

The Tech Partnership

Basic Digital Skills Standards

CONFIDENTIAL

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Version: Consultation draft 05

Date: 31st May 2016



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1. Introduction

This document sets out the Tech Partnership's draft standards for basic digital skills up to and including level 1. The competence based standards are focused on the digital skills needed to live in the digital world, to enter into employment and for those starting off in work.

The organisation of the standards are set out on pages 3 – 5 with the competence based standards on pages 6 – 9.

We increasingly need to acquire digital skills in order to:

- successfully operate digital technology at home and in work
- gain skills and confidence to enter employment
- extend productivity in the workplace

New standards are required for digital skills in order to clearly:

- describe the digital skills required by business and industry
- bring existing definitions up to date in the light of recent technology advances
- form the basis for individual skills development
- support digital transformation in the workplace

2. Overview

The fast moving pace of technological change and ubiquity of digital technologies, coupled with economic drivers to support the development of a skilled workforce to address the predicted growth in the digital economy, places demands on everyone to be able to operate effectively in the digital world.

Digital skills are in high demand with employers as business processes are increasingly transitioned into a digital environment. Therefore it is increasingly necessary for job applicants and employees in a wide variety of roles to be able to undertake the range of tasks required in both their work and daily life that require digital and information competence.

There is currently no standard approach to digital literacy competence spanning the basic digital skills for daily life, work readiness and for increasing productivity in the workplace.

These standards aim to define those digital skills, (up to and including level 1) and to ensure that those seeking employment and who have recently entered employment are equipped with the skills required in the digital economy. The 2012 Royal Society report defines Digital Literacy as:

“The ability to use computer systems confidently and effectively - The use of the Internet, including browsing, searching and creating content for the web and communication and collaboration via e-mail, social networks, and collaborative workspace and discussion forums”

Many employers believe that the scope of digital literacy should not solely focus on the use of ICT and disregard the cognitive skills necessary for processing information in digital environments. Digital literacy involves more than the mere ability to use software or operate a digital device; it includes a wide variety of technical and transferable skills, which users need in order to function effectively in digital workplace environments.



Therefore the scope of basic digital standards reflect the need for a competence led approach. The changing workplace culture and talent management practices that need to be acknowledged in any new standards include the facts that:

- Integration of technology into all aspects of the workplace is changing not only internal communications and process management, but is changing business-to-business and business-to-customer relationships and the speed of transactions
- Technologies are empowering staff to become increasingly responsible for their own personal and professional development
- Technologies offer organisations the opportunity to integrate and embed HR business processes such as talent management or succession planning within the line of business.

3. Organisation of the standards

There are three principle aspects to the basic digital skills standards:

1. Safety and security
 - Positioned at the heart of the basic digital skills standards
2. Technical standards
 - The skills and knowledge to operate effectively in a digital world
3. Transferable skills
 - To ensure the digital standards are rooted in and add value to the business context

The basic digital skills standards define the range of essential digital skills at entry level, and are not geared towards specific occupations. They include:

- basic knowledge and skills to operate in the digital world
- the ability to apply learning in everyday situations related to basic digital skills
- essential basic digital skills linked to job competence required for employment
- basic digital skills to operate effectively in the workplace and aid to increased productivity



