

 LEARNING AND  
WORK INSTITUTE

Forum for Adult Learning  ECORYS 

 SEFYDLIAD DYSGU A GWAITH  
LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

 Scotland's Learning Partnership



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

# Digital Skills Policy and Practice

VCSE forum 20<sup>th</sup> Feb 2017

Susan Easton

Head of Digital Learning and Skills

Learning and Work Institute

UK

# What the new entitlement entails

- The government plans to make training in basic digital skills free for adults in England who lack relevant qualifications.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-plans-to-make-the-uk-one-of-the-most-digitally-skilled-nations>
- “a specified qualification in making use of information technology” is added alongside literacy, numeracy as a level 2 vocational qualification.
- Wording has also been added to the ASCL Act which allows the Secretary of State to determine which qualifications are included.
- Proposal is progressing through the remaining stages, including submission to the House of Lords. The government will consult on the details of this new offer early 2017.

# Why?

- More than 10 million of adults in England lack basic digital skills.
- 35% of people in lower socio-economic groups lack basic digital skills, compared with 13% in higher socio-economic groups.
- Often furthest from the labour market.
- Age is a major factor. Just 43% over 65s have basic digital skills, compared to 93% 15 to 24 year olds.
- By 2015/ 2018 / 2020? 90% of all jobs need digital skills
- Digitally excluded less likely to manage their finances, access cheaper products and services.
- More likely to suffer from isolation, have lower incomes, be disenfranchised and have children who underachieve at school
- Need for Universal Credit.

# Why?

“In today’s digital economy, being able to use modern technology and navigate the Internet should be considered as important as English and Maths.

But too many people struggle to get by, with more than ten million adults in England lacking the basic digital skills they need.

We will make sure all adults who need it can receive free training in digital skills to equip them for the modern world.”

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport Karen Bradley

# Why?

“We are committed to making sure that everyone, regardless of age or background has the digital skills they need to enjoy the benefits of modern technology. Whether it’s applying for a job, accessing vital services or as consumers, our world is increasingly moving online - and we don’t want anyone left behind.

Our reforms will mean that people who lack basic digital skills will get the training they need to get on the ladder of opportunity for the jobs of the future.”

Skills Minister Robert Halfon

# How?

- Courses will be delivered by colleges and other adult education providers
- Training will be funded from the existing Adult Education Budget
- Consultation expected early 2017

# Volunteers

Digitally excluded want to learn:

- Informally
- From people they know and trust
- From people one step ahead, not experts
- For a purpose



