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# Impact of Covid 19 on Work Based Learning Programmes - Physical and Infrastructural Challenges

## Physical Considerations Considered

Access for Learners to: Equipment / Labs, Laptops / iPad, Software and Systems, Wi Fi / Broadband

### Access for staff in training in

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

### Response:

Centres conducted a needs audit on a class by class basis.

They 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.

They liaised with CDET B IT Department and CDET B Management to acquire CDET B accounts and access to Office 365 as appropriate for identified class groups.

They procured a supply of dongles in consultation with IT Department for learners without internet facilities.

They 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 Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities on using the following Zoom, Teams, Moodle, Blended Learning and other TEL topics organised by the CDET B FET Development Unit.



# Impact of Covid 19 on Work Based Learning Programmes - Other Challenges for Staff

## Examples

Lack of IT Skills and fear of teaching remotely using unfamiliar technology, Work Life Balance; Family commitments, Child Care issues, Home Schooling, Inability/unwillingness of learners to engage remotely, Learners' expectation of face-to-face training in a learning institution

## Response:

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

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

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

## Impact of COVID 19 on WBL - Some of the Lessons

Remote learning can be a positive experience provided the correct structure, resources and supports are in place. It can have a positive impact on learner self-reliance and autonomy for their own learning.

- 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. Many require the structure of the physical environment to best learn.
- As the 'workplace' changes because of the impact of COVID 19, the content and mode of delivery of the courses offered 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.

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