



IFF Research

Online Basics Pilot Evaluation

Prepared for Becta

By IFF Research



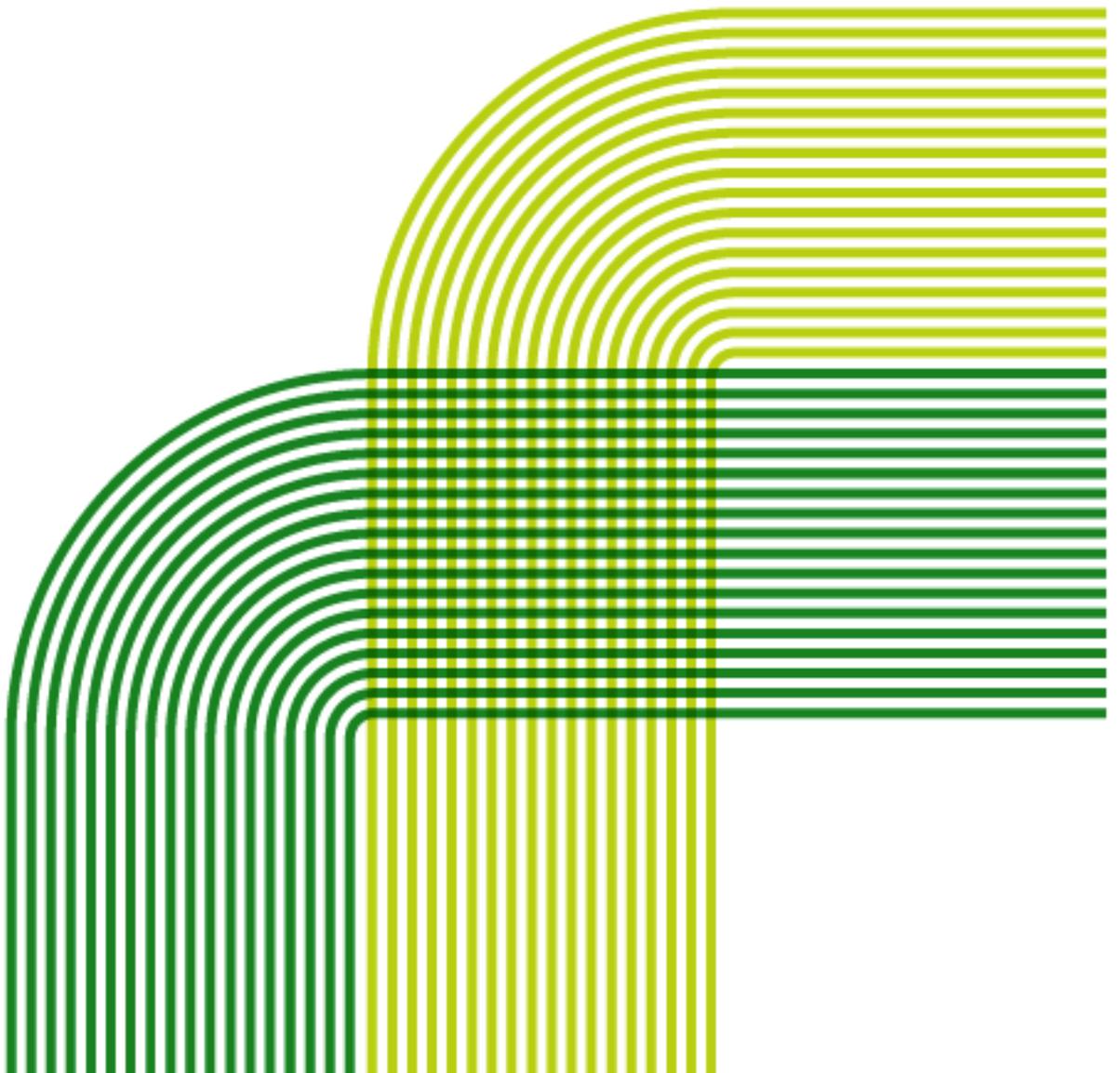


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1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The overwhelming message of the pilot evaluation is that of positivity about Online Basics. In its current form Online Basics works well, is liked by learners and centres alike, and has a potentially high level of demand. Based on the pilot we would certainly recommend rolling out with the current course.

Getting started

- 1.2 Learners found out about Online Basics principally through word of mouth, marketing and referrals. Learners' key reasons for taking the course were for personal development, to increase their online confidence and improve their job prospects.
- 1.3 Previous experience of using computers and the internet varied considerably, while a quarter of learners interviewed in the follow-up survey had taken an IT-related course prior to Online Basics.

Learner experience

- 1.4 Reactions to the course were very encouraging with 92% of those interviewed in the exit survey saying their experience was positive and 99% of those interviewed in the follow-up survey saying that they found it useful.
- 1.5 There was widespread satisfaction with the course's design, content, language and level. There was little need for support, the exceptions being those with the most limited existing skills and non-native English speakers.
- 1.6 The main problems were functionality issues, particularly with regard to the course hanging / freezing and the speed of servers. While these have now been resolved, it is clear they had a negative impact on centres' experiences of running the course, underscoring the need for excellent systems for the national roll-out.

Impact of the course

- 1.7 Learners had generally seen considerable improvements in both their skills and confidence in using computers and the internet as a result of taking the course.
- 1.8 Unemployed learners showed promising signs of using their new skills to help them find work, and all learners of working age felt they now had the ability to use the skills – and the resources now opened up to them – to improve their career prospects.
- 1.9 A high proportion of learners felt likely to undertake further learning or training in future, with a few having already done so.
- 1.10 Most learners had already been putting the skills acquired in Online Basics to use, and many had been passing them on to others. Learners also reported wider benefits of the course related to their general confidence, enthusiasm for learning and direction in life.

Supporting centres to deliver Online Basics

- 1.11 Although there were some queries and specific minor gripes, centres were positive about the support they received from UK online during the pilot. Training was satisfactory and centres which had made use of the discussion groups had found them helpful
- 1.12 Marketing materials had been widely used and appreciated, and centres had generally been proactive in marketing the course.
- 1.13 Online Basics had made limited additional demands on centre resources, with most additional demand being easily met by rearranging schedules or updating equipment. Costs had not been problematic either: like other resources, they were viewed as integral to centres' usual offering.

2 Introduction and Methodology

Introduction

- 2.1 Over a quarter of all adults in the UK (13.9 million) have not used the internet in the last 3 months¹. Within the UK, 75% of those who are at a social or financial disadvantage are also offline, and missing out on the opportunities and benefits that the internet and computer usage can provide. Half of all those offline are over 65. Levelling the digital playing field is an important step towards social equity and economic success in the 21st Century.
- 2.2 The economic downturn and recent policy developments have led to a renewed focus on the digital exclusion agenda. In October 2008, the government recognised digital exclusion for the first time as a root cause of social exclusion² while in June 2009 Carter's Digital Britain report describes how digital inclusion and participation can help Britain sustain its position as a leading digital economy and society³. BIS also launched Estelle Morris' review into digital life skills⁴, which backed up the fledgling Learning Revolution White Paper⁵ putting informal ICT learning at its core and recommending an entitlement for all adults in England to access free training in basic ICT skills.
- 2.3 Online Basics is a pilot learning programme designed to help people who do not have basic ICT skills to help them get to grips with technology. The course consists of 5 modules covering the basics – using a mouse and keyboard, e-mailing, looking at the internet and keeping safe online. Online Basics a key part of Government's response to the Morris Review and compliments the national roll-out of the Home Access scheme that aims to help low-income families who currently lack access to a computer and/or internet to get online at home. The Online Basics pilot scheme ran in 5 areas of England during the period January to March 2010.
- 2.4 This report details the findings of the research evaluation of the pilot scheme conducted by IFF Research that took place in March 2010 as the scheme drew to a close. The evaluation is intended to inform the content, infrastructure, support and marketing of Online Basics prior to its national roll-out later this year.

Methodology

- 2.5 The research evaluation involved 3 aspects:
- Secondary analysis of data and MI supplied by UK online. This consisted of:
 - Data from Online Basics learner exit surveys (1,017⁶) – referred to in this report as the 'exit survey'

¹ 2008 ONS data

² Delivering Digital Inclusion: An Action Plan for Consultation, October 2009

³ Digital Britain, DCMS, June 2009

⁴ Independent Review of ICT User Skills, Estelle Morris, June 2009

⁵ Learning Revolution White Paper, DIUS, March 2009

⁶ 1,026 records were supplied by UK online - several were found to be test cases giving the usable total of 1,017

- Registration data
 - A follow-up CATI survey of 219 Online Basics learners conducted by IFF Research – referred to in this report as the ‘follow-up survey’. This took place from IFF’s telephone centre in London.
 - Qualitative telephone interviews with 21 Online Basics project leaders at centres offering the course as part of the pilot scheme. A number of supplementary interviews were also conducted with other staff at these centres where project leaders had less ‘hands on’ knowledge of the course itself.

