

**Future Apprenticeships:** Using Technology to Support the Delivery of the Apprenticeship Standards Questions and Answers Log

**Date:** 5 October 2016

**Webinar Chair:** Dawn Buzzard, Learning Technologies Adviser, Education and Training Foundation

**Facilitator:** Carolyn Lewis, Work Based Learning Consultant, Vocational Innovation Limited

**Q: Tips for using Technology in Health and Social Care and Childcare/School settings, when devices with camera's e.g. tablet, laptop, phone are barred.**

Carolyn: It is common for sectors such as health and Social Care to present a provider with this challenge. However, a number of case studies were written a number of years ago by the JISC Regional Support Centres that showed that some providers in this sector were very effectively using technology in Health and Social Care and proving that it is not for legal reasons that technology is banned. Of course confidentiality is important, as it is in so many work environments, and awareness of the applicable safeguarding legislation, but it is my experience that some work places ban technology because of a lack of understanding in using it appropriately and being able to provide the appropriate training. It can also be banned due to a lack of confidence in using technology at senior management level.

The new Health Care Worker Apprenticeship Standard specifies the following:

Standard 14. It is now an aspiration that everyone involved in delivering care and support will have the confidence to work digitally and the opportunity to develop their digital skills, whether with computers, smart phones or assistive technology.

Standard 6. Communication includes the use of technology and gives an example of communication using electronic and other devices.

There are many examples on the web of the NHS and others promoting the use of tablets in care environments for information recording so I think it is probably a case of working with employers to ensure that they are fully aware of how technology will be used in a blended delivery model and providing them with assurances around security of data, confidentiality etc.

**Q: Market Research: as a current sub-contractor most of this information is not available: OFSTED etc. Is there anything we can do?**

AELP: There is loads of information available freely from UKCES while they still exist and locally through your LEP. AELP also provides general information to members through our research

briefings.

Carolyn: I think you may mean that market research information is not available on your organisation because you are a sub-contracted provider. It is my understanding that you are inspected as part of your lead contractor's inspection and quality data is also compiled under the lead provider. As a sub-contractor I would recommend building your own online brand through good practice in digital marketing e.g. social media, e-newsletters, free offerings to your sector via your website.

**Q: If you used say Skype etc for the professional discussion how would the end point assessment centre assure the candidate was indeed the apprentice?**

AELP: There are many challenges about how to make the EPA robust and able to be compared like for like across the country. I would suggest that a virtual conversation would not be the main assessment method for the reason that you suggest and also as it may be possible to have someone off screen giving prompts. However, I do agree that using it as a way of testing that the apprentice is ready for the gateway before a more regulated EPA would be excellent use of technology.

Carolyn: There are now many qualification assessments that are being conducted remotely and they are achieving the required invigilation and authenticity of the learner by using web cams. Some of these systems are quite sophisticated with face recognition to ensure the candidate is the person who registered for the exam. There are centres where someone is observing a whole bank of webcams to invigilate an exam with software that sounds an alarm when someone moves away from the camera.

When it comes to remote observation or professional discussion this level of sophistication isn't require. On Skype you can mandate the use of a webcam and the assessor can match the person shown in the webcam with a picture they have been provided with of the apprentice. The recording of both the web cam and the audio during a Skype or other VOIP software, I would argue, is the most authentic evidence that can be collected.

**Q: Does the 20% time off required include during the period that the learner is doing the end point assessment?**

Carolyn: My opinion is yes, that the end point assessment is off-the job and part of the off-the job 20% requirement, but I would recommend that you ask Ofqual who are responsible for external QA of end point assessment.

**Q: Forgive me, but I am repeatedly told that GLH is when a member of staff is present to give specific guidance towards the learning aim being studied therefore excludes use online courses. Am I being misinformed?**

Carolyn: I would agree that the definition of GLH is supervised education or training. However, it has been recognised that as long as support is available to the apprentice then this definition is met. With online learning, which should be accessed during the apprentices contracted hours of work, there should be a workplace supervisor or online tutor support available to the

apprentice.