Figure 1 – Basic Digital Skills Organisation

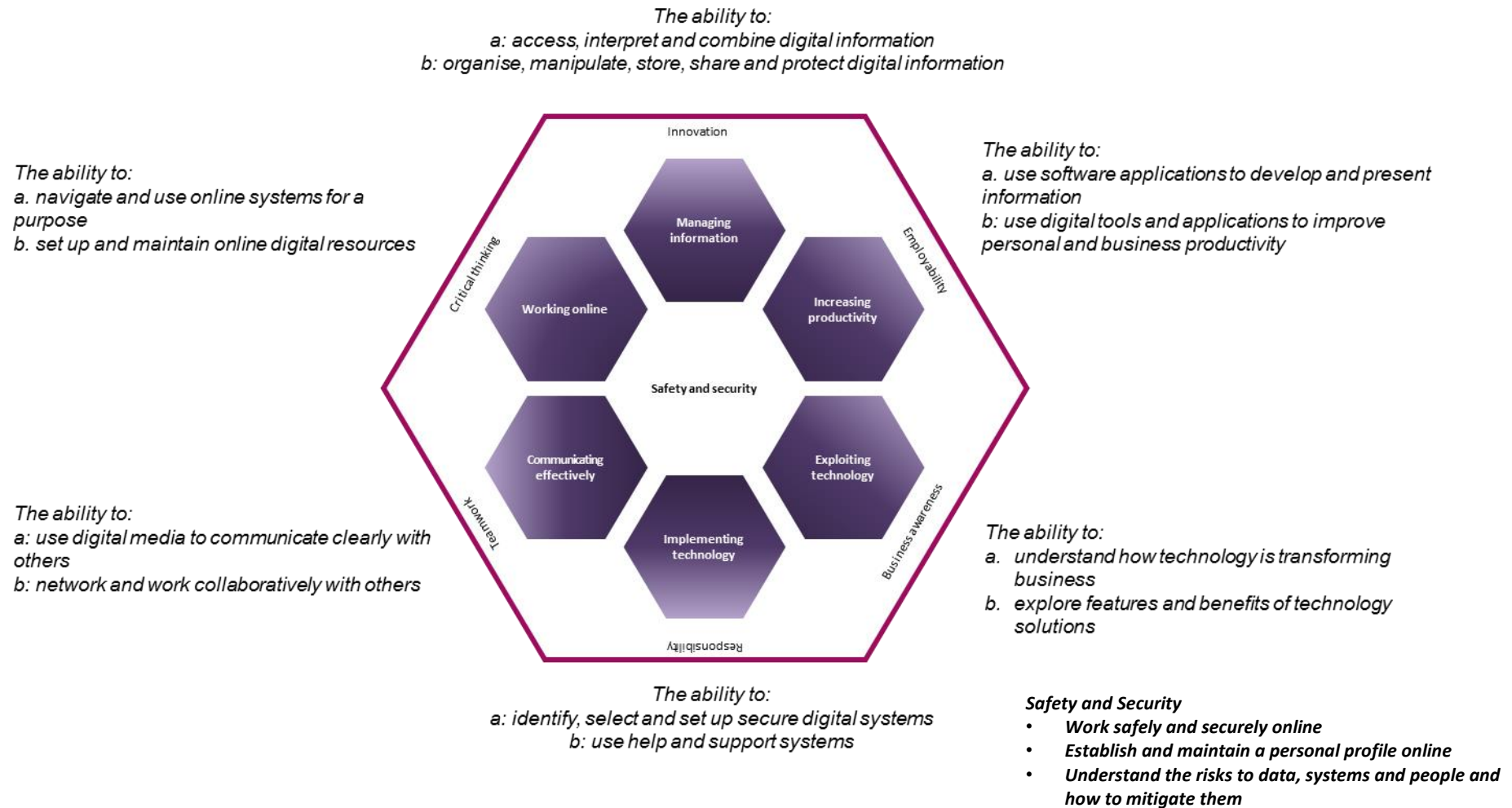
The seven categories of technical competence for basic digital skills are:

1. Safety and security
2. Managing information
3. Increasing productivity
4. Exploiting technology
5. Implementing technology
6. Communicating effectively
7. Working on-line

The six categories of behavioural or transferable competence for basic digital skills are:

