

IVEA INTENSIVE TUITION IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

Guidance Awareness Training

FINAL REPORT

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IVEA
Representing Vocational
Education Committees



National Centre for Guidance in Education
Lárionad Náisiúnta um Threoir san Oideachas

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Foreword

The Guidance Awareness Training (GAT) programme was planned and delivered in 2008. The national co-ordinator of ITABE and the NCGE national co-ordinator of AEGI, worked together on all aspects of this programme with the support of the two national advisory groups and the relevant organisation representatives.

We wish to acknowledge the support and commitment from all who have participated in the development and delivery of the Guidance Awareness Training, and the continued support of the Department of Education and Skills, and the national advisory groups of ITABE and AEGI.

To reflect the success of ITABE and the on-going commitment from the Department of Education and Skills, the DES provided an additional representative to the ITABE advisory group from 2008. Due to the new structures within the National Centre for Guidance in Education, the NCGE-AEGI is now represented by the director of NCGE on the ITABE advisory group.

Since the initial draft of this report in 2009, the Department of Education and Science has been restructured as the Department of Education and Skills. This final report on the Guidance Awareness Training programme is being made available for publication in 2011.

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Glossary of
Terms

GAT

Guidance Awareness Training

ITABE

Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education

LAT

Literacy Awareness Training

NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency

ALS

Adult Literacy Services

ALOA

Adult Literacy Organisers Association

AEGI

Adult Educational Guidance Initiative

ITABE National Advisory Group (2010)	Fiona Hartley	<i>Chair: Chief Executive Officer, Co. Wicklow VEC</i>
	John Stewart	<i>National Adult Literacy Co-ordinator, National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)</i>
	Mary Kett	<i>Further Education Co-ordinator, Department of Education and Science (DES)</i>
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Guidance Awareness Training in Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education Final Report

SECTION 1

Introduction

Background and Context

In 2006, the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) made a successful submission to the Department of Education & Science (DES) to develop intensive adult basic education initiatives within the Vocational Educational Committee Adult Literacy Services (ALS). The allocation of this funding led to the development of the Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education (ITABE) programme. The aim of ITABE was to provide intensive tuition to adults with basic literacy needs. ITABE offered participants the opportunity to access six hours intensive literacy tuition per week over a 14 week period as opposed to the average tuition provision of two hours per week. ITABE facilitated the opportunity to deliver themed literacy or the integration of literacy and numeracy allowing students to increase motivation as well as accelerated improvement of basic skills. A key element of ITABE included the involvement of the Adult Educational Guidance Service (AEGS).

The ITABE programme is supported by a national advisory group comprising of representatives of the DES, IVEA, National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA), the IVEA/VEC Literacy Forum, the Adult Literacy Organisers Association (ALOA). The ITABE programme is co-ordinated by a national co-ordinator, based in and supported by County Dublin VEC. The National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) was invited to participate on this advisory group as the agency with responsibility for the national co-ordination of the Adult Educational Guidance Initiative (AEGI)¹.

For Background to Key Area Guidelines - IVEA Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education Guidelines see Appendix 1

ITABE Pilot Project

In 2006, as part of the pilot programme, 180 ITABE projects were allocated to each of the 33 VECs. An evaluation was carried out at the end of the pilot programme, by the national ITABE co-ordinator which included all stakeholders – AEOs, ALOs, AEGS² Co-ordinators, tutors and students.

¹ AEGI refers to the DES Adult Educational Guidance Initiative which provides funding nationally to VECs/WIT to provide the local adult educational guidance service.

² AEGS refers to the Adult Education Guidance Service, which is the local guidance service of the AEGI

Outcomes from the ITABE evaluation process identified the need for guidelines in three key areas of the project. The three key areas recommended were:

1. project co-ordination

'In tandem with the provision of a Resource Worker for adult literacy services, clear guidelines indicated the role and responsibility of the project co-ordinator should be developed and adopted across the VEC sector.'

2. assessment procedure

'Clear operating guidelines and training in the use of assessment materials must be a feature of future ITABE programmes.'

3. education guidance

'To facilitate improved co-operation between the ALS and the AEGI clear guidelines to support AEGI involvement in ITABE programmes should be developed. These guidelines should be accompanied by the development of an awareness training programme through which staff members of both the ALS and AEGI can gain a greater understanding of the interdependency of the respective services and potential for future development.'

ITABE Pilot Programme Evaluation Report, McCann 2006

Following a successful application for additional ITABE funding to develop the guidelines and a further application process from the VECs, the national ITABE advisory group and the DES selected nine VEC's each hosting an AEGI service, to develop and pilot the guidelines over the autumn term 2006. Resulting from this a *Key Area Guidelines - IVEA Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education Guidelines* (2007) document was produced and circulated to all the VECs.

Key Area Guidelines in Adult Education Guidance

An important feature of ITABE is the co-operation between the ALS and the AEGI and the interaction of both services towards supporting the educational needs of the students. The key area guidelines in relation to adult education guidance and ITABE identified a process to put in place a structure to enhance the partnership between the two services – ALS and AEGS.

While it was acknowledged that the ALS staff provided a level of front line guidance and information to learners, it was recognised that a more structured contribution from the AEGS from the early stages of the programme was necessary to encourage progression and also to reflect the criteria regarding ITABE applications and funding process.

This process involved the delivery of Literacy Awareness Training (LAT) for the guidance services. The LAT was organised for all AEGS staff to gain a greater understanding of adult literacy issues, the local Adult Literacy Services (ALS) and adult literacy provision. This was co-ordinated by the national co-ordinator of AEGI in NCGE in consultation with the national ITABE co-ordinator. The LAT training was delivered by NALA and took place on a regional basis in 2007. The NCGE-AEGI evaluation of the LAT highlighted other specific areas which required further development which included:

- The need for Guidance Awareness Training (GAT) for literacy staff.
- An awareness and understanding of the various levels of guidance required by ITABE participants.
- To clarify the role for guidance in responding to the needs of ITABE participants with special educational needs.

The NCGE-AEGI evaluation further identified a lack of understanding by the ALS as to how the AEGS was being delivered within ITABE, including group and one to one guidance support. This need for further clarification on the role of the AEGI was noted in the *ITABE Pilot Programme Evaluation Report* (2006) and again by both services involved in developing the *Key Area Guidelines - IVEA Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education Guidelines* (2007). This initiated the necessity for Guidance Awareness Training (GAT) for the ALS. In response to this, the AEGI and ITABE national advisory groups established a working group to develop and deliver a programme of Guidance Awareness Training to the ALOs and ITABE co-ordinators. The GAT working group consisted of members of both advisory groups and was co-ordinated by NCGE.

[For Information on and background to AEGI, see Appendix 2](#)

SECTION 2

Guidance Awareness Training (GAT)

GAT Working Group

The NCGE, supported by the national ITABE advisory group invited the relevant associations to nominate a representative for the GAT working group. Members of this group included the NCGE national co-ordinator of AEGI, national ITABE co-ordinator, and representatives from the AEOA, AEGAI and ALOA. The meetings were convened and chaired by NCGE with members reporting to both advisory groups and their associations.

The remit of the GAT working group was to:

- Discuss and make recommendations for a Guidance Awareness Training programme for Literacy/ITABE staff.
- Discuss the guidance needs of and make recommendations for special needs groups within ITABE.
- Consider how the models developed for AEGI/ITABE integration may be of relevance to other adult education programmes.

