

This policy relates to all members of the Gloucestershire County Council's (GCC) Adult Learning user community.

The policy is aimed at those who have access to, and are users of, ICT (Information & Communication Technology) systems and ILT (Information Learning Technology) resources both in and outside of learning venues where actions relate to or use the Adult Education in Gloucestershire's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) or other online content. The community is defined as set out below and throughout this document will be referred to as the **II&CLT (Integrated Information & Communication Learning Technology) user community**:-

- Tutors who are employed directly by Adult Education in Gloucestershire
- Tutors who are employed by a provider manager to deliver Adult Learning provision across the county
- Provider managers
- Learners
- Visitors
- Volunteers

Context

To prepare learners for the needs of today and their future working lives where the curriculum and their personal goals require them to learn how to locate, retrieve and exchange information using a variety of technologies. Digital skills are vital to access life-long learning and employment and II&CLT is now seen as an essential skill for life.

As well as bringing many benefits, technologies can present risks to all groups and users of online resources. Internet use for work, home, social and leisure activities is expanding across all sectors of society. This brings the II&CLT user community into contact with a wide variety influences some of which may be unsuitable.

These new technologies are enhancing communication and the sharing of information, which inevitably challenge the accepted definitions of the boundaries of the Adult Learning community. Use of current and emerging technologies by staff and learners alike include:-

- Internet websites
- Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)
- Instant messaging
- Social networking sites – e.g. Facebook or Twitter
- Emails
- Blogs
- Podcasting
- Video broadcasting sites
- Chat rooms
- Internet shopping or trading on eBay
- Mobile phones with camera and video functionality
- Digital cameras
- Smart phones with e-mail and web applications

All of these have potential to help raise standards of teaching and learning, but may equally present challenges to the II&CLT user community in terms of keeping themselves safe. These challenges include:

- Exposure to inappropriate material
- Cyber-bullying via websites, mobile phones or other technologies
- Identity theft or the invasion of privacy
- Downloading copyrighted materials
- Exposure to inappropriate advertising online gambling and financial scams
- Safeguarding issues such as grooming (particularly vulnerable adults)
- Other illegal activities

GCC seeks to maximise the educational benefit that can be obtained by exploiting the use of II&CLT, whilst at the same time balancing this with the need to minimise any associated risks.

Thus, by making it clear what our expectations are regarding the use of II&CLT, we aim to protect the II&CLT user community from harm, as far as reasonably practicable.

The precise nature of the risks faced by the II&CLT user community will change over time as technologies, fads and fashions change and indeed may well be context specific (i.e. differing learning contexts; differing needs within groups along with differing learner profiles).

However, there are general principles of behavior and a code of conduct that applies to all situations. For example:-

ALL STAFF and ALL TUTORS MUST:-

- Participate in any e-safety training and awareness raising sessions
- Have read, understood and accepted the e-safety policy and Acceptable Use Agreement (AUP)
- Have read, understood and accepted GCC's Social Media Policy
- Act in accordance with the AUP and e-safety policy
- Report any suspicion of misuse to the designated persons or line manager
- Help to educate learners in keeping safe
- Encourage learners to take a responsible approach when using or engaging with II&CLT
- Act as a good role model in their own use of II&CLT
- Pre-check sites and pre-plan Internet searches (where possible)
- Be vigilant in monitoring the content of websites where learners are able to freely search the Internet in case there is any unsuitable material
- Teach learners to be critically aware of the materials/content they can access online and be guided to validate the accuracy of information
- Be aware of the potential for cyber-bullying in their sessions where malicious messages e.g. through the use of forums on the VLE (Moodle, etc) or via internal class emails or text messages on mobile phones etc, which can cause hurt or distress
- Educate learners to respect the need to acknowledge the sources of any information used and to respect copyright when using material accessed on the Internet.
- Not give out their personal information to learners such as their personal telephone numbers, email address or allow access to their personal social networking site accounts i.e. 'facebook' profiles etc.

A balance must be struck when educating the II&CLT user community to take a reasonable approach towards the use of regulation and technical solutions. We must recognise that there are no totally effective solutions to moderate and control the Internet, so this policy incorporates both approaches.

Roles and Responsibilities

ALL STAFF and ALL TUTORS employed directly or indirectly by GCC (inclusive of provider managers and outside contractors)

All members of this group must be responsible for supporting and following the guidelines mentioned in this e-safety document. All members of this group must familiarise themselves with the e-safety and acceptable use of II&CLT policy Safeguarding Policies, as well as their relevance to the code of conduct and safeguarding policies.

Learners

Learners are encouraged to access various technologies in sessions and when undertaking independent research, and are therefore expected to follow the guidelines set out in the e-safety and acceptable use of II&CLT policy. They should participate fully in e-safety activities and report any suspected misuse to a member of staff. Learners must agree to the terms of our Acceptable Use Policy and their e-safety responsibilities:

Learners must:-

- behave in a safe and responsible manner
- treat equipment with respect
- be polite and not use e-mail to bully or insult others
- use the resources only for educational purposes

Learners must not:-

- waste resources including Internet and printers
- eat or drink in the ICT suites
- use someone else's login details
- have any inappropriate files (e.g. copyrighted or indecent material)
- attempt to circumvent or "hack" any systems.
- use inappropriate or unacceptable language;
- reveal their personal details or passwords;
- visit websites that are offensive in any way;
- use chat rooms or newsgroups;
- download anything inappropriate or install any programmes

The Provider management team will e-safety very seriously and will ensure that policies and procedures are in line with best practice and the safeguarding agenda. In particular they will ensure that all staff receive suitable training and development to carry out their e-safety roles and sufficient resources are allocated to the task. Managers will follow the correct procedure in the event of a serious e-safety allegation being made against a member of staff and ensure that there is a robust system in place for monitoring e-safety. Regular reviews of any issues will take place at the safeguarding working group meetings with feedback sessions scheduled to the senior management team meetings.

Responding to issues

It is important that any incidents are dealt with as soon as possible in a proportionate manner and that members of safeguarding working group are aware that incidents have been dealt with.

Any concerns around the misuse of II&CLT must follow the referral process within the Safeguarding policy and procedure where there is a potential threat to another learner, vulnerable person or member of staff. Any suspected misuse must be reported to a member of staff and then an appropriate course of actions will be agreed. All II&CLT user community members need to know what to do if they come across inappropriate material.