Sector Skills definition:

What does 'off-the-job Guided Learning Hours' refer to?

'Off-the-job Guided Learning Hours' (GLH) refers to the time required to be utilised by learners developing the technical skills and knowledge of theoretical concepts across a range of contexts. It is the time away from the "immediate pressures of the job", and may include the following:

- individual and group teaching
- coaching and mentoring
- distance
- learning
- e-learning
- feedback and assessment
- guided study
- collaborative learning

In the report from SFA linked to below they say:

'We are encouraging providers to establish a strategy to determine where the adoption of a greater 'blend' of delivery and assessment types adds most value to a learning programme; Providing learners with improved access to learning outside the classroom, increasing their ability to learn and to assess themselves at their own pace as well as to develop new digital skills and networking opportunities to enhance employability'.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-learning-technology-action-group-recommendations-sfa-response/delivering-online-learning-sfa-response-to-feltag-report>

**Q: Hi please note that the sign off of competence against the Care Certificate Std is the responsibility of the employer not the training provider. It is the registered Manager who is responsible for this.**

Carolyn: Thank you for pointing this out and I do know this so it was an error on my part. I do think that in reality it is the provider in collaboration with the employer that is going to enable the employer to sign the apprentice off as competent. Many employers with apprentices that I have worked with in the past are completely reliant on the provider to decide when the apprentice is ready for summative assessment, mainly because they do not take the time to make themselves familiar with every aspect of the framework.

**Q: Can you please provide a link to the PWC paper referenced in the presentation?**

Carolyn: The article is 'Using technology to help customers achieve their goals'

<http://www.pwc.com/us/en/technology-forecast/2013/issue1/features/technology-help-customer-achieve-goals.html>

**Q: Can anyone recommend any organisations to buy e-learning courses from?**

Carolyn: I must declare my interest in this as I am MD of [www.elearningmarketplace.co.uk](http://www.elearningmarketplace.co.uk)

The eLearning Marketplace has over 1,000 online courses in a wide range of subject areas. Much of our content is short professional courses, but we also have a range of content mapped to QCF qualifications which are found in many new Standards. Our website does not display the full range of courses as some of our publishing partners only want their courses sold to business or education. Anyone interested can email me at [Carolyn@elearningmarketplace.co.uk](mailto:Carolyn@elearningmarketplace.co.uk) and I can send a list of mapped courses. Philip I will email you.

Virtual College also sell online courses mapped to QCF qualifications and so does Learn direct amongst many others.

**Q: Is that workshop online? That is in step 2 of the blended LMS.**

No, the workshop is a face to face activity which can be managed online along-side the online courses as a blended programme. Learners log on to the LMS and see the requirement to complete the online modules, attend workshops and are provided with all the necessary information e.g. date, time venue, maybe upload an assignment and/or attend a webinar. The dates are then displayed in their 'live sessions' calendar with details.

When the workshop happens the tutor can print off a sign in sheet and mark against the programme online who has attended, and this updates each learners account.

**Q: Can you recommend a LMS?**

Carolyn: This is a big question and difficult to answer, as if you were to ask me the same question in person I would want to fully understand your provision, your organisation's objectives, the organisation's in-house IT expertise and many other questions. This information is critical in deciding the LMS that would suit your organisation best. There are over 800 LMS so it is a minefield, and to tell you the truth you want something that is user friendly and works in an intuitive way for staff to engage or you'll spend a lot of time on the LMS and then find that neither staff or learners use it. I will email you a guide that might help.

For many years my organisation used Moodle and many providers that I have worked with use Moodle, however there are many reasons why I would and wouldn't recommend Moodle. We also now use the LMS I gave you a brief demo of in the webinar, but have added functionality from the basic LMS to achieve our objectives. We like it because we work with a massive range of types of businesses whose staff have very varied IT skills, so our priority was a LMS that anyone could use.

