Centre

The [Pathways](#) prisoner re-integration centre are committed to providing, information, education, counselling, support and referral services in a safe and understanding environment for former prisoners in the crucial period after release. It is an outreach initiative of the City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb) Education Service to Prisons and many of the participants began their learning journey as part of the [Education to Prisons](#) programme.

Justice Workshops

CDETb fund the delivery of training programmes for adult male offenders leaving custody and offenders on Probation Service supervision on two [Department of Justice Workshops programmes](#) in the city of Dublin. These are [PACE](#) social enterprise workshop based in Santy, Dublin 9 and the [Candle Community Trust](#) workshop based in Ballyfermot, Dublin 10. Both organisations are independent community organisations and provide the educational opportunities alongside a suite of other services to this target group. The CDETb training centres in Finglas has oversight responsibility for these programmes as 'second providers' and at the time of the lockdown there were 11 full time learners registered on these programmes.

Foundations Project

[Foundations Project](#) is a CDET B and HSE funded initiative for people using homeless services. The project operates from three city centre premises, Parnell Adult Education Centre, Transition Centre Parnell Square, and Tilly’s After-Schools Centre, Sean McDermott St Lower. They provide support to people who are homeless to access education, training or employment, including afterschool programmes for children. The Foundations project provides a line between homeless services and education and training services ensuring that people who are experiencing homelessness have access to programmes that may help them to develop new skills and interests and educational qualifications. They offer a range of programmes and supports, both introductory and QQI accredited, with progression through to more mainstream programmes.

Table 6 below highlights some of the challenges faced by these services, the changes undertaken and the lessons learned for teaching, learning and assessment.

TABLE 6 EDUCATION TO PRISONS, PATHWAYS, JUSTICE WORKSHOPS AND FOUNDATIONS PROJECT

Areas/service spheres	What worked/what are you doing now?	What made things easier?	What were the challenges?	Lessons learned for teaching, learning, assessment and Quality Topics Assurance
Education to Prisons, prisoner integration services, Justice workshops and	<p>Education to Prisons Curriculum converted to ‘TV’ programmes and streamed directly to prison cells with support packs provided</p> <p>Partnered with red cross prisoner leaders to provide ‘peer’ support to learners (Mountjoy prison)</p> <p>Developing up Moodle site for use by Education Service to prisons and Pathways staff and learners.</p>	<p>Commitment and buy in of staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buy in from staff and willingness to engage with new technologies Key workers going that extra mile for vulnerable learners Staff worked through the Easter, weekend, evenings to prepare for virtual opening <p>Communication</p>	<p>Access to technology, or materials needed to operate remotely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All equipment, contact lists in centre at time of closure Not enough laptops No internet access for staff or learners <p>Profile of learners /broader issues to be addressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some learners older or not interested in remote learning 	<p>Continuing and Enhancing Blended learning offers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centres recognise the benefit of blended course for some modules and learners. Zoom expanded the reach and capacity of Pathways programme, providing some online services will continue after restrictions ease Explore possibility of running Zoom and face to face classes simultaneously to expand capacity

Areas/service spheres	What worked/what are you doing now?	What made things easier?	What were the challenges?	Lessons learned for teaching, learning, assessment and Quality Topics Assurance
Foundations Project	<p>Developing content for a series of TV programmes for blended learning use during lockdowns (10 facility groups)</p> <p>In 10 facility groups preparing new materials for use and Some staff transferred to support Pathway programme learners</p> <p>Pathways – post release section of Education to Prisons</p> <p>Programme has set up a virtual centre in Zoom. Learners enter the lobby and are directed to the appropriate room to access classes, group support sessions, counselling as.</p> <p>Supports and grinds for families struggling with ‘home schooling’</p> <p>Preparation for reopening building and continuing to offer/develop blended learning options</p> <p>Justice workshops</p> <p>Remote teaching and learning with support from Tutors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular contact between learners from staff Telephone counselling Red Cross staff Mountjoy (peer to peer supports) Assisting with cards/letters to families <p>Access to technology (hardware, software and VLP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoom online classes Establishing a database remotely Access to IT devices/ smart phones for staff <p>required</p> <p>Access to guidance, training and CPD opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link to Moodle resources CDU website Access to training Technical support group was established from among the staff to offer help and support to colleagues <p>Access to learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some learners in hostels and not able to use their phones/ technology Some learners homeless Some learners contracted COVID 19 or were in isolation due to close contact Addiction issues Learners in emergency accommodation No visitors allowed to inmates <p>Broader needs of learners outweighed the focus on module learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact with learners was focused on keeping them engaged to ensure they were managing and providing a space to talk about their feelings/strategies for coping <p>Motivation for engaging with services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For many of the learners their primary focus for engaging in services is for the social aspects It is about having a place to be, friendship and support from others Can’t provide a cup of tea on zoom 	<p>and involve distance learners and medically vulnerable learners</p> <p>Collaboration and co-design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff working closer together in relation to learners and developing solutions Pooling of skills and talents resulting in more innovative and fulfilling work Dublin prison teachers working on a blended learning project Working together on a prison TV channel to broadcast classes <p>The education opportunities are more than just the course and learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to face engagement cannot be replaced fully by online classes Many learners are seeking the social aspects of the courses <p>Issues arising from using new platforms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of zoom brings teachers into the learners homes and broader lives, this requires the updating of guidelines in child protection, appropriate online

Areas/service spheres	What worked/what are you doing now?	What made things easier?	What were the challenges?	Lessons learned for teaching, learning, assessment and Quality Topics Assurance
	<p>Some face to face engagement with learners continued as learners accessed the essential the services of the wider community organisation</p> <p>Foundation project Remote educational support to families experiencing homelessness, with arts & crafts activity packs distributed and Zoom-based activity groups commenced.</p> <p>Adult education programmes continue to be delivered through a range of medium via email, video-recorded classes. Now uploaded to an easily accessible padlet.</p>	<p>Some tutors had access to learners as they availed of other services offered in their organisations</p>	<p>Resource intensive supports required by learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra staffing hours needed outside training hours to facilitate our learners to engaged remotely • Learner expressing need to re-engage with face to face contact <p>Boundaries blurred /staff brought into the life situations outside of their control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging with learners in own home or own environment exposes staff to experiences that would not normally exist in the confines of the centre 	<p>behaviour and critical incident etc.</p> <p>Constant improvement model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use reflection and evaluation to improve the educational programme • Improve what can be delivered on a daily basis

VIDEO LINK 5 NIALL WALSH, MANAGER OF PATHWAYS PRISONER RE-INTEGRATION PROGRAMME – BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF USING ZOOM



[Click](#) to hear Niall Walsh Manager of the Pathways prisoner re-integration programme speaking about the benefits and challenges of using zoom for Teaching and Learning

Education Centre, Mountjoy Prison

When Mountjoy went into lockdown on the 13th March, the Education Centre faced all the difficulties experienced by other CDETb Centres as well as a number of additional challenges unique to the prison context. The lack of internet access, mobile phones and tablets coupled with the diversity of the learner body, particularly in terms of their levels of ability, learning styles and interests were significant challenges to be overcome. However, given the fact that the biggest impact of the COVID 19

'Perhaps the most salient lesson to emerge from all of this, is not just the prompt, professional and proactive response of the teaching staff, rather it is the recognition that the delivery of education in prison is so much more than just 'the delivery of education'. It is about engagement and connection: building positive relationships that enriches prisoners' lives and promotes personal transformation.'

