

Title:	Critical Digital Literacy and Online Safety
Level:	1
Credit value:	3
GLH:	27
Unique Reference Number:	H/651/8451
Sector Subject Area:	14.1: Foundations for Learning and Life.
Aim:	The aim of this unit is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to think critically about the digital information they encounter and to stay safe, respectful, and responsible online. Learners will explore how to evaluate online content, recognise potential risks such as misinformation, scams, or harmful communication, and apply safe and ethical behaviour when using digital platforms.
Assessment Type:	Assessment of this unit will be through an internally set and internally assessed portfolio of evidence.
Assessment Guidance:	Assessment decisions for skills-based learning outcomes must be made during the learner's normal work activity. Skills-based assessment must include direct observation as the main source of evidence and must be carried out over an appropriate period of time.

Learning outcomes

The learner will:

1. Understand what is meant by critical digital literacy.

Delivery content:

The aim of this learning outcome is to help learners understand that being digitally literate involves more than technical skill - it also includes thinking carefully about online information and behaviour.

The learner must:

- 1.1 Describe what is meant by **critical digital literacy**.
- 1.2 Identify why it is important to **question online information**.
- 1.3 Identify how **bias or misinformation** can affect what people believe or share.

2. Know how to keep themselves and others safe online.

Delivery content:

The aim of this learning outcome is to help learners recognise common online risks and know how to use safety tools and good practice to protect themselves and others.

The learner must:

- 2.1 Identify different types of **online risk** (for example scams, viruses, privacy loss, or bullying).
- 2.2 Describe how to use basic **safety settings and security features** on digital platforms.
- 2.3 Describe how to **respond to** or report unsafe or harmful online activity.

3. Know how to behave responsibly and respectfully online.

Delivery content:

The aim of this learning outcome is to help learners understand how online actions affect others and how to communicate and participate in digital spaces ethically.

The learner must:

- 3.1 Describe what is meant by **digital citizenship**.
- 3.2 Identify examples of **respectful and responsible** online behaviour.
- 3.3 Outline how to **protect reputation** and contribute positively to online communities.

4. Be able to evaluate digital content for reliability and purpose.

Delivery content:

The aim of this learning outcome is to encourage learners to think critically about online material and make judgements about its accuracy, purpose, and relevance.

The learner must:

- 4.1 Identify the **purpose or audience** of a chosen online source.
- 4.2 Check whether information is **accurate and up to date** using another reliable source.
- 4.3 Explain why it is important to **evaluate information** before using or sharing it.

Scope of Training

<p>The Scope of Training identifies areas that must be covered during the delivery of this unit. This is the minimum that is expected but tutors are expected to include other areas, knowledge of which will benefit their learners, based on location, types of work available and from the tutors own professional experience.</p>	
<p>Requirements</p>	
<p>Critical digital literacy:</p>	<p>Definition: The ability to use, understand, and question digital information and technology responsibly.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising that not everything online is true or neutral. • Understanding how to search, check, and cross-reference information. <p>Teachers might wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparing different news headlines on the same topic to identify bias.
<p>Question online information:</p>	<p>Definition: Examining what you read, watch, or hear online before believing or sharing it.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the “Who, What, When, Where, Why” test for online content. • Checking author, date, source, and supporting evidence. <p>Teachers might wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners practising fact-checking on common social media posts.
<p>Bias or misinformation:</p>	<p>Definition: Bias – when information shows only one point of view; Misinformation – false or misleading content.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising emotional or persuasive language. • Awareness of images, adverts, or clickbait designed to influence opinion. <p>Teachers might wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group analysis of sample adverts or memes.
<p>Online risk:</p>	<p>Definition: Any potential danger from using digital tools or the internet.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples: scams, phishing, viruses, fraud, grooming, bullying,

	<p>oversharing, identity theft.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple ways to identify suspicious messages or links. <p>Teachers might wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenario-based quiz: “What would you do if...?”
Safety settings and security features:	<p>Definition: Built-in tools that protect users and data.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy settings, block/report functions, antivirus software, two-factor authentication. • How to update and manage devices securely. <p>Teachers might wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided demonstration of privacy menus on a sample platform.
Respond to:	<p>Definition: Taking appropriate action if something unsafe or upsetting happens online.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps: don’t reply, save evidence, tell a trusted adult, use in-app report tools. • Awareness of official reporting sites (CEOP, Action Fraud). <p>Teachers might wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners mapping where to go for help in different situations.
Digital citizenship:	<p>Definition: Acting responsibly, respectfully, and ethically in digital environments.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding rights and responsibilities when online. • Respect for others, intellectual property, and data privacy. <p>Teachers might wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners creating a “Digital Citizenship Charter.”
Respectful and responsible behaviours:	<p>Definition: Using polite, accurate, and fair communication when interacting online.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples: asking permission before sharing photos, giving credit for others’ work. • Consequences of negative behaviour (e.g. cyberbullying, defamation).

	<p>Teachers might wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role-play good and poor digital communication.
Protect reputation:	<p>Definition: Managing what information about yourself is visible online and how it is interpreted by others.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using privacy tools, reviewing old posts, separating personal and professional accounts. <p>Teachers might wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners conducting a personal “digital footprint check.”
Purpose or audience:	<p>Definition: The reason information was created and who it is aimed at.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying whether content is to inform, persuade, sell, or entertain. • How to spot adverts or sponsored content. <p>Teachers might wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners labelling purpose on screenshots of websites.
Accurate and up to date:	<p>Definition: Information that is factually correct and current.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking publication dates and comparing sources. • Understanding that old information can be misleading. <p>Teachers might wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners practising date-checking and fact comparison.
Evaluate information:	<p>Definition: Making a reasoned judgement about whether information can be trusted or used.</p> <p>Teaching must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple evaluation questions: Is it true? Who made it? Why? • Applying checks before sharing or acting on information. <p>Teachers might wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small-group tasks scoring sample sites for trustworthiness.