The first meeting of the working group was held in January 2008, in County Dublin VEC. In addition to the tasks agreed, it also reviewed the following;

- (i) In response to *the key elements and expected outcomes of the training*, the group outlined a work plan to address the aims of the group, commencing with the development of a programme for guidance awareness training for Adult Literacy Organisers (ALO) and ITABE co-ordinators. In addition to this, the group agreed to carry out a GAT evaluation and write up a final report. A review of the GAT programme would be carried out at a later date to ascertain the effectiveness of its implementation over a given period.
- (ii) The discussion in relation to the guidance needs of participants with special education needs concluded that additional information was required. The working group also acknowledged that this was being addressed by the national ITABE advisory group.
- (iii) In relation to the *relevance of this model of integration* for other adult education services, this would be reviewed following an evaluation of the GAT programme for Literacy/ITABE and recommendations made at a later stage.
- (iv) The delivery of the GAT programme was to recognise the importance of each service's role in the integration of guidance into ITABE (ie. guidance, literacy and programme planning). While the guidance awareness training programme was aimed at adult literacy and ITABE staff, the working group however, identified that guidance awareness in isolation would not suffice, and that a more integrated approach would be more beneficial. Therefore, an invitation to attend

and participate in GAT was extended to the AEGS guidance co-ordinators/counsellors and VEC adult education Officers. It was envisaged that this integrated approach would support the overall inclusion of the AEGS and ALS in the design and delivery of guidance provision as part of the planning process for ITABE programmes.

GAT Development and Delivery team

NCGE approached the AEGI services and VECs where examples of good practice of the integration of adult education guidance into ITABE were in operation. Four AEGS guidance co-ordinators and a guidance counsellor working closely with their local Adult Literacy Services were invited to become part of the GAT development and delivery team. The remit of this team was to reflect on the various methods of guidance delivery within AEGI and develop a draft guidance awareness programme. This programme content would include theory, policy and examples of good practice in guidance delivery. One member of this team was then appointed as the AEGAI representative to the GAT working group.

As guidance awareness training was a new initiative for both the guidance and literacy staff, NCGE invited the course manager of the NUI Maynooth Adult Guidance and Counseling programme to become involved in the process. The course manager provided support and mentoring to the team involved in the development and delivery of the GAT programme.

Aims of Guidance Awareness Training (GAT)

The aim of the GAT programme was to provide an understanding of adult guidance, to clarify how adult educational guidance was delivered to participants, to build positive relationships between the services in the context of ITABE programmes.

The training content would include:

- presentations from both the AEGI national co-ordinator and ITABE national co-ordinator
- input from AEGS and shared experiences of working within ITABE groups
- an outline of the AEGI and its role in ITABE
- small group discussions
- discuss and agree a process for a more collaborated and integrated AEGS input into ITABE
- explore and agree a process of referral between both organisations

- introduce an AEGS and ITABE local area planning process

The working group in consultation with both national advisory groups reviewed the draft content at all stages of development including design, planning and delivery. The working group made appropriate additions and amendments to ensure that the content was relevant and appropriate to Adult Literacy and ITABE. The final GAT programme content was approved by each representative organisation.

GAT Delivery

To facilitate optimum attendance the GAT programme was held regionally on four consecutive Wednesdays in October 2008. NCGE informed the CEOs in each of the VECs of the planned training. AEOs, ALOs, ITABE co-ordinator/core tutors and AEGS guidance co-ordinators were also invited to attend. In recognition of the different situation in the city of Waterford area, where AEGI REGSA is located in Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT), NCGE wrote to the CEO, AEO and ALO in city of Waterford VEC to invite the relevant staff to attend the GAT programme.

SECTION 3

Guidance Awareness Training Day

The training session was opened by an AEO from a local VEC as previously agreed through the AEOA. This was followed by presentations from both national co-ordinators and AEGI guidance co-ordinators/counsellor leading to themed facilitated discussion groups as outlined below.

Presentations:

1. Background on ITABE and AEGI - ITABE national co-ordinator
This presentation outlined the background to the development of ITABE, the AEGI involvement within the literacy service and the response by the national ITABE advisory group in supporting the Guidance Awareness Training.
2. Guidance Awareness - Theory and Policy - AEGI national co-ordinator
This presentation focused on adult guidance in an adult educational context, creating an understanding of the AEGI service, its target groups and the policies governing the AEGI.
3. AEGS and ITABE Guidance Provision in Context - AEGS guidance co-ordinator/counsellor
This presentation outlined how adult education guidance could be integrated into ITABE to compliment the service already being provided by the ALO and the ALS. This presentation also included examples of present practices and reflected on the experiences of the guidance co-ordinators/counsellors involved.
4. Discussion Groups
Themed discussion groups took place both in the morning and afternoon. The discussion groups were facilitated where possible by an AEO and included representatives from all the services attending (eg. AEO, ALO, AEGS, and local ITABE programme co-ordinators/core tutors).

Discussion Groups

Discussion Group 1: Sharing Your Story

This focused on the sharing of information and examples of communication and networking in operation by the AEGS, the ALS and ITABE across the various VECs. Participants reflected on the information outlined as part of the presentations and were invited to explore new ways of enhancing the communication and integration of both services. The information shared in this discussion session was reported back to the main group and documented. The key observations were drawn on to stimulate and inform the follow up discussions in the afternoon session.

Discussion Group 2: The AEGS/VEC Planning of ITABE Programmes

Each local VEC area team ie. AEGS, ALO, AEO, ITABE programme co-ordinator/core tutor were invited to form discussion groups. As part of the training content, sample templates on programme planning, information exchange and referral procedure were provided.

Discussions also reflected on the information shared in the previous session and participants were encouraged to consider how this information may enhance their own local practice. For many VECs, this provided the opportunity to formally discuss and plan a process of integrating guidance into the ITABE for their local VEC area.

To further enable this process, a draft template *local area plan* was circulated to each team. This was to encourage discussion and explore methods which may be used to put in place a mechanism or structure to advance a partnership approach for the integration of adult education guidance into ITABE.

Each VEC area team was invited to discuss, agree, document and sign off on their proposed local area plan.

For those area teams where relevant representatives were not present (eg. AEO, ALO, and AEGS Co-ordinator) the staff members agreed to bring the template to their respective VECs for discussion and approval and to be signed off by the AEO/ VEC management. This *local area plan* was to be forwarded to the AEGI national co-ordinator to support and inform future training and evaluation.

In the case of the WIT based REGSA, the city of Waterford VEC ALO attended the GAT programme along with the REGSA guidance co-ordinator. The area plan for this VEC was to be discussed locally.

[See Appendix 3](#)

SECTION 4

Feedback and Evaluation

Attendance at GAT sessions

One hundred and sixty six participants attended the GAT programme as detailed below:

29	•Adult Education Officers
54	•Adult Literacy Organisers
34	•AEGI Guidance Co-ordinators
18	•AEGI Guidance Counsellors
31	•ITABE Co-ordinators and Tutors

Training Day evaluation

A verbal feedback and evaluation took place at each of the four GAT days co-facilitated by the two national co-ordinators. Plenary discussions provided opportunities for critical reflection and comments, which also recognised examples of good practice already in place such as:

- AEGS input into the Initial Adult Literacy Volunteer Tutor Training Course
- positive relationships between the services
- importance of planning between ALS and AEGS regarding schedules, course content etc.
- sharing of information and feedback about the ITABE group/individual participants through an agreed referral procedure between both services

Follow up Evaluation

In November, a follow up evaluation form was sent to all participants and these were returned to the national co-ordinators in December 2008.

Summary of Evaluation

- Forty nine evaluation forms were returned, providing a 29.5 % response rate.
- Overall, the individual evaluation reports provided positive feedback on the Guidance Awareness Training programme.
- The presentations were considered to be *good/very good/excellent* by 96% of respondents.
- The group discussions were considered to be *useful / very useful* by the majority of participants, with only 10% and 12% respectively reporting that the two group discussions were '*Not useful*'
- The sample templates for sharing of information, and referral procedures were found to be *useful* by 88% of respondents.