(Anne Costello - Education to Prisons)

restrictions for prisoners is the lack of family visits as well as significantly reduced out of cell time, our initial response was focused on communication and reassurance as we attempted to stave off our learners' fear, anxiety and boredom. Within days of being locked out we wrote to all learners and sent them the first of a number of activity packs developed by the teachers. This 30 page pack included cell workouts and yoga exercises; mindfulness and resilience strategies, art and craft activities as well as more general diversion activities such as word searches, crosswords, Sudoku, quizzes, and so on. We continued to send in a new pack each week until the Prison Service took over printing and distribution of similar packs for all prisons at the end of April.

The efforts of the Red Cross teacher and Red Cross volunteers are integral to our ongoing attempts to meet our learners' educational needs. Not only are they a vital component in peer to peer education on infection control within the prison but they are the conduit through which we distribute and collect educational materials and supplies for all 500 prisoners in Mountjoy. In order to tailor our response to their individual needs, every prisoner continues to receive 'a request form' on which he can request educational materials, resources and supplies. To date over 1000 specific requests have been received. The majority of requests have been for art and craft supplies. However, a large number have requested QQI coursework to work on in their cells. While bearing in mind the caveat that all such coursework will be completed in class before being considered for validation, over 90 QQI 'booklets' have been distributed to date. Of note, is the popularity of the Level 2 modules which teachers have adapted to incorporate the craft activities students are working on independently. Nonetheless, many other prisoners are completing their Levels 4 and 5 courses with the support of their teachers.

In addition to QQI coursework, individual teachers continue to send and receive work to and from their learners. ESOL and Leaving Cert learners have been targeted in particular; and all Open University students have been facilitated to complete their courses. Weekly creative writing and art competitions have been organised. Furthermore, teachers have developed specific booklets and activities to help prisoners cope with the unprecedented conditions, for example, designing 'memory books' for fathers to fill in and send to their children in the absence of family visits.

Educational content has been supplied and uploaded onto the internal prison TV channel. It is envisaged that this initiative will prove to be a significant element in the delivery of education going forward. Educational activities and content will be streamed into all cells through a blended Learning approach. While this is no real substitution for the face to face delivery of education, it does provide a stopgap for now and augments the materials being distributed at present.

Perhaps the most salient lesson to emerge from all of this, is not just the prompt, professional and proactive response of the teaching staff, rather it is the recognition that the delivery of education in prison is so much more than just 'the delivery of education'. It is about engagement and connection; building positive relationships that enriches prisoners' lives and promotes personal transformation. That is why the feedback from our learners is that they not only miss 'education' but also the sense of purpose and promise of a better future that education brings.

CASE STUDY 6 PATHWAYS PRISONER RE-INTEGRATION CENTRE

The Pathways

'virtual' information, education, counselling and support centre

The [Pathways](#) prisoner re-integration centre is committed to providing, information, education, counselling, support and referral services in a safe and understanding environment for former prisoners in the crucial period after release. It is an outreach initiative of the City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb) Education Service to Prisons and many of the participants began their learning journey as part of the [Education to Prisons](#) programme.

The pathway programme normally operates its programmes from small premises off Parnell square with most services offered face to face or by telephone. After the Centre closed on the 12th March, like many other CDETb centres, the initial days were spent establishing contact between staff and then between staff and learners. Then establishing plans on what services to continue to provide, and how those could be provided during lockdown. Some of the staff members had WhatsApp groups already established with their learners to support their cookery and music programmes. This then grew in the first weeks of lockdown with that teacher conducting lessons by developing short videos and following up individually with phone calls to learners. The counsellor also began conducting counselling sessions by telephone.

The team then carried out an audit of what technology was available to staff and learners. Most learners had access to mobile phones with some also having access to a laptop. ZOOM was identified by the service as viable platform to begin offering Online Supports to Learners. The challenge then became how to create viable content, to do this staff needed IT hardware, such as laptops, phones and even Internet dongles, the purchase and delivery of these was organised centrally in CDETb and delivered to staff home addresses.

'As some of our homeless students tested positive for Coronavirus, they were placed in isolation and this contact provided them with a network of supports'.

'Most learners had access to mobile phones with some also having access to a laptop'.

The rapid pace of change required IT up skilling and also a change to what and how teachers delivered classes. Working with the Curriculum Development Unit a plan for upskilling staff was developed and suitable online training and supports for staff accessed. With the team focusing on the use of Zoom, Powerpoint and TEAMS for delivery and contact. The feedback from learners and staff has been so positive that pathways plan to continue to deliver online supports even after restrictions have lifted and are planning to develop some of their courses as blended learning options for delivery in the future.

The Pathways staff were committed, to not just getting as much of what they used to do back up and running, but also expanding their offer to meet the new demands that COVID 19 was bringing. Some of the learners in prison had been released due to COVID 19, expanding the Pathways client list and those learners that remained had no access to mobile phones or any interactive technology. In response to these changes the Education to prison service refocused its responses, the staff that normally operated in the prison service refocusing some of their energy and teaching time on the expanding number of Pathways learners.

The delivery of virtual service does not work for all; some older learners found it difficult to engage online or just preferred face-to-face contact so the staff try to maintain phone contact at least twice per week with those learners. Some of the pathway learners have sadly passed away as a direct result of the lockdown and COVID 19 and a number of learner's locations including their welfare are currently unknown. However, many learners stayed in touch and wanted to continue to engage with learning opportunities and the Pathways staff were determent to provide those opportunities.

Staff worked through the Easter break, late nights, early mornings and weekends to get the service and supports online. 6 weeks after initial closure the centre was fully '**virtually**' reopened and by end of May operating an expanded timetable, with a virtual reception on Zoom, and individual classrooms facilitated through Breakout Rooms. The centre is open the 'normal' hours with clients dropping in or attending for their timetabled classes, or scheduled group support session or individual counselling session by calling in through the 'lobby'. The demand for services is so strong now that the centres opening hours will expand by an additional 3 hours per day until the end of July.

New opportunities, new needs

Being on-line means Pathways is no longer constrained by the physical limitations of their city centre location. This allowed Pathways to extend their course offers, user numbers and their client group. Firstly, this included responding to requests from learners outside of Dublin and using their networks and contacts in prisons and prisoner support organisations around the country to include prisoners being released from prisons in other parts of the country in their services. For example 3 learners recently released from prison in Cork signed up immediately. Virtual working has also resulted in Pathways engaging with learners in their own homes for the first time. As a result, they have begun to provide individual grinds via Zoom to learners and their families who may be struggling with home schooling.

As the country progresses through the easing of restrictions, it is envisioned that the structures currently in place for the Pathways programme will allow them continue to support learners during this difficult time. Social distancing will prevent the service operating as they did previously. It is hoped that the flexible blended model will mean in the event of another full nationwide lock down, the centre will be ready to 'keep the show on the road'.

Second and Specialist Providers



[Presentation of second and specialist providers section](#)

CDET B work in partnership with organisations across Dublin city to provide educational opportunities to learners, these include second providers, funded centres and hours in cooperation. Many of these voluntary and community organisations provide a wide range of services, supports and opportunities to their participants and the provision of educational opportunities in a specialist settings creates a supportive environment tailored to allow the learner achieve their educational and life goals.

