Hartlepool Jobs and Skills Service

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Blended Learning Policy

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Next Review Date: 1st August 2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

Hartlepool Jobs & Skills Service is committed to delivering high-quality provision, including outstanding teaching, learning and assessment so that all of our learners develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours required for society and to meet the needs of employers across Tees Valley.

The Service aims to provide innovative, engaging, and challenging opportunities, both in class and through blended approaches, which will ensure our learners achieve their aspirations, develop positive attitudes and demonstrate excellent attendance in order to be prepared for the world of work, thrive in the community and achieve positive outcomes including progressing into Sustained Employment.

The Covid Pandemic brought about new challenges for teaching and learning with a sudden need to adapt to new ways of remote learning and limited time for staff to develop their skills in order to move to remote delivery. The Service significantly enhanced its digital offer during this period by implementing new technologies, including Microsoft Teams and Google Classroom.

2. PURPOSE

The Blended Learning Policy outlines how processes and procedures have been designed and how they will be operated to deliver a blended approach across the Hartlepool Jobs & Skills Service.

Blended learning involves a combination of face-to-face and online remote teaching, which keeps learning moving and provides learners with a more diverse learning experience. This policy will complement the Digital Inclusion Plan by supporting the development and implementation of digitally inclusive teaching and learning methods to support learners, staff and the whole Service.

3. AIMS OF THE POLICY

The aims of the Blended Learning Policy are:

- To enhance learning using a blended approach that provides opportunities for all whilst ensuring that blended teaching, learning and assessment meets the guidelines set out by awarding bodies and external funders through both Internal and External Quality Assurance

- To broaden and develop learners' knowledge in addition to the main learning programme across all educational provisions, including Skills and Learning for Inclusion.

- To ensure good communication to enhance learner progress whilst promoting and supporting learners to demonstrate high standards of behaviour and attitude, including more autonomous learning skills demanded by Employers.

- To enhance accessibility so all learners can access the range of learning opportunities and to increase the use of digital technologies within the Service.

4. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

There are responsibilities for Staff Members in delivering the Blended Learning Policy which include:

- Creation and ongoing usage of a dedicated resource bank of learning materials and policy documents for staff which will be kept up to date and stored securely within the Network Folder.

- Track and monitor learners' progress alongside offering support where required using various digital platforms, including Google Education, EQUALS and QualsDirect.

- Offer all learners additional provisions to enhance their learning experience through Online CPD Provision and, where necessary, referrals to other providers or Educational Institutions.

- Ensure learners have access to the appropriate technologies to complete their learning programme, including utilising a bank of digital devices which can be loaned to learners by the Service.

- All Tutors and Assessors must develop their knowledge, confidence and skills in delivering remote and blended learning with ongoing training, mentoring and CPD provided by the Service.

- Create accessible 'how to' videos to assist learners alongside new Staff Members to effectively access online platforms or deliver remote and blended learning per this policy.

- Ensure all safeguarding measures are maintained in remote and blended learning approaches utilising the Tootoot Platform, and safeguarding should be informed at inductions of learners, including those studying Online or Blended.

- Maintain existing timetables and, where possible, replicate the in-class experience through live remote lessons, which will be offered where required and delivered by the Service.

5.   METHODS OF CURRICULUM DELIVERY

The various delivery methods adopted by the Service are outlined below, which may be utilised at any given point in the academic year as the need arises and to meet the requirements of learners within the Service.

- Face-to-face delivery: Most learners will attend classroom-based lessons and face-to-face teaching. In some circumstances, support may be needed via remote methods, e.g., for absent learners.

- Blended delivery: Learners receive a blended approach of face-to-face lessons for a proportion of their lessons, and the remainder is delivered through online remote teaching via platforms such as Google Education.

- Remote: In the event of full or partial closure of the Service, all curriculum delivery will convert to online remote teaching through digital platforms, including Google Education and Microsoft Teams.

6.   ACCESSIBILITY TO ONLINE LEARNING

At enrolment, all learners will be asked key questions in relation to their situation regarding online access and experience of using technology. The information will be used to assist the Service in identifying individual needs and required support or allocation of appropriate technology to support learning if this is required for their learning within the Service.

At induction, all learners will receive an introduction to online learning, including a demonstration of Google Classroom. As part of this induction, learners will be provided with their logins, including email accounts, to access Google Education. Those who require additional support will continue to receive this via the Tutor, Assessor and Digital Inclusion Officer.

7.   MONITORING

The progress of the Blended Learning Policy, including the use of remote and blended learning delivery, will be monitored by the Curriculum Team. It will also form part of the Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (OTLA) Policy.

The Blended Learning Policy will also add value to the Digital Inclusion Plan, which is monitored by our Digital Inclusion Lead.