



# Improving digital practice within Community Learning and Development (CLD)

A framework for CLD providers to make their practice more effective by using digital approaches

*January 2024*

For Scotland's learners, with Scotland's educators

## Purpose

This guidance is for all CLD practitioners to understand what “effective digital practice” looks like within the sector. It provides information on where digital can be utilised to enhance the different features of CLD and gives examples of what this might look like. These features are inclusive of all disciplines of the sector including youth work, adult learning, community development and family learning. They include: planning, practice sharing, delivery, engagement, empowerment, capacity building, practitioner development, awareness raising, accreditation, recording & reporting and evaluation.

It should be used as a guide for CLD providers to envision ways that digital can enhance the work they do. It should also be used by leaders to drive forward improvements in making practitioners more digitally agile. This document is underpinned by the [CLD competences](#) and its development has been driven by its guidance stating that digital should be embedded within approaches used by practitioners.

The examples provided are not an exhaustive list and have been compiled by CLD practitioners from around Scotland. They should be referred to as ways in which digital can be incorporated into the various elements of CLD. The examples listed do not mention specific digital tools/applications/programmes however these can be retrieved from Education Scotland CLD Officers and associated digital networks. All examples presented are done so with an understanding of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requirements.

This is a self-evaluation document and is not for inspection purposes however can be used to support quality indicators within [“How Good is Our Community Learning and Development”](#)

## **Responsibility**

Although this document provides guidance on what effective digital practice looks like it should be noted that the expectation to achieve this falls to leaders, teams and practitioners. Individuals should take a personal responsibility in upskilling themselves where appropriate.

This guidance has been designed to support the sector in understanding what emerging digital approaches exist in a CLD context. It can be utilised within any environment and works within individual and multi-disciplinary teams or partnerships. The understanding of GDPR, social media policies and wider data protection considerations for individual authorities and organisations also remains the responsibility of the practitioner.

## **How this document should be used**

This document breaks down the core components of CLD into themes. These components are what all disciplines of CLD use to provide services to local people and work within partnerships.

Practitioners should examine each theme and the description, this should be done individually, in teams or as a discipline/service/partnership.

Practitioners should then self-evaluate how well each particular theme is currently delivered in their particular setting.

Examples are provided of what this might look like in a practical sense, these should be used to guide this reflective discussion. Not all examples are needed to fulfil a particular theme.

The planning and self-evaluation template (separate document) should add to this self-evaluation, showing which of the themes are being delivered successfully and which need improvement.

<b>Features of effective digital practice within CLD (Component &amp; Description)</b>	<b>What this might look like...</b>
<p><b>Planning A</b></p> <p>Digital tools are used to allow teams to coordinate with one another efficiently and effectively</p>	<p>Online meeting spaces are utilised effectively and appropriately at local, regional and national levels, acknowledging accessibility and environmental factors</p> <p>Communal file and information storage locations exist for teams to access resources and engage within discussion. Shared files are worked on collaboratively with editing, reviewing and commenting allowing digital discourse</p> <p>Cloud based platforms are regularly utilised to ensure practitioners can engage with/share information, resources and documentation, internally and externally</p>
<p><b>Planning B</b></p> <p>Practitioners are confident in utilising appropriate software packages to improve the development, organisation and implementation of work, while reflecting on practice</p>	<p>Practitioners consistently use common platforms including word, spreadsheet, presentation and email programmes</p> <p>Practitioners are using digital tools such as management information systems, databases etc effectively to plan pieces of work and reflect on data from previous projects</p> <p>Practitioners are confident in using online statistics, data sources and research to inform decisions and support priorities</p> <p>Practitioners have an opportunity to reflect on programme development and share experiences to inform best practice in digital learning</p> <p>Practitioners incorporate online training resources, where appropriate, when planning activities for learners</p>

<b>Features of effective digital practice within CLD (Component &amp; Description)</b>	<b>What this might look like...</b>
<p><b>Practice Sharing</b></p> <p>Practitioners have the ability to gather and share emerging practice from their context through digital means</p>	<p>Practitioners work collaboratively and share practice with colleagues using digital platforms</p> <p>Practitioners share practice locally, regionally and nationally using digital means within internal and external settings</p> <p>Practitioners are confident in utilising social media platforms to share current practice and engage with communities</p>
<p><b>Delivery A</b></p> <p>CLD practice delivery has digital elements embedded into its core</p>	<p>Resources are created and stored digitally so they can be edited, modified and shared with practitioners/volunteers and learners as part of planning and teaching/learning</p> <p>Digital mechanisms are consistently embedded into the delivery of CLD services e.g. online enrolment forms, attendance recording. They are also used to promote and share any provision</p> <p>Practitioners are confident in using digital means to engage learners e.g. gaming, videos etc.</p> <p>Practitioners are confident in promoting digital tools and approaches to learners that to support key delivery themes e.g. mental health, learning for sustainability, anti-racism etc.</p> <p>Practitioners use digital tools for formative assessments such as online quizzes, video diaries, audio files, online whiteboards</p>

