

## What is new about Basic Digital Skills in the CALP Guidelines 2020

Below is a list of changes in Basic Digital Skills in the [CALP Guidelines 2020](#) (Section 5.1.4, p 29)

In the CALP Guidelines 2020, there are some changes to the definition and primary intended learning objective (PILO) of the Basic Digital Skills category.

### What do I need to know about changes to the Basic Digital Skills category?

#### Old definition:

Basic Digital Skills are defined in the Community Adult Learning Program Guidelines as the ability of individuals to appropriately use and understand digital systems, tools and applications, and to process digital information.

Old primary learning objective:

The primary intended learning objective is the development of foundational digital skills to support an individual to navigate the basics of a computer, tablet, smartphone, keyboard, operating device, or the internet.

#### New definition:

Basic Digital Skills are defined in the Community Adult Learning Program Guidelines as the ability of individuals to understand and use digital systems, tools and applications, and networks in order to access and manage information and thrive in learning, the workplace, and daily life.

#### New primary learning objective:

The primary intended learning objective of this category is the application and understanding of key concepts across a range of contexts, situations, and digital platforms, including hardware, software, navigation, settings, safety, and connectivity.

As you will notice, the primary learning objective of Basic Digital Skills has shifted to the application and understanding of knowledge across a range of contexts and digital platforms. This is a key shift, meaning that one-off learning opportunities that do not focus on this PILO may not be included in Basic Digital Skills.

## Why the change?

In reviewing CALP final report data on Basic Digital Skills, grant managers noticed many of these learning opportunities were of short duration, lacking intensity in terms of hours, and many CALPs were unable to evaluate and demonstrate the impact of programs against the CALP Logic Model. As noted in the CALP Data Collection Guide, it is important that all LFL learning opportunities be sufficiently long and intensive to give learners opportunities to use the skills they have learned in the classroom throughout their daily lives, before returning to the classroom to learn new things and reinforce existing knowledge, and then repeating the cycle.

To measure the impact of foundational learning, learners need to have the time and opportunity to incorporate these skills into their daily lives over a sufficiently long period of time. Short-term, one-time learning opportunities do not allow instructors/facilitators/tutors this opportunity, making it challenging to know if learners are applying knowledge and skills to broader contexts or whether they are achieving longer-term learning goals.

Advanced Education has revised the definition of Basic Digital Skills to reinforce that, for these learning opportunities to be considered foundational, they must be intensive and focus on building skills that learners will acquire and use over the longer term across a range of platforms, contexts, and situations.

Organizations are still permitted to offer digital learning opportunities that do not focus on the application of knowledge and skills across platforms, contexts, and situations. Those learning opportunities belong in Community Capacity Building.

## How do I know if my Basic Digital Skills learning opportunity fits into Literacy and Foundational Learning or Community Capacity Building?

There are two main questions you can ask to determine if a learning opportunity belongs in Literacy and Foundational Learning (LFL) as a Basic Digital Skills learning opportunity or Community and Capacity Building (CCB).

### First: “Does this learning opportunity teach the basics of digital skills?”

LFL Basic Digital Skills learning opportunities focus on teaching the basics, such as:

- Understanding, using, and navigating hardware or operating systems at a basic level, such as IOS, Windows, tablet, or smartphone;
- Understanding and using basic software, including basic keyboarding/typing and introductory word processing, such as basic Microsoft Word;
- Basic navigation on hardware or a device, of software, and of the internet;
- Understanding settings;
- Understanding safety in a digital context;

- Understanding connectivity.

CCB would include any learning opportunities that build on the foundational skills noted above in order to fully participate in society, the workplace, or further learning by utilizing software, applications, social media, email and the internet in a safe manner. Examples of more advanced learning include:

- Software such as Microsoft Office (for example, Word (excluding basic level), Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Outlook – at any level);
- Other software and applications that enhance participation in the workforce, further learning, and society – for example, InDesign Level 1 and social media such as Facebook

**Second: “Does this learning opportunity support the application of digital knowledge across a range of contexts, situations, and digital platforms?”**

Basic digital knowledge includes hardware, software, navigation, settings, safety, and connectivity. Basic Digital Skills offered in LFL is more than just the acquisition of skills but is also about learning how to apply these skills knowledge in real-world situations on a lifelong learning journey. A great example of a learning opportunity that fits this requirement is described below:

Literacy for Life delivers Tech Talk sessions where participants are encouraged to bring their own devices:

- Sessions are structured around "themes" such as hardware, software, navigation, settings, safety, and connectivity.
- In the classes, facilitators group learners who have similar devices and encourage them to work together to problem-solve.
- The classes explore and troubleshoot through a task, rather than the facilitator giving step-by-step instructions.
- This approach builds capacity for learners, leading them to be more confident in finding solutions to their tech troubles independently during class and in the future.
- The approach also allows participants to gain knowledge in areas they were interested in and are relevant to their needs.
- It should be noted this course is two hours long per session, over the course of eight weeks. The sustained time and intensity of the course allows learners the opportunity to gain confidence around technology “themes” and facilitates the opportunity to measure success.

CCB would include learning opportunities where the application of knowledge across a broad range of contexts may not be a priority. Skills gained in the CCB programming area are more specialized and tend to be step-by-step instructions of one skill on a

single platform, meaning the skills learners gain are situation dependent. Examples include:

Learning opportunities that focus on how to work an iPad, iPhone, or other niche technology without focusing on the application of those skills across other contexts. Navigating apps on digital platforms that do not transfer to other technology, such as how to use a camera or FaceTime on a phone.

A learning opportunity must satisfy both these requirements to be classified as an LFL learning opportunity in Basic Digital Skills.

### **Professional Development Available:**

If you would like professional development that will offer you training on how to create and deliver Basic Digital Skills learning opportunities that fit in the LFL programming area, Advanced Education recommends 'Tech Talk.' Check out the CALP Portal, or talk with you Regional Support Staff or Professional Development Specialist, to learn how you can enroll.

As always, when you are unsure about categorization, contact your grant manager at Advanced Education to learn what programming area your learning opportunities represent.