



Y Coleg Cymunedol Cenedlaethol  
The National Community College

## Safeguarding in an Online Learning Environment Tutor Guidance

October 2020



## 1.0 Introduction

We are committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment, and we recognise our responsibility to safeguard the wellbeing of learners who are enrolled on our courses or activities, whether face-to-face in a classroom or online.

This guidance focuses specifically on safeguarding in an online learning environment, and provides information for tutors on how online learning can be delivered safely and securely.

Everyone has a role to play in safeguarding. Due regard should be given to the considerations outlined in this guidance to ensure learners and tutors are appropriately protected and safeguarded.

## 2.0 Safeguarding policy

This guidance is provided alongside AOC | ALW's [Safeguarding and Prevent Policy](#), and does not replace the responsibilities, principles and expectations included within it.

Whether learners are at home or in the classroom, the safeguarding and welfare of learners is paramount and takes precedence over all other considerations.

At all times you should continue to follow AOC | ALW's Safeguarding and Prevent Policy. All issues relating to online safeguarding should be dealt with in the same way as face-to-face teaching or interactions.

If you have any safeguarding concerns about a learner, you should ensure your concerns are reported urgently (see Appendix A for Safeguarding contacts).

**If you think a learner is in immediate danger, you should contact the police on 999.**

## 3.0 Safe practice when teaching a class online

### 3.1 Preparations

- Ensure the lesson is planned in advance and sufficient notice given to learners.
- Maintain a register of learners attending each lesson.
- Ensure all learners have access to software applications required (pre-course support is available for learners; please discuss with your regional team in the first instance).
- Check all content is appropriate and for any tasks requiring online research, check the suitability of the websites prior to the lesson.
- Be mindful that some learners may require more time than others to complete certain online tasks.
- Ensure you are familiar with the functions of Microsoft Teams and how to use the platform effectively (for guidance see [here](#)).

### 3.2 Location, camera and audio settings

It is essential to carefully consider location, audio and camera settings to maintain a professional learning environment at all times. This is particularly important when tutors or learners are at home.

Please consider the following:

### 3.2.1 Location

If you are delivering or a learner is joining a class from home or outside a classroom setting you should:

- Choose a neutral location that is appropriate and safe, e.g. a living room, a study or a kitchen.
- Encourage learners to work from an appropriate home location where they feel comfortable.
- Wherever possible, reduce the potential of the lesson being interrupted by other household members or pets.

### 3.2.2 Camera settings

- Carefully consider what is in view of the camera, i.e. check that the background is professional and does not contain images or information that should not be shared or that could be deemed inappropriate.
- Wherever possible, both tutors and learners should use the agreed organisational background as standard practice (see Appendix B). Uploading the background could be a participatory class activity, and learners can be supported to do this where required.
- For some of our courses such as Youth, Community and Playwork and Workplace Learning courses, it is a requirement that cameras are always switched on. From a teaching and learning perspective, asking all learners to switch on their cameras will enable you to pick up on any non-verbal and visual cues. However, please be mindful that some learners will have valid reasons for not wanting to turn their cameras on. In these situations, we recommend that you use your professional judgement and seek support from your regional team to agree a way forward.

### 3.2.3 Audio

The use of a headset with microphone (like those available with many mobile phones) is recommended for audio clarity.

## 4.0 Professional conduct

You should continue to work in the same professional manner as you would in the classroom, and should undertake the following:

- Adhere to professional standards of dress when in front of the camera.
- Be conscious that, in an online environment, remarks are being heard by a number of learners and could be easily misconstrued.
- End the session for all participants, ensuring learners are not left alone and unsupervised in a lesson/session you have left.
- Be mindful of the need for confidentiality, especially if conducting a lesson from a venue where other people are present.

## 5.0 Learner conduct

The Organisation's expectations regarding learner conduct are the same whether classes are taking place online or face-to-face in the classroom. These expectations are clearly explained in the [Learning Agreement](#)

[and Learner Code of Conduct.](#)

Any persistent conduct issues should be raised with your Regional Manager, and will be addressed via the Organisation's [Unacceptable Learner Behaviour Procedure](#).

## **6.0 Safeguarding, Prevent and online safety- guidance for learners**

While we are self-isolating and socially distancing due to Coronavirus, social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and video calls, are a great way to stay in touch with friends and family, share our thoughts and ideas and connect with like-minded people. However, as we become more reliant on digital communication, we need to be mindful of the associated risks and to be aware of how we can stay safe online.

Guidance on safeguarding, Prevent and online safety has been developed for our learners and is available on our website [here](#).

## Appendix A

### Safeguarding Key Contacts

Name	Role	Contact number	Email address
Cath Hicks	Designated Safeguarding Lead / Head of Learner Services & Resources	07931 204613	<a href="mailto:cath.hicks@adultlearning.wales">cath.hicks@adultlearning.wales</a>
Rachel Burton	Youth, Community and Play Work (YCPW) Manager/ Safeguarding Officer	07960 858835	<a href="mailto:rachel.burton@adultlearning.wales">rachel.burton@adultlearning.wales</a>
Jayne Ireland	Regional Manager South East Wales/ Safeguarding Officer	07787 423632	<a href="mailto:jayne.ireland@adultlearning.wales">jayne.ireland@adultlearning.wales</a>
Sarah O'Connell Jones	Regional Manager North Wales/ Safeguarding Officer	07930 867920	<a href="mailto:Sarah.O'ConnellJones@adultlearning.wales">Sarah.O'ConnellJones@adultlearning.wales</a>
Beth John	Regional Manager South West and Mid Wales	07432 881123	<a href="mailto:beth.john@adultlearning.wales">beth.john@adultlearning.wales</a>
Martyn Reed	Learner Services Manager	07715 904304	<a href="mailto:martyn.reed@adultlearning.wales">martyn.reed@adultlearning.wales</a>
Mary Morris	Human Resources Manager	07930 688202	<a href="mailto:mary.morris@adultlearning.wales">mary.morris@adultlearning.wales</a>

*In an emergency (immediate threat or danger to life), you should always call 999*

## Appendix B

### AOC|ALW organisational background for use in MS Teams meetings

Wherever possible, both tutors and learners should use the agreed [organisational background](#) as standard practice when participating in a lesson via Microsoft Teams. Uploading the background could be a participatory class activity, and learners can be supported to do this where required.

To install the background, you will need to add it to your background library within Teams when in a meeting by pressing 'Add new' in the Background settings as seen below. Once uploaded it will remain in your background library – there is no need to upload it on every occasion. The background will be at the bottom of the library (below the stock backgrounds) once uploaded. You will then need to select it as your chosen background should you wish to use it. Please note - the background image will appear mirrored to you when chosen but will not appear mirrored to other meeting participants.