Online Basics Visits and Uptake

- 2.6 Here we briefly review the registration data produced by UK online for the duration of the pilot period, from the week commencing January 10th up until the week commencing March 21st (11 weeks). It should be noted that this includes lower levels of use in the week of January 10th.
- 2.7 The Online Basics website received over 16,000 hits during the pilot, looking at specific hits to the Online Basics site, and not those accessing the site via MyGuide. This included an average of just over 1,300 unique visitors to the site a week.
- 2.8 Online basics courses were accessed by a range of users, including registered MyGuide users who could access the modules without specifically signing up to Online Basics. This meant that there was a high level of Online Basics courses launched, with an average of over 14,000 a week and peaking at 24,446 courses launched during the ninth week of the pilot. This describes all launches of the courses, whereas course completion rates were understandably lower.
- 2.9 Some 3,838 people registered specifically on Online Basics during the course of the pilot. There was a high of 1,002 registrations in the fourth week, with typical numbers varying between 200 and 400 specific registrations a week during the rest of the pilot.
- 2.10 Sixty per cent (60%) of those who registered specifically on Online Basics used the course, launching at least one of the modules during the pilot. Whilst the 40% who did not launch a module have not been tracked in the research, it is quite possible that a significant number of these people found the course too basic for their needs, given that they had the requisite skills to register but chose not to continue.
- 2.11 In a typical week, 4% of all users on Online Basics (both specific Online Basics registrants and those accessing it via MyGuide) completed at least one Online Basics module. However, among specific registrants to Online Basics, the weekly proportion completing at least one module was typically over 50%, reflecting their stronger commitment to, and interest in, the course compared with general MyGuide users.

Follow up Survey Response Rate

- 2.12 Sample for the IFF follow-up survey was based on records of learners who completed the exit survey. An initial 1,026 records were supplied by UK online which gave a starting follow-up sample of 411 after removing learners not wishing to be re-contacted, records with blank or invalid contact details and test cases.

From this starting sample of 411 records, 219 completed interviews were achieved. Table 2.1 below details the fieldwork outcomes.



Table 2.1: Follow-up survey fieldwork outcomes

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------|
| SAMPLE RECEIVED FROM UK ONLINE | Online survey completes | 1026 |
| | Agreed to re-contact | 430 |
| | Useable contacts for IFF | 411 |
| IFF FIELDWORK OUTCOMES | Called | 410 |
| | Completed interviews | 219 |
| | No contact made | 106 |
| | Unobtainable sample | 15 |
| | Refusals + other negative outcomes | 71 |
| | Response rate (completed / useable) | 53% |

2.13 While the overall response rate was very good, the base of 219 completed interviews limits our ability to analyse by key demographics and prevents socio-geographical analysis by post-code, one of the initial aims of the pilot evaluation.

Report structure

2.14 The report aims to cover all aspects of learner and centre experience with Online Basics and is divided in to the following chapters.

- Executive Summary
- Introduction and Methodology
- Profile of Online Basics Users and Centres
- Getting started on Online Basics
- Learner Experience
- Impact of the Course
- Supporting Centres to Deliver Online Basics
- Conclusions and Recommendations
- Appendices (Exit survey questionnaire, IFF follow-up questionnaire, Centre topic guide)

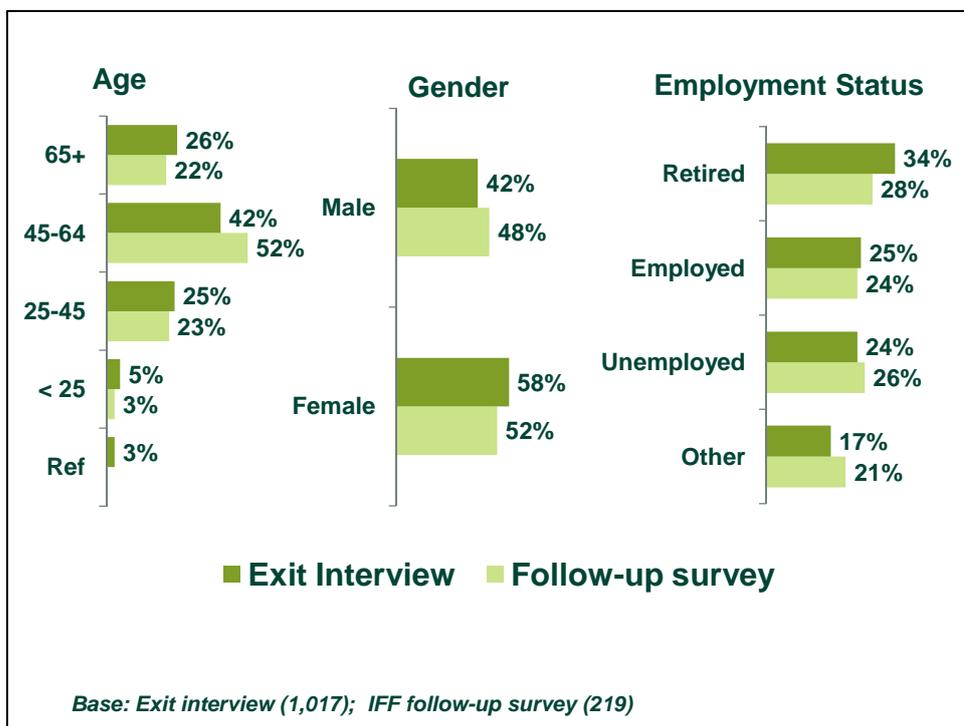
3 Profile of Online Basics Users and Centres

3.1 This chapter covers the profile of learners and centres covered in the research. It is important to note that the profile is based on those who took part in the exit survey rather than the overall profile of Online Basics users.

Learner profile

3.2 Figure 3.1 below shows the profile of Online Basics learners from the exit survey and the profile of achieved interviews in the follow-up survey.

Figure 3.1 Learner profile



3.3 As figure 3.1 shows, the population is skewed towards older learners with around two thirds aged 45 or over. The majority of centres confirm, stating that most learners they have seen are aged over 40 or 50. A handful of centres cited a different age profile, for example a family learning centre mentioned a mix of ages while an Employment Zone centre has mainly seen unemployed learners of working age.

3.4 The follow-up survey age profile broadly matches the exit survey, albeit with more learners aged 45-64 (52% v. 42% in the exit survey).

3.5 The bias towards older learners reflects the pilot scheme’s centre-based delivery of Online Basics as the majority of participating centres have this user profile. The national roll-out will not be so focused on centre-based learning and a broader spread of ages is expected.

3.6 The exit survey indicates that more learners are female than male (58% v. 42%). This is again reiterated by centres who generally stated that the gender split was even or with more women than men.

The profile of follow-up survey respondents was slightly more evenly split between men and women (48% and 52% respectively).

- 3.7 Learners were most likely to be retired in both the exit survey and the follow-up (34% and 28% respectively). Around a quarter in both were unemployed and a quarter in work. Centres felt that the majority of learners were retired or unemployed. Libraries were more likely to have had retired learners make up the bulk of their intake.
- 3.8 According to the exit survey data, 14% of learners were BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic), as were 16% in the follow-up survey.
- 3.9 Centres gave varying reports about the proportion of learners for whom English is their second language, ranging from a very low proportion to around 50%.
- 3.10 Around a quarter of learners had some form of disability or learning difficulty (27% in the exit survey & 24% in the follow-up). Amongst the exit survey respondents: 11% had a physical condition that limits basic physical activity, 5% are deaf or hearing impaired, 5% have a mental health problem, 3% have learning difficulties, 2% are blind or visually impaired and 4% had some other form of disability.
- 3.11 Centres were asked if the profile of Online Basics users differed from their 'normal' user profile. The response was mixed. Several training centres, community centres and private training providers stated that Online Basics users were generally older than their usual learners and were distinct because of their lack of prior computer and internet experience (some degree of IT experience being a pre-requisite for much of these centres' other provision).
- 3.12 On the other hand, the majority of libraries stated that the profile of Online Basics users did not differ from their normal user profile as their existing users made up most of their Online Basics registrations. This is a good example of how effective word-of-mouth and face to face engagement has been in many centres as a means of promoting learner registration. This will be covered in more detail in chapters 4 and 7.

Profile of centres

- 3.13 In total 21 interviews were conducted with centres offering Online Basics as part of the pilot scheme from a starting sample of 36. The centres making up this 21:
- Were most commonly libraries, around half were. Other types of centre included:
 - Community centres
 - Adult learning centres
 - Charities
 - A family learning centre
 - A LearnDirect centre
 - A college 'Employment Zone'
 - A 'Virtual Learning Centre'
 - Had varying funding sources – reflecting the various types of centre.
 - Ranged widely in their history of offering IT training, from less than two years to over fifteen years.
 - Generally had fewer than ten staff and had large proportions of part-time staff. Around a quarter relied on volunteers.