There is a wide variety of providers under this umbrella from Community Training Centres (CTCs) providing second chance learning opportunities for early school leavers, Specialist Training Providers working with learners who are overcoming disabilities and Local Training Initiatives providing second chance education for learners who have been out of the labour marker for 6 months or more. The awards offered are wide and varied to meet the needs and progression goals of learners. The CDET B [Training Centre](#) in Finglas has oversight responsibility for second provider programmes with the [Adult Education Services](#) providing oversight of hours in cooperation.

[Community Training Centres \(CTC\)](#) are locally managed centres that provide integrated education, training and work experience to young people aged between 16 and 21 years who have left school with incomplete or no formal qualifications. The awards offered range between level 3 and level 4 on the NFQ with many learners progressing on to level 5 awards on PLC programmes around the city. Specialist Training Providers (STP) like the [Central Remedial Clinic](#) and the [National Learning Network](#) cater for people with intellectual and physical disabilities between the age of 16 and 65 with centres offering awards ranging from level 3 to level 5 Major Awards on the NFQ.

LOCAL TRAINING INITIATIVES (LTI) LIKE THE [IRISH NATIONAL ORGANISATION OF THE UNEMPLOYED \(INOUE\)](#), ENGAGE WITH CLIENTS TYPICALLY WITHIN A SPECIFIC AREA/LOCATION AND OFFERS SECOND CHANCE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR LONG TERM UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE RANGING IN AGE OF BETWEEN 18 TO 35.

TABLE 7 SECOND AND SPECIALIST PROVIDERS

Areas/service spheres	What worked/what are you doing now?	What made things easier?	What were the challenges?	Lessons learned for teaching, learning, assessment and Quality Topics Assurance
<p>SECOND PROVIDER</p>	<p>Many second providers provide access to education and training alongside other support programmes to their clients. In those cases remote teaching and learning was supported by those wider engagement.</p> <p>All centres are operating remotely using an emergency remote teaching and learning approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some STP's had very positive engagement with learners and will adopt blended/remote learning going forward For some learners they preferred the option of learning from home due to fear of leaving a safe environment One to one Zoom calls helped learners greatly Centre website Scheduled Zoom classes Staff committed to CPD 	<p>Access to technology and IT knowhow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a Tutor in web designing New website with timetable of Zoom classes Having an e-learning platform in existence Google classroom <p>Approaches used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using a flipped classroom approach Posting out work to learners in the absence of laptops Full engagement from staff CPD from the FET Unit 	<p>Mental Health/ wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health seemed to be the largest issue Learners missing their friends Learners missing the friendly surroundings of the centre Learners missing the interaction, even asking could they be brought in without anyone knowing <p>Access to IT and IT knowhow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear of using new technologies Lack of laptops and communication devices <p>Disengagement of learner/home or community environment not supporting learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners home relationships struggling Old habits resurfacing with some learner missing class start times Worry that some learners may not return to the centre (fear of COVID) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essential to have an e-learning platform available for learners to engage <p>Learners in these programmes preferred alternative assessments to exams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some learners found the alternative assessments much less stressful and achieved higher grades that expected Learners asked if all assessment techniques could be geared to assignments Learners reported that they learned so much more by researching material Some second providers expressed the desire to continue to develop assessments locally Possibility of going to meet vulnerable learners in the community with the correct PPE

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns that learners will not progress to CFE due to lack of engagement towards the end of course • Some struggling with module content due to isolation 	
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VIDEO LINK 6 LORRAINE HENNESSEY TRAINING MANAGER WITH INOU SPEAKING ABOUT USING A FLIPPED CLASSROOM APPROACH

[Click](#) to hear Lorraine Hennessey Training Manager with the [INOU](#) speaking about using a Flipped Classroom approach in a level 5 award in Community Development during COVID 19

CASE STUDY 7 DUBLIN ADULT LEARNING CENTRE AND PARNELL ADULT LEARNING CENTRE

Dublin Adult Learning Centre & Parnell Adult Learning Centre

Partnership Working

In 2020 the Parnell Adult Learning Centre, (CDETb Adult Education Service (AES), North Inner City) partnered with Dublin Adult Learning Centre ([DALC](#)) to run a part time Special Needs Assisting Level 5 Childcare module for the first time. This joint initiative, co-delivered by 2 tutors was targeted at economically disadvantaged learners with literacy difficulties.

AES oversaw the QA of the award and provided BTEI funding and two tutors to deliver the programme for 15 learners, one focused on delivery of content and one to provide literacy support for learners. DALC provided the premises for the course delivery and recruited the learners.

When the lock down occurred, many of these learners had **limited access to technology**, some experience **literacy difficulties** and still had **3 outstanding assignments** to complete in order to gain their award. Yet 14 of the 15 learners completed their full module and went forward for their QQI award. Two have even gained employment in care homes since completing their studies.

Maintaining contact with learners

Keeping lines of **communication** open and ensuring that learners were kept motivated and on track to finish was the first priority of both organisations. To facilitate this, the tutors established a WhatsApp and email class group. At first, both organisations expected the lockdown to pass quickly so for the first 2 weeks they offered **1 to 1 phone support**. When it was clear that the emergency would continue for longer than originally announced, they responded by organising a weekly [Google meet](#) class at the usual class time.

Developing technology skills

The main IT device available to some of the learners was a **mobile phone**, so any technology solutions offered by the tutors had to be accessible by phone. To support this centres also posted out **hard copies of support documents** to learners who preferred a paper-based document. Some of the learners struggled with the chosen technology initially, so both tutors supported each learner to set up on WhatsApp, email and google meet. This turned out to be very worthwhile with all learner feedback highlighting that Google Meet and regular WhatsApp contact really encouraged them to **keep going** and **feel less isolated**.

"I think co tutoring was very important in terms of the success in getting the group through. Roisin and I met over Google Meet and spoke regularly during the week. It helped us to plan and provide the necessary support for each individual student"

CDETb Tutor Louisa Crowley

Remote teaching and learning

"Overall the COVID situation required more time and commitment from each of us and I think it would have been much more difficult to do it alone".

CDET B Tutor Roisin Harbourne

At the time of the lockdown the curriculum for the course had already been covered in the classroom, but both organisations recognised that learners were in need of **additional support to achieve their awards**. To provide that support the focus on the virtual classroom (google meet) was to provide support and reassure the learners that they could complete their assignments and achieve the award. During these sessions, the tutors kept the atmosphere light, allowing the learners to reconnect and discuss their assignment progress. The emphasis was on keeping **learners motivated** and on track to finish.

Throughout the lockdown, both tutors **provided feedback** to learners on their assignments drafts, in addition Roisin also provided **literacy support via email and phone** for some students. While providing literacy support by phone was a new departure, Roisin found that having a set time available for learners to work through literacy issues over the phone worked.

The students were working on the final 3 assignments when lockdown began, so the tutors created short **YouTube instructional videos for each assignment** and shared them via their WhatsApp group. The feedback from learners on these was also very positive.

The tutors also established a **shared google drive folder** to jointly contain and share with each other the course content, the learners draft assignment and tutor feedback, and the assignment tracking excel sheet designed to support the quality assurance internal verification process.

CASE STUDY 8 IRISH NATIONAL ORGANISATION OF THE UNEMPLOYED – LTI PROGRAMME

Building Futures LTI Programme

The [Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed](#) (INOu) are a CDETb local training initiative (LTI) second provider. In partnership with CDETb, INOu provide community education and training opportunities for long term unemployed people in the Building Futures and Shaping Futures programmes alongside their other programmes and supports to long-term unemployed people and those that work with them. INOu are also a registered QQI provider at level 6.

