

Ysgol Aberconwy



Blended Learning Policy

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THIS POLICY HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

Signed:

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Definition:

Blended Learning is a formal approach to education that creates an integrated learning environment where face-to-face and online teaching and learning become complementary, with the purpose of giving learners a more diverse and engaging learning experience.

Rationale:

At Ysgol Aberconwy innovation in pedagogy is at the heart of seeking to provide teaching and learning to meet the needs of every student. Previously, as a TEEP training establishment, Ysgol Aberconwy has embraced online delivery and as another approach to learning during the covid pandemic.

Teaching and Learning:

- Ysgol Aberconwy ensures that all teachers have adequate ICT equipment, support and training to deliver lessons to a range of pupils and ages should pupils be forced to not attend school due to school closures or illness.
- Where possible, the primary mode of teaching is via face-to-face lessons in a school environment.
- All resources and non-formal assessments can be delivered online in all subject areas via TEAMS. This platform encourages a colloquy between pupil, teacher and parent and can involve: face to face teaching via video link; setting of tasks; responding to pupil / parent questions and concerns (posts / chat function) and assessing and marking / feeding back on work (assignments function).

Aims:

1. To ensure that blended learning delivery meets the guidelines set by the awarding organisation.
2. To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage any group or individual learners.

In order to do this Ysgol Aberconwy will:

- Ensure that staff are timetabled to support blended learning when learners are working remotely.
- Ensure that staff and pupils are aware of the code of conduct to cover remote learning (see Appendix 1).
- Ensure that the school marking codes and timely feedback are adhered to by all staff.
- Ensure that each virtual teaching session includes actual teaching as well as tasks for pupils to complete in order to demonstrate their knowledge or skills. All virtual teaching is recorded in line with code of conduct and safeguarding requirements.
- Ensure that all pupils in KS4 and KS5 are aware of the JCQ policy on malpractice.
- Ensure that all pupil work is stored securely following BTEC guidance.
- Ensure that pupils and staff are supported in accessing digital technology and improving their skills.
- Ensure that each BTEC subject can work within their assessment plan guidelines, showing flexibility of teaching units, whilst trying to maintain formal assessments are completed in school sessions and under teacher supervision.

Distance Assessment:

- This is a method of assessment where the assessment is carried out remotely. At Ysgol Aberconwy the preparatory skills or tests of knowledge acquisition can be assessed remotely

either via the teacher in the virtual delivery or by pupil responses marked in assignments on TEAMS.

- Formal assignments requiring a pupil to demonstrate their knowledge or skills will not be assessed remotely if staff cannot authenticate whether or not the response is the pupil's own unaided work. All formal unit assessments will be completed, where possible, in a school environment.
- Such an approach will mitigate the circumstances leading to possible malpractice, whilst ensuring consistency across and within subject areas.

The implementation of Ysgol Aberconwy's Blending Learning Policy is based upon the Welsh Government's 'Live-Streaming and Video-Conferencing: Safeguarding principles and practice (Sept 2020)' and the school adaption of this (see Appendix 2). In addition, Ysgol Aberconwy has promoted an 'Agreement between Staff and Students' to promote safe and effective remote learning. The Blended learning Policy will be updated upon further advice / recommendations from WJEC or Pearson.

APPENDIX 1 :



Using Video-conferencing on TEAMS:

Agreement between Staff and Students

The following is an agreement between staff and students when using video-conferencing and/or live streaming.

Staff agree to:

- Discuss roles and responsibilities with learners at the outset of all lessons / sessions.
- Notify students of any scheduled lessons / sessions, cancelled lessons / sessions or changes in arrangements.
- Ensure that they keep themselves up-to-date with all relevant policies and procedures, including online safety, safeguarding and data protection policies.
- Record all lessons / sessions.
- Prevent a one-to-one situation at the end of an online class by disconnecting **all** participants at the close of the lesson / session.