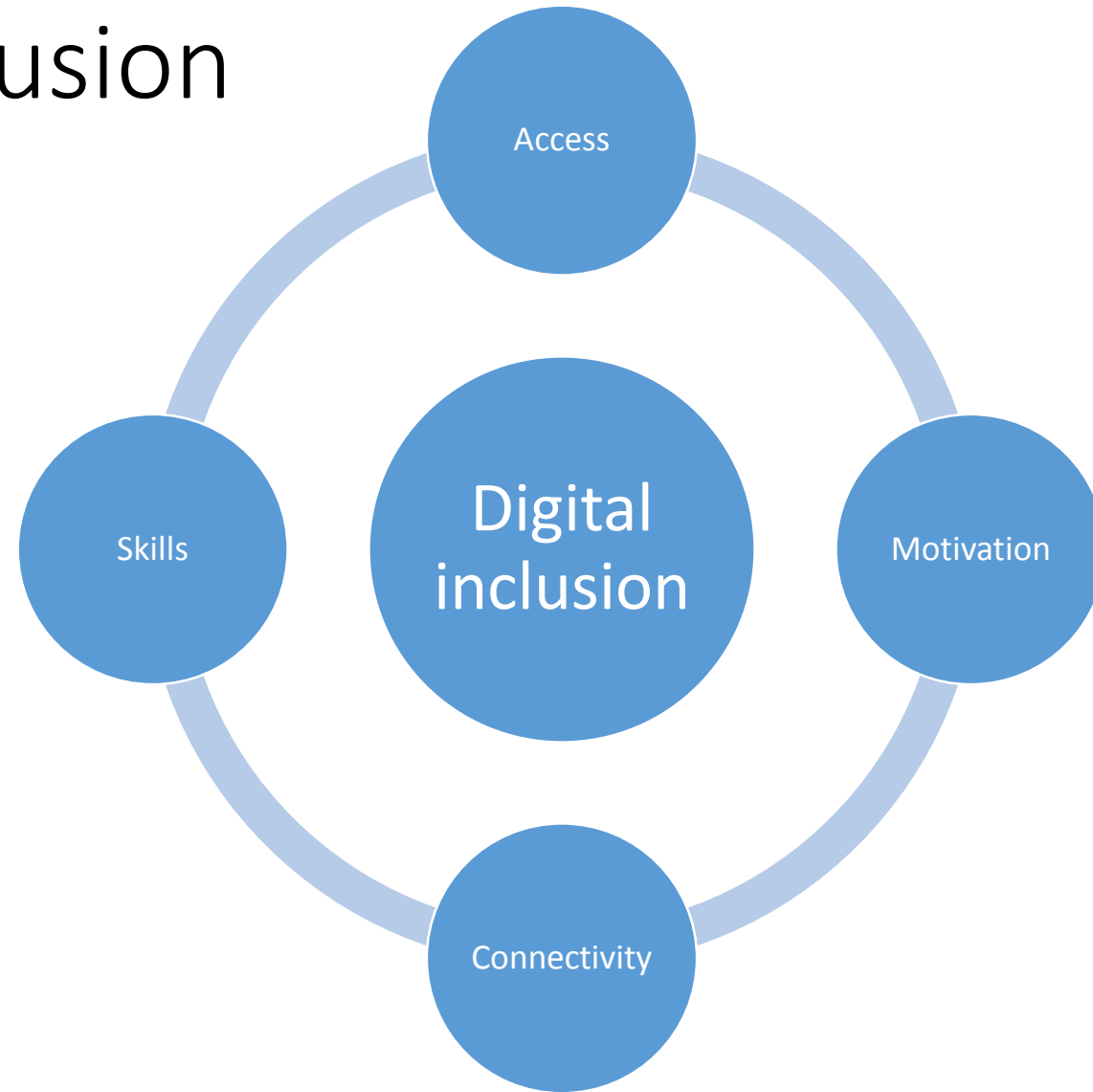
A word cloud of digital inclusion programs. The words are arranged in a roughly rectangular shape, with varying colors and sizes. The programs listed include: DigitalHeroes, GetITTogether, InternetVolunteers, O2Gurus, CyberMentors, UKDigitalChampions, InternetChampions, DigitalActivistInclusionNetwork, CommunityLearningChampions, CommunityChampions, CommunityCapacityBuilders, DigitalOutreachTrainers, ComputerBuddies, DigitalActivists, FirstClickFriends, InternetRangers, UKCircuitRiders, and WebWizards.

# Discuss

- How can VCSE providers contribute to delivering it?
- What can they contribute?
- How do they make the case?



# Digital inclusion



# Mobile revolution

Mobile overtook desktop computers in 2015 as preferred device to access the internet



