

Wales digital experience insights 2019: WBL summary

Related to the Digital 2030 Framework

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Digital 2030 vision

*Post-16 learning providers will seamlessly integrate digital technology into delivery; and encourage innovation in using inclusive, accessible and bilingual approaches to enhance the learner’s experience. Based on an awareness of the digital skills needed to support the Welsh economy, providers will equip learners and staff with the digital capabilities and confidence they will need to succeed in everyday life and in work.*

Insights overview for each key area of the vision

1. Learners will be equipped with digital capabilities and confidence

Two thirds of learners recognise that digital skills are important in their chosen career, however only just over a half feel their course prepares them for the digital workplace. Over two thirds of learners agree they have regular opportunities to review and update their digital skills, but it is not clear whether this is guided or directed towards preparation for the digital workplace.

Generally, learners are confident in using mainstream technology such as finding information online and word processing, however less than a third produce work in digital formats other than Word or PowerPoint. Also, less than a third access course materials online in their own time.

Nearly a fifth of learners use assistive technologies either through necessity or an optional choice. Of those, only two thirds say they are provided with support from their learning provider.

1. The learning experience will be enhanced through the integration of digital technology

Four fifths of learners rated the quality of digital teaching and learning on their course as better than the ‘average’ midpoint rating, over two thirds were happy with the amount that digital technology is used on their courses, and nearly two thirds agree that online assessments were delivered and managed well. Only two thirds of learners feel they have access to reliable wifi at their learning provider, but a similar proportion agree that their organisation supports them to use their own digital devices.

A significant fifth of learners said they would like to see the use of technology improved, particularly in the following areas:

* Online practice questions (32%)
* References and readings (25%)
* Course related videos (24%)
* Finding resources on the virtual learning environment (19%)

Learners views on technology use for learning delivery are reflected in teaching practices: Only just over a quarter of teaching practitioners relying on the virtual learning environment for their teaching, and a similar proportion using live polls or quizzes in class.

Examples of digital technologies that teaching practitioners do find useful included e‑portfolios, City & Guilds Learning Assistant, OneFile, and OneDrive. In addition, almost four fifths use a digital system to give personalised feedback to learners, but less than a half agree that the systems available are easy to use.

Although nearly a fifth of learners and a quarter of teaching practitioners use assistive technologies, awareness and organisational support for this is limited. Less than half of all teaching practitioners agreed that they are informed about these technologies, and roughly a quarter of those using the technologies said they received no support. Some learner and teaching practitioner free text answers suggest they regularly use technology to translate between languages as part of their learning/teaching.

Over 90% of teaching practitioners agree their organisation informs them of their responsibilities regarding managing learner data securely, but only around half agree they are informed about their responsibilities regarding their own health and wellbeing in the digital workplace. Only two thirds feel informed about digital copyright and licensing.

Over two thirds of learners agree that the organisation helps them stay safe online, but around a fifth of learners did not agree that their data privacy was protected. Nearly three quarters agree they can access health and wellbeing services online.

1. All staff are equipped with digital capabilities and confidence

Less than a half of teaching practitioners agree they are given guidance about the digital skills they are expected to have, and similarly small proportion feel they get regular opportunities to develop their digital skills. Just over a quarter felt they actively develop their digital skills.

While nearly 90% of teaching practitioners never teach in a live environment, only just over a half create learning materials in a digital format other than text or PowerPoint. Less than a sixth said they receive recognition or reward for developing the digital aspects of their roles.

Nearly two thirds of teaching practitioners said they want digital technologies to be used more in their teaching, and nearly half feel that they are early adopters of technology, but less than a fifth said they are given time and support to innovate. Over half said that the support they do get comes mainly from other teaching colleagues, and a third use online resources, but only around a tenth use an online network or forum to broaden that support.

Less than a half of teaching practitioners agree they are informed about assistive and adaptive technologies, yet nearly a third use these technologies, and just under a fifth said they are vital to them. Of those teaching practitioners using assistive technologies, three quarters say they are provided with support from their organisation.