The GAT programme had provided an opportunity for ALS and AEGS staff to focus specifically on working in partnership for ITABE and to share their experiences. For some, this was the first occasion that various representatives from their own individual VEC had the opportunity to work together as a team. Several respondents provided very positive evaluation on the team planning session and felt that the discussions on *local area plan* offered an effective structure on which to base further ITABE/AEGS planning meetings.

Feedback indicated discrepancies in guidance support ranging from one hour per week per group to three hours per week per group. Further highlighted was the lack of AEGS provision in some areas. Both verbal and written evaluations identified the need for further clarification on the 'appropriate' number of hours of guidance provision to be allocated to ITABE, either through one to one or group guidance sessions.

For detailed statistics of Feedback and Evaluation Results, please see the following:

Appendix 4: Results from the Evaluation Form sent out in November 2008

Appendix 5: ITABE / AEGI Combined feedback

Appendix 6: ITABE Feedback

Appendix 7: AEGI Feedback

Appendix 8: Additional comments

SECTION 5

Conclusion

The Guidance Awareness Training programme was successfully developed and delivered with national regional and local participation.

The GAT programme presented the theoretical basis of adult guidance and a sample framework for a partnership approach to support the integration of adult education guidance provision into ITABE.

While many ALS and AEGS already worked closely together, the GAT programme provided an opportunity to focus purely on ITABE and the planning process necessary to ensure a clear understanding of how both services could work together in providing guidance within adult basic education programmes.

The training sessions offered those attending the opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the types of networking taking place within other areas of the country between both services. It also offered examples of good practice on the integration of guidance in operation in a number of VECs. In addition to this, it offered opportunities to both the ALS and the AEGS to improve co-operation and gain a greater understanding of their respective services.

The GAT programme further identified that the integration of appropriate guidance into the ITABE programme depended on the requirements of each individual ITABE group and may differ depending on the level of guidance service available. The support of the Adult Education Officers and VEC management has been a key element in the success of this integrated approach.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A planning process between ALS and AEGS, based on the key area guidelines should be developed locally to include:

- discussion and consultation between ALS and AEGS on local guidance needs
- AEGS input into tutor training to create and ensure guidance awareness for literacy staff involved in the provision of ITABE programme
- sharing of information about the needs of the ITABE group prior to guidance provision
- agreed standard referral and feedback system between both services
- agreed scheduling of the group and one to one guidance sessions
- carry out an annual review to reflect on-going practice and provision as identified by the ALS and the AEGS for the ITABE participants

The provision and delivery of the guidance programme to ITABE should be agreed as part of the Local Area Plan between AEGS and ITABE. The identified needs of the participants will inform the number of hours for guidance delivery to each group

A further interim evaluation is to be conducted at a later date. It is expected that this evaluation will provide each Adult Literacy Service and Adult Educational Guidance Service an opportunity to review and reflect on the ITABE/AEGS planning process - to review local area plans, sharing of information, referral systems and progression routes etc.

The process employed in the development of this guidance awareness training for ITABE, could be used as a model for the integration of guidance across other adult education programmes through:

- decisions and support at national and management level
- national representative working subgroup
- consultation and discussion involving all key staff
- an integrated approach which recognises the importance of each service within the wider team in the provision of guidance to adult learners
- providing guidance awareness training programme such as GAT to the relevant staff/tutors, followed by facilitated group discussions with local adult education and guidance staff

- development of a local area plan between the adult education service and the AEGS to include scheduling of group and one to one provision, referral system, follow-up supports and progression options

SECTION 6

Appendices

Appendix 1

Intensive Tuition of Adult Basic Education (ITABE)

Background

Late in 2005 the Department of Education & Science (DES), in response to the high percentage of adult population experience poor basic skills highlighted in the *OECD International Adult Literacy Survey* (2005), invited relevant organisations to make an application to develop and deliver a national programme aimed at providing intensive adult basic education tuition. County Dublin VEC drafted a submission in co-operation with the VEC Literacy Forum which formed the basis for an application made by the IVEA on behalf of the VEC sector. This application proved to be successful and the DES agreed to invest €1 million in the design, delivery, co-ordination and evaluation of the national Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education (ITABE) pilot programme in 2006.

The aim of ITABE is to provide participants, in groups of 6–8 students, with an opportunity to access six hours of ABE tuition per week over a 14 week period as opposed to the average tuition provision of two hours per week. Research in the UK has shown that 550 hours of tuition is required to improve literacy skills to a functional level and students could potentially achieve a level of independence in a shorter timeframe through extended intensive tuition (*Moser Report 1999*). ITABE facilitated the opportunity to deliver themed literacy or the integration of literacy and numeracy allowing students to increase motivation as well as accelerated improvement in basic skills.

A specific literacy assessment tool, linked to the National Framework of Qualification levels, was developed to assist in the development of a curriculum and to measure progress made over the period of the pilot project.

Management and Co-ordination of ITABE

The ITABE programme is an IVEA led project and co-ordinated nationally by County Dublin VEC. It is supported by an advisory group comprising representatives of the Department of Education & Science, the Irish Vocational Education Association, the VEC Literacy Forum, the National Adult Literacy Agency, Adult Literacy Organisers Association and the National Centre for Guidance in Education.

Overall monitoring and support of the project is provided by the national advisory group. Monitoring the implementation of the national project, liaising with, and supporting VECs on an on-going basis are carried out by the national ITABE co-ordinator, guided by the national advisory group.

Aims and Objectives of ITABE

- To provide adults with literacy/numeracy difficulties access to intensive tuition for a minimum of six hours tuition per week over a 14 week period.
- To provide the opportunity for demonstrable improvement in literacy/ numeracy skills.
- To provide tuition within the context of the individual student's needs and the level of basic skills required to function within the home, community and workplace.
- To deliver the tuition programme within appropriate models of good practice.
- To provide an opportunity to achieve accreditation.
- To include appropriate levels of engagement with the Adult Education Guidance Service.

Criteria for ITABE funding

- Participants to be 18 years of age or older and not attending full-time second level education.
- Participants to have skills lower than FETAC Level 3.
- The ITABE assessment to be carried out upon entry into the 14 week programme and after the programme is completed.
- Appropriate levels of engagement by the Adult Education Guidance Service.
- The majority of tuition hours to be allocated to literacy/numeracy.
- Curriculum areas are: Communications (incl. numeracy), learning-to-learn and introduction to IT.
- ITABE projects may not be used to deliver ESOL.
- Each group to comprise of 6 - 8 participants.
- Each project has an allocation of 84 tuition hours.
- Accreditation options to be made available where appropriate.

Key Area Guidelines - IVEA Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education Guidelines (2006)

As part of the evaluation process for the ITABE Pilot Project the need for guidelines in a number of key areas was identified. The ITABE national advisory group made a recommendation to the Department of Education & Science to develop these guidelines using the remaining funds from the original pilot

project and a structure to carry out this work was agreed in August 2006. Nine VECs were selected to develop and pilot the guidelines over the autumn term 2006.

As the involvement of the Adult Education Guidance Initiative (AEGI) is key to the planning of ITABE projects, and while in some VECs this was working very well, it was identified there was a greater need for co-operation between the Adult Literacy Service (ALS) and the AEGI. The purpose of the education guidance guidelines is to place a structure on the process of interaction between the two services. One of the recommendations outlined in the document recognised the need for Literacy Awareness Training (LAT) and Guidance Awareness Training (GAT) for key staff working with ITABE.

In 2007, the national advisory group advised the ITABE co-ordinator to initiate the recommendations in relation to the awareness training. NCGE in consultation and collaboration with the national ITABE co-ordinator, commissioned NALA to deliver LAT to the staff of the Adult Education Guidance Services nationally. The ITABE evaluation and the NCGE-AEGI evaluation of the LAT programme both recommended (i) the development of guidance awareness training for literacy staff and (ii) support for the co-operation and integration of both services.