# What the new entitlement entails

Go ON UK (now do everyone) identified five Basic Digital Skill areas

**Managing information**

**Problem solving**

**Communicating**

**Creating**

**Transacting**

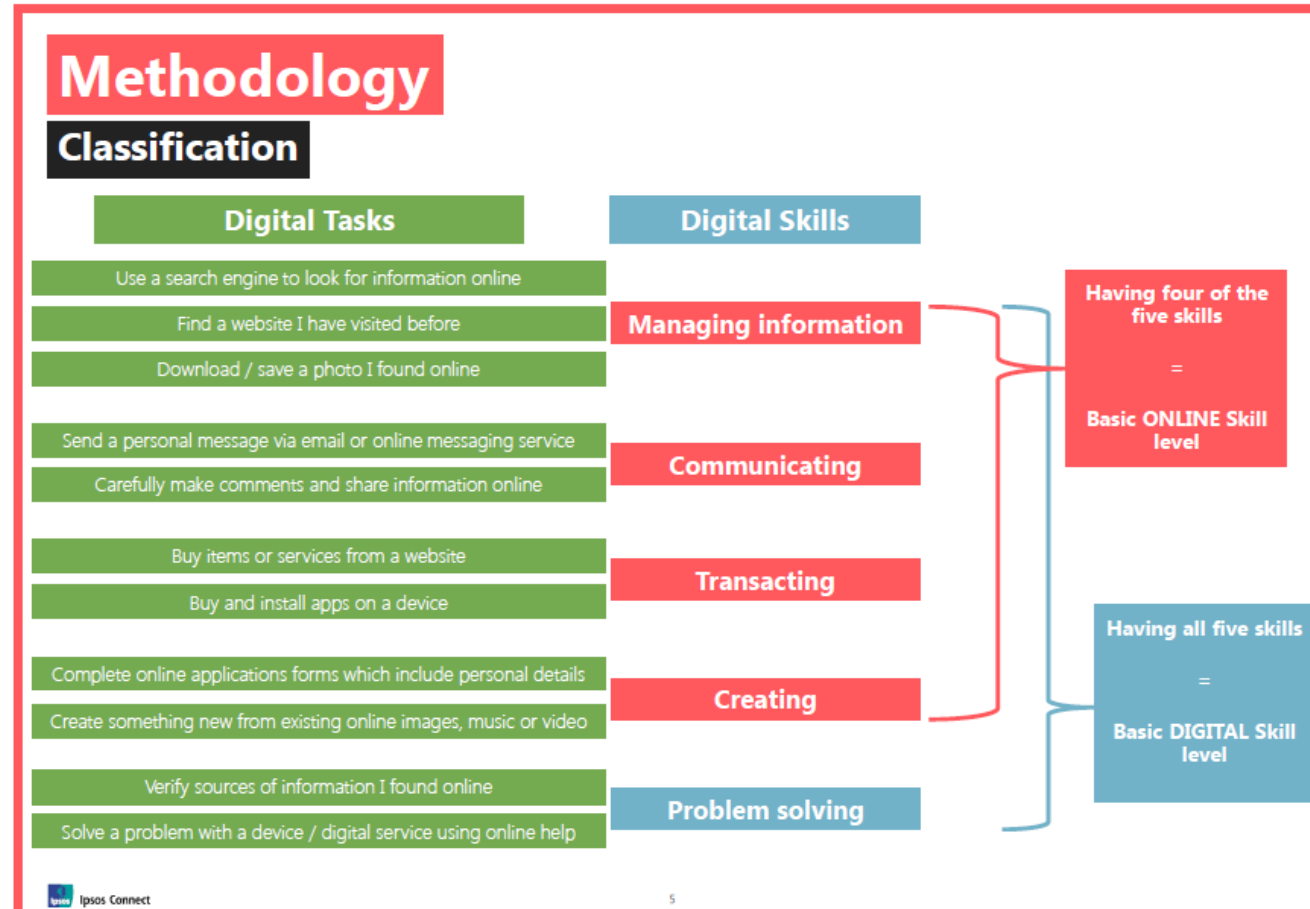
# Basic Online Skills, Basic Digital Skills, Digital Capability

- Primary measure - Basic Digital Skills
- Together, Basic Digital Skills and Basic Online Skills are referred to as “digital capability”.