The Building Futures programme provides learners with the opportunity to complete a QQI major award in Community Development at Level 5. Many of the learners are coming from disadvantaged backgrounds themselves and are interested in developing the skills and competencies that will allow them to address the needs in their communities, either by securing employment or undertaking further study opportunities.

The Community Development course is delivered face to face in the classroom using group work, discussions and experiential learning methodologies, with learners also engaging in voluntary work locally to apply what they were learning in class. At the time of the lockdown in March 2020 three main issues needed to be address to allow the learners to complete their course in time for CAO '0' and '1st' round offers. These were:

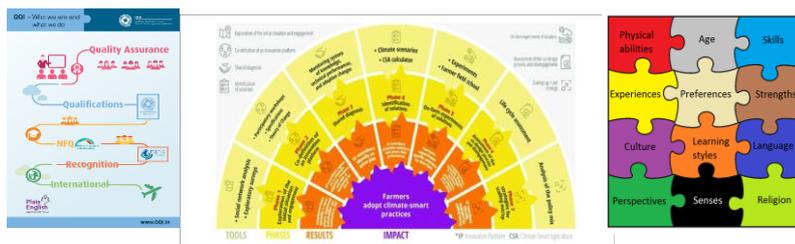
1. **Technology** - only a few learners owned a laptop, had Wi-Fi connections in their home and the digital skills need to work online. In addition, some learners were living in homeless accommodations, which only allow for Wi-Fi in communal areas
2. **Outstanding exams** - the lockdown removed the ability to sit the exam for Social Studies
3. **Work experience module not undertaken** - most of this had been scheduled for the end of the year and as workplaces were on lockdown this removed the ability of learners to undertake their work experience module.

With the commitment of staff INOu did the following to address the challenges. INOu had received a donation of 15 laptops the previous year and were able to lend these to the learners and staff. These laptops enabled the development of a website specifically for the learners to access materials from a central base at all times. They also established a Zoom room for online classes, meetings and one to ones. Then with learners using their phones and free data, the staff used one to one and group sessions to teach learners how to use the technology so that the class material could continue to be delivered to the learners online. The access to technology and the development of the website made it possible for INOu to continue to use their experiential learning methodologies by applying a flipped classroom approach. The learners accessed and read/watched the material by themselves and then joined a Zoom class to discuss and debate what they had studied.

The ongoing voluntary experience that the learners had engaged in throughout the course provided the learners with the opportunities to complete their work experience module. The learners had completed more than the expected hours and their supervisors from the voluntary and community organisations provided a work report on skills demonstrated by learners during their time as volunteers.

SECTION 3

Supporting Teaching, Learning and Assessment



This section reviews the supports that were put in place to ensure the integrity of the awards including development of alternative assessments, continuous professional development provision, and the development of quality assurance and governance processes

Alternative Assessments



[Presentation of Alternative Assessment section](#)

Alternative Assessment is the term given to the assignments, demonstrations or online assignments used to replace traditional examinations or practical assessments during the COVID 19 emergency in line with the QQI [Guiding Principles for Alternative Assessment during COVID-19](#). This approach to learner assessment was applied in CDETb centres and service spheres when social distancing and COVID 19 restrictions prohibited the usual assessment methods taking place. To support and guide the application of Alternative Assessments within its provision CDETb developed a set of guidelines for colleges and centres.

Because the lockdown occurred towards the end of the academic year the majority of alternative assessments were developed by converting end of year examinations into alternative assessments, peer reviewing them and approving them through the colleges/centres QA governance structures. This approach took place on programmes and courses where knowledge and/or skills could be displayed by the learner either through a written assessment or by demonstrating the skill, recording it and forwarding it to the assessor. Learners needed to have access to the requisite technology to complete alternative assessments. While CDETb staff made every effort to accommodate learners, a small number on specialist programmes and courses with specific mandatory practical demonstrations were unable to complete all modules. They will be facilitated to complete these modules when COVID 19 restrictions are lifted.

To ensure the integrity and credibility of the awards the CDETb COVID 19 Quality Assurance processes tracked the use of Alternative Assessments across the service spheres. The IV, EA and RAP processes all recorded and verified the correct application of AA to insure the learning outcomes were met. To date Alternative Assessments have primarily been used in CFEs and for learners working to progress. To support the development of AA across all CDETb spheres a working group was established in the FET Development Unit. This group partnered with [the Further Education Support Service \(FESS\)](#) to provide training to members of college/centre Quality Assurance teams in how to identify core, regulatory and essential learning outcomes. A case study approach was used to demonstrate how this could be done.

For learners who were coming towards the end of their courses, inclusive of CFE learners, 2016 apprentices and trainees, the development of Alternative Assessments primarily focused on adapting examinations and practical demonstrations that had already been developed. Therefore, there was limited

need to review the learning outcomes and the issue did not arise. However, for learners at the earlier stages of their programmes and courses, including those across the other service spheres, identifying core, regulatory and essential outcomes in a changing environment can be challenging. Further local, regional or national lockdowns are put in place further guidance will be required on how to identify these outcomes.

In preparation for further lockdown periods, working groups across the CDETb service spheres a bank of assessments and teaching resources are being developed to support emergency remote or blended learning into the future.

CASE STUDY 9 INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS – AUCTIONEERING APPRENTICESHIP

The [Auctioneering and Property Services Apprenticeship](#) is a two-year 'earn and learn' programme, combining on-the-job training with academic study. It leads to an Advanced Certificate in Auctioneering and Property Services and allows apprentices to hit the ground running early in their career. Apprentices spend four days a week in the workplace and attend college one day per week. They develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours necessary for a successful career in estate agency, property management and property letting. A work-based mentor supports the apprentice through a structured programme of on-the-job training and development. The programme was developed by CDETB in partnership with the Property Services industry and was running in [Ballsbridge College](#) and in Cork City ETB and Galway Roscommon ETB at the time of lockdown.

Unfortunately, during the COVID lockdown, many of the host employers were not able to maintain apprentices; this had implications for the completion of the award and for the learner's ability to attain their 'D' licence in property management essential for practicing in industry. Each of the learners already had significant work based experience as part of their apprenticeship programme, spending 4 days per week in a supervised environment and had already covered many of academic aspects essential for the D licence, for example property management 1 & 2 and Law.

So with the agreement of the Property Regulator a simulated work based learning programme was developed using technology and professional development approaches to replicate the workplace experience and facilitate the learners to apply theory to practice and demonstrate the competencies required for both the work placement and the [Property Management 'D' licence](#).

'I found the online training went very well. I re-listened to the lecture again and when I was doing my assignment so I found this very beneficial. I think also you can concentrate more at the lectures as you are not tired from travelling' Y2 Apprentice

To achieve this during the COVID 19 lockdown, the year 2 apprentices from across the programmes attended a simulated workplace environment where a workplace mentor oversaw their training an experience. These mentors were required to have a 'D' category licence, a minimum of 5 years as a PSRA registered professional and be currently practising in the sector. The programme was delivered online using a flipped classroom approach with readings and resource material made available in advance through the Moodle platform to support live interactive workshops on Zoom.

Under the supervision of a licensed Property Management professional, the apprentices from across the county joined together in the virtual environment to explore key concepts, experiences and practical application of skills and knowledge learned on the job. In agreement with the regulator the 5 full day theory to practice sessions focused on Finance, health and Safety, Engagement and AGM all core, essential and regulatory components of the D licence.