- Virtually all had staff with formal adult learner support or tutor/teacher qualifications (excluding a couple of libraries). In many centres, particularly community centres, all or most staff had such a qualification.
- 3.14 At the time centres were interviewed, half had registered between 25-50 learners to Online Basics. The rest had registered fewer than 25 or between 50 and 100.
- 3.15 Respondents were generally centre managers or co-ordinators with responsibility for overseeing the pilot scheme. Some librarians with this responsibility were also interviewed. In certain cases, a second respondent, often a tutor, with more 'hands on' experience was sought to give additional information on course content and learner support issues.



4 Getting Started on Online Basics

- 4.1 This chapter looks at how and why learners came to register on the Online Basics course in terms of their initial engagement with the course, reasons for registering and prior IT experience.

Initial engagement with Online Basics.

- 4.2 Centres were asked how learners end up on the Online Basics course. There was some variation between centres, but four clear routes were apparent:

- **Word of Mouth.** This was a vitally important means of awareness – most libraries and community centres stated that a significant proportion of their learners had been made aware of the course by a friend. These centres held the view that this has and will always be the case for them as they are a central part of the local community.

“Someone who has been on the course will tell their friends – we have such a long waiting list that we haven’t had to do any other kind of marketing at all”

Library, South West England, more than 100 Pilot learners

The follow-up survey underlined the potential of word-of-mouth to be a major factor in Online Basics uptake in the future. Within a few weeks since taking part in the course half of the learners interviewed had already recommended the course to a friend (52%). Of the remainder who hadn’t yet done so, approaching nine in ten said they would recommend the course to a friend (87%).

- **Marketing.** The majority of centres felt that marketing they had used both within the centre and externally had resulted in many registrations. Several centres had used leaflet and poster campaigns in their local communities, focussing on public places where their target audience might be – doctors’ surgeries, cafes, community centres.

As mentioned in chapter 3, libraries’ learners were generally made up of existing library users. Here, on-site marketing and staff actively promoting awareness among library users were key reasons for registration.

“We market ourselves and it is quite a small community so people may come in to get books or a DVD and that makes it quite busy so we have a good chance of marketing things. We’ve put together a display with the leaflets etc. We also have an IAG adviser and she has been able to talk to people coming in who are looking for courses.”

Library, Yorkshire and Humberside, less than 25 pilot learners

Centres’ reactions to and use of the marketing materials supplied to centres by UK online will be covered in more detail in chapter 7 of this report.

- **Referrals.** Around a quarter of the centres spoken to had registered learners who had been referred to the course by another agency, most commonly Jobcentre Plus but also local schools, probation services, nextstep and Connexions. Many centres have established links with IAG advisers and providers in the local areas and this proved fruitful.

“We work closely with all the schools and the children centres in the areas.”

Family learning centre, North West of England, 76 to 100 pilot learners



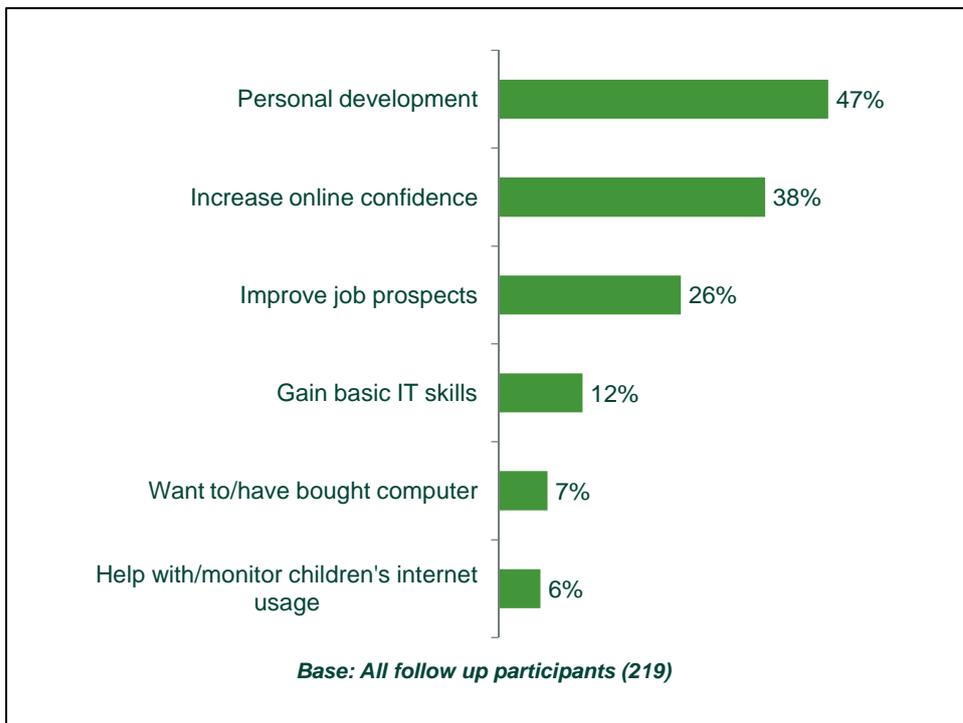
- **Drop-ins.** A handful of centres mentioned that some of their learners had simply come by the centre and registered on the course. Clearly centres' internal marketing and promotion was at play here also.

4.3 The exit survey findings broadly confirm these key routes to the course. The main routes these learners mentioned were: hearing about the course through a friend or family member (26%), a local community organisation (16%), Jobcentre Plus (15%), direct contact with the centre itself (8%), local press (4%) or various marketing sources e.g. posters (3%), a leaflet through the door (3%) and radio (3%).

Reasons for taking the course

4.4 In the follow-up survey, learners were asked what their key reasons were for taking the course. These reasons are shown below in figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Key reasons for taking the course



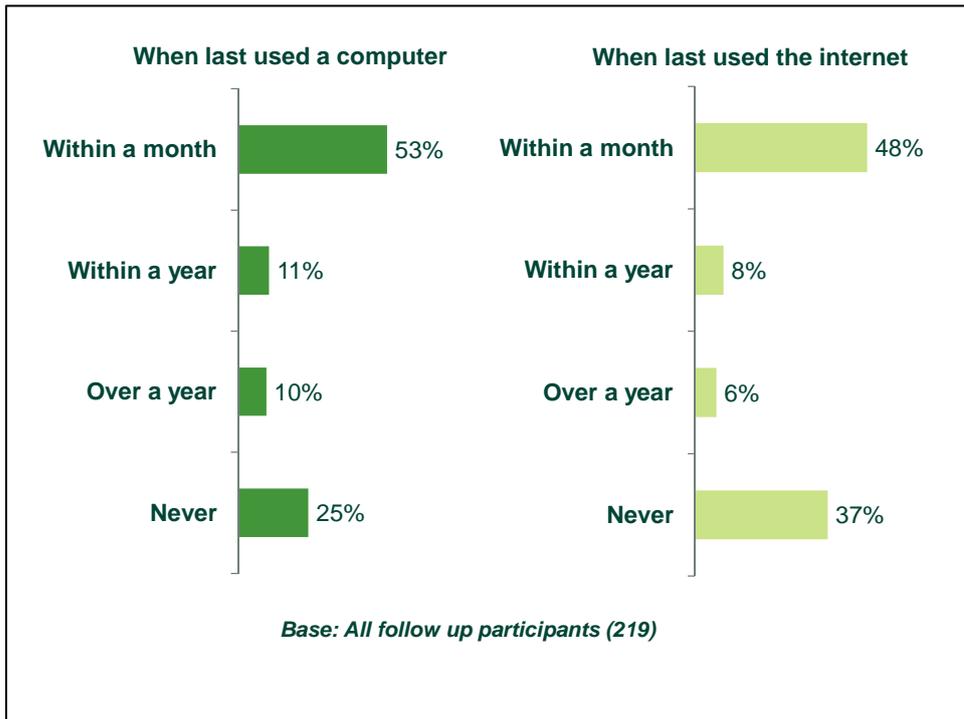
- 4.5 There were three key reasons why learners took part in Online Basics:
- Personal development – this included a simple wish to do some learning, a desire to keep up-to-date with technology and a recognition that developing computer skills could help learners reach their full potential.
 - Increase online confidence – principally in terms of getting started on social networking sites, using email, using search engines and online shopping.
 - Improve job prospects – both in terms of prospective work and current employment.

4.6 There was little variation by sub-group, although those aged over 65 were more likely to have taken the course because they wanted to or already had bought a computer.

Pre-course computer experience

4.7 Learners’ prior experience of computers and the internet before the course varied considerably. A quarter had never used a computer before (25%) and two fifths had never been on the internet before (37%). Around half had used a computer (53%) or been on the internet (48%) within a month before they took the course. It is worth noting that we do not have information on the frequency or level of this prior computer or internet use.

Figure 4.2 When last used a computer and the internet



4.8 A quarter of learners interviewed in the follow-up survey had been on a course about computers or the internet before the Online Basics course. These were mainly basic word-processing courses undertaken several years ago. However, a handful mentioned ECDL and BBC courses. Again, it’s worth noting that we do not have any indication of whether learners completed these courses, or indeed if they were of any perceived use.

Initial IT assessment

4.9 The majority of centres assess prospective learners’ skills prior to starting the course. This generally involved a short interview or chat about prior experience, although some centres carried out a more comprehensive assessment.