# Digital Capability

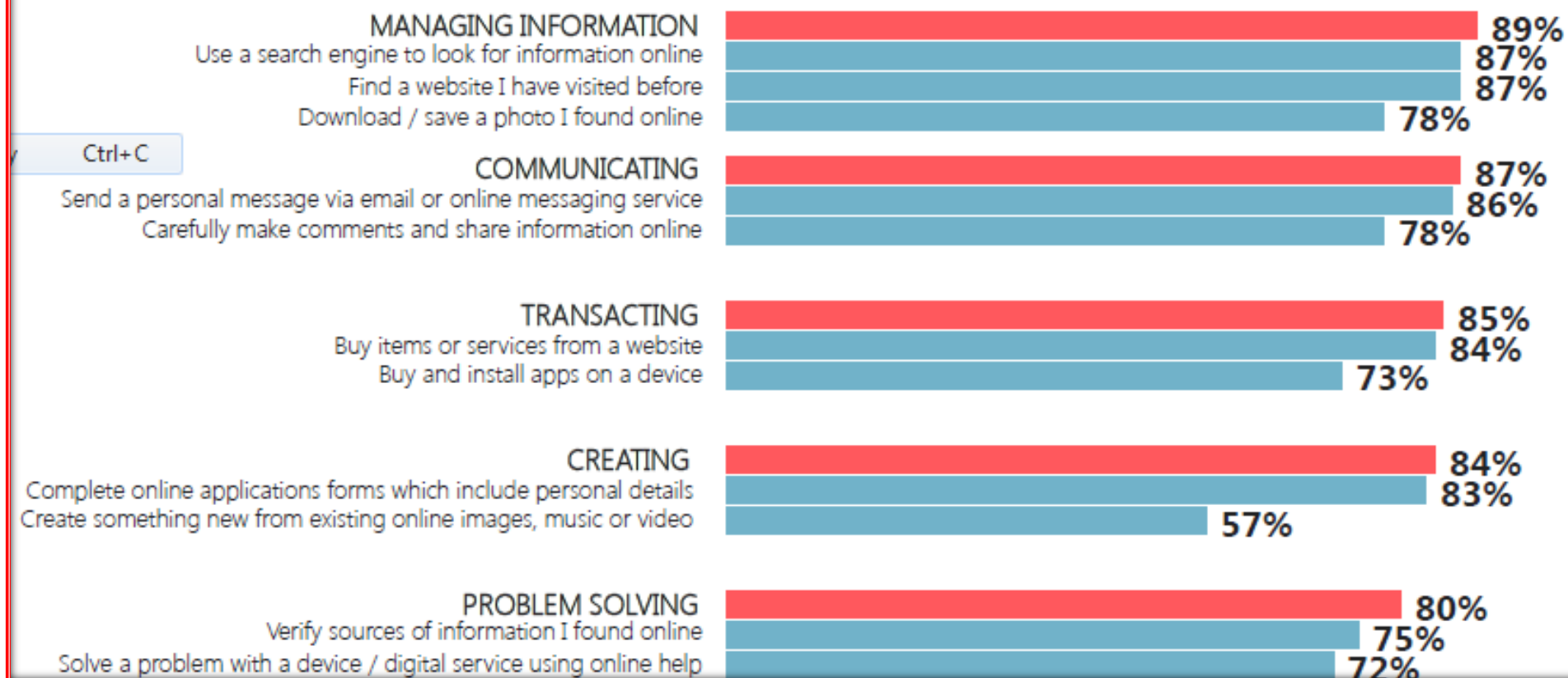
- Previous categories of Basic Online Skills changed to new definition of Basic Digital Skills.
- Revised classification introduced 'problem solving' category, and refreshed many tasks required for the other basic skills
- The Basic Digital Skills level amongst ABC1s is higher than the national average at 87%, but is significantly lower amongst the C2DE social grades (65%).
- The digital skills level starts to decline amongst the 45+ demographics.
- 65+ groups having a Basic Digital Skills level of 43%. This group have the lowest digital device ownership, the bulk of this age group are retired, suggesting they lack the opportunity/ desire to acquire the skills.
- Learners have "spiky profiles"

# What are these digital skills?



# Basic digital skills

Looking at the individual tasks for each skill, capability to create content, use online help and install apps is lower than the other tasks.



# Issues

- Data protection
- Security
- Teacher skills
- Access
- Fit for the future
- Mechanistic approaches
- Online safety for adult learners



# Discuss

What factors could encourage or inhibit your contribution.

# Discuss

- What contribution can volunteers play?
- What skills do volunteers need? How can learn them?
- What opportunities does the policy present to strengthen the role of volunteering locally?
- How can the case be made to local skills commissioners for funding for volunteering to be included within the entitlement?
- What are your next steps?