Appendix 2

National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE)

The National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) is an agency of the Department of Education and Skills. Its main role is to support and develop guidance practice in all areas of education and to inform the policy of the Department in the field of guidance. On behalf of the DES, NCGE co-ordinates the development of the AEGI through monitoring, reporting activities, service evaluation visits, technical support, and in-service continuous professional development for AEGI staff. NCGE convenes and chairs the AEGI advisory group on behalf of the DES. The National Guidance Forum (2007) definition of guidance clarifies that guidance does not merely focus on progression up through the education system, but also allows the individual to consider their life-wide opportunities.

‘Guidance facilitates people throughout their lives to manage their own educational, training, occupational, personal, social and life choices so that they reach their full potential and contribute to the development of a better society’

Guidance for Life: An Integrated Framework for Lifelong Guidance in Ireland (2007)

The DES *‘Learning for Life’ White paper on Adult Education (2000)* outlined that guidance involves a range of activities to help the individual to make these choices. Group guidance and one to one guidance sessions with a qualified guidance counsellor provide the adult learner with the opportunity to consider all of their options, not just within the education system but in all aspects of their lives. This is particularly appropriate in a Literacy/ITABE context, where adults are focusing on the development of literacy and numeracy skills and FETAC Levels 1-3. Recognition of prior learning (RPL), motivation, educational and vocational experiences/hopes, decision making, personal goals, information and advice on the adult education system and the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) are just some of the areas where guidance supports the individual in their lifelong learning journey.

Adult Educational Guidance Initiative (AEGI)

The AEGI is a DES funded initiative which provides quality educational guidance services for adults and consists of 40 Adult Educational Guidance Services (AEGS) nationally based within the VECs and Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). The AEGI services provide adult guidance services to the target groups of VTOS, Adult Literacy, Community education (including BTEI) and former residents of designated institutions which includes impartial adult education information, one-to-one and group guidance which support people to make informed educational, career and life choices.

The AEGI national advisory group was chaired by NCGE and included representatives of all the major stakeholders involved with the AEGI including the IVEA, AEOA and AEGAI.

Appendix 3

Sample templates

AEGI and Adult Literacy Service	
One to One Guidance Feedback Form	
Name:	Date of 1-1 meeting:
Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>
General “progression plan” *:	

SAMPLE

General “personal plan” *:

AEGI and Adult Literacy Service

Referral to ITABE Form

Name:

Date of referral:

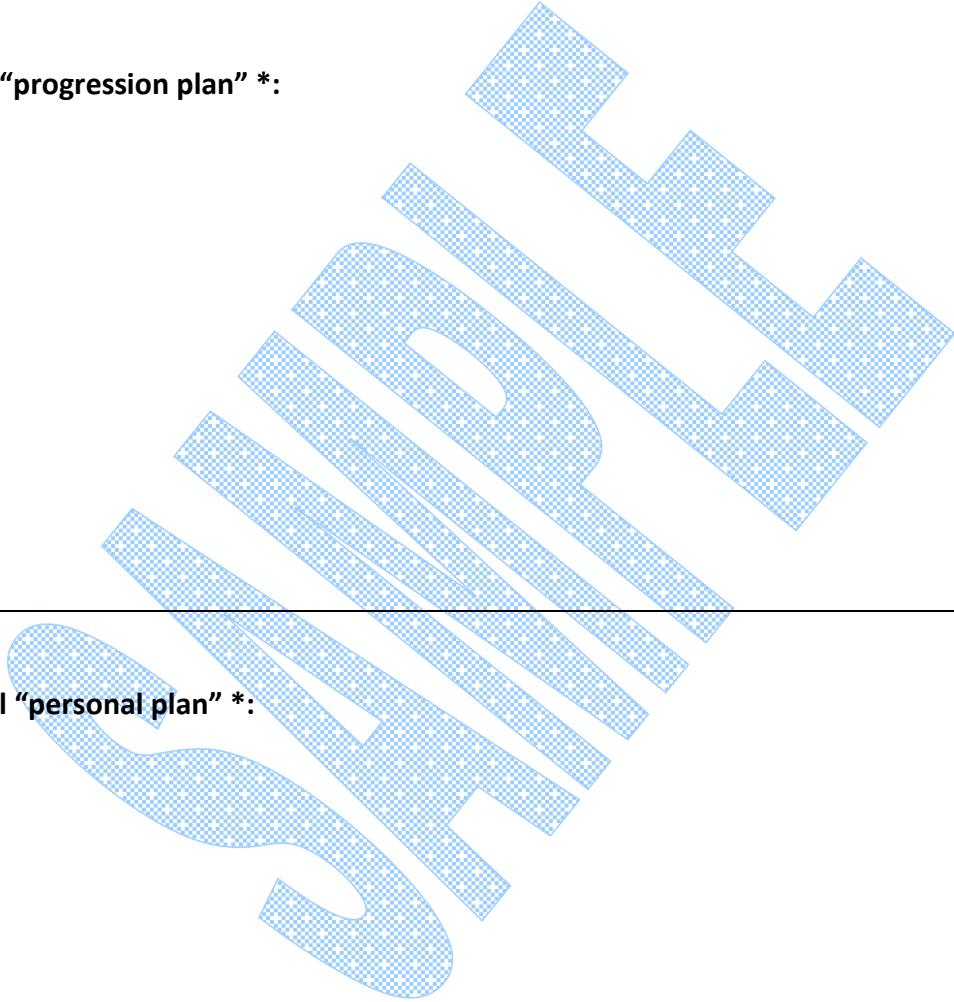
Age range:

Male

Female

General “progression plan” *:

General “personal plan” *:



General educational and background/skills:

Local Area Plan (Sample)

Adult Educational Guidance Service / Adult Literacy Service

AEGS provision to ITABE

Area: _____

Agreed Local area Plan

1. What works well for us?

2. What could we improve upon?

3. Referral procedure.

4. Exchange of information

5. Guidance awareness for initial tutor training

6. What could we implement now, based on the GAT today?

7. Document local plan

eg. Date for planning meeting to address the above

Signed AEGS: _____

Signed ALS : _____

Signed AEO : _____

Appendix 4

Result from the Evaluation Form sent out in November 2008

Participants were asked to rate:

- a) the GAT programme presentations on a scale of Poor / Good / Very good / Excellent
- b) the group discussions and sample templates on a scale of Not useful / Useful / Very useful.

1	Background on ITABE and AEGI			
	Poor	0%	Very Good	41%
	Good	14%	Excellent	45%
2	Guidance Awareness – Theory and Policy			
	Poor	4%	Very Good	43%
	Good	16%	Excellent	37%
3	AEGI and ITABE Guidance provision in Context			
	Poor	0%	Very Good	41%
	Good	14%	Excellent	45%
4	Group Discussion 1 – Sharing your story in mixed groups			
	Not Useful	12%	Very Useful	57%
	Useful	29%	No Response	2%
5	Group Discussion 2 – Area Team Groups - ITABE/AEGI planning			
	Not Useful	10%	Very Useful	61%
	Useful	27%	No response	2%
6	Sample Template			
	Not Useful	6%	Very Useful	29%
	Useful	59%	No response	6%

SOME GENERAL COMMENTS

The environment created was conducive to focused discussion on the development of guidance provision within ITABE and resulted in agreeing measures to develop further guidance activities within ITABE programmes.

The planning exercise put a structure on the whole ITABE provision process and was such a valuable part of the day's proceedings.

Concrete exercise and produced a plan which we worked on and fine tuned

Overall I found the training day excellent and it certainly helped our Guidance and Literacy Service to start working more in partnership for the future

It was interesting in that this was the first time our teams got together to focus exclusively on guidance – and as a result we have decided to meet again in the New Year to develop a plan for guidance in general as well as specifically in relation to ITABE

An integrated approach which recognises the importance of each role in a wider team in the provision of guidance to adult learners.