Insights into addressing the Digital 2030 Aims

1. Digital standards

**Clear, nationally agreed standards for digital skills are in place to enable learners and staff to meet industry, private and public sector requirements, building on the digital competences developed during compulsory schooling.**

* 1. 60% of learners agree that before they started their course, they were told what digital skills they would need (16% disagree), and 68% agree they have regular opportunities to review and update their digital skills (10% disagree) [significantly better figures than in FE] (LQ18).
  2. 42% of teaching practitioners agree they are given guidance about the digital skills they are expected to have as a teaching practitioner (15% disagree), and 44% agree they get regular opportunities to develop their digital skills (13% disagree) [generally better figures than in FE] (TQ15).

1. Enhanced learning

**Learning is enhanced through the use of technology, wherever it is appropriate and beneficial to the learner.**

* 1. 82% of learners rated the quality of digital teaching and learning on their course as better than the ‘average’ midpoint rating (LQ19), 35% agree they can find things easily on their virtual learning environment (19% disagree) (LQ16), and 61% of learners agree that online assessments were delivered and managed well [far more than in FE] (LQ17).
  2. 75% of learners find information online and 31% produce work in digital formats other than Word or PowerPoint ‘weekly or more’ (LQ15) and, in their own time, 29% of learners access lecture notes or recorded lectures ‘weekly or more’ [almost half that of FE] (LQ9). When asked what digital tools or apps they find useful, most learners mention Google search and OneFile; several also mentioned Duolingo (LQ9a).
  3. When learners were asked how much they would like digital technology to be used on their course, 70% said ‘same as they are now’, 21% said ’more’ [half that of FE], and 9% said ‘less’ (LQ25). Areas where learners would like improved online support were: more practice questions (32%), more references and readings (25%), and more course related videos (24%) (LQ20). This is reflected in the [Resource alignment](#_Resource_alignment) section.
  4. Only 27% of teaching practitioners agree they rely on the virtual learning environment for their teaching [far less than in FE] (TQ9), and only 34% of teaching practitioners carry out live polls or quizzes in class (only 7% do so weekly or more often, and 27% monthly or less often) [much less than in FE] (TQ12).
  5. When asked to give an example of a digital tool or app teaching practitioners find useful in their role, most mentioned e-portfolios, City & Guilds Learning Assistant, OneFile, and OneDrive (TQ14a).
  6. 79% of teaching practitioners use a digital system to give personalised feedback to learners (52% do so weekly or more and 27% do so monthly or less) (TQ12), and 42% agree that their system for online marking and providing feedback was easy to use [significantly higher than in FE] (TQ10).

1. Coherence and accessibility

**The coherence and accessibility of digital learning is increased through a range of curriculum delivery methods that are appropriate to learner and employer needs, and offer learning opportunities in both the Welsh and English languages.**

* 1. 4% of learners said assistive technologies were vital to meet their learning needs, and a further 14% said they used assistive technologies as an optional choice (LQ5). Of those learners who say they use assistive technologies, 67% say they are provided with support from their learning provider (LQ6).
  2. 70% of learners agree that their organisation supports them to use their own digital devices [much more than in FE] (LQ11).
  3. 13% of teaching practitioners said assistive technologies were vital to them, and a further 20% said they used assistive technologies as an optional choice [around twice as many as in FE] (TQ4). Of those who say they use assistive technologies, 74% of teaching practitioners say they are provided with support from their organisation (TQ5).
  4. 45% of teaching practitioners agree they are informed about assistive and adaptive technologies [far more than in FE] (TQ16).
  5. Some learner and teaching practitioner free text answers mentioned apps that suggest they regularly translate between languages as part of their learning/teaching, eg use of Duolingo.

1. Safe experience

**A safe and secure teaching and learning experience is enabled and managed for all learners and staff through provision of appropriate virtual and physical environments.**

* 1. 73% of learners agree the organisation helps them stay safe online, and 78% of learners agree their organisation protects their data privacy [both much higher than in FE] (LQ11).
  2. 73% of learners agree they can access health and wellbeing services online [much higher than in FE] (LQ11).
  3. 93% of teaching practitioners agree their organisation informs them of their responsibilities regarding managing learner data securely, but only 55% agree they are informed about their responsibilities regarding their own health and wellbeing in the digital workplace (11% disagree) [a much better perception than in FE] (TQ16).
  4. 66% of teaching practitioners agree they are informed about digital copyright and licensing (TQ16).