The programme was delivered from the 6th to 13th June 2020 in zoom with preparation carried out in advance by the apprentices. This approach facilitated the apprentices to meet their peer group and collaborate for the first time. Each learner used industry specific case studies to demonstrate their competencies and secure their 'D' licence.

Feedback from the tutors, assessors and learners was so positive that the regulator has confirmed her agreement to proceed with this virtual interactive environment as a permanent addition to the programme delivery and the preferred approach to attaining the D licence element of the programme into the future.

Quality Assurance



[Presentation on Quality Assurance section](#)

Ensuring the integrity of the awards offered through CDETb was of the highest priority during the COVID 19 emergency and a key guiding principle in the organisations contingency planning document. In the document CDETb committed to **Adopting steps to ensure the integrity of the awards** through strong governance and documenting quality assuring approaches taken across the CDETb with the following actions outlined:

1. The CDETb Quality Assurance Strategic Planning Council (QASPC) to hold regular incorporeal meetings

The QASPC held regular incorporeal meetings to review and make recommendations on contingency planning and alterations to CDETb QA practices and processes. It also **coproduced and recommended a COVID 19 quality assurance handbook** for use across the scheme. Building on previous documents and guidelines the handbook outlines the policies, processes and related templates for quality assurance during COVID 19.

In order to assist and inform the work of the QASPC the FET Development Unit compiled two reports. The first report based on information supplied by the different service spheres gave an overview of non-completed learner work experience placements. The second report, again based on information and data supplied by the various service spheres gave an overview of outstanding practical examinations and demonstrations which learners were required to complete as mandatory and required elements of the programmes and courses they were pursuing. The latter report was submitted to QQI in April.

The QASPC will continue meeting via zoom to advise CDETb senior management on plans to prepare for the reopening of colleges and centres, converting programmes and courses to blended learning options and reviewing proposed changes that may impact on awards.

2. Each FET centre and/or service sphere to produce an approved COVID 19 contingency plan

At the commencement of the lockdown in March each CDETb centre/service sphere prepared contingency plans for submission and approval through the CDETb governance structures. Colleges and centres also referred to, operated and or updated their critical incident plans in preparation for what the COVID 19 emergency may mean for staff and learners. The contingency plans were circulated across the centres and service spheres both for comment and to share expertise, ideas and approaches. This process contributed to the co-production of the CDETb COVID 19 contingency plan and related guidelines published on May 1st,

which outlined how CDETb would assure the quality and integrity of certification achieved by learners during the COVID 19 emergency.

In the survey of principals and heads of centre carried out in June 2020, 100% of respondents strongly agreed that having an overarching CDETb COVID 19 QA handbook was a useful support during the COVID 19 emergency.

In addition, CDETb produced a COVID 19 risk mitigation discussion document which identified solutions to a range of COVID 19 related scenarios that might take place. This process alongside the review process is helping to inform contingency planning for the reopening of centres.

3. Internal Verification (IV) of all courses

Internal Verification (IV) is a very important step in assuring the quality of the CDETb offered awards, maintaining their value for learners and their wider acceptance and credibility. Revised guidelines and templates on how to carry out IV during COVID 19 were developed. These were considered at Results Approval Panels (RAPs) with particular attention paid to alternative assessments.

Colleges and centres held virtual exam-boards where learners' results for each course were viewed holistically. As documentation was online and held remotely, it reduced paperwork (printing of sheets for all staff) improved attendance (virtual meetings eliminated travel time) and resulted in productive, effective discussions. Many colleges and centres have identified virtual exam-board meetings as a positive innovation which they wish to retain post the COVID 19 emergency.

Previously IV was primarily a paper based exercise with teachers preparing boxes of documentation during IV for review by External Authenticators. Due to the lockdown this process went online with a template replacing the teachers' paper IV document box. An instructional video was produced to support colleges and centres to make this change [Click here for a video on how to complete this form](#)

This process turned out to be very effective and popular with most CFEs expressing a desire to use one drive or Moodle for the submission and storage of assessments, IV and EA into the future.

4. External authentication to take place in line with government regulations

In 2018/2019/2020 FESS, ETBI and CDETb recruited and carried out training for External Authenticators and following this a new EA panel was formed. Their subject matter and quality assurance expertise were a very important component during the COVID 19 emergency helping to assure the integrity of awards. In line with the guidance in the QA handbook, the EA moderation of awards took place using the ETB's common sampling strategy following the completion of the IV process. An External Authenticator (EA)

report was produced for courses using an adapted CDETБ EA template, which recorded COVID 19 adaptations and alternative assessments. As an additional quality assurance measure a member of the FET Development Team or a member of the CDETБ senior management team attended RAP meetings across the scheme. The FET Development Unit are currently gathering the RAP reports and a review of these will take place in July to identify areas for development.

5. Appeals process

As in other years CFEs colleges and centres operated a robust Appeals process in 2020 whereby learners may appeal the programme and course results they have received. In the first instance, the majority of appeals are dealt with through each CFEs/centres internal appeals structure and processes. In a small number of cases learners take their appeals to the CDETБ External Appeals Office.

SUPPORTING THE CHANGES TO QA PRACTICES

To support Quality Assurance processes and changes and as a support to senior staff, a weekly QA Zoom forum meeting commenced in April with Principals and Heads of Centres. The forum meetings were chaired by a FET Director and members of the FET Development Unit also attended. A QA padlet was developed whereby questions and challenges could be posed, discussed and collective solutions found at the weekly forum meetings. In a survey of Principals and Heads of Centres undertaken in June 2020 92% agreed or strongly agreed that they found the forum meeting useful in managing the QA changes needed during the COVID 19 emergency and 100% agreed or strongly agreed that they would welcome an overarching QA handbook for use post COVID 19.

In response to requests made in this survey, these meetings were extended to include Assistant Principals and Deputy Heads and the meeting are now theme based for example, appeals, semisterisation, timetabling, blended learning etc. with centres sharing their experience and outlining the benefits, challenges and solutions they have come to.



VIDEO LINK 7 [CLICK TO HEAR](#) PRINCIPAL PATRICIA O' KEEFFE OF PEARSE COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION SPEAKING OF HER EXPERIENCE QUALITY ASSURANCE DURING COVID 19

[Inaugural review](#)

In preparing for the QQI inaugural review the experience and developments within CDETБ during the COVID 19 emergency will inform the organisation's process and preparations.

The **case study 9** outlines some of the changes that went well and supported quality assurance in a CDETБ College of Further Education.

CASE STUDY 10 ACTIONS TO SUPPORT QUALITY ASSURANCE DURING LOCKDOWN – CDCFE

[Colaiste Dhulaigh CFE](#) is one of the largest FE colleges in the country. It operates across three campus locations in the north side of Dublin offering learning and progression opportunities and awards for school leavers, unemployed, employed and career changers from levels 3 to level 8 on the NFQ. At the time of the lockdown in March, there were over 1,300 learners enrolled in more than 90 different programmes and courses across the various campuses of which 90% were on PLC courses.



During the COVID 19 emergency, Coláiste Dhúlaigh were very committed to maintaining the value of the awards they offered to learners and put steps in place to ensure the integrity of these awards. This included communicating openly with learners and stakeholders, having robust QA process in place and arranging safe and alternative ways to complete essential QA tasks needed to ensure learners received their certification in time for CAO '0' and round '1' offers.