“We use UKFB, it is a diagnostic assessment regarding people’s computer use in the past. They are asked a series of questions and then the computer will generate what their strengths and weaknesses are.”

- 4.10 Centres use this interview or assessment to determine whether the learner is appropriate for the course. A handful of centres use this as an opportunity to manage learner expectations about the nature of the course; making it clear that Online Basics is designed for absolute beginners.
- 4.11 As a result, a number of centres had found that one or two prospective learners were too advanced for Online Basics. In these instances, individuals are often referred to other MyGuide courses. One centre mentioned that they had identified a couple of people whose level of literacy would have hampered their progress with the course and did not register them to the course.



5 Learner Experience

- 5.1 This chapter explores the learner experience of Online Basics; views on its content and functionality, its level of difficulty and its layout and design. It also explores the important issue of learner support needs. While much of this feedback can be obtained direct from learners through the exit survey and the follow up survey, we also incorporate centre views on each of these aspects.

Overall experience

- 5.2 Overall, learners were extremely positive about Online Basics, with 92% of those interviewed in the exit survey saying their experience was positive. Furthermore, the centres involved in the pilot were very positive about the course, considering it ‘user friendly’, ‘professional’ and ‘simple to use’, all of which bodes well for national rollout.
- 5.3 The exit survey shows that key positive aspects of the course for learners were that Online Basics is easy to understand, user friendly and allows them to work at their own pace. This was also echoed by the centres, many of whom stressed the flexibility of the course, allowing learners to ‘dip in and out’ and concentrate on areas in which they particularly needed help, such as emailing or online searches.
- 5.4 The follow-up survey shows that all 5 modules were considered to be useful, with relatively little variation between them (keyboard 96%, mouse 93%, email 95%, Internet 98%, online searches 98%). Overall, 99% of the learners interviewed in the follow-up survey said they found the course useful, and 76% considered it ‘very useful’.

Functionality

- 5.5 Generally, the centres had few criticisms about the course aside from the serious technical problems with hanging, freezing and the speed of servers, which were mentioned by every centre interviewed. Whilst centres on the whole appreciated the efforts of UK online to resolve these technical glitches, it is clear that this issue needs to be completely resolved before national rollout, as in many cases centres felt that these issues detracted from the learner experience, as well as having a detrimental effect on word of mouth referrals. Some centres even felt that they had lost learners as a result:

“Throughout the process everyone has problems with it, it is very frustrating- a couple had a very frustrating time with it last week and we have not seen them since”

Family Learning Centre, North West England, 76-100 Pilot learners

Some centres also remarked on problems such as these being particularly discouraging for complete beginners, who may feel that they are at fault if things go wrong or find that the course takes a prohibitively long time as a result of the issues:

“It’s not ideal when you are dealing with complete beginners who are nervous- they spend half an hour filling something in and then they press a button and it stops working.”

Library, South West England, 26-50 Pilot learners

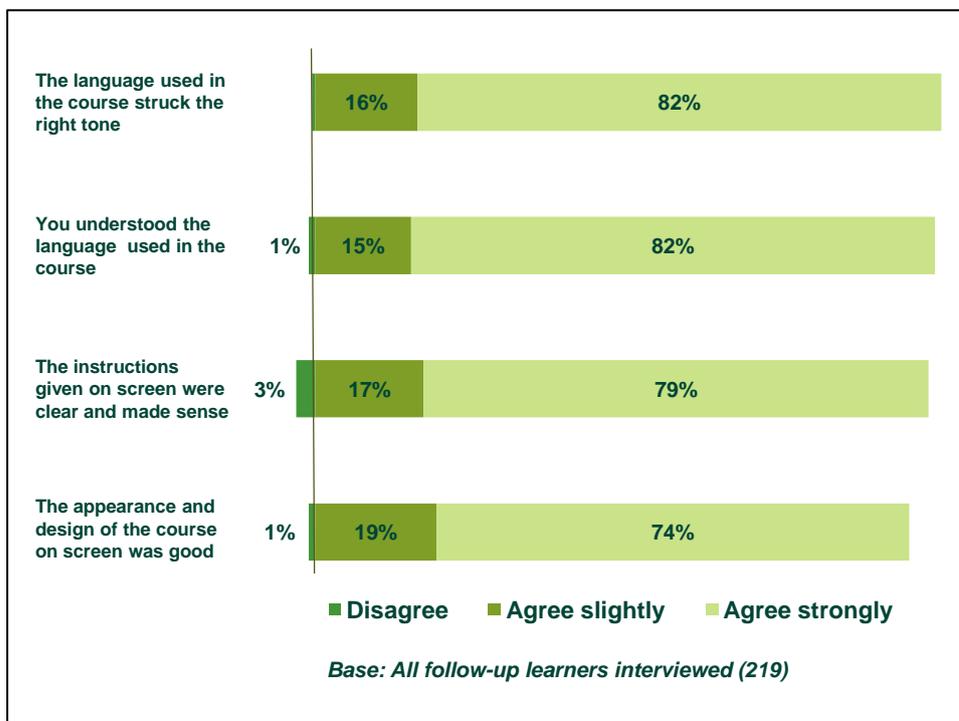


- 5.6 Apart from these technical issues, centres mention few drawbacks to the course. One issue mentioned by several centres, however, is the potential problems with registration for those learners who have no prior experience with computers. Some centres felt that this becomes a ‘catch 22’ scenario, as learners who have never seen a keyboard or a mouse before, would not be able to register themselves to undertake a course designed to help them use a keyboard and mouse. This is obviously not a problem if the learner takes Online Basics at a centre, where staff are available to help with this and other elements of the course, but it would have potential implications for those learners who follow the course independently although one would assume that the majority of those with absolutely no experience would have support from family or friends in the early stages.
- 5.7 Other minor functionality issues mentioned by centres included some frustration that Online Basics is branded separately but embedded within MyGuide and that there is not more distinction when logging in (mentioned by two centres), a ‘clunky and old fashioned interface’ (mentioned by one centre) and the fact that pressing continue throughout the course without answering any of the questions will still generate a certificate that says learners have completed the Online Basics course (mentioned by one centre).

Design, language and tone

- 5.8 The vast majority of learners were very positive about the instructions and ease of use of Online Basics. As the chart below shows, learners understood the language used in the course, felt that it struck the right tone and also felt that the on-screen instructions were clear and made sense. Additionally, both learners and centres were positive about the appearance and design on the course, remarking that it was ‘professional’ and ‘well set out.’

Figure 5.1: Views on design, language and tone

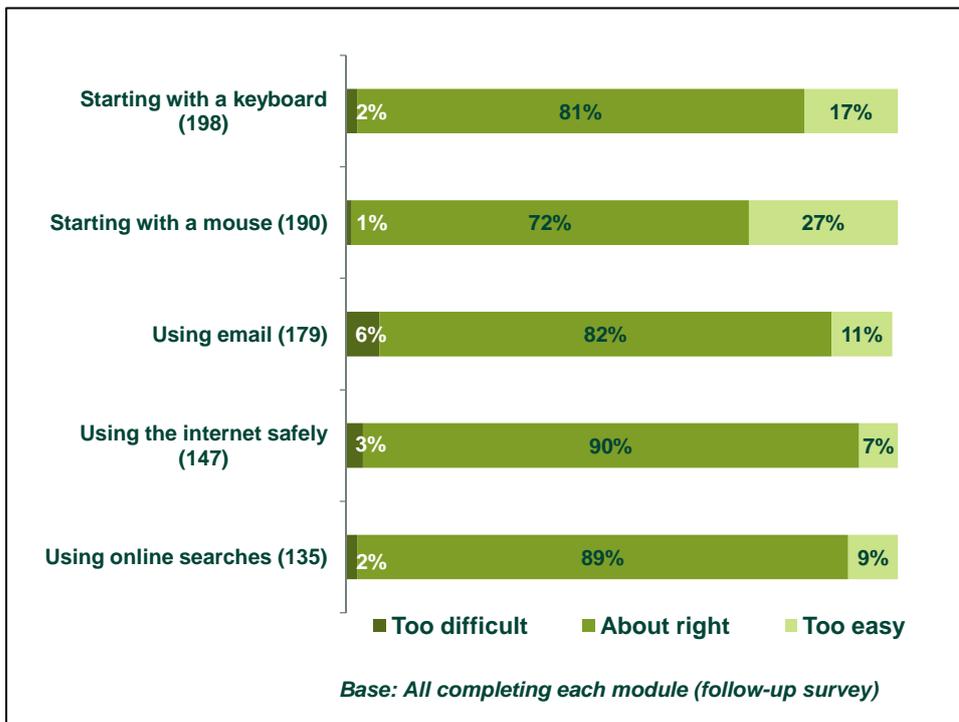


5.9 One point to note is that some centres commented on potential problems with the language for non-native English speakers although there was nothing to suggest here that these learners were struggling with the course content itself. Some centres also felt that older learners sometimes struggled with the technical terms used, although it is fair to say that this would be expected given the nature of the course and the target audience. Both of these points do suggest, however, that for some groups of learners the course may not work unmediated.