Students agree to:

- Be punctual for all video-conferencing lessons / sessions.
- Access the relevant files for each lesson / session in advance and have the materials to hand.
- Make sure they have all power adaptors and laptops ready before the lesson / session begins and are logged into the lesson / session.
- Show respect for everyone in the online classroom.
- Dress appropriately for all lessons / sessions, thinking about respect for others.
- Ensure the location they log in from is appropriate and change their 'background' setting as agreed with the member of staff.
- Seek to contribute to the lesson / session in a positive manner and not be disruptive at any time.
- Not take, record or share images or copies of the lesson / session.

APPENDIX 2

Live Streaming and Video Conferencing Protocol Ysgol Aberconwy Autumn 2020



This guidance follows Welsh Government's latest "Live-streaming and video-conferencing : safeguarding principles and practice" which can be found on Hwb [HERE](#)

1. Introduction

The use of video-conferencing and live-streaming has grown exponentially over the past few years and for many, has become part of daily communication both socially and for business. It is therefore unsurprising that many wish to make full use of this technology to deliver lessons or hold sessions with small groups or individual students.

In a time where it has never been more important to adapt and use innovative ways to learn, we are well placed to deliver a digital learning programme to students, but it is important that we do it well and safely.

Safeguarding is an integral principal of digital learning. The safety and welfare of students is paramount and takes precedence over all other considerations.

This guidance provides information on how video-conferencing and live-streaming will be used safely and securely at Ysgol Aberconwy.

This guidance will also be shared with other practitioners such as therapists, educational psychologists, youth workers, youth support staff, learning advisory staff that may occasionally support students remotely via digital means.

2. Background

- a. The school considers that video-conferencing or live-streaming is an appropriate way for teachers to host lessons with students when they are unable to be in school, for example during lock-down.
- b. The governing body, headteacher and staff have full regard to national safeguarding guidance and local safeguarding policies.
- c. In periods of school closure (or partial school closure for example to a year group), the school recommends that video-conferencing or live-streaming should be used to maintain contact with classes and to explain tasks or concepts to them. It will also be used to maintain contact between staff and with external agencies.

- d. Accountability is owned by the headteacher and governing body. Therefore this guidance must be observed alongside and additional local authority guidance.
- e. At Ysgol Aberconwy :
 - all video-conferencing or live-streamed lessons/sessions **will be carried out** using Microsoft Teams rather than an external provider, through our own implementation of Microsoft 365.
 - staff will use a school issued device. Staff **should not** use their own personal equipment under any circumstances
 - due regard should be given to the considerations outlined in this guidance to ensure students and all practitioners are appropriately protected and safeguarded.

3. Definitions and Terms

i **The differences between video-conferencing and live-streaming events**

It is useful to note the difference between video-conferencing and live-streaming and their uses and intended benefits so that you can choose the appropriate format for your activity.

Video-conferencing is a **synchronous approach** involving multiple parties with the option for each participant to turn on cameras and audio. It requires all participants to take part at the same time.

Possible uses

- Facilitate staff meetings.
- Where a physical meeting cannot be held such as conducting a well-being catch-up session or holding a SEN/ALN appointment.
- Deliver small group pastoral or teaching sessions.
- Deliver class lessons.
- Link two sites of synchronous learning, for example, two classrooms on different sites.

Intended benefits

- Gives participants an opportunity for face-to-face contact in real time.
- Facilitates interactions.
- Positive impacts on student engagement and well-being.
- Useful for keeping in contact with students.
- Feedback to students is instant and interactive.
- Useful in areas where access to particular courses or subjects is limited for geographical reasons.
- Enables individualised support.
- Can be used to enable children and young people to keep in contact with their peers and engage in group learning, for example, discussions.

Live-streaming events is an **asynchronous approach** involving a video flow from a broadcaster to viewers. Viewers cannot be seen or heard although there may be functionality to interact via typed messages. Live-streamed events can be watched live or can be accessed after it's been recorded.

Possible uses

- Deliver class lessons to students.
- Deliver large-scale lectures or assemblies.
- Deliver webinars.

Benefits

- Live-streamed events offer flexibility as the lessons can be accessed at a time convenient to a student and/or their family.
- It might be easier for parents/carers and students to manage at home.
- Although there is no verbal or visual interaction available to the viewer, if watching live, participants may be able to ask questions using the text box allowing for some interaction.

ii The differences between lessons and sessions

This guidance refers to video-conferencing and live-streaming lessons and sessions. For the purpose of this guidance:

- a **lesson** refers to the delivery of a classroom lesson – whether this is through video-conferencing or through a live-streamed event
- a **session** refers to instances outside of a typical lesson where there may be only one student present such as a well-being catch-up session with a student or a special educational need (SEN)/additional learning need (ALN) appointment.