COMMUNICAITON WITH STAFF AND LEARNERS

During COVID 19 communication with staff and learners was an important element in effectively responding to the impact on teaching, learning and assessment. The Principal's weekly newsletter to staff continued alongside virtual team and department meetings. However, the college also recognised the importance of communication with learners. Staff were committed to maintaining contact with learners, and did so using email, phone, WhatsApp, post, virtual platforms. In addition, the Principal began sending a weekly **Newsletter** to students. This added an additional layer of support and ensured that all learners got the **same message, at the same time, and in the same way** keeping all informed and minimizing the

'I began communicating with students since the lockdown with a weekly newsletter and it worked a treat, I began to get emails back letting me know how they were doing and what problems they were encountering or who needed extra help'.- Principal of CDCFE

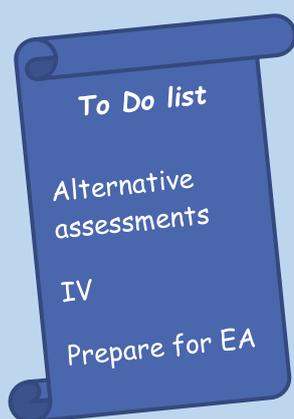
spread of misinformation. In addition, it offered learners an opportunity to connect directly with the Principal of the College.

Phone Service for students

Keeping communication lines open was considered very important, so CDCFE put five specific phones answering services in place to support students. Three of these were with the **Guidance service**, which received a steady stream of calls, but less than had been expected given the circumstances and the numbers of learners. While numbers were small, the availability to the learner was important.

The busiest call line was the one for **VTOS** learners with most enquires relating to entitlements. The final answering service was a general CDCFE phone line, this primarily received general queries similar to those that would normally be dealt with by the centres office staff.

GOOD PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION KEY TO ASSURING QUALITY



The College QA team met regularly and prepared a weekly teaching, learning and assessment 'to do list' with guidance on 'how to do it', for staff. The Principal circulated this list to all staff along with her newsletter helping to *'keep everybody on track'*.

Holding virtual **Exam Boards** turned out to be a very positive experience for CDCFE and an innovation they would consider maintaining into the future. The challenges of having staff spread over 3 campus buildings was removed by holding the meetings via Zoom while also making the process more efficient and effective.

Appeals

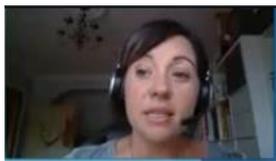
CDCFE took a two-step process approach to appeals, an internal informal process with the Deputy Principal and Quality Assurance team and then the more formal external process, which involved the CDU. The college were able to sort out most of their appeals locally using the informal process and provide opportunities for repeating.

QBS Entry on QQI System

CDCFE have a large staff team. Normally QBS entries to the QQI system take place in the college during work hours. Providing remote access to the QBS system to a large number of staff raised cyber security issues. To address this issue the college was able to timetable online access to the QBS system in order to maintain security. Any changes needed due to late submission or extenuating circumstances were completed by the person responsible for QBS or one of the colleges Deputy Principals.

CDCFE were able to convert examinations and practical demonstrations to alternative assessments, complete their IV and EA processes for modules and courses, hold virtual exam board meetings, upload grades on to QQI's QBS system all in time for their learners to avail of the June/July certification period and the CAO round '0' and '1' offers. This was achieved due to the leadership, dedication and commitment of staff to support learners reach their educational and developmental goals.

Professional Development Plan to Respond to COVID 19



[Click](#) to hear Carrie Archer, the PD Coordinator speak about the CDETb's PD response during the COVID 19 emergency phase

In March 2020, CDETb moved almost overnight from face to face delivery of Further Education and Training provision to emergency remote teaching, learning and assessment. To achieve this and maintain the integrity, quality and credibility of the awards CDETb FET staff had to be upskilled, trained and supported in IT skills, choosing and using virtual learning platforms, teaching remotely to a diverse learner group and developing alternative assessments. Peer-to-peer learning within CFEs and centres and one-to-one advice from staff in the FET Development Unit was the first port of call in the days that followed lockdown. Within weeks, the [Curriculum Development Unit](#) (CDU) and the newly appointed Professional Development Coordinator had begun offering CPD opportunities in each of the required IT areas.

The lockdown came towards the end of the academic year, which meant that for most of the CFE learners the course curriculum had been largely completed. The key challenge for the CFE service sphere was on converting written examinations to online and alternative assessments. For the Training Centres, Adult Education Services, Youthreach Centres, CTCs, Education Service to Prisons and other second providers the focus was on maintaining engagement with learners and undertaking remote emergency teaching and learning.

The CDU Moodle platform was used to support staff to respond to the demands of the lockdown. On this site, staff were directed towards webinars and suitable online guidance and content to support them in their teaching and assessment roles with CDETb specific PD courses offered from early April. As the centres prepare for autumn reopening with a focus on developing content to provide a blended approach where needed the upskilling staff in blended and remote teaching techniques and technologies is a priority for the CDETb's CPD response.

How was CPD used to support teaching, learning and assessment during COVID 19?

The National PD strategy identified TEL as one of the areas that FET practitioners had the least confidence in, so it was inevitable that a move to emergency remote delivery would prove highly challenging for many in the sector. Akin to every other element of the organisation, with the challenges of COVID, for PD there

needed to be a sharp and strategic shift in focus to address the most immediate needs of staff in order to benefit learners, with a view to supporting the medium and long term needs of staff as a whole.

Training courses/ workshops offered and rationale:

Supports and resources have been implemented, with some addressing the needs of staff across the organisation, and others being very specific to a target group/ particular service sphere. Both the sessions and feedback received informed the rationale for the introduction of continued webinars and online sessions for staff across the organisation.

Sphere specific training:

As well as accessing webinars provided by other organisations the following CDETb specific training was provided to staff in the different service spheres:

1. Training for **Youthreach centres on Social Emotional Learning** in the Emergency remote delivery environment with **considerations regarding data protection and building confidence in moving to a virtual classroom** (80 staff attended).
2. Sessions with **Dochas centre staff with a view to supporting Prison staff** in producing resources to be able to broadcast into the Prisons (18 staff).
3. An introduction to **MS Teams for Training Centres** (instructor and non-instructor staff) including the development of a TC Teams site to support the use of MS teams which has been populated with continued resources to support TC's in the use of Teams as a staff communication platform and as a tool for use with learners (114 members).
4. An **introduction to MS Teams for Youthreach centres** (both academic and non-academic staff) and the development of a specific site (as per TC's above). (120 members)
5. **Individual work with staff in FE Colleges** in carrying out online examinations for ITEC.
6. Online sessions in the use of TEAMS for Psychological service (7 participants)
7. **FESS and CDETb**: Exploring what is meant by '**essential**' **learning outcomes when devising alternative assessments** during the COVID 19 crisis- CDETb AES and Youthreach staff with responsibility for devising alternative assessments; designed for programme coordinators and nominated subject-matter experts.
8. 2 day **training for new TEL mentors** who will support staff in their centres (8 staff from Youthreach, training centres and PLC). Development and ongoing support of a Teams site to support all 21 CDETb TEL mentors in their role as a support to their staff on site.
9. 129 **General Operatives** to complete one day intensive training in **public area cleaning** in preparation for return to work

Whole staff training

In addition to the sphere specific training provided, there were also 23 live 1-hour sessions provided over 5 weeks where 3,820 staff logged on live. These sessions and the supporting materials were also then made available for all staff to access afterwards. The sessions included

- Sessions on **how to use platforms** – Zoom, TEAMS, Moodle, O365
 - Specific Teams created and resourced in TC's and Youthreach
- Moving on to PD programmes about **content and engagement** e.g.
 - TEL Tools (8 different tools)
 - Zoomergisers
 - Screencasting and recording
- PD programme to **support the move from emergency remote teaching, learning and assessment to quality Blended Learning** for example
 - Blended learning and Pedagogy of online learning and teaching
 - Identifying Core, essential and regulatory learning outcomes
 - Universal design for learning (UDL)

All the live training sessions and related support material and located [here](#)

Feedback from staff:

Below is a snapshot of some feedback and engagement by staff in PD since COVID.