Level and length

5.10 In terms of the level and length of the course, the general feeling was that both were ‘about right’ – 90% of learners in the exit interview though the level was appropriate and, as the chart below shows, the level of the individual modules was generally appropriate for the target audience. The most basic units, such as the keyboard and mouse modules, were more likely to be considered too easy, although this could be addressed with an initial assessment of learners’ skills. Encouragingly, the later units were no more likely to be considered too difficult. As might be expected, older learners were less likely to think units were too easy, as were those who had not used a computer/the internet before. There is a note of caution here as bases were low, but this pattern is logical.

Figure 5.2: Views on level and length



5.11 In terms of length, the average amount of time spent on the course is six hours, although this average is taken from learners at various stages of completion. Amongst those who have completed all 5 modules, the average amount of time spent is eight hours. This is split between those who took over eight hours (32%) and those who took four hours or fewer (49%). Generally speaking, the centres interviewed felt that the level of time taken to complete the course was as expected, although a small number of centres felt that the guidance time given by UK online was a little optimistic:

“In terms of the guidance on how long it takes people to get through it, that’s probably a bit ambitious- in our experience it usually takes people longer than that.”

Family Learning Centre, North West England, 76-100 Pilot learners**Course content**

- 5.12 Both centres and learners were positive about the content of Online Basics: the general feeling was that it is appropriate for the target audience. Hardly any of the learners or centres interviewed felt that there was anything missing from the course; where they did, this was content available elsewhere through MyGuide. As mentioned earlier, some centres commented on the difficulty in registering for those learners with no previous keyboard or mouse experience, something which emphasises the advantages for learners with absolutely no computer experience of taking the course through a centre rather than independently. Some suggested that a pre-registration activity involving this hardware could be a useful tool and one centre had found a print out of the keyboard keys useful for learners:

“It would help if there was something we could print off to show what all the keys do – we did print something off but it was not from Online Basics. Learners are invited to press the return key and some learners would not know which one that was.”

Library, North West England, 26-50 Pilot learners

- 5.13 Additionally, some centres felt that guidance on laptop/netbook mouse control could be useful and some centres commented that learners felt the email module does not look like the email they have at home or work. That said, these were minor issues and the course content was generally viewed positively; learners enjoyed being able to work through the modules at their own pace and centres felt that it was a key advantage that learners with more experience could choose the modules that suited them, whilst those with little or no experience would get a good grounding in all the basics of using computers and the internet. It is also worth noting here that 95% of the learners interviewed said that they enjoyed taking the course, another positive finding for Online Basics.

Support

- 5.14 In terms of the support needed, relatively few learners needed help or support from a member of staff during the course. Virtually all the support that was needed was related to course content with learners requiring help to perform specific tasks within the module. The exit survey demonstrates that, where applicable, learners are very happy with the support they receive from centre staff (96%). Centre interviews, however, suggest that, at least to begin with, some learners can require a great deal of support. For complete beginners, most of this will relate to ‘teething problems’ at the beginning of the course, particularly the previously mentioned difficulties with registration for those with little or no IT experience. Whilst a minority of centres felt that this demand for extra support placed a strain on staff resource, others felt it is worth the extra effort on their part as Online Basics learners will continue learning on other courses:

“It has created extra work for staff but we feel we are here to support the learners so we will give them as much as they need. We also see it as a positive as Online Basics will feed into our other courses, particularly as we are in the process of putting all of our courses online.”

Library, North West England, 26-50 Pilot learners

- 5.15 With the exception on non-native English speakers, centres agree that the support learners need rarely, if ever, goes beyond the course content. The centres interviewed were generally equipped to offer support to learners with learning difficulties or disabilities or at least able to direct them towards another organisation that could. A few centres mentioned that some learners could have literacy and numeracy issues, but these were a small minority.

- 5.16 Specific examples of the support required by learners included locating certain keys on the keyboard, how to open, write and send an email and how to email attachments. It is worth remembering, however, that some learners will always need support whatever the course content. Percentages of learners needing support in each module were encouragingly low (keyboard 10%, mouse 6%, email 18%, using the internet safely 10%, using online searches 12%). As would be expected, those learners needing help were likely to be older and less likely to have used a computer or taken a computer course before.
- 5.17 Overall, both learners and centres were enthusiastic about Online Basics, which was seen as an excellent package for learners with little or no IT experience as well as a useful tool for those learners who just need to learn one or two online skills. The key factors for learners and centres are the same: words and phrases that appear repeatedly in the interviews are 'simple', 'easy to use', 'user friendly', 'professional' and 'clear' – all key positives for Online Basics. Whilst it is clear that some learners do require extra help and assistance when undertaking the course, the majority are able to work through it independently, which bodes well for national rollout. Furthermore, learners enjoy doing the course and centres are extremely positive about the benefits, including increased confidence and communication skills and better employment prospects for jobseekers. It is to these benefits that we now turn our attention.



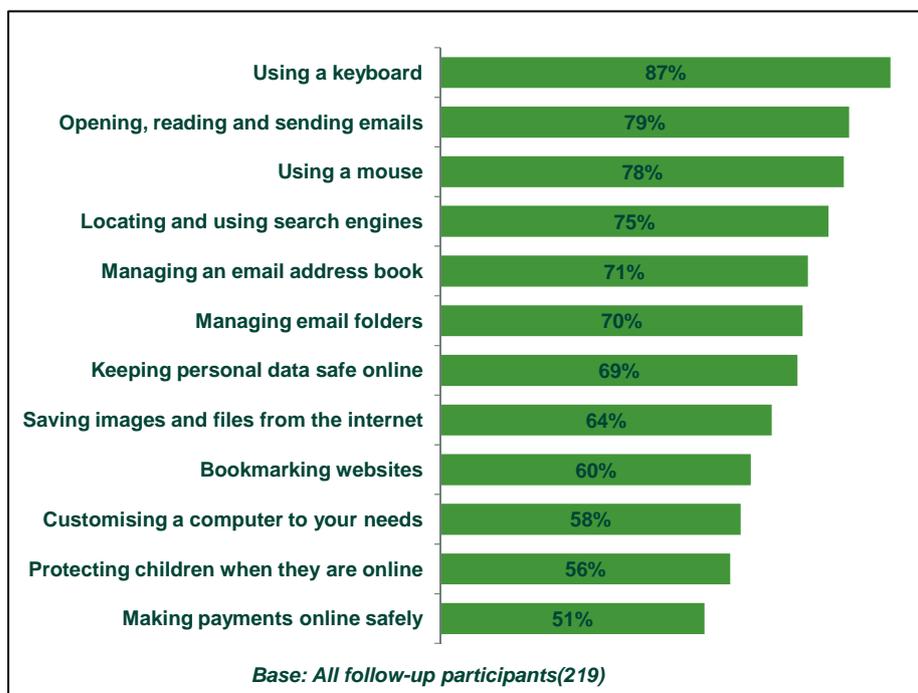
6 Impact of the Course

6.1 This chapter describes changes learners have experienced as a result of taking Online Basics, including improvements in specific IT skills, confidence in these skills, steps taken towards gaining employment or changing current employment circumstances, and wider benefits in their lives. This information is drawn from the follow-up survey.

IT skills, knowledge and confidence

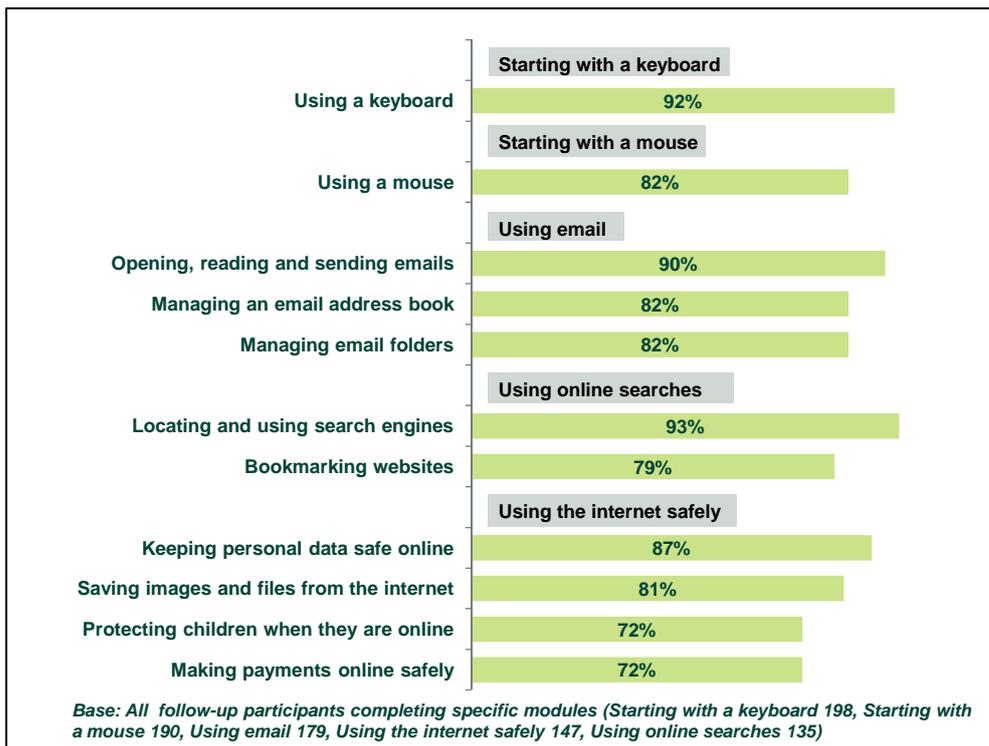
6.2 The vast majority of learners interviewed in the follow-up survey felt that their IT-related skills and knowledge had improved and this was especially evident for the more basic skills, as the Figure 6.1 demonstrates. Improvements were particularly evident amongst respondents who had not previously completed any other computer courses: this included basic skills like Using a keyboard and Using a mouse, and emailing skills like Managing email folders and Managing an email address book,