4. Key principles – safeguarding

- a. Whether students are at home or in the classroom, safeguarding and welfare of students is paramount and takes precedence over all other considerations.
- b. At all times you should continue to follow the school's safeguarding policies. All issues relating to online safeguarding should be dealt with in the same way as face-to-face teaching or interactions.
- c. The school's policies for online safety, staff and student well-being, safeguarding and distance learning, should be followed at all times.
- d. If you have any safeguarding concerns about a child, you should discuss these with the Designated Safeguarding Person for the school ensuring your concerns are reported as soon as possible.

5. Key considerations – safe practice when using video-conferencing and live-streaming

There are a number of key considerations to ensure safe and effective use of video-conferencing and live-streaming. These are set out below.

5.1 Initial considerations

To decide whether to use video-conferencing or a live-streaming event, staff must consider:

- a. the purpose, benefits, limitations and appropriateness of a video-conferencing lesson or live-streaming lesson/session
- b. the appropriateness for all students based on their individual circumstances
- c. the availability of students, e.g. whether **all** students are available? Will some need to join or leave at different times?
- d. the number of students on a lesson or session
- e. the length and time of lessons and sessions, ensuring they are both appropriate for the students in question
- f. the connectivity and devices available to students and staff members.

5.2 Preparations

Before initiating a video-conferencing or live-streaming lesson/session the following should be undertaken as part of any preparations.

- a. If the lesson/session is not part of an already agreed timetable, seek authorisation from your leadership team line manager before video-conferencing or live-streaming lessons/sessions and let them know the planned timetable of all lessons/sessions.
- b. Ensure the lesson is planned in advance and sufficient notice should be given to students and/or parents and carers as required.
- c. Ensure appropriate user agreements are in place for all students involved in video-conferencing and live-streaming lessons/sessions and that these agreements are clearly communicated to students and shared with parents and carers.
- d. Ensure all students have access to their O365 account
- e. Check all content is appropriate and for any tasks requiring online research, check the suitability of the websites prior to the lesson.
- f. Be mindful that if the lesson includes tasks, some students may require more time than others.
- g. Familiarise yourself with functions of Microsoft Teams (more information is available in the Hwb Support Centre on [Microsoft Teams](#))

5.3 Location, camera and audio settings

It is essential to carefully consider location, audio and camera settings to maintain a professional and responsible disposition at all times. This is particularly important when staff or students are at home. Staff must make the following considerations.

Location

If a member of staff is leading, or a student is joining, a video-conferencing call or live-streaming from home or outside the school setting they should:

- a. choose a neutral location that is appropriate and safe,
- b. encourage students to work from a suitable communal home location where they feel comfortable,

- c. reduce the possibility of the session being interrupted by other household members or pets.

Camera settings

- a. 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.
- b. It may be helpful to ask a 'critical friend' to check what is in view of the camera.
- c. We recommended that staff and students change their background as standard practice.
- d. Be mindful that not all students will want to switch their camera on.

Audio

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

5.4 Professional conduct

Although there are certain situations in which we recommend the use of video-conferencing or live-streaming to maintain the curriculum and contact effectively, we recognise that it is done on a voluntary basis.

Staff choosing to live-stream should continue to work in the same professional manner as they would in the classroom and as such they should ensure that they :

- a. Adhere to professional standards of dress when in front of the camera.
- b. Be conscious that in an online environment remarks are being heard by a number of students and could be easily misconstrued.
- c. End the session for **all** participants, ensuring students are not left alone and unsupervised in a lesson/session the practitioner has left.
- d. Be mindful of the need for confidentiality; especially if live-streaming a lesson from a venue where other adults or children are present.

5.5 Numbers of practitioners required

i. When a practitioner is teaching from home

The home environment is potentially less controlled than a classroom one and despite best efforts and interruption such as a barking dog or a doorbell, might be unavoidable.

