

Wales digital experience insights 2021: Further Education summary

Related to the Digital 2030 Framework

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Introduction

This document aims to present the findings of the 2021 Wales post-16 digital experience insights survey, mapped to the vision and aims of the [Digital 2030 Framework](https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/digital-2030-a-strategic-framework-for-post-16-digital-learning-in-wales.pdf) and, where notable, compare them with findings from a similar exercise undertaken in 2019. Each finding is accompanied by the survey question number, allowing easy cross matching between the organisation’s individual survey results and that of the sector.

Surveys were made available to further education, work-based learning and adult and community learning providers in spring and summer 2021. Bespoke question sets were devised for learners, teaching practitioners and professional services staff.

* 5921 learners participated: 4437 FE, 1008 WBL and 476 ACL. 21 organisations participated: 9 colleges, 8 ACL providers / partnerships and 4 independent training providers.  
  Note: 5 colleges used more than one learner survey: 4 FE and WBL, 1 FE and ACL
* 1181 teaching staff participated from 22 organisations: 10 colleges, 8 ACL providers / partnerships and 4 independent training providers
* 1051 professional learning staff participated from 14 organisations: 10 colleges, 3 ACL providers / partnerships and 1 independent training provider

This document is part of a suite of resources aimed at helping post-16 education providers implement and embed Digital 2030. Welsh Government funds Jisc to support eligible post-16 education providers in Wales to realise the benefits digital technology can bring, particularly in relation to [Digital 2030.](https://gov.wales/digital-2030-strategic-framework) For more information on how Jisc can help please contact your [account manager](https://www.jisc.ac.uk/contact/your-account-manager).

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

Only 36% of learners stated they discussed digital skills at induction whilst 46% felt they were provided with the chance to assess digital skills e.g. for career planning. However, two thirds felt well supported on their course to meet an employer’s needs and nearly three quarters rated the quality of digital skills support as average or better.

70% of learners highly rated the quality of delivery methods on their courses to meet their needs in completing their course, with 60% highly rating delivery methods as meeting the needs of current or potential employers. Three quarters of teaching staff feel well supported in teaching their programme to meet the needs of students in completing their course(s) and to meet the needs of their students’ target roles and goals.

Generally, learners are motivated to use technology to support their learning and are confident in using new and mainstream technology.

Over half of learners are supported in their use of technology by their lecturers, 11% turn to other students and 15% to family and friends whereas 12% use online videos and resources.

13% of learners use assistive technologies with nearly two thirds of those saying they are provided with support from their learning provider.

The vast majority of learners use digital tool or apps to make notes or recordings, access course materials and look for additional resources whilst two thirds use digital tools or apps to access recorded lectures. In addition, learners value interactive quizzes or polls and access to practice questions online to support their learning. Accordingly, 85% of teaching staff use live polls or quizzes in class with 41% doing so weekly or more.

83% highly rate delivery methods to enable learning in both English and Welsh.

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

80% of learners highly rated the quality of digital teaching and learning on their course. However, in relation to their learning environment, only two thirds of learners and 57% of teaching staff found it to be reliable; 59% of learners and 40% of teaching staff believed it to be well designed; and 61% and 48%, respectively, that it is easy to navigate.

64% of learners and 52% of teaching staff agree that the system for submitting work and getting feedback works well with over three quarters teaching staff providing digital feedback to students at least weekly.

82% of learners highly rate their learning provider’s digital provision (software, hardware, learning environment), up slightly from 77% in 2019. Three quarters of teaching staff also highly rated their organisation’s digital provision, up from just under half in 2019. When asked what would be most useful to them, a quarter of learners wanted more laptops or tablets to be available in class with about a sixth wanting more laptops or tablets available on long term loan and more computers in computer rooms.

Three quarters of learners and teaching staff feel they have access to reliable Wi-Fi at their learning provider. Whilst two thirds of learners feel that their organisation supports them to use their own digital devices, less than half of teaching staff feel similarly supported.

78% of learners have access to online course materials whenever needed with roughly a third stating they have access to e-books, recorded lectures and online skills training resources when needed.

Over three quarters of teaching staff have access to online skills training resources, file storage and back-up, two-thirds to e-books and journals and a quarter to lecture capture whenever needed.

Since 2019 there has been a slight increase in the number of learners finding interactive polls/quizzes, time working online with other students and practice questions as most useful. The value placed on course related videos and references & readings has fallen slightly.

Over two thirds of learners agree that their learning provider supports them to use their own digital devices and that they can access online systems and services from anywhere.

Nearly half of learners are either unsure or uninformed about their health and wellbeing as a technology user and about keeping personal data safe whilst over a third are uninformed about staying safe online. Similarly, one in five teachers are uninformed about keeping student data safe and over a quarter feel uninformed about helping students behave safely online.