Presentations on guidance theory and activities to the relevant staff/tutors, followed by facilitated group discussions with local guidance staff which focus on the appropriate integration of the theory into practice.

Appendix 5

Guidance Awareness Training 2008

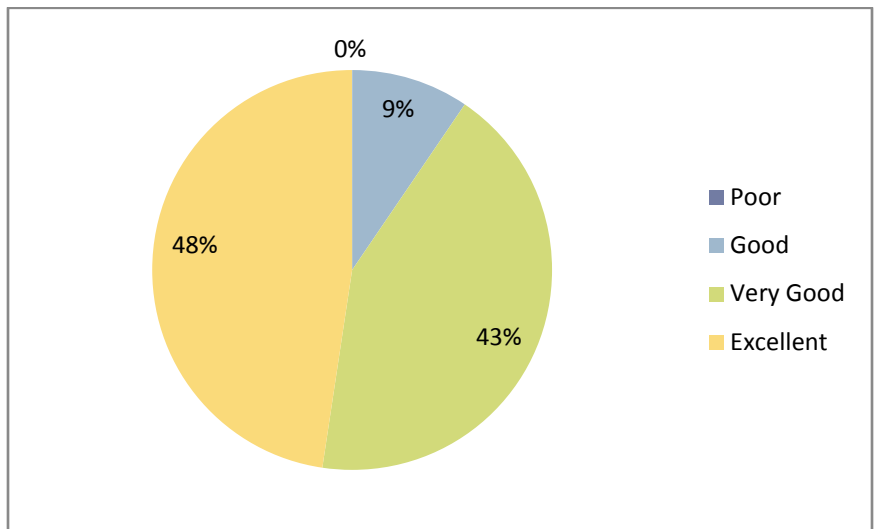
Programme Evaluation – ITABE Feedback

Total number of evaluation forms received = 21

SESSION 1 - PRESENTATIONS

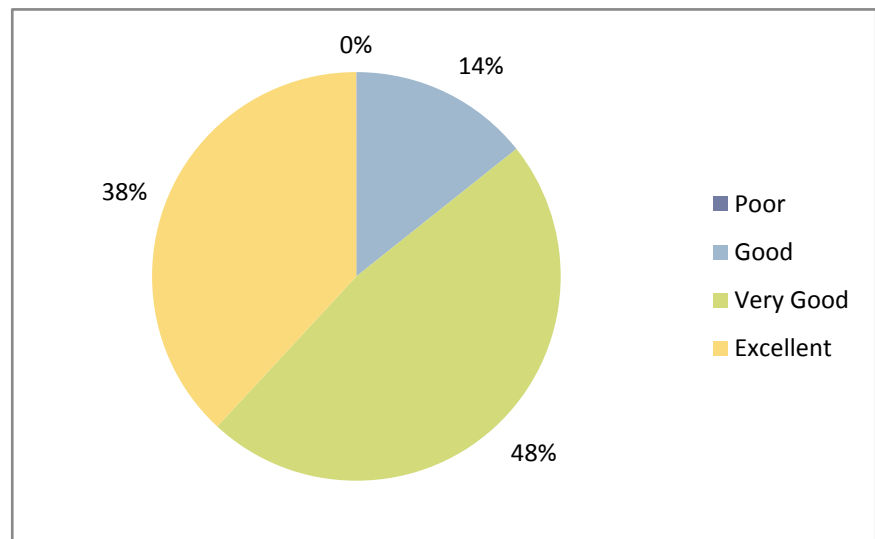
ITABE Presentation

Rating	No. of Responses
Poor	0
Good	2
Very Good	9
Excellent	10



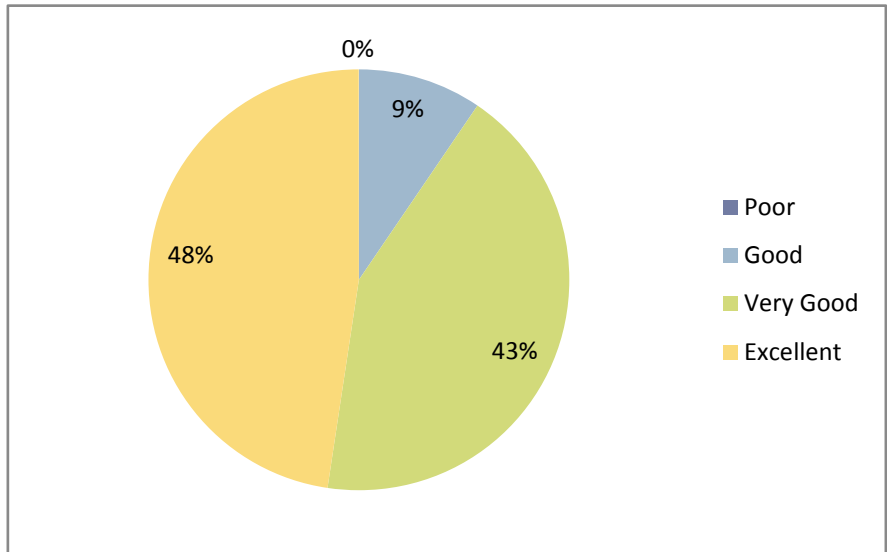
Guidance Awareness Presentation

Rating	No of Responses
Poor	0
Good	3
Very Good	10
Excellent	8



AEGI and ITABE Guidance in Context

Ratings	No of Responses
Poor	1
Good	2
Very Good	9
Excellent	8

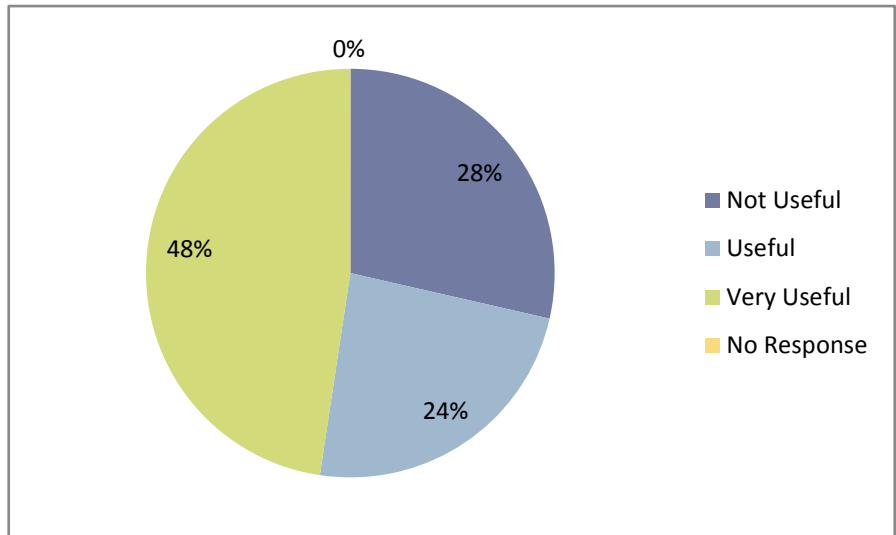


ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Anomalies between the experience of various AEG Counsellors (20 hours of guidance to an ITABE programme indicated in the presentation) and staffing levels added to confusion as to the appropriate level of guidance input.

