wwetb
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Phort Láirge agus Loch Garman
Waterford and Wexford
Education and Training Board

FET BLENDED LEARNING

CONTINGENCY GUIDE

VERSION AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Version	Reviewed by	Approved by	Last Modification Date	Approval Date
1.0	Quality Team, TEL Team, IT Dept.	Quality Team, TEL Team	December 2025	5th December 2025

INTRODUCTION

This guide provides clear and practical steps for **teaching staff** and **learners** to follow in the event of technical issues affecting blended or online learning.

It ensures that teaching, learning, and assessment can continue with minimal disruption, while maintaining learner engagement, data protection, and quality assurance compliance.

Topics Covered:

- **Continuity:** Learning should continue (where possible) even when technology fails.
- **Equity:** All learners should have access to resources and support.
- **Communication:** A clear communication plan should be available for use during these events.
- **Preparation:** Preventive planning reduces disruption time.
- **Quality:** Teaching and assessment integrity should not be impacted by a technology outage/failure.

DIGITAL RESILIENCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

To minimise downtime and ensure continuity of learning, the TEL Team and WWETB implement the following measures:

- Platform Reliability:
  - Moodle is hosted by Enovation, who provide a minimum of 99% uptime guarantee.
  - Moodle is backed up for 30 days.
  - Ongoing support and updates are available through Enovation.
  - GDPR and Data Protection: Compliance is ensured through a data protection clause in the SOLAS–Enovation SLA (Clause 6: Personal Data). SOLAS acts as the data controller,
  - A general Data Protection Notice is available on federation Moodle sites for transparency.
- Cybersecurity and System Protection:
  - WWETB IT Services maintain robust malware protection and security protocols across all systems.
  - WWETB servers have cloud based and local backups.
- Licence Management:
  - The TEL Team actively monitors and manages all software licences to ensure they remain valid and up to date.
- Regular System Checks and Updates:
  - Routine checks and updates are coordinated by the TEL Team and IT Services to reduce technical failures.
- Device Security:
  - All WWETB devices are secured with antivirus
- TEL Tool Testing and Compliance
  - All new TEL tools will be tested by the TEL Team to ensure pedagogical suitability, compatibility, and reliability. Each tool will also have a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) and a Service Level Agreement (SLA) in place before implementation.

1. LOCAL TECHNICAL ISSUES

This section addresses common day-to-day technical problems that may affect either learners or teachers, outlining their respective responsibilities and available support options.

Learner Technical Issues and Responsibilities

Typical Learner Issues:

- Internet connection drops or slows down.
- Software (Moodle, Teams) not opening.
- Audio or video not functioning.
- Difficulty logging into class or course platform.

Learner Responsibilities

Proactive Measures:

- Test all hardware (camera, mic, speakers, keyboard, etc.) before class.
- Charge devices fully and check connections.
- Ensure software is updated and functioning.
- Review the teacher's communication protocol and contingency plan.
- Download any essential course materials in advance.
- Log in early on the day of the session.

Reactive Measures:

If an issue occurs during class:

1. **Troubleshoot**: Restart device, software, or Wi-Fi router; try another device if possible.

2. **Notify Teacher**: Use the agreed communication channel (email, phone, chat).

3. **Access Backup Materials**: Use downloaded slides, pre-recorded content, or Moodle resources.

4. **Follow Up**: Catch up with the teacher or peers once reconnected.

Note: Technical support from WWETB IT Services is available to staff only. Learners are supported by their teacher or centre coordinator for non-technical guidance.

Teacher Technical Issues and Responsibilities

Common Teacher Issues:

- Computer/laptop not powering on
- Display screen not working
- Keyboard or mouse failure
- Microphone or speakers not working
- Webcam/camera malfunction
- Software crash or login issues

Teacher Responsibilities

Proactive Measures:

- Inform learners in advance of the contingency plan.
- Prepare and store backup content (e.g. slides, pre-recorded lectures).
- Have access to an alternative device and communication method.
- Familiarize yourself with IT escalation procedures.
- Maintain updated contact lists for learners and programme coordinators.

Reactive Measures:

If a disruption occurs:

1. **Inform Learners Immediately**: Use an alternate device to send a message, e.g.

"Due to a technical issue, today's online class is delayed/interrupted. Please check Moodle/email for updates."

2. **Troubleshoot Quickly**: Restart or switch devices within 10 minutes.

3. **Escalate**: Contact ITHelpdesk@wwetb.ie and notify your Programme Coordinator.

4. **Activate Backup Plan**: Switch to asynchronous materials or recorded sessions.

ICT Support

Support Type	Purpose	Contact
General IT Support	For device, login, or connectivity issues.	ITHelpdesk@wwetb.ie
Centre Coordinator	Local learning and timetable updates.	[Insert Centre Contact]

2. SYSTEMATIC OR MAJOR TECHNICAL ISSUES

This section covers large-scale or platform-wide disruptions such as system outages, platform failures, or cyberattacks.

Examples of Systematic Issues

- Widespread Moodle, MS Teams, or Office 365 outages.
- Cybersecurity incidents impacting WWETB systems.
- Data breaches or system access interruptions.
- Extended broadband or power outages at multiple sites.

Key Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Key Responsibilities
IT Services	Diagnose and communicate system-wide issues; restore functionality; protect data integrity.
Teachers	Implement backup plans; communicate changes to learners; document disruption and response.
Programme Coordinator	Coordinate local communication; ensure teaching continuity; escalate to management.
QA Office	Ensure quality assurance and compliance; document actions taken..

Actions During Major Disruptions ICT Support

1. Communication and Notification

- IT Services will notify all staff and coordinators of major incidents.
- Programme Coordinators will communicate guidance to teachers and learners.

2. Continuity of Learning

- Use alternative channels (email, shared drives, offline resources).
- Deliver asynchronous or recorded content where live delivery is unavailable.

3. Decision on Course Delivery

- Decisions on course postponement or modification are made by Programme Coordinators in consultation with IT and QA Offices.
- Every effort should be made to honour course delivery commitments and minimize learner disruption.

4. Post-Incident Recovery

- Resume normal teaching once systems are confirmed stable.
- Teachers to schedule catch-up sessions as needed.
- Document lessons learned and update contingency plans.

RECOVERY AND FOLLOW-UP

Stage	Actions	Responsibility
Resolution & Restart	Restore teaching on the original platform once IT confirms systems are stable.	Teacher / IT Support
Catch-Up Support	Schedule follow-up or recorded sessions to ensure learning continuity.	Teacher / Programme Coordinator
Record and Reflect	Document the issue, response, and lessons learned.	Teacher/IT Support/ Programme Coordinator.
Review and Improve	Update the contingency plan and preventive measures if required.	Programme Coordinator.