**Q: Can you explain why you think E portfolio is not suitable going forward and how LMS is much better please?**

Carolyn: An e-portfolio is built for assessment and is brilliant for the purpose it was built. Now I am generalising here because I don't know the latest releases of all the e-portfolios on the market. However, many e-portfolios include a resource repository so that learners can

access learning materials, but this is far from what I believe an organisation needs to track and evidence learning and interim assessment. There is also usually a restriction on the type of interactive content that can be hosted in an e-portfolio e.g. embed codes for video, interactive video, animation etc. An e-portfolio rarely evidences the starting, progress and completion of the online learning and doesn't report on the answers given within a quiz or game for instance. I haven't seen an e-portfolio, but I stand corrected if there are any, that can send email reminders about a workshop the learner needs to attend or an online training activity that should be completed by a certain due date, evidences their attendance at face to face training, combined with external training records e.g. St John's Ambulance First Aid course and then combines this with online learning to get an overall picture of the learner's progress towards the final aim.

With the Apprenticeship Standards the provider shouldn't be preparing assessment plans or recording summative assessment which is what an e-portfolio is perfect for. Of course you can use an e-portfolio for interim assessment, but whether you are actually required to present any of the outcomes of this to the end point assessment company will depend on the Standards you are working towards.

At the end of the day it will be down to each provider to decide whether they invest in a LMS and e-portfolio, or just one of them, but in my view it should come down to what is best for the learners, meets the requirements of the training provider and provides the necessary evidence required by external quality assurance.

**Q: Are there any Learning Management Systems that you recommend? For a new, small training provider, are there any good free and low cost LMS platforms that you can recommend?**

Carolyn: There are a number of free LMS platforms and they can be good for getting the feel for what it is you actually like and dislike about an LMS. The risk is that you spend a lot of time in structuring the free LMS, uploading your content and learner information and then find that you need more functionality than the free version offers or you need more space or user numbers than the free version offers. You can then find that it becomes very costly.

When I last looked the following organisations offered free versions:

Course Sites  
Edmodo  
Lore  
Eliademy  
Simple VLE  
Google Classroom

I think the important starting point is to learn about what an LMS can offer you, then identify what you want to achieve as an organisation. Be honest about your own IT capabilities, particularly the staff, think about your budget and remember that you will have to incorporate

staff training and on-going support into the cost, even if its free. You don't want to buy into an LMS which has all the functionality you could wish for and find it's so complex no one will use it.

I would recommend asking for demos of any LMS you decide to look at. Ask how you perform each type of task you would want to do, e.g. we carry out our reviews with learners in the workplace on a tablet; how would we upload these to the learners account on the LMS? How can we create and manage blended courses?

You can choose an LMS where by you just pay for active users on the LMS, so those that log in during the month, irrespective of the amount of courses or content you have. You can start by investing not too much time creating a particular area of content, e.g. induction, use it for 6 months and then either progress to other areas of your provision or decide that you've learnt a lot about staff and learner engagement and in fact it's not the right LMS for you. You will then be better prepared to find the LMS that will be right for you.

**Q: How do you propose delivering learning for learners in locations where internet is not guaranteed? e.g. rural areas with poor connectivity and no provision of internet by employer.**

Carolyn: You could take the view that any apprentice could potentially be with an employer where this is the challenge and therefore our model can accommodate this occurrence. Some providers have a very small percentage of learners in this situation and have solutions that they can draw on, such as lend the employer a netbook or tablet with an off-line version of their online content. This is less than ideal as the whole reason for using learning technologies is not make learning more engaging and accessible for the learner and bring efficiencies and effectiveness to the provider. Off-line content is not ideal if you are running an LMS or have any online management tool that requires data from the outcomes of the off-line learning. The employer may be in a location where an internet dongle can be used. I have accompanied learners to the local library before now so that they can access online content.