Group Discussion 1 – Sharing Your Story

Ratings	No of Responses
Not Useful	6
Useful	5
Very Useful	10
No Response	0



ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

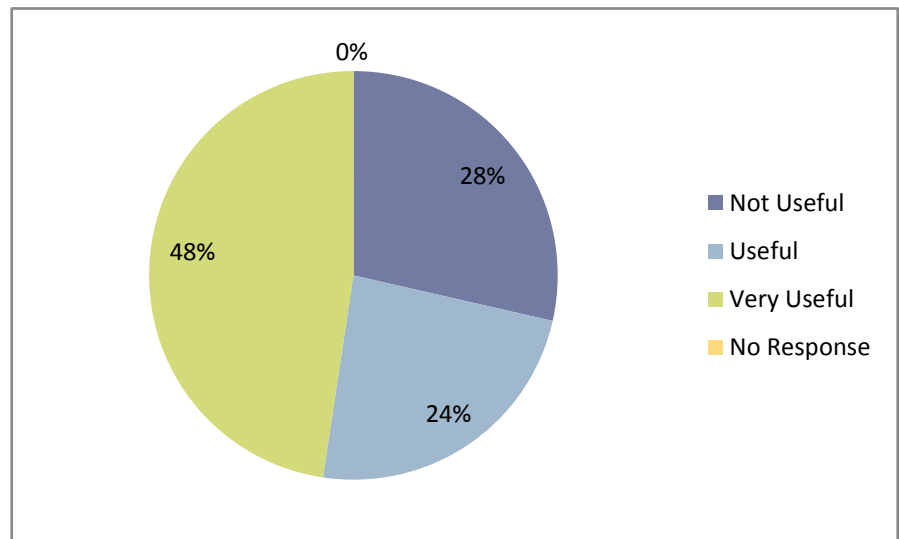
Mostly indicated the lack of a cohesive approach to the purpose of guidance in ITABE and had the potential to create even deeper confusion without a clear indication from leadership as to the 'right' approach and content.

Interesting to hear how other counties avail and share expertise

SESSION 2 - Group Discussion 2

Area Team Groups - ITABE/AEGI Planning

Ratings	No of Responses
Not Useful	4
Useful	4
Very Useful	13
No Response	0



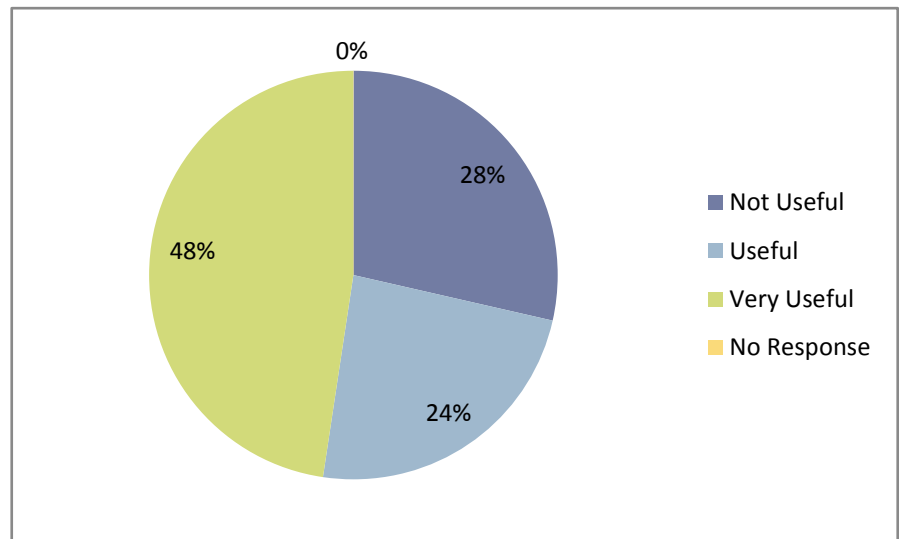
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The heavy handed approach to this section, where the facilitators insisted on signed documents from people without the authority to do so, was detrimental to advancing the relationship between the two elements of the VEC Adult Education Services. It was an ill-conceived and objectionable methodology.

Found this to be very good. Provided an opportunity for AEGIS and myself to focus on getting started with plan.

Sample Referral Forms

Ratings	No of Responses
Not Useful	0
Useful	13
Very Useful	8
No Response	0



ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The environment created was conducive to focused discussion on the development of guidance provision within ITABE and resulted in agreeing measures to develop further guidance activities within ITABE programmes - Guidance Co-ordinator

The planning exercise put a structure on the whole ITABE provision process and was such a valuable part of the day's proceedings.

Concrete exercise and produced a plan which we worked on and fine tuned

Overall I found the training day excellent and it certainly helped our Guidance and Literacy Service to start working more in partnership for the future

It was interesting in that this was the first time our teams got together to focus exclusively on guidance – and as a result we have decided to meet again in the New Year to develop a plan for guidance in general as well as specifically in relation to ITABE

Does the AGEI have the monopoly on guidance provision within the ITABE project or is guidance provided through the AES, however it is funded, appropriate where available? If the latter is applicable then why are all guidance decisions made by the AEGI and why weren't non-AEGI providers given equal status at the training events?

Exactly what is an appropriate level of guidance input into an ITABE project (84 hours of tuition)? This wasn't clearly answered at the awareness training event.

Exactly what is appropriate guidance content in relation to ITABE projects and how is this determined? This also wasn't made clear.

While sharing experiences has a value, that value is limited in the absence of clear leadership on agreed structures (level of input) and agreed content.

It was interesting in that this was the first time our teams got together to focus exclusively on guidance – and as a result we have decided to meet again in the New Year to develop a plan for guidance in general as well as specifically in relation to ITABE

Easy pace and well laid out hand-outs

I found the networking and putting faces to names very useful

A very well run training session

A well-organised thought-provoking day. Well done all involved

I found the day very useful but can be difficult for the guidance people to get around particularly in rural areas.