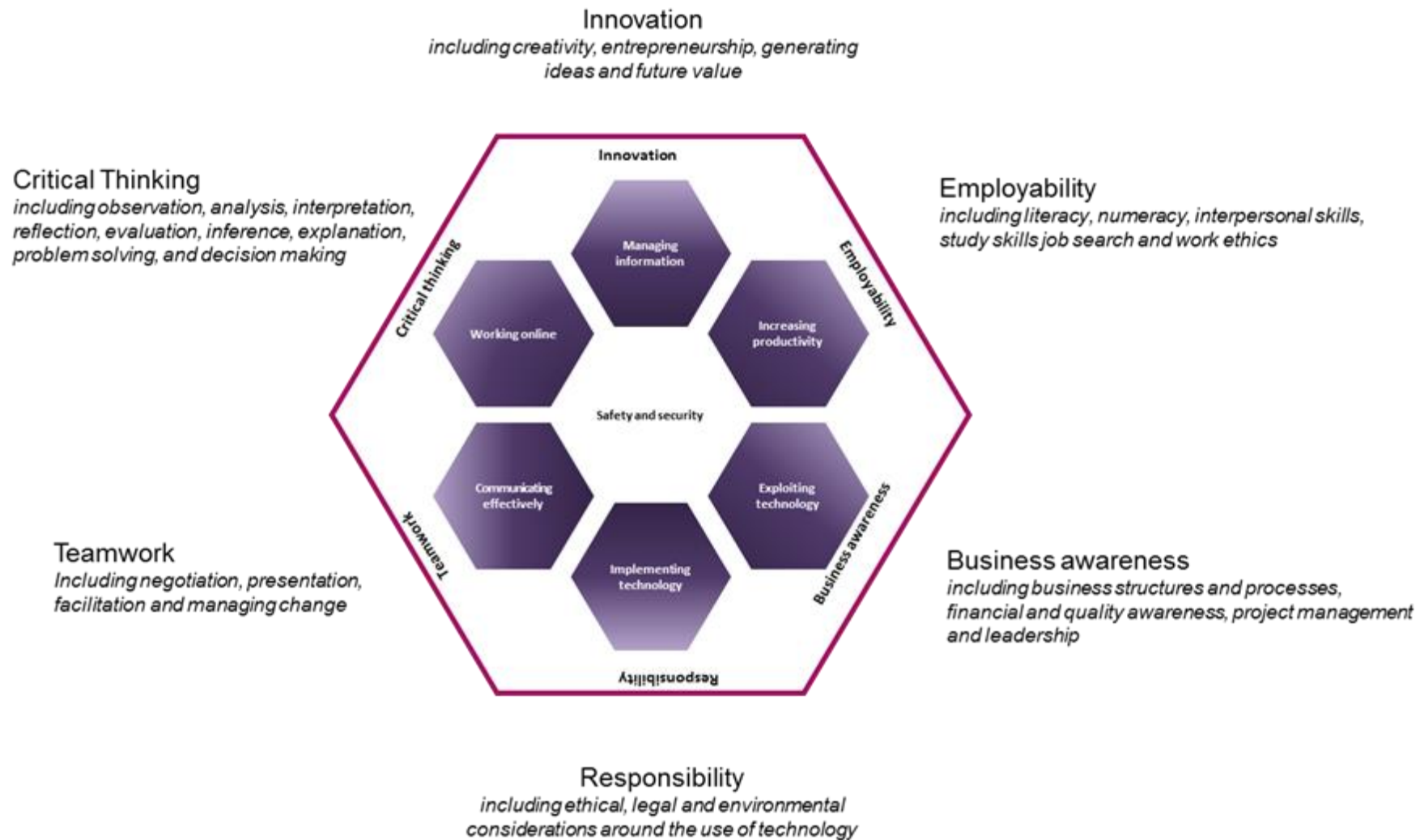
1. Critical thinking
2. Innovation
3. Employability
4. Business awareness
5. Responsibility
6. Teamwork