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	<p>Practitioners are confident and have skills to be digitally agile, interchanging between digital and non-digital delivery approaches</p> <p>Practitioners have regular opportunities to review and refresh practice and see where digital can enhance learning opportunities</p> <p>Practitioners incorporate STEM learning into opportunities, promoting the use of technologies</p> <p>Learners have access to a broad range of opportunities to increase their digital skills and learning, utilising different device types</p> <p>Learners can easily participate in online learning and online assessments</p>
<p><b>Delivery B</b></p> <p>Digital means are utilised to make delivery approaches more accessible for learners</p>	<p>Practitioners are confident in using digital platforms to communicate information to learners in an accessible and informative way</p> <p>Practitioners ensure learners, not currently using digital technology or with limited knowledge, have access to the development of basic skills</p> <p>Practitioners are confident in monitoring and managing online learning platforms</p> <p>Learners have opportunities to access learning in a range of different formats e.g. face to face, online independent learning, hybrid learning, live/recorded online sessions</p> <p>Learners have consistent access to digital tools to assist in their learning e.g. online dictionaries, online translation tools, video guides</p>

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	<p>Learners have or are provided access to digital devices which gives them the opportunity to learn at a time and place that suits them</p> <p>Learners can access tutor and practitioner supported online learning when required</p> <p>Use of screen readers and other accessibility technology are available and provided consistently to learners who require it. Learners and practitioners have good knowledge of these tools and how to access them</p> <p>Digital communication methods are used consistently by practitioners to engage, encourage and involve learners in the delivery of programmes</p>
<p><b>Engagement A</b></p> <p>Consultation with learners is conducted by practitioners utilising a range of digital mechanisms</p>	<p>Practitioners are confident in using digital tools to capture the views of learners</p> <p>Practitioners use appropriate digital tools to share views gathered as a result of engagement and consultation</p> <p>Practitioners facilitate opportunities for learners to participate in digital consultations for local, regional and national priorities, alongside CLD plans</p> <p>Learners are fully involved in consultations, with digital tools and platforms being used consistently where appropriate e.g. using platforms to gather learner voice</p> <p>Learners digital accessibility requirements for consultations are catered for</p> <p>Learners are offered choices on how to engage with CLD services using a mixture of face to face and digital means</p>

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<p><b>Engagement B</b></p> <p>Digital approaches promote inclusion for learners, actively removing barriers</p>	<p>Practitioners are confident in ensuring digital approaches for learners are accessible to all, cater for all ability levels and available in a range of formats</p> <p>Learners have access to digital devices and sufficient data while they engage with CLD learning and provision provided by practitioners</p> <p>Learners have opportunities to access digital learning and gain the skills and knowledge to participate fully and be included</p> <p>Accessibility technology is utilised for learners with additional needs to allow them to challenge and be supported with barriers they face</p>
<p><b>Empowerment</b></p> <p>Practitioners support the improvement of digital literacy within learners they work with and their willingness to utilise it</p>	<p>Practitioners confidently use digital approaches and technology within groups to build confidence and encourage participation</p> <p>Practitioners actively seek opportunities for digital skills development across all activities</p> <p>Practitioners consistently embed digital learning opportunities in programmes</p> <p>Practitioners understand the digital needs of their learners and seek to embed the development of digital literacy skills where appropriate</p> <p>Learners exercise choice over when, what and how they use digital technology in their learning.</p> <p>Learners are encouraged and supported to be active, confident, engaged, informed and included participants, who are fully engaged with activities which involve using digital technology</p>