13. Would you attend online training sessions outside of your teaching hours (ie evenings/ during holidays)

[More Details](#)

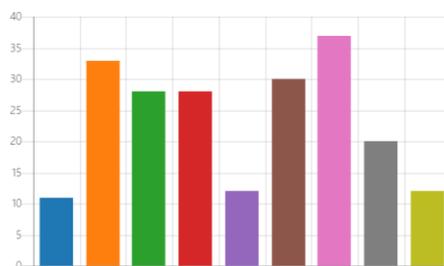
● Yes	153
● No	13
● Maybe	49



14. Please indicate any training sessions you would like to see in the future

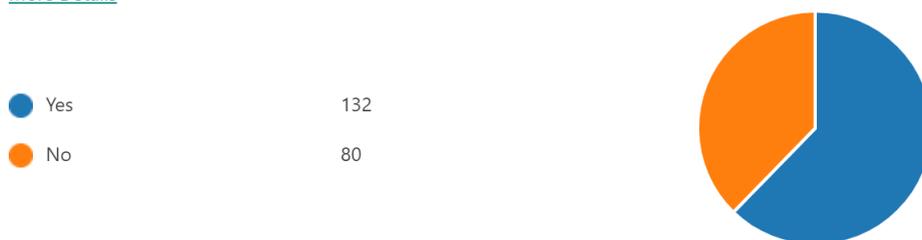
[More Details](#)

● An introduction to Universal D...	11
● Using Microsoft Teams	33
● Technology Enhanced Learnin...	28
● Using Google Suite for educat...	28
● Basic IT skills	12
● Screenrecording/ Powerpoint ...	30
● Using Moodle	37
● Pedagogy of online teaching	20
● Inclusive assessment	12



15. Have you engaged in other online professional development since the onset of COVID?

[More Details](#)



16. If you answered yes to Question 15 above, what professional development have you participated in? (include webinars, courses etc)

141 Responses

117	anonymous	I have completed my training over the last 10 weeks with AHEAD (through the National Forum) and received the Digital Badge in Universal Design for Learning.
118	anonymous	Microsoft Teams Webinar
119	anonymous	Linkedin-Learning - Teams / Adobe Connect and learn live, Zoom tutorials, Pearson Qualifications Webinar Quality Assurance Updates and COVID19 response. SOLAS Pilot Training for Inaugrial Review and QIP. Ahead weekly Webinars on Fridays x 3, Dip. Change Management
120	anonymous	GAA webinars, Wriggle
121	anonymous	Teams Webinar
122	anonymous	Using Teams for Blended Learning;
123	anonymous	EPEA webinar and IPEA webinar
124	anonymous	I am studying TEL course, and Marketing course online.
125	anonymous	Moodle and zoom training

Ongoing resources and supports:

- ✓ All **resources and follow up supports** (including recordings) for all whole staff sessions are housed on our [Curriculum Development Unit's Moodle platform](#), which all staff have been access to and which are supported by the CDU librarian. This will be the continued point of contact for all staff as a platform for continued upskilling of staff in the medium and long term.
- ✓ **Designated section on CDU Moodle platform** populated by the psychological service to support leaders and relevant staff in implementing CDETb critical incident plans.
- ✓ [Designated section on the CDU's website](#) to point staff toward FET specific courses, sites, resources and supports.
- ✓ The introduction of a **Prison Service staff specific space on CDU's Moodle site**, populated with quality assured resources to support staff in all 7 centres.
- ✓ The **PD coordinator has additionally completed a Badge in Online Teaching** and Learning through the National Forum and Badge in UDL with AHEAD and is beginning a course in developing online resources, which will be used to provide additional supports in these areas in the medium and long

term. Ongoing collaboration with FESS, AHEAD and other external agencies will further support PD opportunities.

- ✓ 17 staff in positions of influence across the CDETb are undertaking a change management programme with NUI Galway

Responding To Emerging Needs



[Presentation on responding to emerging needs](#)

COVID 19 quickly brought about changes to the world of work, and while the primary focus during the lockdown phase was on ‘keeping the show on the road’ and ensuring learners continued to have opportunities to engage in quality learning, secure valuable educational qualifications and to avail of progression routes. CDET B also continued to innovate and respond to the needs of employees and employers in Dublin City. Two examples of responding to these needs are the ‘*infection prevention and control*’ programme developed by the Employers Engagement Unit in partnership with [Coláiste Íde](#) for staff employed in crèches and Childcare facilities and the *skills to work* programme developed by the [AES](#) Workplace Education Unit with Mandate Trade Union for the staff made redundant by the closure of Debenhams.

CASE STUDY 11 MISSION IN ACTION - DEVELOPING COURSES TO SUPPORT THE REOPENING OF IRELAND

Mission in Action

Developing courses to support the reopening of Ireland

The mission of the CDET B is

“To provide professional high quality education and training services for people in Dublin City that contributes both to the personal development of the individual as well as to the overall social, economic and cultural development of the city – think people, think service, think Dublin City”

In April 2020 the [Employer Engagement Unit](#) in CDET B brought together experts from across the CDET B to support employers in Dublin city to respond to some of the challenges they were facing because of COVID 19. One of the results emerging from those virtual gatherings was the conversion of the *QQI Level 5 5N3734 Infection Prevention & Control module* to an Online/Blended delivery course. On the 27th of May 2020 the first 15 learners, all from crèches and childcare facilities, began their studies in preparation for the reopening of facilities on the 29th of June 2020.

Personnel from CDET B’s Employer Engagement unit, established and coordinated a virtual working group to prepare the module for online/blended delivery. The group, hugely supported by the Principal and Deputy Principal of Coláiste Íde, consisted of subject matter experts from across the CDET B in areas such as:

- infection prevention and control
- technology enhanced learning
- universal design and assessment

with guidance on Quality Assurance from the FET Development Unit.

‘Very positive exercise where personnel with expertise in different areas worked collaboratively towards achieving quality assured programmes to a high standard’

There were many firsts for this group.

- It was the first time the employer engagement unit brought expertise from across the different service spheres together to develop a module or course
- it was the first time that most of the group had met remotely or used virtual meeting spaces, so they needed to develop a new skill before they could bring their existing expertise into play
- first time for the group members to meet
- first time for this team to convert a face to face module to a blended/online offering.

The team worked remotely to develop the content and the assessments in line with the module descriptors, the CDETb blended learning policy and best practice in universal design and assessment. As most sectors were on lockdown the team began preparing the module content for delivery to those in the 'care' sectors focusing on health care, social care and childcare sectors. This course is now running in [Coláiste Íde](#) for those sectors with the virtual learning platform hosted on their Moodle platform.

The team are currently modifying the content to support a broader set of employers and their staff including retail and hospitality industries.

