

E-Safety and Digital Policy

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Aiming to improve the quality-of-life skills and employability of residents in the borough, making Wandsworth a vibrant and prosperous learning community.

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Name originator/author:	Joss New - Deputy Head of Lifelong Learning
Contact details:	Joss.new@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk T: 020 8871 5372 M: 07867 151502
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E-Safety and Digital Policy

1 | Introduction

Wandsworth Council Lifelong Learning (WCLL) and its subcontractors are committed to developing a blended learning approach, integrating both virtual learning and delivery at various community locations.

To enhance the quality of our provision, we prioritise the use of technology to support the development of skills for employment and everyday life. Our aim is to ensure that all learners benefit from technological advancements and are empowered to achieve their full potential.

2 | Scope

This policy applies to everyone involved in WCLL courses and learning activities, setting out expectations for the safe and effective use of digital technologies by staff and subcontractors.

All subcontractors commissioned to deliver these courses may adopt this policy or implement their own, subject to a quality assurance check.

3 | Intent

The intent of this policy is to ensure that our IT systems are safe, reliable, and compliant, while promoting responsible online behaviour and protecting personal information. We support learners through tutors, skills coaches, and employers, and provide training to staff and learners on online safety. Any issues or misuse are addressed appropriately, through Safeguarding, Code of Conduct and Equality and Diversity policies.

WCLL identifies and supports learners facing digital poverty by maximising access to resources, offering IT skills courses at all levels, and providing equipment loans. We deliver targeted communications to raise awareness, operate an effective IAG service to quickly address barriers, and train staff and stakeholders to embed digital skills across all courses.

We work closely with council services, community groups, and partners to broaden our digital offer, avoid duplication, and ensure provision is responsive and relevant. Our flexible digital learning offer aims to help adults - particularly those most in need - gain essential skills, improve wellbeing, and access better opportunities for work and life.

4 | Access to Equipment

Laptop Loans

If 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 devices and data services.

Learners are expected to abide by WCLL's Acceptable Use Agreement, which outlines responsible and safe use of digital technologies. By accessing WCLL systems and equipment, learners agree to use them appropriately, protect system integrity, and support a safe digital learning environment.

'Bring Your Own Device' Policy

Learners who use personal devices for their studies are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure their equipment and data are secure. WCLL provides guidance to help minimise risks such as loss, theft, or misuse. This includes using secure passwords, keeping devices updated, backing up work, and being cautious about downloads and app sources. By following these measures, learners help maintain a safe and effective digital learning environment.

If you are using your own device for your course, configure your device to maximise its security and follow this guidance:

- Set a strong password or PIN to access your device.
- Avoid leaving your device unattended. Set it to lock automatically when it is inactive for more than a few minutes.
- Ensure the anti-virus software for your device is up to date.
- Only download applications or software from trusted and reputable sources.
- Configure your device to enable you to remotely wipe it should it become lost.
- Restore second-hand devices to factory settings before using for the first time.
- Back up your documents.

WCLL cannot accept responsibility for any lost, stolen, or damaged personal devices, or for any loss or corruption of data on such devices. Additionally, WCLL is not liable for any charges incurred on personal accounts as a result of course-related device use.

Learners are expected to use personal devices in a way that does not disrupt others or interfere with the learning environment. This includes being mindful of those around them, keeping devices on silent, and only using devices for course-related activities. Recording or sharing images, videos, or audio without permission is not allowed, and devices should not be used in sensitive areas.

Additionally, learners must ensure their devices are fully charged before attending sessions, as charging at the venue is only permitted with staff approval. Inappropriate use of devices, including cyberbullying or storing offensive material, is prohibited. Tutors may also request that devices be put away during certain activities to maintain focus and respect for all participants.

5 | Online Code of Conduct

WCLL has produced an Online Code of Conduct, below. Please familiarise yourself with the content before joining an online course.

Online Code of Conduct poster

WCLL LEARNER ONLINE CODE OF CONDUCT

BEFORE CLASS

- Join your virtual session in advance and allow time to log-on.
- Ensure you have what you need to take notes from the session.
- Leave your camera on during class and be aware of what others will see in your background.
- Mute your microphone when you are not talking.
- Choose a suitable workspace for the online classroom, in a quiet place.
- Wear appropriate clothing for classes. No caps, hats or hoods to be worn in lessons.