Fortunately, there are fewer and fewer places that don't have either internet access or 3 or 4g to access cloud content, so hopefully this challenge will reduce over time.

**Q: Clearly undertaking the end point assessment test and professional discussion will be off the job. What I meant was that if the end point assessment period is 3 months added after the "gateway" has been passed ..does the learner have to be off the job one day a week for the entire 3 months?**

Carolyn: See my earlier comment on this.

**Q: We've been looking at FUSE as an option for LMS, they are incredibly expensive at per license. Are there LMS suppliers that you could recommend at a cost effective and fair price per license?**

AELP: Look for an education based provider, FUSE are business based. Moodle provide a free platform for up to 50 people which would let you explore an LMS. Attending BETT will let you see the main providers in one place - have a look at the BETT Website.

Carolyn: Hopefully some of my earlier comments will help you. It does depend on the LMS as to whether it's suitable for training providers. We use a business LMS and use it for both business and education. It just means thinking outside the box a bit.

Our Moodle is the most basic version with very few live learners and the annual hosting and support is around £2,000. If you have the expertise to host and manage the server side aspect of Moodle then you are in a great position and Moodle could suit you very well. As I've said there are around 800 LMS on the market now, varying hugely in price. The main thing is that you know what you want to achieve using the LMS and what evidence you want to collect, in a certain amount of detail, and you then do your research, if you don't you can spend a lot of time and money on something that doesn't get used. Just setting up the organisation structure on Moodle is time consuming, unless you get an expert to do it for you, and then with all LMS you need to plan and create your courses. I would suggest speaking to a similar provider as yourselves about what they use.

**Q: What's the LMS system you showed today called?**

Carolyn: We buy into a top level subscription of Learnup on and offer the advanced functionality to our customers at the lower level subscription price, e.g. blended programmes, white labelling, webinar integration etc. We have actually built in automation from our website to the LMS so all buyers of our courses are automatically enrolled and tracked on the LMS. We also use quite a number of the functions of the LMS for tasks that the software is not designed for but that meet a training provider's requirement. If you'd like a demo please get in touch.

**Q: Is there a need to physically deliver any training face to face or can it be done via webinars/virtual classrooms and e-learning and employers lead on face to face training and support?**

Carolyn: That's an interesting question, because SFA say that an apprenticeship can be delivered as a blended model but not totally online. In fact they are encouraging the blended model, but what they don't specify what aspects should be done face to face. There are providers who are wholly delivering Functional Skills online with a mix of online content and live webinars, and others who have all the knowledge requirements online. If you want to deliver as much as possible online then I would deliver all the knowledge and understanding online for all aspects of the apprenticeship and then the once a month workplace visit is used to recap, revisit, check and plan learning, along with all the necessary support. Generally in this visit the trainer will need to offer some additional guidance or even training perhaps in a problem area, but this training is minimal compared to the amount of knowledge to be delivered. A face to face workshop, intermittently or regularly, during the apprenticeship is very valuable as it gives the apprentice the chance to meet with their peers and do a variety of team activities, but for some providers even one workshop is not possible.

It is hugely valuable to make the online aspect of delivery as sociable as possible, with online forums, webinars when learners can contribute with audio and support sessions using something like Skype for a group of learners.

**Q: Most standards say that all training/learning must be completed before the End Point Assessment!**

AELP: That is the case with all of them.

Carolyn: Yes, definitely. I don't think I said any differently.

**Q: Yes, please I would love a blank plan, and a filled one to use as examples when talking to others in the org.**

Carolyn: I will send you the plan and if anyone else wants one just drop me an email.

**Q: What are the 2 systems you shown today with regards to elearning content for Health & social care & childcare?**

Carolyn: There is quite a variety of online content for Health and Social Care and Early Years, I'll drop you an email and if anyone else would like to know what online content is available off the shelf do drop me an email.

Association of Employment and Learning Providers  
October 2016