A very worthwhile exercise

Appendix 6

Guidance Awareness Training 2008

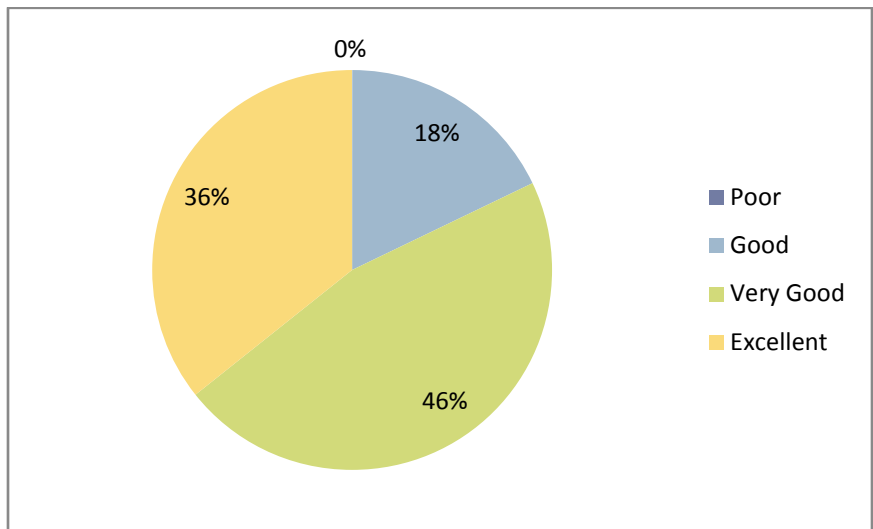
Programme Evaluation – AEGI Feedback

Total number of evaluation forms received = 28

SESSION 1 - PRESENTATIONS

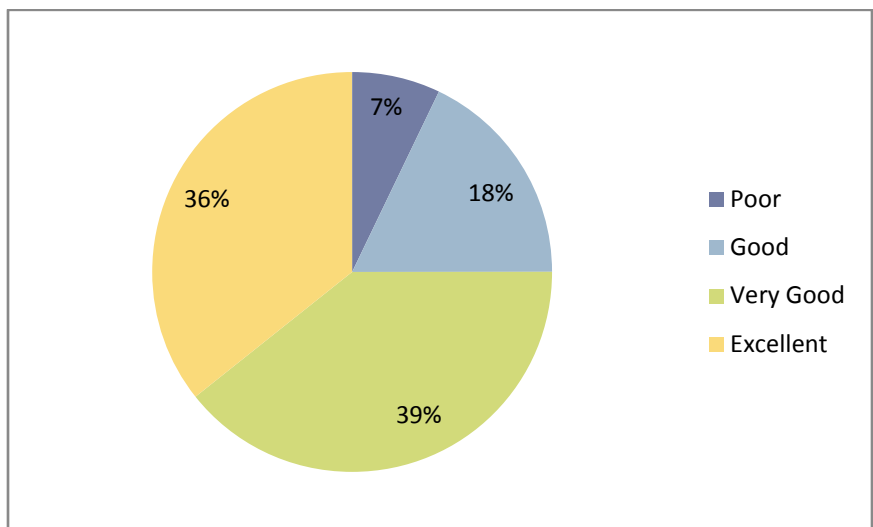
ITABE Presentation

Rating	No. of Responses
Poor	0
Good	5
Very Good	13
Excellent	10



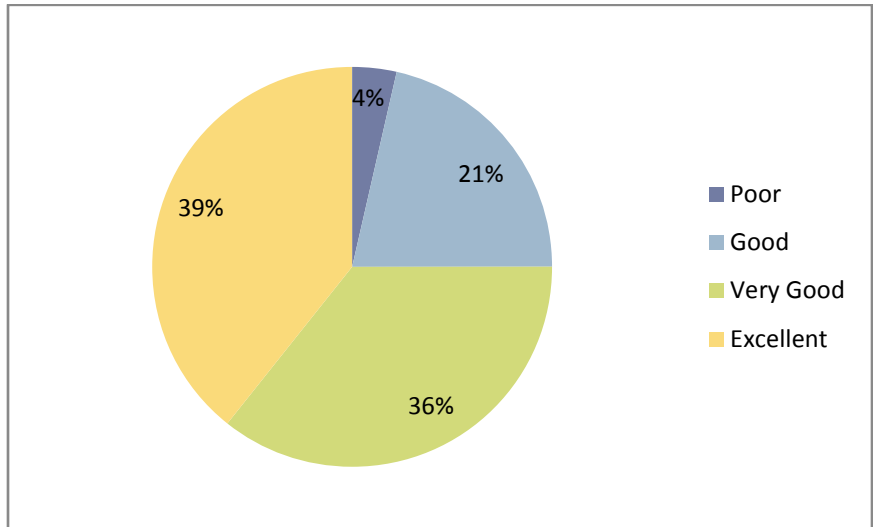
Guidance Awareness Training

Rating	No. of Responses
Poor	2
Good	5
Very Good	11
Excellent	10



AEGI and ITABE Guidance in Context

Rating	No. of Responses
Poor	1
Good	6
Very Good	10
Excellent	11



COMMENTS

I felt it might have created huge expectations for some VECs, which guidance counsellors may not be able to deliver due to lack of staff/funding

I found all of the presentations excellent

Our service found them a useful basis for delivering our own presentation on guidance awareness to our service co-ordinators before Christmas with input from the national co-ordinator AEGI.

The presentations provided a valuable opportunity to raise awareness and understanding of both ITABE (Literacy) and Guidance.

It was a very good idea to bring the different sectors together specifically to focus on this area and plan for the future.

Presentations - informative, concise and dynamic.

All the Presentations were clear and relevant. The importance of guidance in ITABE was highlighted; this was especially useful for our AEO to see.

Maybe as suggested on the day, the next level of intervention is Guidance Integration Training.

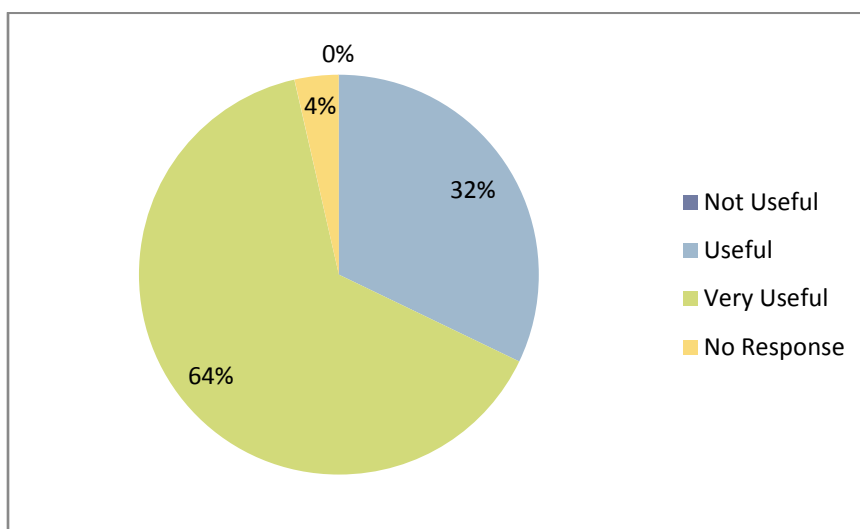
I found all presentations very informative and helpful

Perhaps because it was some time back I'm afraid I seem to be mixing up the second and third presentations. I do remember that the first presentations were good but the one presented by the Guidance representative was quite poor. Personally I found it interesting but basic – the reason I am marking it poorly is because I was very aware of Literacy staff around me who were becoming

frustrated as they felt they were very familiar with the information being presented and were hoping for some more concrete examples of ways in which guidance has been able to fit as part of a literacy programme. I also would have been interested in more concrete examples of programmes/activities that worked and did not work.

Group Discussion 1 – Sharing your story

Rating	No. of Responses
Not Useful	0
Useful	9
Very Useful	18
No Response	1



OTHER COMMENTS

Helpful as a brief insight into different types of guidance activities within ITABE in different services but, with time restrictions, insufficient to gain a clear understanding of those activities.

Delighted that the Adult Literacy services became aware that the Guidance Service has a role to play with ITABE groups and Literacy groups in general.

Experience related during this session underlined the importance of co-operation between services.

I found it very useful to hear of the experiences of other services here.

Beneficial sharing of ideas and progress from different centres.

A very useful exercise as it gave a good sense of what other services are doing around the country.

The idea was good and it did open discussion and an opportunity for looking at our mind sets and the way guidance is facilitated differently in different places. To rob a bit from the Irish Independent - before we make up our minds, we need to open our minds to the possibilities offered through really integrating guidance into the design and delivery of teaching and learning in ITABE (*but not just ITABE*). This is true for both non guidance (Literacy/ITABE personnel/VEC Managers) and guidance

practitioners.

It was clear from this section of the training day that every VEC was different.

It was a useful/very useful exercise in that it demonstrated that there was some confusion out there – and this discussion may have provided the opportunity to clear up some of this confusion and re-enforce the importance of building a good relationship between the Guidance Service and the Adult Literacy Service.

It was a very useful awareness exercise.

It highlighted the importance of good communication between Guidance and Literacy services.