Over three quarters of teaching staff feel supported to enable learning in both English and Welsh with a third highly rating delivery methods to enable learning in both English and Welsh.

1. All staff are equipped with digital capabilities and confidence

Only 21% of teaching staff and 38% of professional services staff discussed their digital skills when they were recruited and even less at induction. Half of teaching staff say they discuss digital skills at appraisals and informally with their manager, whilst 65% discuss digital skills with colleagues at meetings and 72% at staff meetings or CPD sessions. 57% of professional services staff discus their digital skills informally with their manager whilst half do so at appraisals, meetings with colleagues and CPD sessions.

Only 59% of teaching staff agreed that their organisation provided them with guidance about the digital skills needed in their job role, 40% that their organisation provides the chance to assess their digital skills and 37% with time to explore new digital tools and approaches.

Two thirds of teaching staff agree their organisation provides a good online environment for collaboration. Over three quarters of teaching and professional services staff have access to online skills training resources with half of teaching staff and nearly two thirds of professional services staff feeling supported by colleagues to use technology within their roles.

87% of teaching staff are motivated to use technology to support teaching but only 68% confidently use digital tools in the classroom. Three quarters state they are confident at trying out new technologies, 58% enjoy trying out new technologies but only a quarter use simulations, virtual or augmented reality. Despite the high figures for motivation and confidence, only 59% of teaching staff feel informed about innovations in digital teaching and learning.

Only just over half of professional services staff feel their organisation provides them with guidance about the digital skills needed in their role, however roughly three quarters highly rate the quality of support provided to develop their digital skills and to deliver their role. Similarly, three quarters of professional services staff enjoy reliable Wi-Fi, up from 64% in 2019.

89% of professional services staff are motivated to use technology to support their job role with 71% stating they are confident to try out new technologies whilst 53% enjoy trying out new and innovative technologies.

27% of teaching staff and 22% of professional services staff stated they were rewarded or recognised for the digital skills they developed.

81% of teaching staff feel they are informed about keeping student data safe with 71% feeling informed about equality and accessibility legislation and how to help students behave safely online. Only 56% agree they are informed about health and wellbeing as a technology user but this is an improvement on 39% in 2019.

Comparably, professional services staff feel better informed than teaching staff with 88% agreeing they are informed about keeping student data safe, 81% about behaving safely and respectfully online, 78% about equality and accessibility legislation and 66% about health and wellbeing as a technology user.

One in five teaching staff and one in ten professional services staff make use of assistive technologies with over two thirds saying they are supported by their organisation. Both groups use screen readers, dictation tools and magnifying tools.

Over 90% of professional services staff feel supported to perform their role in both Welsh and English languages.

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. 56% of learners agree that their learning provider provided them with guidance about the digital skills needed for their course (5% disagree) (LQ33), and 72% highly rate the quality of support they get from their learning provider to develop their digital skills (7% poorly rate the support) (LQ36). 71% of learners also highly rate the delivery methods on their course in meeting their needs to complete their course (LQ29).
  2. 59% of teaching practitioners agree they are given guidance about the digital skills they are expected to have in their role (7% disagree) (TQ29), and 74% highly rate the quality of support they get from their organisation to develop their digital skills(5% rate this poorly) (TQ 32). 76% of teaching practitioners feel well supported in teaching their programme to meet the needs of students in completing their course (5% disagree). (TQ 26).
  3. 52% of professional services staff agree they are given guidance about the digital skills they are expected to have in their role (8% disagree) (PSQ23), and 72% highly rate the quality of support they get from their organisation to develop their digital skills(6% rate this poorly) (PSQ26). 77% of professional services staff feel their organisation supports them well to deliver their role. (PSQ20)

1. Enhanced learning

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

* 1. 80% of learners rated the quality of digital teaching and learning on their course as good or better (LQ28), 61% agree their virtual learning environment is easy to navigate (4% disagree) (LQ15), and 64% of learners agree that the system for submitting work and getting feedback works well (LQ13). 28% of learners use live polls or quizzes weekly or more in class (LQ 25) whereas 60% use digital tools or apps to make notes recordings in their own time, weekly or more (LQ 21). 29% of learners find interactive quizzes and polls most useful with 26% rating the availability of practice questions most useful (LQ 23).
  2. 57% of teaching practitioners agree their learning environment is reliable (10% disagree) with 48% finding it easy to navigate (11% disagree) (TQ 13). 77% of teaching staff give digital feedback to individual students weekly or more (TQ 18) with 52% agreeing the system for marking work and giving feedback works well (TQ 12). 41% use live polls or quizzes in class weekly or more whereas 15% never do (TQ 18).