1. Understanding benefits

**The benefits of digital technology, and possible barriers to their achievement, are understood by all staff including senior leaders.**

* 1. Only 13% of teaching practitioners said they were provided with recognition or reward when they develop digital aspects of their role; 31% said they receive no recognition or reward (TQ15).
  2. 59% of teaching practitioners create learning materials in a digital format other than text or PowerPoint (13% do so weekly or more [significantly lower than in FE] and 46% monthly or less), and 87% never teach in a live online environment (TQ12).
  3. 62% of teaching practitioners said they wanted digital technologies to be used more in their teaching practice; 36% said ‘same as now’ and only 2% said ‘less’ (TQ13).

1. Continual improvement

**Continual improvement of the learner experience and business processes is supported through effective and innovative use of digital technology.**

* 1. 49% of teaching practitioners rated the overall quality of support that they receive from their organisation to develop the digital aspects of their role as better than the ‘average’ midpoint rating (TQ17), and 44% agree they are given regular opportunities to develop their digital skills (13% disagree [half that in FE]) (TQ15).
  2. 27% of teaching practitioners agree that they develop their digital teaching skills formally or informally (15% disagree), and only 18% agree that they read up on issues relating to digital education (18% disagree) (TQ14).
  3. 45% of teaching practitioners feel that they are early adopters (either because they tend to be the first to adopt new technology, or because they are an early adopter when they see clear benefits), 43% feel they adopt technology at the pace of their peers, and 13% after their peers (TQ6), but only 18% said they were given time and support to innovate while 27% said they were not [half that in FE] (TQ15).

1. Collaborative culture

**A culture of collaboration ensures that information and best practice are shared to drive effective use of digital skills to support leadership, learning and business processes.**

* 1. 66% of learners agree that digital skills are important in their chosen career [much higher than in FE], and 55% agree their course prepares them for the digital workplace (LQ18).
  2. 54% of teaching practitioners say that other teaching colleagues are their greatest source of support in using digital technologies in their practice (TQ7), but only 11% agree that they discuss teaching with peers via an online network or forum (51% disagree) (TQ14).
  3. Only 18% of teaching practitioners rely most on support staff [slightly higher than in FE], while 33% rely most on online videos and resources (TQ7).

1. Resource alignment

**Staff, learning and business resources are aligned to enable efficient support of the continually evolving digital requirements of post-16 education.**

* 1. 44% of learners said they look for additional learning resources not recommended by their tutor/lecturer ‘weekly or more’ (LQ9)
  2. Availability of digital facilities:

|  | Learners | Teaching practitioners |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Access to facilities:   * Reliable wifi * Online course materials or VLE * e-books and e-journals * File storage and back-up * Recorded lectures / lecture capture * Video-based skills training * None of the above | (LQ10)  68%  74%  20%  46%  5%  16%  10% | (TQ8)  70%  30%  29% [half that in FE]  88%  2%  16%  2% |

* 1. Perception of digital facilities:

|  | Learners | Teaching practitioners |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Digital provision is better than the ‘average’ midpoint rating | 76% agree (LQ14) | 45% agree (LQ11) |
| Teaching spaces are well designed for the technologies they used | 41% agree (LQ17)  10% disagree | 21% agree (TQ10)  39% disagree |
| The software on their course is industry standard and up to date | 58% agree (LQ17)  8% disagree | 30% agree (TQ10)  23% disagree |
| They are given the chance to be involved in decisions about digital services | 37% agree (LQ18) | 11% agree (TQ15)  24% disagree [almost half that in FE] |

# Note:

The data summarised in this report comes from a relatively small sample of work based (WBL) learners and teaching practitioners across Wales. However, as responses were submitted from colleges and independent training providers, it was felt, that although small, it was sufficiently diverse and significant for analysis.

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