4. Basic Digital Skills Competence - Standard Organisation





5. Transferable Competence for Basic Digital Skills - Standard Organisation





6. Competence Based Basic Digital Skills Standards

6.1 Technical Competences for Basic Digital Skills

Area	Description	Ref	Standard	Skills to live in the digital world	Skills for getting into work	Skills for those in work
Managing information	The ability to: a: access, interpret and combine digital information b: organise, manipulate, store, share and protect digital information	A1	Search for information, products and services etc. online using search queries	x	x	
		A2	Gather and collate digital information	x	x	
		A3	Manage and share references to online information sources		x	
		A4	Use information to support decision making (e.g. for purchasing decisions)	x	x	
		A5	Develop and interpret information reports		x	
		A6	Evaluate the reliability and suitability of digital information sources	x	x	
		A7	Evaluate the quality of digital information	x	x	
		A8	Use analytical tools to explore and interpret information		x	x
		A9	Categorise information by its type		x	
		A10	Organise and store information (in file systems, spreadsheets and databases)	x	x	
		A11	Manage access to information sources to maintain confidentiality, integrity and availability of information			x
		A12	Understand and follow internal and external standards relating to information and its management			x
		A13	Synchronise information on multiple devices	x		x
		A14	Understand the value of information in business			x
Communicating effectively	The ability to: a: use digital media to communicate clearly with others b: network and work collaboratively with others	B1	Use digital media (such as email, instant messaging and VOIP) to communicate clearly with others, taking into account privacy, safety and netiquette	x	x	
		B2	Use online communication tools safely and effectively to exchange information and ideas	x	x	
		B3	Participate safely and responsibly in online networks and social media	x	x	
		B4	Appreciate different communication modes (e.g. visual, audio and text) effectively to suit the business purpose and audience.		x	
		B5	Contribute appropriately to online networks and communities (such as submitting ratings, reviews and recommendations)	x	x	
		B6	Work collaboratively online towards a business goal			x
		B7	Understand risks, permissions and data flow in a collaborative environment			x
		B8	Use appropriate media and language for business communications			x
		B9	Understand the importance of reporting suspicious online or digital communications activity		x	x
Increasing productivity	The ability to:	C1	Capture and edit digital media (visual, audio etc.)	x	x	
		C2	Create and edit digital content in a range of formats		x	

	<p>a. use software applications to develop and present information</p> <p>b. use digital tools and applications to improve personal and business productivity</p>	<p>C3 Enter, edit and combine business data in office applications</p> <p>C4 Publish digital content to the web</p> <p>C5 Import and export data between digital systems</p> <p>C6 Maintain and use productivity tools (such as digital calendars, contact information)</p> <p>C7 Organise and archive digital communications effectively</p> <p>C8 Control versions of digital assets</p> <p>C9 Seek ways to improve personal productivity using digital tools</p>		x	x
Implementing technology	<p>The ability to:</p> <p>a: identify, select and set up secure digital systems</p> <p>b: use help and support systems</p>	<p>D1 Use appropriate digital/interactive devices</p> <p>D2 Select IT tools / devices for business applications</p> <p>D3 Use files and folders to organise data</p> <p>D4 Set up digital devices for use</p> <p>D5 Synchronise mobile devices and data</p> <p>D6 Respond appropriately to problems with IT systems</p> <p>D7 Play / present multimedia formats</p> <p>D8 Use help and support systems to solve problems</p> <p>D9 Ensure malware and virus protection software is up to date</p> <p>D10 Understand how to keep a computer or mobile device updated</p> <p>D11 Organise and update apps</p>	x	x	
Exploiting technology	<p>The ability to:</p> <p>a: understand how technology is transforming business</p> <p>b: explore features and benefits of technology solutions</p> <p>c. learn new digital skills</p>	<p>E1 Understand the importance of digital information in business</p> <p>E2 Appreciate the role of technology and information management in digital services</p> <p>E3 Understand how technology is transforming business operations</p> <p>E4 Locate and use digital resources to meet personal development needs</p> <p>E5 Explore the functions and features of a software application</p> <p>E6 Respect the ownership of digital assets</p> <p>E7 Understand the benefits of open source, cloud on demand, and host applications</p> <p>E8 Understand the purpose and implications of software licencing</p> <p>E9 Plan own learning in basic digital skills using a range of resources (open source, books etc.)</p> <p>E10 Locate and use digital resources to meet personal development needs</p>		x	x
Working online	<p>The ability to:</p> <p>a: navigate and use online systems for a purpose</p> <p>b: set up and maintain online digital resources</p>	<p>F1 Access the internet</p> <p>F2 Use a browser to navigate the internet safely and securely</p> <p>F3 Configure browser settings to improve searching and browser performance</p> <p>F4 Create and maintain an online identity</p> <p>F5 Conduct transactions safely online</p> <p>F6 Use shared online digital applications</p> <p>F7 Explore an online learning resource, or simulation</p> <p>F8 Understand the constraints of licensing and copyright legislation as applicable to online content</p> <p>F9 Moderate the activities of an online group</p>	x	x	