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. 13% of learners said they used assistive technologies such as screen readers, dictation tools, alternative input devices and screen magnification (LQ6). Of those learners who use assistive technologies, 64% said they are provided with support from their organisation (LQ6a). 68% of learners agree their organisation supports them to use their own digital devices (LQ18)
  2. 48% of learners highly rate the delivery methods on their course to enable learning in both English and Welsh languages (LQ 29)
  3. 19% of teaching practitioners said they used assistive technologies such as screen readers, dictation tools, alternative input devices and screen magnification (TQ4). Of those who use assistive technologies, 70% said they are provided with support from their organisation (TQ4a).
  4. 71% of teaching practitioners agree they are informed about equality and accessibility legislation (TQ30).
  5. 44% of teaching staff highly rate the support received in their teaching programme to enable learning in both English and Welsh languages (TQ26)
  6. 9% of professional services staff said they used assistive technologies such as screen readers, dictation tools, alternative input devices and screen magnification (PSQ4). Of those who use assistive technologies, 67% said they are provided with support from their organisation (PSQ4a).
  7. 78% of professional services staff agree they are informed about equality and accessibility legislation (PSQ24).
  8. 60% of professional services staff say they are well supported to perform their role in both English and Welsh languages (PSQ20)

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. 62% of learners agree they are informed about staying safe online, 57% agree they are informed about keeping personal data safe and 56% agree they are informed about health and wellbeing as a technology user (LQ34).
  2. 81% of teaching practitioners agree they are informed about keeping student data safe under GDPR, 56% agree they are informed about their health and wellbeing as a technology user and 61% agree they are informed about digital copyright and licencing (TQ30).
  3. 88% of professional services staff agree they are informed about keeping student data safe under GDPR, 66% agree they are informed about their health and wellbeing as a technology user and 61% agree they are informed about digital copyright and licencing (PSQ 24).

1. Understanding benefits

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

* 1. 64% of learners are motivated to use technology to support their learning (LQ26) and 67% are confident to try out new technologies (LQ11).
  2. Only 27% of teaching practitioners agree their organisation provides them with reward and recognition for the digital skills they develop, whilst 25% disagree (TQ29).
  3. 87% of teaching practitioners are motivated to use technology to support their teaching (TQ20) and 74% are confident to try out new technologies (TQ9). However, 76% have never used simulations, virtual or augmented reality (TQ19).
  4. Only 22% of professional services staff agree their organisation provides them with reward and recognition for the digital skills they develop, whilst 26% disagree (PSQ23).
  5. 90% of professional services staff are motivated to use technology to support their job role (PSQ16) and 71% are confident to try out new technologies (PSQ9).

1. Continual improvement

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

* 1. 59% of teaching practitioners feel informed about innovations in digital teaching and learning (TQ30), and 58% enjoy trying out new technologies (TQ7). However, only 37% agree that their organisation provides them with time to explore new digital tools and approaches (TQ29).
  2. Nearly three quarters of teaching staff discuss their digital skills in staff meetings / CPD sessions, 62% at meetings with colleagues and 51% informally with managers (TQ31). Also, 80% of teaching staff have access to online skills training resources whenever needed (TQ10).
  3. 53% of professional services staff said they enjoy trying out new technologies (PSQ7).
  4. Just over half of professional services staff discuss their digital skills in staff meetings / CPD sessions, at meetings with colleagues, informally with managers and at appraisals (PSQ25). 80% also stated they have access to online skills training resources (PSQ10).

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. 60% of learners highly rate the delivery methods on their course to meet the needs of current or potential employers (LQ29)
  2. Only 11% of learners prefer to turn to other students for support in using technology in their learning, higher than ACL (2%) and WBL (6%) but down from 20% in 2019. 12% make use of online videos and resources, lower than both ACL (19%) and WBL (15%) but up modestly from 9% in 2019 (LQ22).
  3. Half of teaching practitioners turn to other teaching colleagues most for support in using digital technologies in their teaching with just under a third making use of online videos and resources (TQ23).
  4. 65% of teaching staff agree their organisation provides a good online environment for collaboration (TQ16).
  5. 62% of professional services staff turn to other colleagues most for support in using digital technologies in their work role with 16% making use of online videos and resources (PSQ18).

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. Availability of digital facilities:

|  | Learners | Teaching practitioners | Professional services staff |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Access to facilities:   * Reliable Wi-Fi * Online course * e-books and e-journals * File storage and back-up * Recorded lectures * Online skills training * None of the above | (LQ12)  73%  78%  29%  52%  33%  38%  3% | (TQ10)  75%  68%  81%  27%  80%  1% | (PSQ10)  83%  85%  76%  2% |

* 1. 82% of learners rated the quality of their learning provider’s digital provision as good, excellent or best imaginable (LQ20).
  2. 76% of teaching staff rated the quality of their organisation’s digital provision as good, excellent or best imaginable (TQ17).
  3. When asked what would be most useful to them, 15% of learners stated more computers in computer rooms, 27% more laptops or tablets available in class and 16% more laptops or tablets available on long term loan (LQ19).

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