Figure 6.1 IT skills improved



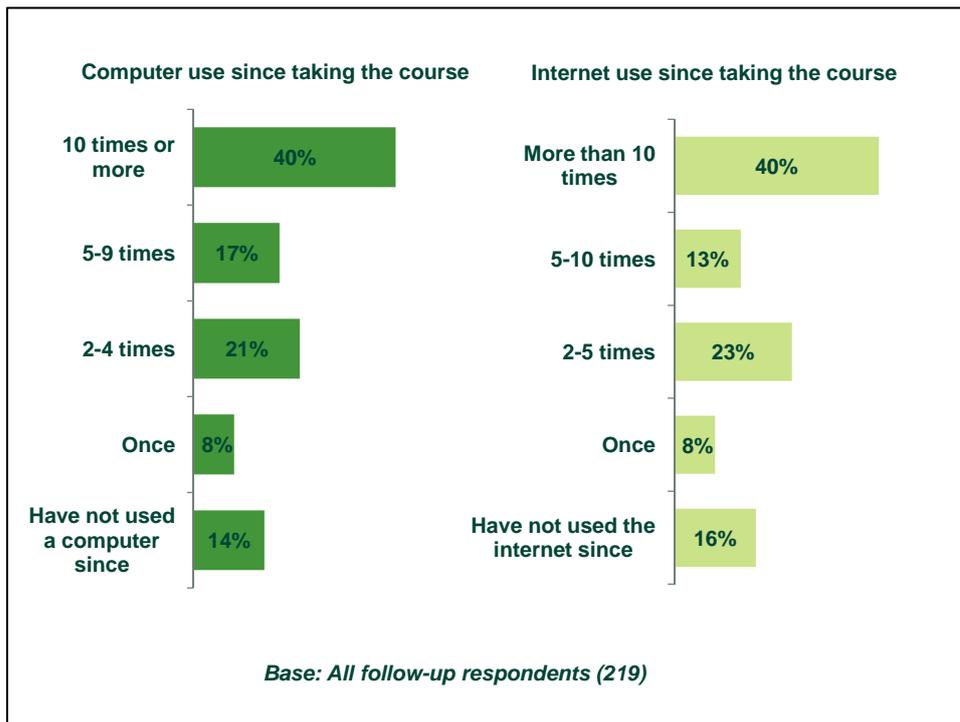
6.3 As would be expected, Figure 6.2 illustrates that improvements were particularly evident amongst those who had completed the specific modules associated with each new skill. For example, the improvements in online safety skills were higher when based on those who had completed the module on 'Using the internet safely'. On the other hand, even those who had not taken specific modules had also experienced some improvement in related skills, reflecting the general increase in their IT-related skills and confidence.

Figure 6.2: IT Skills improved amongst those completing associated modules



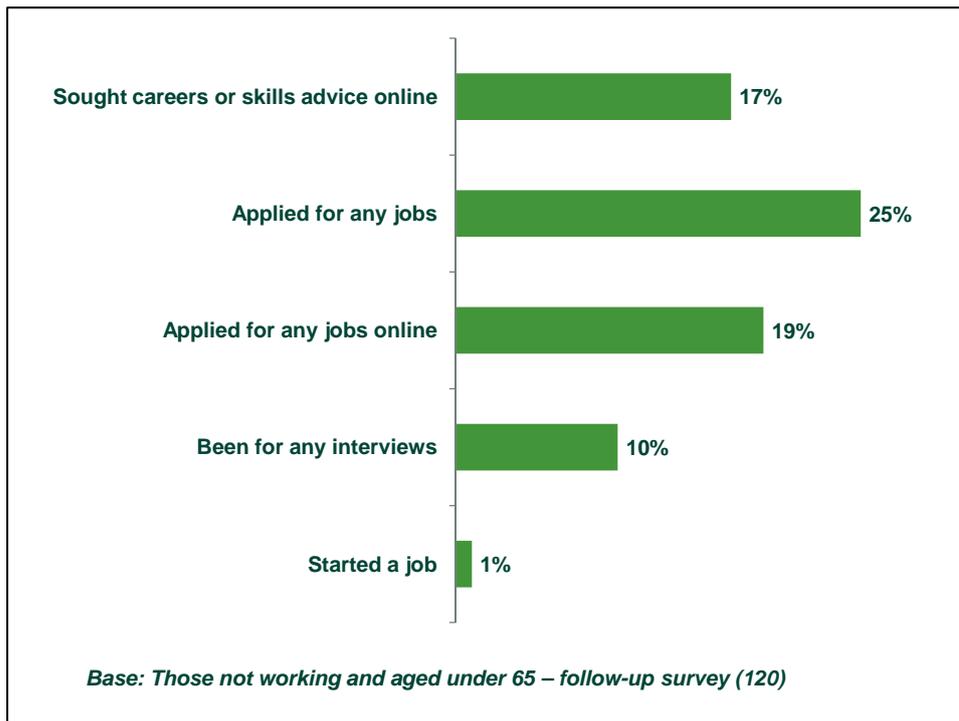
- 6.4 Only a small minority (11%) of respondents had not yet used the skills they learnt on the course, which is especially impressive given that learners were interviewed fairly soon after completing the course. This figure was as low as 6% amongst those who had taken all five modules, and overall 39% of respondents felt that they had used their new skills ‘to a great extent’ since taking the course.
- 6.5 Whilst a small proportion of learners (14%) said they had not used a computer since taking the course, 40% of learners had used a computer ten times or more since completion of Online Basics. The vast majority (88%) felt more confident using a computer, and 51% said they felt a lot more comfortable. Eighty-one per cent (81%) felt more comfortable using the internet, and almost half (47%) stated they felt a lot more comfortable online.
- 6.6 Respondents who had not used a computer or the internet prior to taking the course were more likely not to have used them since (26% of those who had not used a computer before and 31% of those who had not been on the internet before had not used them between taking the course and being interviewed). However, there is also strong evidence to suggest that the Online Basics course is helping those with no prior experience: those who had never used a computer before taking the course are almost universally more confident with computers now (98%) while those who had never used the internet before are much more confident with the internet (89%). Those with no prior experience may also be those who have limited or no access to IT facilities in their daily lives, and hence have had less opportunity to use their new skills.

Figure 6.2: Computer and internet use since the course

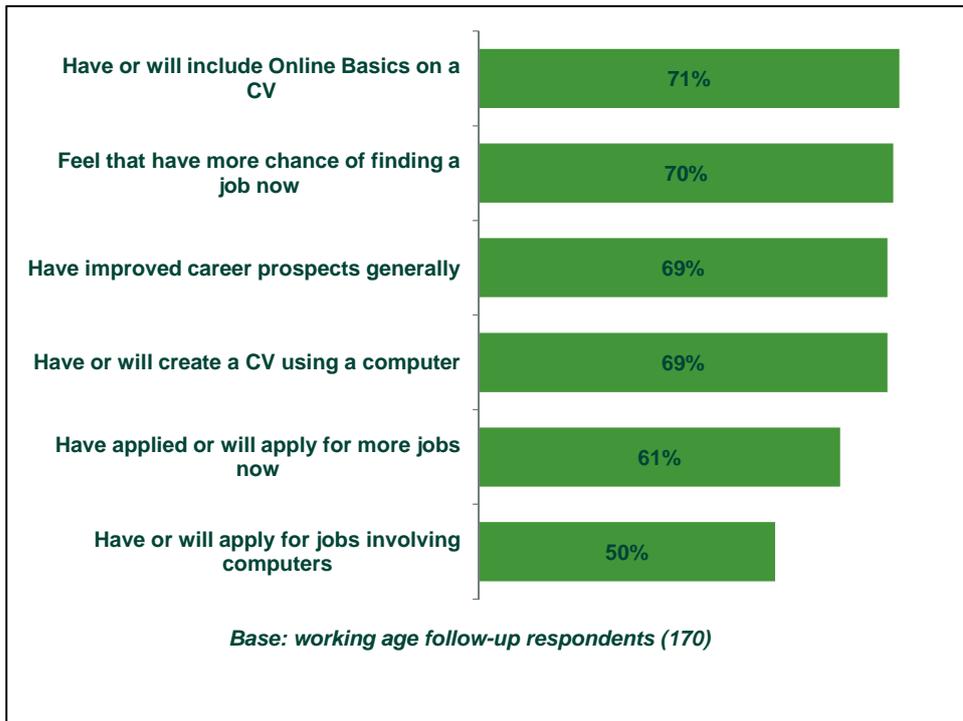


Employment and employability

6.7 Amongst those respondents who were unemployed and of working age, the chart below shows that a quarter (25%) had applied for jobs since taking the course, and almost one in five (19%) respondents had applied for jobs online. Men were marginally more likely to have applied for jobs. Additionally, 17% of unemployed learners of working age had sought careers or skills advice online since taking Online Basics, with women and those aged under 45 somewhat more likely to have sought advice. It should be noted that findings for age and gender differences are based on small sample sizes. However overall these findings are strongly indicative of increased confidence to use online resources and IT-related skills to change employment circumstances.