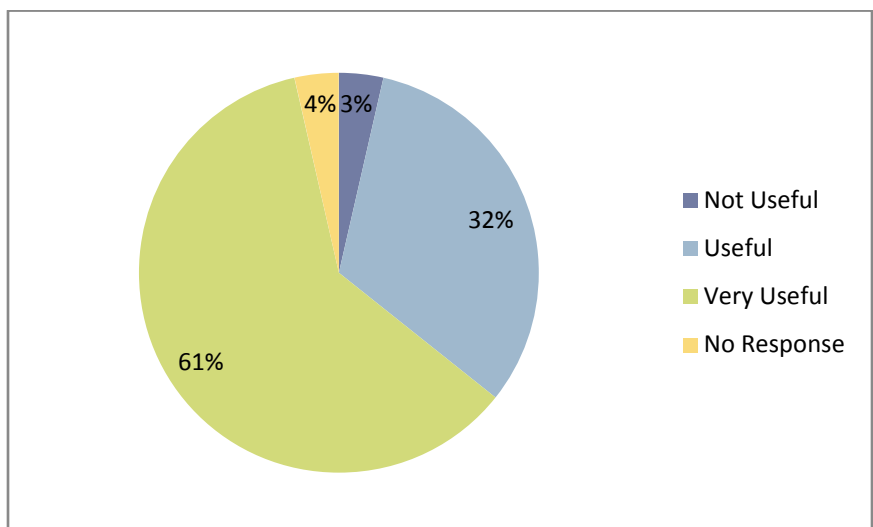
The groups were suitably structured/divided up for this part of the training day.

VERY helpful! A fantastic opportunity to hear what is working and what is not working in other areas and also to hear about some of the issues and difficulties that face the ALO when it comes to co-ordinating their programmes. It was a fantastic way to share ideas and I was grateful for the participants' honesty and frankness.

SESSION 2 – GROUP DISCUSSION 2

Area Group Teams – ITABE/AEGI planning

Rating	No. of Responses
Not Useful	1
Useful	9
Very Useful	17
No Response	1



COMMENTS

Positive

First meeting of all stake holders in VEC re Adult Guidance Service and ITABE. It created a good

environment to look at the issues involved for the first time, particularly as a lot of resistance still exists to genuine collaboration.

Negative

All stakeholders could not identify where all ITABE groups were located and did not know the start dates. Co-ordinator of ITABE for county was not in place.

Project Manager of the Adult Guidance Service was unable to attend afternoon session so key decisions were postponed.

One ALO did not attend afternoon session and another did not attend the GAT training day therefore as a guidance counsellor none of the people I need to liaise with were present to discuss links between Adult Guidance service and ITABE.

The environment created was conducive to focused discussion on the development of guidance provision within ITABE and resulted in agreeing measures to develop further guidance activities within ITABE programmes.

This planning exercise put a structure on the whole ITABE provision process and was such a valuable part of the day's proceedings.

I felt more time was needed to discuss in greater detail. I thought it was very rushed.

Some ALO's were unwilling to sign up to this process at the meeting but it was good to at least start this process rolling. Our guidance service was invited to a meeting with our Literacy service as a result as well as a Literacy Tutors meeting both of which are positive steps forward.

There was only one other member of our area team present on the day so that limited us.

Following a discussion at local level the Co. Kilkenny Adult Guidance Service returned the completed ITABE Agreed Local Area Plan.

This proved a very important exercise. It really helped to accelerate the Guidance/ITABE process in our VEC.

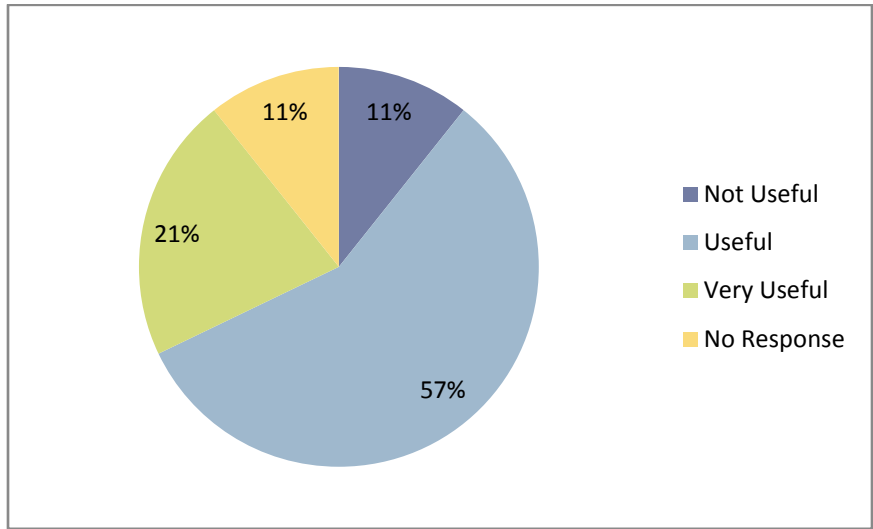
Concrete exercise and produced a plan which we worked on and fine-tuned.

Again, a great way to push things forward. The difficulty since has been following up to ensure that the plan has been put into action but because all three of us signed off on it, it has been easier to call planning meetings.

It was great to get together with the ALO in a structured setting for planning.

Sample Referral Forms

Rating	No. of Responses
Not Useful	3
Useful	16
Very Useful	6
No Response	3



OTHER COMMENTS

Unable to complete process due to lack of key personnel.

Useful as a discussion point on referral procedures.

Not applicable, we have our own in the service.

Provided good opportunity for face to face honest discussion.

I would find these very useful to use in our service.

It was good that the need to seek client permission for referral of certain information was actually printed on the form.

The sample referral forms will prove a useful as a way of recording referrals both to and from ITABE groups – This information will then be available when required.

Provide excellent record system and comprehensive information provision. Great assist to both ITABE and AEGI planning.

I can see how the referral forms could be useful but it is something that our service decided against as we feels it adds to the already large amount of paper work that is involved with the ITABE project. We are still in the process of getting our tutors etc. on board to allow guidance to become part of the programme and introducing extra paper work at this stage would create a barrier rather than encouragement. However it may be something we could use in the future and that is why I feel it is useful to some extent.

Appendix 7

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

I'm currently working with one ITABE group and it's going very well. I've had an excellent planning meeting with the resource worker and also the tutor. This was followed up by a group guidance session and short 1:1 sessions with each individual. This worked very well and the group were very open to the process. I have a second group session planned for 16th January, which will meet the guidelines as set down by the IVEA.

Very positive and practical day where a plan was devised.

Very happy with this training day and have seen results (re. consultation) already.

Overall I found the training day excellent and it certainly helped our Guidance and Literacy Service to start working more in partnership for the future.

Encouraging and motivating day. Coming away with template of plan to develop was the icing.

The training day highlighted the importance of communication between services within the VEC, including the following:

- The provision of some basic information prior to a Guidance Counsellor visit would prove beneficial for the process, eg. the educational needs/level of the group, is the group a special needs group etc.
- Follow on activities on the part of the Guidance Counsellor are also important, ie. feedback to the ALO about the guidance or progression needs of ITABE participants and other relevant issues.
- Ultimately developing a good working relationship between services (Literacy and Guidance) is important and has an impact on the success of guidance within the ITABE programme.

Overall, I found the day was another good opportunity to listen, learn and reflect. My key learning was:

I recognise that resources can limit dramatically what can be delivered on the ground, but I worry sometimes that as guidance practitioners, 'we are our own worst enemies' and that our own perception of the role of guidance is limiting. We need to really believe in and be capable of arguing for the value of having guidance at the table when programmes/courses are being planned and developed, so that guidance is seen as integral and not as 'add on'. We need to be able to showcase models of this so that where resistance is experienced, we can point to why and how guidance needs to be integrated and show the impact and benefits of such integration. I think we could also be more creative in how we get others stakeholders to think about guidance and its relevance, whether in programme design or delivery. I don't have the answers, but perhaps there's scope for something /a creative think-tank at our next coordinator training in May 09.

A shaky start to the day but a very productive and valuable late morning and afternoon. I will say that I would have preferred if there was an onus on ALL ITABE staff (ie. in our case the ALO and the ITABE co-ordinator) to be present at that meeting. I did try my best from this side to ensure this but I did not feel that there was any pressure from the ITABE side to make sure that all staff were present. But thank you, it was a valuable day none the less.