



DIGITAL POLICY

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Digital Policy 2023

1 | Introduction

Since April 2020, WCLL has developed its provision and continues to offer adult learning courses both online and face to face from the Gwynneth Morgan Centre, SW18. Most of our sub-contractors are able to deliver in a similar way from sites based in the community. The service continues to work towards a more 'blended' approach through a combination of physical and virtual learning.

The service aims to mitigate barriers to learning and it is committed to maximise opportunities for those who are digitally excluded.

The council's six corporate objectives are:

- **Providing the best start in life** - By investing in early years provision, family support, school improvements, mentoring, apprenticeships, and skills training
- **Greener, safer, better neighbourhoods** - By working with our community to combat climate change and improve our environment and our neighbourhoods – keeping them green, clean and safe.
- **More homes and greater housing choice** - By delivering a range of homes to suit different needs for people who live or work in the borough, particularly for those on lower incomes, while providing more help and support to people who rent either from the council or privately.
- **Helping people get on in life** - By helping people secure new job opportunities and encouraging investment in the borough.
- **Encouraging people to live healthy, fulfilled and independent lives** - By helping young and old stay safe, active and in control of their lives.
- **Value for money** - By maintaining the lowest possible council tax, making every pound go further and ensuring that we live within our means.

The WCLL Digital Strategy will enable the service to maximise inclusion and participation in learning. To improve the quality of learning provision, we place an emphasis on using technology to develop skills for employment and general every-day living. We aim to share and provide the benefits of technology with all learners and enable them to achieve their full potential.

2 | Scope

The policy applies to all learners/apprentices enrolled on a course with Wandsworth Council Lifelong Learning and participating in any learning related activity. This document provides a framework for the safe and effective use of digital technologies within our service. It provides the parameters for our staff and subcontractors and is the basis for making decisions about which actions we need to take when developing and delivering our digital provision.

The intent of our Digital Strategy is to:

- Prioritise adult learners who have significant barriers to digital learning.
- Enable those who are most disadvantaged to engage in digital learning so that they can progress in life and work.
- Provide the education, skills and learning that give adults a second chance and supports their employment prospects and wellbeing, which in turn, improves productivity and creates the circumstances for economic success.
- Support the most disadvantaged to gain essential basic maths, English and digital skills qualifications as well as pre-vocational qualifications, to aid their progression into further learning and sustainable employment.
- Work with a range of sub-contractors to offer an extensive flexible curriculum that helps to promote better health and wellbeing and social integration and cohesion.
- Provide learning in response to digital changes which can be beneficial to the family unit in their daily lives and engage and encourage participation from learners of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.
- Improve access to adult learning by offering online classes which are accessible and manageable to learners who might not otherwise participate in adult learning.

This will be achieved by:

- Identifying learners who face a barrier to learning through digital poverty.
- Maximising resources and equipment available to support learners and the workforce.
- Offering IT Skills courses at a range of levels starting at a basic level, linking to progression and more advanced opportunities.
- Operating a laptop/tablet/dongle loan scheme to enable participation.
- Delivering engaging marketing and communications to raise awareness and encourage participation. This will include targeting areas/wards of deprivation within the borough.
- Operating a highly effective IAG service that quickly identifies barriers to digital learning.
- Training and developing tutors and stakeholders so that they can use ICT to enhance learning and embed digital skills (where applicable) within all courses.
- Connecting with other council services, particularly the work of Children's Services, Libraries, Economic Development and Adult Social Services.
- Connecting with key community groups and stakeholders to broaden the digital offer. This will include working with internal departments as well as sub-contractors.
- Connecting and contributing to other work related to digital development in Wandsworth to maximise impact and avoid duplication.
- Continuing to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of the offer in order that digital provision is appropriate, responsive and relevant.

3 | Equipment and Platforms, Including Laptop Loans

The service is committed to providing equipment and resources to digitally excluded adults who are not able to fully participate in learning.

3.1 Tackling digital exclusion

Where learners do not have the equipment they need to access learning opportunities, the service will endeavour to provide that equipment, where it is practical and affordable to do so. This could include affordable devices (hardware/software applications) and data services (sim-only, broadband, community fibre).

3.2 Loans to staff and learners

We have designed an IT Equipment Acceptable Use agreement. In summary the agreement states:

WCLL aims to ensure that learners should have safe access to digital technologies and devices.

This acceptable use agreement is intended to ensure that:

1. WCLL learners will be responsible users and stay safe while using the internet and other digital technologies.
2. WCLL systems, equipment and users are protected from accidental or deliberate misuse that could impact the security of the systems.
3. WCLL learners will have good access to digital technologies to enhance their learning and will, in return, expect learners to agree to be responsible users.

Additional documentation includes IT Equipment Learner Assessment Record, IT Equipment Declaration Issue and a Return form.

3.3 Safeguarding and Prevent

We will ensure that we provide a healthy and safe learning environment for our learners and staff when taking part or teaching our digital provision. This is also the requirement all our sub-contractors. Please refer to the E-safety section on page 19 of the Safeguarding Policy and the Staying Safe Online guidance in the Learner Handbook.

3.4 Bring Your Own Device Policy

WCLL recognises the need for learners to use their own electronic devices such as laptops, tablets, smart phones, and similar equipment to enhance and support teaching and learning.

This policy relates to reducing the risk when using your own device at a learning venue. Such risks may be your device being lost, stolen, used, or exploited in such a way to take advantage of you. Following the procedures below will bring benefits to learners through protection of your own data and equipment.

If you are using your own device for your course, it is important to ensure that it, and the information it contains, is appropriately protected.

