

Some key questions for identifying hazards when working with young learners using technology or online

A Technology Audit

What technologies are used? Where? Who uses them?
What control do you as a learning provider or employer have over these technologies? Do you own the technology and the connection, or are there instances where young learners may be communicating online using their own equipment?
What filtering and blocking technologies are in place? How effective are these?

Are acceptable-use policies (AUPs) in place?

Do they cover all service users and all technology uses?
Are they appropriate to the age of the users?
Are users (or their designated parent/carer) required to sign the policy?
How is the impact of the AUP monitored?
Are processes in place for reviewing and updating the policy in line with developments in new technologies?
How are breaches of the policy identified and recorded?
What actions are taken when a breach occurs?

Are technical staff aware of the issues?

Is there regular dialogue with teaching staff about requirements for technology configuration to support the curriculum and individual learners as needed?
Are they fully aware of their proactive and reactive responsibilities for monitoring the network infrastructure in relation to safe working online?

Is your Risk Assessment for technologies adequate?

Are all staff involved as appropriate, including assessor, training co-ordinator, mentor, supervisor etc.?
Is the use of technology and risk assessment embedded within course planning?
Are lines of responsibility clear?
Are you up to day with the latest trends in technology use by your learners?
Are you talking to your learners regularly about their use of technology?