DURING CLASS

- Be prepared participate and engage in the session. Your Tutor will guide you on how to raise a question.
- Be tolerant and respectful towards all and respect everyone's views online.
- Do not use mobile phones or other devices during classes.
- No food or drink (other than water) to be taken while online, unless advised by your tutor.
- Do not smoke or vape during your lessons.
- Do not take screen shots or photos of others online.
- Do not use AI tools to transcribe the session. Your tutor may record the lesson, if it has been agreed with all learners in the class.

CONDUCT

- Observe all WCLL policies and procedures during your course.
- Display a positive commitment to your learning and attend 100% of your sessions.
- Be punctual and inform WCLL of any reason for absence, in advance.
- Harassment, bullying, discrimination, swearing, racist, homophobic, transphobic or sexist conduct will not be tolerated.
- Do not post or share words or images that bully, harass, or that could be deemed to be offensive.
- Behave responsibly and safely so as not to endanger yourself or other people.
- Be committed to a healthy lifestyle, which is not dependent on the misuse of drugs or alcohol.
- Learners may not bring children or young adults to the centre, as we cannot take responsibility for them and will ask you to leave if you do so.

If you're unsure about anything during your course, just let your tutor know. For any concerns or safeguarding issues, please contact our Safeguarding Team - details are in your learner handbook.

Dress Code for Online Learning

- Even though our courses are online, we ask learners to dress appropriately to support a respectful and focused learning environment.
- Wear clean and tidy clothing.
- Avoid pyjamas, beachwear, revealing outfits, or clothing with offensive slogans or images.

This will ensure that sessions are professional and comfortable for everyone.

This code of conduct is mandatory across all our courses and should be followed by all learners across our whole provision.

6 | E-Safety Responsibilities

Digital platforms can expose learners and staff to various influences, some of which may be harmful and pose risk. WCLL is committed to raising awareness of these risks and promoting safe online behaviour. Learners are expected to use digital resources responsibly and report any concerns, helping to maintain a secure and supportive learning environment for all.

The range of online risks can include (but is not limited to) exposure to misleading information, extremist content, illegal material, and harmful interactions with others. There are also dangers related to privacy, commercial frauds, and inappropriate advertising, particularly for younger users.

Online Safety and Behaviour in Virtual Learning

In line with this policy, tutors and learners must maintain professionalism and respect during online sessions. This includes:

- Wearing appropriate clothing and ensuring a suitable learning environment.
- Only authorised participants may join; cameras should remain on unless agreed otherwise.
- Recording, sharing sessions, or disclosing personal information is not permitted.
- Language and behaviour must always be respectful.
- Tutors may ask for devices to be put away to support learning.
- Any illegal activity will be reported to the authorities.

WCLL aims to maximise the educational benefits of IT while minimising associated risks. By working with our tutors and subcontractors to clarify expectations about the safe use of IT, we aim to protect our learners from harm as much as reasonably practicable. These guidelines help ensure a safe, respectful, and secure online learning space for everyone.

7 | 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 updating their, as required.
- Acting on feedback from staff on the effectiveness of training.
- Establishing a tutor steering group to facilitate the sharing of best practice, improvements, and managing new our learner's safety online.
- Providing support to tutors to enable them to manage technological challenges.

We assess how well tutors and support staff adapt to new teaching and assessment requirements by carrying out observations of teaching, learning, and assessment (OTLAs) and reviewing their development plans.

8 | IT Security

WCLL networks are protected with up-to-date security measures and software. The learner network at the centre is managed by the City Learning Centre and is protected against threats like hacking and harmful websites. Offsite venues use council networks that meet international information security standards (ISO27001), helping to keep your data safe wherever you learn.

If a member of staff has any concerns regarding the use of IT, they should report this immediately to one of the following:

- Quality Manager (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- Deputy Head of Service (Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- Head of Service (Safeguarding Officer)

Reports of any e-safety incidents are acted upon immediately to prevent, as far as reasonably practicable, any harm or further harm occurring.

Actions following the report of an e-safety incident might include disciplinary action, reports to external agencies, parent or carer updates for EHCP learners or Vulnerable Adults (e.g., the Police or Channel Panel).