Therefore when a member of staff is video-conferencing or live-streaming from home or outside of a school/setting there **must be at least two members of staff** online and present at all times. In these instances staff should **never** undertake a video-conferencing lesson where **only one member of staff and one student is present**.

ii. When the practitioner is teaching from a school/setting

When a member of staff is video-conferencing or live-streaming from a **classroom setting** it is not necessary to have a second staff member present at the lesson/session, but the member of staff should record the lesson/session to safeguard both students and staff. They must make all students aware at the outset of the recording (please see below for further details).

As per teaching from home, staff should **never** undertake a video-conferencing lesson where **only one member of staff and one student is present**.

iii. Video-conferencing sessions with a student

- a. There may be instances which require a session involving one student, such as a catch-up session, a well-being chat, an assessment, supervision or therapy session, where possible you should have **two members of staff present (even if virtually)** at all times during the session.
- b. There may be **exceptional circumstances** (such as counselling sessions, appointment with an Education Psychologist or SENCo/ALNCo) where the nature of the conversation requires a **confidential** one-to-one session with a practitioner, as would be normally conducted in a school/setting. Such individual sessions **must** be considered and agreed by the headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Person. Consent **must** also be granted and recorded from the student's parents/carers. Written acknowledgement of the session should be placed on file in accordance with local data storage arrangements.

5.6 Recording video-conferencing and live-streaming lessons and sessions

There is a recording function available in Microsoft Teams whereby staff can record the lesson/session. As stated above, all sessions involving students will be recorded.

These recordings are stored by default on the school's Office 365 'Stream', but should not be shared in TEAMS. If students miss a 'live lesson' they will need to catch up with set work through discussion with the teacher, as they would if they missed a normal lesson. These recordings should not be downloaded or otherwise stored as they should be considered to contain 'personal data' and must be stored in line with the school's GDPR protocols.

If you intend on recording a lesson to share with students at a later date, this should be done as a live-streaming event asynchronous activity without students being present in the recording.

Recordings will not be used for any evaluation purpose.

6. Student behaviour and etiquette

The school will set out acceptable behaviours and expectations from the outset to ensure an effective and orderly lesson or session.

By publishing an 'Agreement' on each TEAM in which Video-conferencing or livestreaming will occur, staff will :

- a. Make parents/carers aware of the expected behaviours and requirements including location to join the lesson/session and appropriate dress.
- b. Clearly communicate that 'classroom standard' of behaviour is expected from all participants.
- c. Create and agree clear ground rules to reflect the standard of behaviour expected based on their existing school or setting behaviour management policy.

- d. Explain the rules at the introduction of the lesson/session, e.g. who can speak, how to ask a question or ask for help.
- e. Continue to remind students about agreed rules at the start of each lesson/session and outline how they can raise concerns if required.

7. Using video-conferencing to link up two sites for learning

There may be instances where the school wishes to make use of the benefits of video-conferencing or live-streaming to link up with another classroom on site. Such instances could include the following.

- a. One class or teacher may wish to link up with another classroom on site to facilitate social distancing.
- b. We may wish to link up with students where some are in school or setting and some are at home.
- c. One class may wish to link up with other classrooms to facilitate a lesson or session between different year groups, for example to enable the school council or other groups to meet.

In all instances, all concerned should adhere to the guidance outlined in this document.

8. External organisations

There may be occasions when the school wishes to video-conference or live-stream with external organisations. For instance in running the LINC programme.

These lessons/sessions should be dealt with using the same safeguarding protocols as any other video-conferencing or live-streaming lesson or session as set out in this guidance, and with the additional points also recommended.

- a. staff should set up and control the session, inviting the external organisation or students as guest participants.
- b. staff should clearly establish expectations and communicate the expectations set out in this guidance to the external provider or students.
- c. staff should ensure they end the lesson/session for all when the lesson/session is over.
- d. The number of staff required should be the same as with any other video-conferencing or live-streamed lesson/session, which is set out above in section 5.5.
- e. Other professionals involved in providing online sessions with students and/or their families will have been provided with clear guidance from their professional associations and/or employers and should follow these in conjunction with this guidance.