**Summary of findings from a sample of EA reports 2023**

# **Sampling of reports**

Fifty-five EA reports were sampled across all 5 service spheres as follows: 3 from Adult Ed, 36 from colleges of FET (3 per college), 1 from each of the TCs plus 3 from second providers, 3 from the education service to prisons and seven from YouthReach. Reports were sampled to maximize the spread of programmes and the spread of external authenticators. The reports were inputted into a spreadsheet and themes extracted as they emerged.

The quality of the reports themselves was analysed and is also commented upon in this summary report

# **Quality of EA reports**

The quality of the reports varied on a spectrum from detailed, constructive and highly-organised on the one end to very sparse indeed on the other. The sparsest reports went little beyond authenticating the results and giving a few vague, evaluative comments. Most, however, gave good, detailed analysis and recommendations.

# **Summary of themes from EA reports**

In what follows, most good practice and areas for enhancement apply across service spheres and across and within centres.

# **Briefs/Assignments**

## Areas of good practice

* Good examples of integration in briefs
* Assignments give good opportunity to the students to develop a variety of skills.
* Clear and detailed structure and instruction on briefs
* Gave learners the opportunity to be creative while meeting LOs
* Gave learners the opportunity to gain full marks

## Areas for enhancement

* Unclear and made marking difficult to EA
* Too many, too old, not adequate to the level
* Weighting incorrect
* Unclear, too vague, onerous and complicated
* City of Dublin ETB template not used
* Did not give learners the opportunity to gain full marks

# **Academic Integrity**

## Good practice

* Good to see recommendation to use FET referencing guide for referencing research – this should be embedded into all assignment briefs – add to assignment brief template.
* Sample of bibliography technique included – could be linked to FESS handbook.
* No marks were allocated for work that was not referenced.
* Ethics attended to in assignments

## Areas for enhancement

* Little evidence of Harvard referencing being applied
* Suggest that examples of Harvard referencing be included in assignment briefs
* Ethics approval process for primary social science research
* Use opportunities to embed academic referencing (in-text and bibliography) across the assignments
* Suggestion to allocate specific marks for academic referencing.

# **Digital Platforms**

* Google sheets, One Drive, Padlet, Moodle

## Good practice

* The Moodle platform was easy to access with a note to the EA from each teacher to notify the EA of where all work was located.
* One Drive easy to navigate

## Issues and areas for enhancement

* Use of QR code to access materials; EA querying GDPR and licensing permissions
* Some names of tabs in Moodle were slightly different to module names
* A standardised template for submission of all components to ensure that all work is labelled clearly to include name, module, award and date

# **Evidence & Access to evidence**

## Good practice

* Excellent labelling and layout of work both in tutors’ folders and student work and evidence. Easy to navigate
* Suitable workbooks completed in full by students
* All evidence easily found and of a good/excellent standard

## Areas for enhancement

* Learners’ work not labelled. Perhaps a template for each submission would help.
* Some evidence not available

# **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**

## Good practice

* Evidence of people being given a variety of formats to use in assessment
* Excellent use of UDL in assessments evident, which enhances learning outcomes and demonstrates a progressive approach to learning
* Great to see recordings- video or audio to capture evidence from diverse learners.

## Areas for enhancement

* Some evidence of students completing practical aspects of learning outcomes would be welcome: Photo or video
* Video logs could be piloted

# **Feedback**

## Good practice

* Focused, targeted, explicit, helpful, clear and constructive, encouraging, personalized and professional
* Formative and summative feedback. Summative feedback very clear and linked to grade allocation

## Areas for enhancement

* Descriptive rather than constructive
* Not evident or unclear
* Summative feedback given but more formative feedback needed
* More documentation of feedback given to students needed

# **Marking/Grading**

## Good practice

* Fair, and consistent with module descriptor and national standards
* No marginal marks close to grade cut off points
* Detailed marking schemes show transparency of grades awarded

## Areas for enhancement

* Incomplete marking schemes
* Inconsistencies with grades
* Grades left close to cut-off points
* Totting errors
* Not transparent where marks are lost/gained
* Rubrics could be a standard document used as part of the suite of assessment tools in any of the graded modules

# **Integration**

## Good practice

* Excellent, highly visible, well-signposted cross-modular integration
* Good use of cross-modulated hours

## Areas for enhancement

* Scope for further cross-modular assessments and brief integration to reduce workload for learners and assessors
* Well-organised
* Integration statement, which supports applied learning across modules.

# **Internal Verification (IV) process**

* Good practice
* Great attention to detail
* Minor discrepancies noted and amended prior to EA visit
* Multi-layered IV process
* Evidence of robust IV

## Areas for enhancement

* Totting errors not picked up
* Evidence missing, marking sheets not attached, signatures missing
* Need to circle back on issues detected in IV
* No issues identified in IV report