



# City of Dublin Education and Training Board

## Learner Consultation Event

NQF Level 1-4 | 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021 | 11am-1pm

Many of the learners reported negative experiences of school which had either led to them leaving education early or delayed them taking up further education and training opportunities such as those offered through FET.

They liked being on the FET courses, being treated well, the small class sizes, the commitment of teachers and tutors and the supports provided. They valued being listened to, having their opinions respected and being treated as equals.

Most of the learners felt the courses they were on, the way they were delivered, and the commitment of the teachers and tutors had built their self-belief and self-confidence and increased their ability to apply for a job or further study.

## Learner Journeys

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 2021, 63 learners from [Adult Education Services](#) including [Community Education](#), [ESOL](#) (English for speakers of other languages) and Adult literacy, [Youthreach centres](#), [Community Training Centres \(CTC\)](#), [Local Training Initiatives \(LTI\)](#) and [Specialist Training Providers](#) (STP) in Dublin city came together to share their experiences of training and learning over the last few years.

The learners on the Youthreach and CTC programmes were aged 15 – 24 years of age and those on the other programmes 18 – 70+ years old.

Learners spoke about what led them to the course and centre they were in. Some chose the courses they were on because they were interested in the kinds of jobs they would lead to, for example a course in childcare or beauty. Some were only on the course because they were sent by their local [Intreo](#) office and others out of a personal interest or a desire to develop.

Some chose the centres first and the course second for example they chose the course because it was delivered in their local area and they heard about it from a friend or neighbour. Others chose the centres because of the specialist supports they provided.

Some of the learners spoke about how important it was to have someone care about them as people, with many of the learners commenting how their teachers and tutors have helped them grow and develop as people.



*'The teachers care about us as people'*  
**Learner**

*'It feels completely different from school, I wish I had come here years ago'*  
**Learner**

Different life journeys and experiences were shared by learners from courses and centres across Dublin City



63 Learners



27 FET Centres



36 Courses



32 Facilitators



### What participants asked CDETB to remember about its learners when reviewing and planning our courses

#### Keep listening to us, caring about us, respecting us

- Learners talked about how important it was to have someone who cared about them as people as well as students
- Learners highlighted how diverse a group they are and how important it is that their diversity is recognised, respected and catered for

#### Make courses easier to find and get on to

Some learners spoke about the challenges they experienced working out what they wanted to do or do next, finding and getting onto courses and suggested the following

- Be clear in the title and advertisement what the course is about and what you can do with the qualification afterwards
- Promote the courses more because some learners didn't know what courses were available to them or how to get on them
- Be clearer about costs of courses (if there are any) and grants/allowances available for learners on the course
- Have someone they can talk to about different types of courses and jobs available
- Make the application process easier
- Make sure the centre's 'front of house staff'/first people they meet in a centre know what courses are available in CDETB centres and can help learners apply for the courses and grants

### Remember that not everyone has connections for getting work experience, information about different types of careers or support to get a job

Some of the learners expressed the difficulties they experienced getting work experience or jobs in the area they were studying if they didn't know anyone who already worked in the area. They suggested the following

- Support before they come on a course to make sure it is the right course for them
- More support getting work experience in the same area as their course
- Support after the course is over to find a job in the area they qualified in

### Recognise that learners are all different and cater for that difference

Learners spoke about the difference between being in a class where the teaching style suited them and being in a class where it didn't. This included online teaching. They suggested the following

- Develop individual tailored learning plans to keep everyone learning and developing at their own pace
- Use a variety of different teaching and assessment approaches to suit different learning styles
- Deliver courses using different modes (face to face, online, blended) to suit learner needs
- Building confidence and supporting learners to grow and develop is an important part of being on courses
- Provide wellness programme throughout the year to help learners manage the stresses and anxiety associated with studying, especially during COVID 19

*'It is very demotivating if the pace of the class is too fast or too slow'*



## Experience of studying this year

### What it was like to be a learner during COVID 19

Using both Padlet and small group discussions, learners shared their experience of studying this year focusing on what went well, what didn't, and what can CDETB learn from that. They also discussed what changes introduced because of COVID 19 should be kept after the emergency phase of COVID 19 passes.

#### WHAT WENT WELL

- Learners more confident from participating on the course and mixing with new people
- Help from tutors and peers – always get the help you needed
- Tutors/teachers were supportive and accommodating of learners' needs
- Being treated as equals
- Teachers using different teaching styles to appeal to all the different learning styles of students
- The wellbeing programmes and activities helped to reduce anxiety
- Great communication from tutors and teachers about what was happening to replace classes during COVID 19

#### WHAT DIDN'T

- Too much screen time
- Internet access and connections (both learner and staff)
- Uncertainty caused by COVID 19
- Some learners didn't have access to the technology and equipment needed for online learning with some learners doing full courses using mobile phones
- Not being able to go into centres – missing class interaction
- Diversity of IT skills among staff and learners
- Difficult to motivate self at home / Not having a suitable place to learn at home
- Not having work experience options
- Having to delay the end date of some practical course for months because it couldn't be delivered or took longer to deliver remotely

#### WHAT COVID 19 CHANGES SHOULD WE KEEP

- Smaller classes
  - allows for learners to be grouped according to ability – this improved motivation
  - more support from tutors and allowed individual supports to be developed
  - easier to make friends
- Wellbeing programmes delivered throughout the year. This helped learners deal with anxiety and manage changes
- A small amount of remote delivery for some people
- Everyone doing at least one class online to keep developing remote working skills
- Using technology as part of the classes
- Make class notes and recorded classes available online after class is over
- Positive tutor support

We used small group discussions, Padlet, surveys and case studies to gather feedback from participants. This initial summary does not include all the feedback received. A full report of the event will be available and circulated to stakeholders mid-summer 2021.

*'You always got the help you needed and you never felt lost or alone' – Learner*



Website:  
[www.cdetbctu.ie](http://www.cdetbctu.ie)



Contact:  
353 (0)1 498 9500



Email:  
[fetqa@cdetb.ie](mailto:fetqa@cdetb.ie)