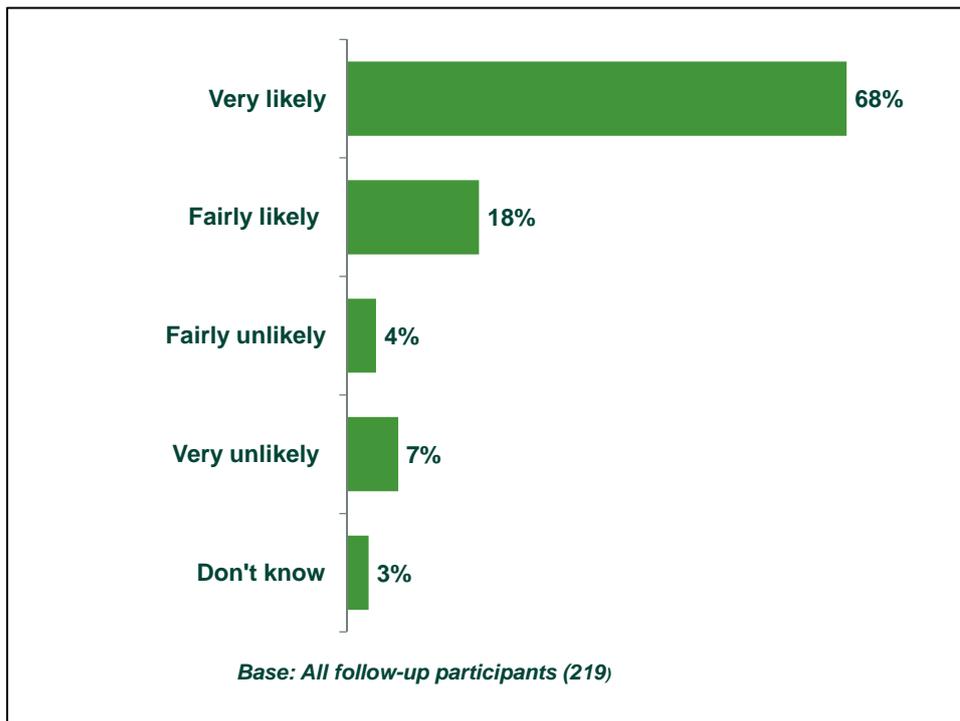
Figure 6.3: Steps taken towards employment since the course

- 6.8 Results were also very positive for employed respondents, with just over a quarter (26%) having used their new skills in their jobs. This highlights the wider benefits Online Basics can have, providing advantages for employers as well as learners. Over a third (37%) of employed respondents reported increased job satisfaction and a third (33%) felt they now had better job security, underscoring the benefits of improved IT skills.
- 6.9 As Figure 6.4 demonstrates, those in employment recognised numerous other benefits to having completed the Online Basics course, with over two thirds of working age respondents feeling that they would have more chance of finding a job, or a sense of having improved their career prospects generally. Online Basics had a further practical benefit for those looking or applying for jobs, with 69% of learners now able to create a CV using a computer. It should be noted that these figures collect both what learners have already done and what they intend to do: intentions may not lead to actions but none the less the findings are positive, reflecting improved confidence in abilities.

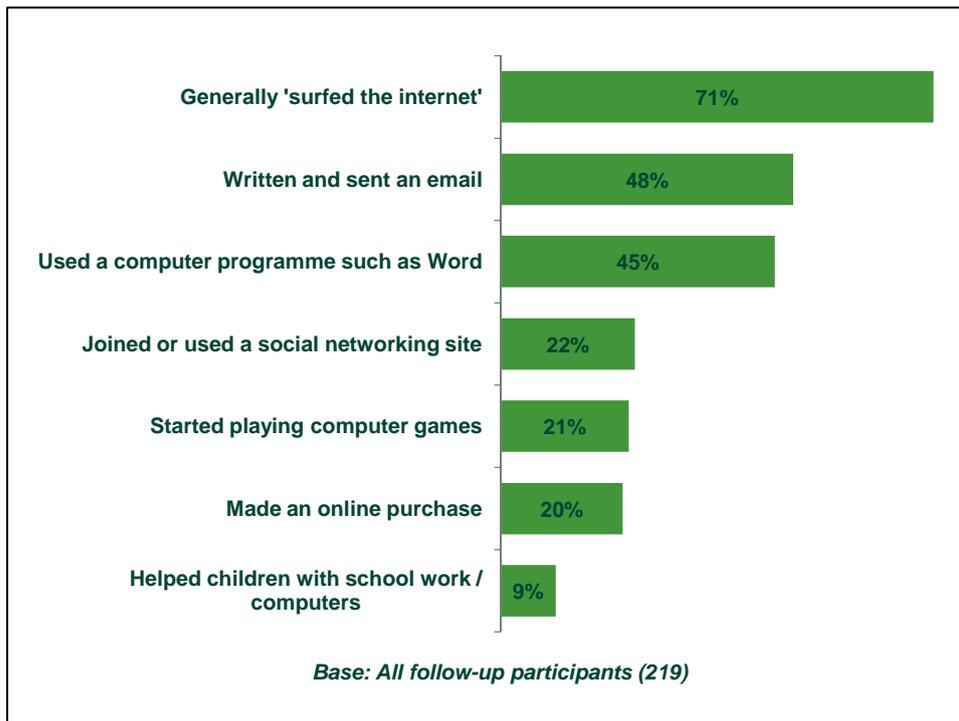
Figure 6.4: Employment prospects since the course

Further learning

- 6.10 In the relatively short period of time between completing the course and being interviewed by IFF, 12% of respondents had already undertaken further learning related to computers or the internet: this rose to 18% amongst those who had completed all five modules. Of the 12% who had undertaken further learning, 59% were trying to improve their skills without taking part in a formal, taught course whilst over a third (37%) had gone on to a taught course at a college or private training provider. Over half (56%) of those who had already moved on to further learning had gone on to take online courses through MyGuide, highlighting the progressive opportunities of the offering.
- 6.11 Particularly encouraging was that the vast majority (86%) of learners interviewed felt that they were very or fairly likely to undertake further learning in the next two years, and 68% felt it was very likely as illustrated in Figure 6.5. Women were more likely to see further learning as very likely (78% of women vs. 56% of men). Just 11% of respondents said they were unlikely to pursue further learning, and although base sizes are low, more than half of these respondents were retired, and may therefore have less interest in improving work-related skills.

Figure 6.5: Likelihood of further learning**Activities newly undertaken**

6.12 As Figure 6.6 shows, the vast majority of learners interviewed had been using computers and the internet since taking the Online Basics course, with over two thirds (71%) having surfed the internet and nearly one half of respondents (48%) having sent an email for the first time. One fifth of respondents had made an online purchase for the first time, whilst 22% had used their new internet skills to join a social networking site.

