

Using E-learning: Advice for Training Advisers

E-learning stands for **Electronic Learning** and simply means **learning based on the electronic media**. E-learning covers a wide set of tools and processes including computer based content, video, CD-ROM, web based content, email, MP3/video players and more. Nowadays, many courses are delivered using e-learning or through **blended learning** where some aspects of traditional teaching are also available, so volunteers may have some experience of this in their work lives.

Before learners decide on e-learning as a method, they should consider its benefits and challenges:

Advantages:

- Flexibility (time and place) – the learner decides how and when to learn
- Reduced costs – save time on travel. learning materials
- Easy reviewing – repeating and reviewing the learning is straightforward.

Challenges:

- Flexibility – learners need to have strong motivations and a good study plan
- Technology – skills and computer/internet access are required
- Deceptive easiness – the learner will still need time to study.

It's important for the learner to choose a method that is right for them and that will meet their expectations. Ask them what method they are more comfortable with. Do they prefer the collaborative elements that a course can bring? Do they have the self motivation to complete and reflect on the training they might do online? Do they have access to computer equipment?

Accessing the learning

E-learning is only available online, so they need to make sure they have good access to the internet. The system requirements are as follows:

- Computer with internet browser
- Standard broadband internet connection
- Flash Player 9 or equivalent
- Audio facilities (speakers or headphones).

If they do not feel comfortable using the online tools, this may not be the right method for them.

Setting goals

You should set deadlines with your learner as to when they want to complete the e-learning.

Reflecting on their learning

Some guidance has been produced to help learners to reflect on the learning they are undertaking.

It is important to reflect on how the topics they have covered are reflected in their roles. They may also want to discuss with other volunteers to reflect on real life experiences or they may need to do some further study into the topic.

As Training Advisers, you have a very important role in making sure that learners have understood the core objectives, and that they have adequately demonstrated this knowledge in practice. This is the same for every method used, so don't forget to ask those initial questions.