Reflections from the team on what worked well /could be improved

'There was no template for converting programmes so we had no preconceptions of what would or wouldn't work- we took a leap of faith' - developing guidance or templates for this would be really helpful

'Working remotely posed some challenges for the team and the fact everyone was also involved in other duties which meant that these programmes relied heavily on the goodwill of all involved. The concept of developing methods to accurately record achieved learning outcomes through the medium of technology-very challenging and all new learning for us'.

- **What worked so well that it could be retained beyond the emergency?**

Acknowledging and harnessing the skillset among staff across the provision. The development of a working group to pool our resources to enable the efficient use of time and skills in the development of Online/Blended programmes to be offered beyond the emergency.

CASE STUDY 12 DEBENHAMS IRELAND / MANDATE TRADE UNION

WORKPLACE EDUCATION UNIT Debenhams Ireland / Mandate Trade Union

The workplace education unit for the Adult Education Service (AES) is based in the Ballymun Adult Education region and covers the five CDET B AES regions offering upskilling or career changing educational programmes primarily for low skilled workers or those in professions in danger of mechanisation.

In March 2020, shortly after the COVID lockdown began, Debenhams Ireland announced the closure of all their stores nationwide in Ireland. Mandate Trade Union represents a number of Debenhams workers and has worked collaboratively with the AES Workplace Education Unit in the past. Mandate contacted the unit to see if the CDET B could use the Skills for Work funding initiative to provide a learning solution that might help and assist the employees of Debenhams. Given the tight timeframe and the COVID 19 restrictions, it was imperative to move swiftly and get the offer of courses to the employees as soon as possible.

After carrying out a learning needs assessment, a non-accredited programme was developed to prepare staff for the redundancy, to ease them into a nurturing, supportive learning environment and to ensure they stayed job ready in order to be able to seek and secure employment or further learning post COVID 19 lockdown.

The staff expressed a desire for a viable learning situation that would help them build their confidence to research and apply for jobs. to create CV's, cover letters and develop interview skills. They also expressed a need for support as they had been employed by Debenhams for between 16 to 32 years did not feel confident about entering a learning environment or seeking a new role.

'Encouragement and support was given to each learner, particularly those who struggled with the technology, but once the initial connections to Zoom was made the learners all looked forward to their classes each week and to the support they also gained from each other at such a difficult time in their lives'

Access to technology was an issue, but did not turn out to be a barrier to anyone who wanted to attend the career preparation course offered. Lack of confidence in using technology was also a consideration, whilst the course was aimed at improving confidence, creating CVs and searching for employment, it had to incorporate training on how to access and use the technology. However, with support and guidance of CDET B tutors, learners were able to access their classes via Zoom.

Debenhams has branches nationwide. So while Mandate advertised the 'Skills for work' course through their online platform, CDET B staff contacted the other ETB Skills for Work coordinators that had a Debenhams store in their region. The CDET B staff informed them of the situation, received their help in recruiting interested learners, and assisted them in offering similar Skills for Work courses for Debenhams workers in their regions.

As a result of this initiative, 29 long service workers from Debenham's Henry Street, Dublin branch and many more nationwide, learned how to create modern, tailored cover letter and CV, and can now research jobs online and were provided with an opportunity to attend mock interviews. All 29 learners were given specific feedback and advice for improving their interview performance in the future.

On completion of the programme each learner will receive a SFW attendance certificate. A completion ceremony will take place on Zoom and will be attended by Mandate staff, CDET B tutors to congratulate learners on their achievement. Learners attending reported that the online course has helped them to cope with the stress of the current situation in which they find themselves and has allowed them to meet with their former co-workers to discuss their individual situations within the learning environment.

Appendix I

COVID 19 – QA, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Case Study Guidance

What is the Case Studies for?

The purpose of the case studies is to document and demonstrate innovative practices and responses that were developed to support and enhance teaching, learning and assessment in during COVID 19. In order to inform CDETБ and national policy on quality assurance, teaching, learning and assessment.

Who can submit a case study?

Any of the 60+ centres under the CDETБ FET service spheres for example, Colleges of Further Education, Training Centres, Youthreaches, CTC's, Specialist Training Providers, Adult Education, Night Schools, Education to Prison etc., or cross service sphere support services for example, FET Development Unit, Employer Engagement, IT supports, Psychological services, CPD etc

What types of actions are suitable for a case study?

We are aiming to capture actions or practices that helped assure the integrity of FET awards and supported teaching, learning and assessment during COVID 19. This can include staying in touch with learners, supporting learners to access technology, developing alternative assessments, upskilling yourself and others in new teaching methodologies, scenario planning to prepare for unknown 'new normal'

How do I go about completing a case study?

The best case studies tell a story with a distinct beginning, middle and end. The beginning outlines the context and the need/s to be addressed, the middle is what you did for them, and the end is how they benefited. The following headings **may** guide you in writing up the case study (max 600 words, use bullet points where appropriate, you don't have to use headings)

FET Centre: give name of your centre and a short context about the location, focus ect.

Background: some general information about the learner group and the course/module they were undertaking

Requirement: what was the issue/s facing this learner group/staff – for example access to technology or specialist equipment, ability to sit a practical exam or undertake work experience

Approach: what you did that addressed their need, or solved their problems

Results: the outcomes of your work, at a practical level

Benefits: how the learner benefited as a result of your work

Lessons for teaching, learning and assessment: what are the key lessons for your centre, CDETБ or FET education into future

COVID 19 – QA, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Centre Reflections

What is the self-reflection report for?

The purpose of the centre/service sphere self-reflection report is firstly to support reflective practice and continuous improvement processes in the CDETb, and secondly to **gather lessons learned** from the COVID 19 emergency responses in order to support evidence informed decision-making at centre, CDETb wide and national level.

Who can submit a self-reflection report?

Any of the 60+ centres under the CDETb FET service spheres for example, Colleges of Further Education, Training Centres, Youthreaches, CTC's, Specialist Training Providers, Adult Education, Night Schools, Education to Prison etc., or cross service sphere support services for example, FET Development Unit, Employer Engagement, IT supports, Physiological services, CPD etc

What should the report capture?

The CDETb COVID 19 'informing the future' review will contribute to the QQI's '*Evaluation of the Impact of the Covid-19 Modifications to Teaching Learning and Assessment*' so ideally it should look at some of the same key questions that the national review will explore.

The key questions for the CDETb review In relation to QA, teaching, learning and assessment are -

- **What were the main differences between how you normally operate and how you operated since the beginning of the emergency?**
- **What worked well?**
 - this might result in a case study from your centre
- **What did not work as well as hoped but could be improved?**
 - **What in hindsight might have been done differently?**
 - What challenges or resource implications are associated with that?
- **What worked so well that it could be retained beyond the emergency?**
- **How were the changes to Teaching Learning and Assessment overseen, coordinated/quality assured at your centre/service sphere?**

How do I go about preparing a report?

This is an extremely busy time of year for FET, however it is also an extremely important opportunity to contribute to a local, regional and national understanding of FET and how it may be delivered in the post lock down phase of the COVID 19 emergency and beyond. A 2-page submission answering some or all of the questions above would be ideal. The FET unit can also provide a workshop guideline for delivery in Teams/Zoom to facilitate all staff to contribute to a centre/sphere wide submission, for support with this contact Louise on 086 6004562.



QQI AWARD

CDET B

An Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath
City of Dublin Education and Training Board



Ireland's European Structural and Investment Funds Programmes
2014-2020
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