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<p><b>Capacity building</b></p> <p>Practitioners actively look to increase the knowledge that learners and services users have surrounding digital, using place based and inclusive approaches</p>	<p>CLD Teams/Providers have digital champions who support the capacity and digital skills development within their discipline</p> <p>Practitioners develop strong partnerships to create collaborative approaches to respond to learners' digital needs</p> <p>Practitioners identify joint opportunities with partners to offer digital upskilling opportunities to communities</p> <p>Practitioners are able to build understanding within learners surrounding current digital themes including cyber resilience and internet safety</p> <p>Practitioners work with partner agencies to identify and engage those with little or no digital knowledge</p> <p>CLD providers across all sectors work together to share digital resources, skills and knowledge in an area/community</p> <p>Learners can access a range of digital learning opportunities locally within their communities</p>
<p><b>Practitioner Development</b></p> <p>Regular and meaningful digital upskilling opportunities are offered to practitioners. These are accessible and engaging in origin, while also being based on need</p>	<p>Practitioners' digital skills are reviewed, and goals set through professional review and development</p> <p>Practitioners take part in regular professional learning and training surrounding digital approaches, tools and strategies</p> <p>Practitioners have regular opportunities for reflection upon current practice and how digital can be used to enhance this</p>

Features of effective digital practice within CLD (Component & Description)	What this might look like...
	<p>Practitioners have opportunities to share their digital practice with colleagues, teams and external organisations</p> <p>Practitioners have opportunities to lead developments in digital CLD practice across local and national areas</p> <p>Practitioners take part in practitioner enquiry around digital learning</p> <p>Practitioners are confident in using digital approaches to work in partnerships with colleagues, organisations and partner agencies</p>
<p><b>Awareness Raising</b></p> <p>Practitioners regularly utilise social media and online platforms to promote the work within their setting and increase their own awareness</p>	<p>Practitioners confidently use social media platforms to engage with learners, offering the means for individuals and groups to communicate with CLD services</p> <p>Practitioners confidently use social media platforms to celebrate success, promote opportunities and create communities of practice</p> <p>Practitioners are able use online platforms to discover the benefits of new/emerging trends within digital</p> <p>Practitioners are willing to try new digital methods and utilise these to promote and engage with learners.</p> <p>Practitioners actively engage with models of engagement that allow them to improve their awareness of digital practice within CLD</p>

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<p><b>Accreditation</b></p> <p>Provision of accreditation opportunities, guidance and the way which evidence is gathered, utilise digital means where appropriate</p>	<p>Guidance on implementation, range, moderation and verification of different awards can be accessed via common digital platforms</p> <p>Practitioners are confident in signposting learners to digital courses and qualifications available through suitable learning sites, while giving information on how to access them</p> <p>Practitioners can use digital platforms to access learner's work and give feedback on progress</p> <p>Practitioners include a range of different digital means to gather evidence for awards including videos, recordings and photos among others</p> <p>Practitioners look for opportunities to accredit digital learning that individuals participate within</p> <p>Practitioners use digital tools to securely store assessments and all associated documents</p> <p>Learners use digital portfolios to gather and present evidence for awards</p> <p>Learners have access to robust and valid online assessment mechanisms</p> <p>Learners can submit assessments digitally</p>
<p><b>Recording and Reporting A</b></p> <p>Reports on impact can be developed and published via different digital mechanisms</p>	<p>Data from management information systems can be accessed, analysed and interpreted successfully by practitioners</p> <p>Project outcomes and outputs are recorded within digital spaces that are accessible to teams</p> <p>Practitioners know how to input relevant data into management information systems which link to CLD planning, evidence gathering and quality assurance processes</p>

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	<p>Practitioners and CLD leaders can generate reports to show key indicators surrounding work delivered</p> <p>Practitioners and CLD leaders use digital solutions for monitoring and tracking which include analysis, graphical presentation and summary of data. This should link to local planning and organisational reporting</p>
<p><b>Recording and Reporting B</b></p> <p>Partnership and collaborative approaches have established digital systems</p>	<p>Data regarding requests for support from other departments, partners and organisations are recorded digitally</p> <p>Data surrounding requests for CLD support is utilised to analyse overall partner engagement and types of requests being made</p> <p>Practitioners use digital tools to identify trends/gaps, while drawing conclusions and making informed decisions to support interventions</p> <p>Practitioners utilise digital approaches to improve learner pathways choices between different partnership opportunities</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>Effective evaluation includes digital approaches to guarantee a wide range of feedback from learners and partners</p>	<p>Practitioners use digital methodologies where appropriate, to gather baseline assessments and track progress of learners</p> <p>Practitioners can successfully show how they have responded to feedback and improved services.</p> <p>Learners have opportunities to evaluate the quality and quantity of digital learning provided</p> <p>Learners and partners are engaged and actively participate in evaluation of CLD services and plans using digital means including polls, videos, presentations, podcasts and social media</p>