- Set and use a passcode (i.e., pin number or password) to access your device. Whenever possible, use a strong passcode. Do not share the passcode with anyone.
- Set your device to lock automatically when the device is inactive for more than a few minutes.
- Do not leave your device unattended.
- Ensure the anti-virus software for your laptop, tablet or phone is up to date.
- Configure your device to enable you to remotely wipe it should it become lost.
- If your device is second-hand, restore to factory settings before using it for the first time.
- Only download applications or other software from reputable sources.
- Make arrangements to back up your documents.
- Configure your device to maximise its security. Take time to study and discover how to use new and enhanced security features and decide which are relevant to you.

WCLL is not responsible for stolen, lost, or damaged devices, including lost or corrupted data on any device.

WCLL is not responsible for any device charges to your account that might be incurred during course-related use.

It is important that the use of a personal device does not put others at risk or interfere with their learning, therefore we ask you to follow the guidelines below:

- Please be aware of the people around you, group dynamics and interaction.
- Refrain from checking emails, Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- Turn off all sounds on your device.
- Do not use your device for any activity unrelated to the course you are attending.
- Printing from personal devices is not possible at a learning venue.
- Personal devices must be charged prior to attending your course and run on battery power while at a learning venue. Charging of devices at a venue is not permitted unless a staff member has agreed to this.
- Please do not use devices to record, transmit, or post images or videos of a person or persons during course activities, unless you have received their permission.
- Devices with cameras or recording functions are not allowed to be used in potentially sensitive areas such as toilets.
- The Bluetooth function on a mobile device must be always switched off and not be used to send images or files to other mobile devices.
- Using mobile devices to intimidate and threaten other learners is unacceptable. Cyber bullying, 'sexting' or 'up-skirting' will not be tolerated.
- Learners must ensure that files stored on their phones do not contain violent, degrading, racist or pornographic images. The viewing or transmission of such images may constitute a criminal offence.
- On some of our courses, tutors may ask learners to put electronic devices away.

4 | Online Code of Conduct

As a WCLL learner you will be expected to adhere to our online code of conduct. This will ensure that all learners attending their lesson will have the best experience and learn in a respectful and safe online classroom.

- Ensure that you join the virtual session in advance and allow time to log-on, so that the lesson can start on time. The class is to help you and your learning.
- You must have your camera on while you are in class, but please be aware of what others will see in your background.
- Ensure your microphone is on mute when you are not talking.
- Choose a suitable workspace that is appropriate for the online classroom. Make sure you are in a quiet place in your home so that you can concentrate fully on the session.
- Display a positive commitment to your own development and learning.
- Please wear appropriate clothing for attending a lesson. No caps, hats or hoods to be worn in lessons.
- Attend 100% of your sessions, be punctual and be prepared for training. Inform WCLL of any reason for absence. Provide reasonable notice for time off for doctor, dentist, hospital, or other personal appointments.
- Ensure you have equipment with you to take notes from the session.
- You will be encouraged to participate and engage in the session. Your Tutor will instruct you on how to raise a question.
- Follow all Health and Safety instructions, policies and procedures. Behave responsibly and use safe practices so as not to endanger yourself or other people.
- Be patient, as responses online via your device can sometimes take longer to be heard by the tutor.
- Observe all WCLL policies and procedures while learning.
- Do not use mobile phones/personal games consoles during learning.
- No food or drink (other than water) to be taken while online, unless advised by your tutor.
- No smoking or vaping during your online lesson.
- Do not share WCLL, training provider or learner property, materials, or resources without permission.
- Do not take screen shots or photos of others online.
- Be tolerant and respectful towards all. Respect differences in ideas, opinions, religion, and culture. Respect everyone's views online.
- Harassment, bullying, discrimination, swearing, racist, homophobic, or sexist terms are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Do not post or share words or images that bully, harass, or that could be deemed to be offensive to staff and other learners.

5 | The Digital Curriculum

The aim of our digital strategy is to provide support for digitally excluded residents to develop the confidence and motivation to incorporate 'digital' benefits into their everyday lives.

This includes providing support to the elderly, young people, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups to enable them to use 'digital' to improve their quality of life and enable access to education, health services, employment, goods/services online and more.

Methods to achieve this aim include establishing a 'digital buddy' programme, enabling digital work placements and linking Social Prescribing and Talking Points.

6 | Learners and Learning, including Communications

WCLL and its sub-contractors provide high-quality digital skills, that advance the knowledge and use of digital devices so that learners can access services, education, work, and the digital demands of everyday life.

This includes providing a range of 'basic to advanced' training courses ensuring the training is relevant and useful for residents and tailored to different age or special interest groups.

In addition, training and support will be offered to all learners to ensure that they have the skills necessary to use digital equipment, platforms and software effectively, to support their learning.

The service and our sub-contractors support learners to ensure that they can carry out their responsibilities in ensuring that our digital learning environment is both healthy and safe. This includes completing LARA's (Learning Activity Risk Assessments) which incorporates an online learning section.

7 | Staffing and Staff Training and Support

The service and subcontractors will provide staff with training and support to ensure that they have the skills required for teaching both online and for a blended learning provision. This will include:

- Keeping track of staff access to equipment and their skills in using the various digital equipment and platforms.
- Using this information to provide updates and further training and support.
- Considering the views of staff on the effectiveness of relevant training.
- Establishing a tutor steering group to facilitate the sharing of best practice, identifying future improvements, and managing new threats to our learner's safety online.
- Providing support to tutors to enable them to manage persistent challenges in delivering online provision, such as technological issues and disengagement of learners.
- Evaluating how well tutors and support staff have adapted to the different requirements for facilitating learning and assessment through conducting OTLA's and reviewing development plans.
- Providing specific and relevant training to additional support staff and volunteers in providing learning and personal support.