Safety and security	S1	Stay safe and secure when working online	x		
	S2	Understand the importance of minimising risk to IT systems and data		x	x
	S3	Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices in the workplace			x
	S4	Understand the concepts of e-safety and how to protect online information	x	x	
	S5	Understand how to report inappropriate activity or security breaches			x
	S6	Work with due regard to health and safety good practice in the workplace			x
	S7	Use secure practice for setting and changing passwords	x	x	x

6.2 Transferable Competences for Basic Digital Skills

Area	Description	Ref	Standard	Skills to live in the digital world	Skills for getting into work	Skills for those in work
Critical Thinking	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation • Analysis • Interpretation • Reflection • Evaluation • Inference • Explanation • Problem solving • Decision making 	A1	Be able to interpret information relating to problem scenarios within own work, using relevant problem solving techniques		x	
		A2	Be able to make decisions based on analysis of information	x	x	
		A3	Be able to select and apply problem solving techniques to well defined problems		x	
		A4	Understand the importance of problem solving in order to support decision making			x
		A5	Be able to develop problem-solving approaches using digital media			x
		A6	Be able to approach problems in a consistent and systematic way			x
Innovation	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity • Entrepreneurship • Generating ideas 	B1	Understand how entrepreneurial behaviour differs from traditional behaviour			x
		B2	The importance of creative thinking in order to support innovation and develop solutions			x
		B3	Understand the range of potential sources of ideas		x	
		B4	Understand how to use a range of techniques that can be used to generate ideas			x
Employability	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Numeracy • Interpersonal skills • Job searching skills • Study skills • Work ethics 	C1	Set and monitor progress towards personal goals	x	x	
		C2	Explore and self-learn digital technologies	x	x	
		C3	Reflect upon own development as a digitally literate person	x	x	
		C4	Respect audience and recipient when using digital media for communications		x	
		C5	Job search skills and techniques using online resources		x	
		C6	Develop appropriate CV's and cover letters using digital systems		x	
		C7	Submit job applications and CV's using email and online submission		x	

Business Awareness	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business structures and processes Financial awareness Quality awareness Project management Leadership Customer awareness 	D1	Use appropriate personal style and behaviour in customer interactions		x	
		D2	Understand the importance of customer service to an organisation		x	x
		D3	Show an awareness of own role responsibilities and accountability as they relate to financial probity, and the efficient use of finances within the organisation			x
		D4	Show an understanding of the importance of quality, both within an organisation and to its brand products and services		x	
		D5	Carry out responsibilities with regards to working towards the required levels, standards and targets of quality		x	
Responsibility	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethical considerations Legal considerations Environmental considerations 	E1	Correctly appreciate own role and responsibilities and that of others within the organisation			x
		E2	Correctly work with regard to others		x	
		E3	Follow all organisational procedures and correctly report any contraventions			x
		E4	Adhere to procedures for ensuring confidentiality and security of data and information			x
		E5	Behave and act ethically in handling and sharing digital information		x	x
		E6	Recognise social responsibility (ethics)		x	x
		E7	Respect confidentiality and privacy at all times		x	x
		E8	Work carefully and accurately, checking outputs and correcting mistakes			x
		E9	Works within organisational styles and guidelines			x
Teamwork	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team communications IT enabled team-working Negotiation Facilitation 	F1	Communicate with others in team and organisation as appropriate to own work			x
		F2	Understand how IT systems within the organisation are used to support the team structure and connections to operate			x
		F3	Understand the need for organisations to implement procedures, policies, and strategies to ensure compliance with legislation and regulations		x	x
		F4	Clarify outputs required and negotiate realistic deadlines for task completion			x

End of document

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