Figure 6.6: First time activities since the course

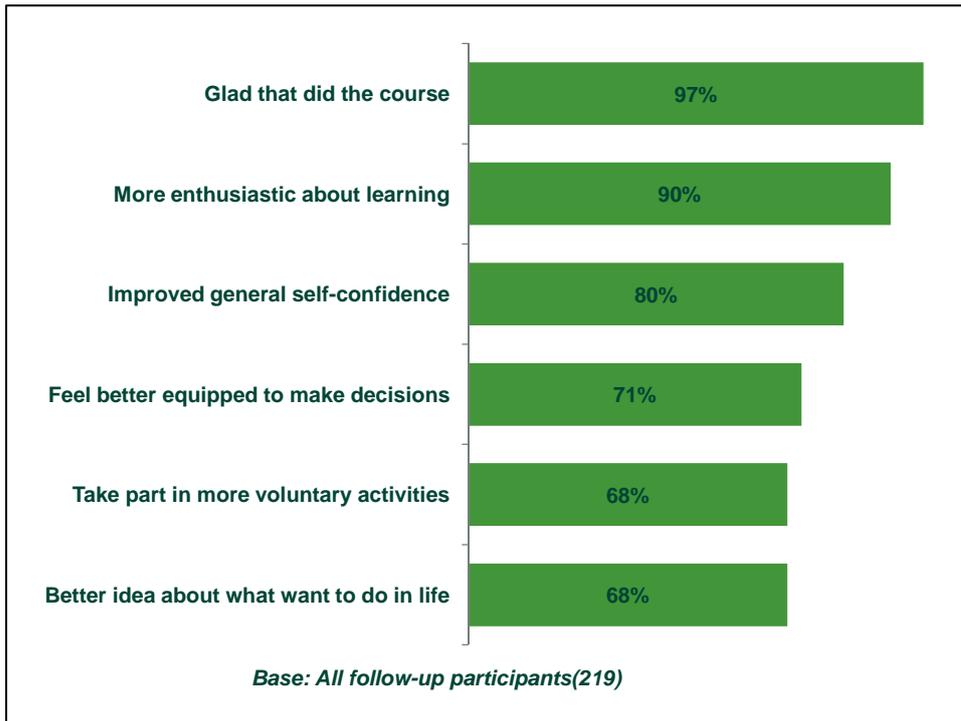
6.13 The evidence suggests that, as hoped, the course is particularly helping those with little or no previous experience. Encouragingly, of those who had never used a computer before taking Online Basics, 65% had sent an email for the first time since taking the course, and of those who had never used the internet before, 77% had surfed the web for the first time. Respondents who had not been on a previous computer course had successfully surfed the internet (76%), sent an email (54%) and used a computer programme such as Word or Excel (50%) for the first time since completing Online Basics. The vast majority (89%) of respondents who had done one or more of these activities for the first time felt that they had done them either as a direct result of taking the Online Basics course, or that the course helped them.

Other benefits

6.14 There were also wider benefits to taking the course, as Figure 6.7 shows. The vast majority of respondents (97%) reported that they were glad to have done the course, with 90% of respondents saying they felt more enthusiastic about learning, 80% reporting an increase in general self confidence and 71% stating that they felt better equipped to make decisions. These 'softer' benefits are more centred around 'distance travelled' towards an outcome rather than hard attainment measures, such as progression into employment, but in many ways these are as important to this particular cohort.

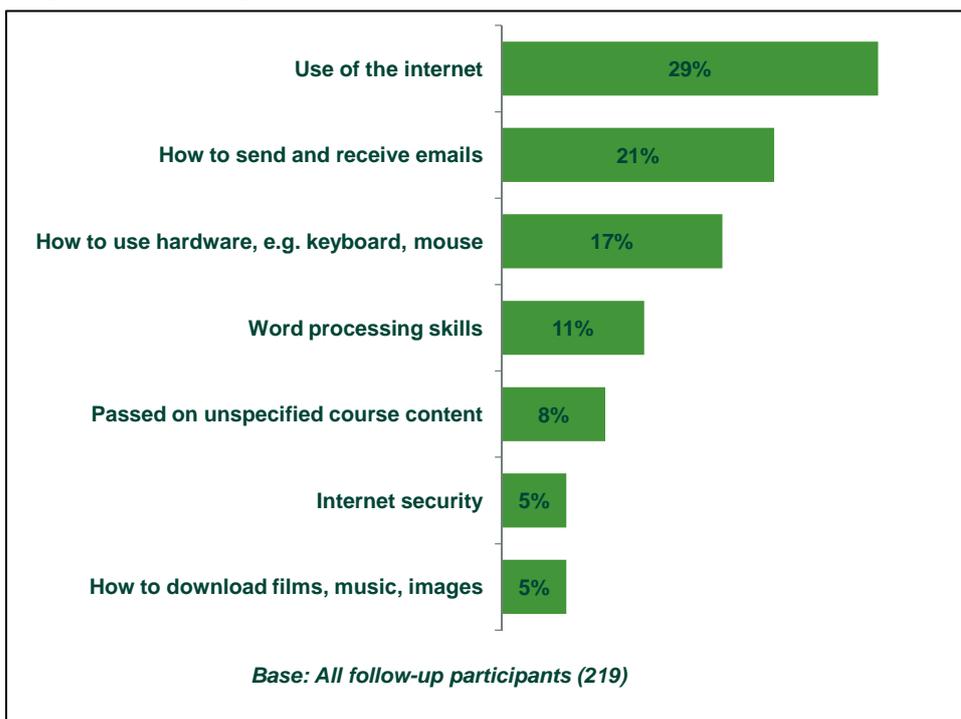
6.15 More than two thirds (68%) of respondents said that they had or would take part in more voluntary or community activities, which is a high proportion in the context of comparable evidence. Many of the centres interviewed were using volunteers to help conduct the courses, with some volunteers being drawn from learners on previous courses. These volunteers may be contributing to learners' enthusiasm for getting involved in similar activities, both to help others and potentially to improve their own skills and CVs. A further 68% of learners reported feeling that they had a better idea about what they wanted to do in life since taking the course.

Figure 6.7: Softer benefits



6.16 Encouragingly, just under one third of respondents (29%) had already passed on skills that they learnt through the Online Basics course to others, indicating considerable confidence in their own skills. Of these, learners were most likely to have given others information on use of the internet (29%), followed by how to send and receive emails (21%), how to use hardware such as a keyboard or mouse (17%) and word processing skills (11%), as shown in Figure 6.8.

Figure 6.8: Skills passed on



6.17 Furthermore, more than half the learners interviewed (52%) had already recommended the course to someone else. As hoped, word of mouth from such satisfied users should prove to be an effective means of promoting the course. Of those respondents who had not recommended it, 87% felt they would recommend it in the future, which confirms again the positive attitude towards Online Basics from learners.



7 Supporting Centres to Deliver Online Basics

- 7.1 This chapter examines the support centres have received from UK online for setting up and running Online Basics. Particular focus is given to training and information sharing through the discussion groups, the marketing materials centres received and any additional resource requirements, logistical issues and costs incurred as a result of their involvement with Online Basics.

Overall support from UK online

- 7.2 The majority of centres are positive about the support they received from UK online in setting up and running the Online Basics course during the pilot. A handful appreciatively mentioned phone calls received to check on their progress.

"They were fantastic in terms of publicity and the materials they gave us and the free helpline number."

Library, North West of England, 51 to 75 pilot learners

- 7.3 A handful of centres that felt they had not received adequate support from UK online. These were all Local Authority funded libraries or charities. There was a sense that these centres felt marginalised or even slightly ignored by UK online due to what they thought was a lack of communication. One centre reported that any communication they receive comes via the Local Authority rather than directly from UK online; they would definitely have preferred direct communication.

- 7.4 A couple of these centres felt that they had been left out of the loop in the process leading up to the point where the pilot went live and felt that they were still unclear on certain issues at the time of being interviewed. These centres felt that a lack of face to face contact was the main issue here.

"At the beginning, the project was very vague. All the agreements had been made prior to us knowing about it. The pilot is coming to finish in a few weeks and I only met a member of their team for the first time last week...The people I spoke to via email have been helpful, but I just feel a lot of the emails and queries would not have been necessary if they had explained everything at the beginning face to face."

Library, Yorkshire and Humber, Less than 25 pilot learners

- 7.5 Other specific issues that centres more generally mentioned that had not been made clear to them were:
- Whether the target of 50 meant 50 learners or 50 registrations
 - Evidence requirements for funding
 - Whether there was scope for revising targets due to the server problems
 - Whether the server problems would impact on funding, revised targets or not.

- 7.6 The majority of centres had a specific Online Basics lead at the centre. These were in most cases the individuals interviewed for the research. This was found to be a useful way of keeping in contact with UK online and maintaining lines of communication for support.

Training

- 7.7 Most centres had received some training for their provision of Online Basics. This was generally through the UK online webinars although in some centres the training was organised internally. On the whole, staff at the centres felt that they had been adequately equipped to provide Online Basics through the training they received.



"It was useful – we haven't had to provide any other training for staff."

Library, North West of England, 51 to 75 pilot learners

- 7.8 Many centres felt that the 'beginners' content level of Online Basics made it easy to lead as a course especially as they are used to offering IT training more generally.
- 7.9 However, a handful of centres had some minor complaints about the training they received. The webinar format was not to everyone's taste and some staff felt that they did not receive all the necessary information:

"People didn't get what they wanted out of it... one person said she still did not know how to log someone on after the training."

Library, Yorkshire and Humber, Less than 25 pilot learners

- 7.10 The findings suggest that in many cases, centres reservations about the amount of training they received was initially due to their lack of awareness of how simple the course actually is. That said, initial concerns about the level of training were eventually put to rest by actual hands-on experience of the course. However, it would be worthwhile ensuring centres and staff are fully briefed about the background and nature of Online Basics before, or at the beginning of, any future training.

Discussion groups

- 7.11 Around half the centres had used one or more of the Ning forum and other discussion groups. Where these had been used, the feedback was generally positive.

"It was good to see who else was doing what and our tutor was on the phone to follow it up as well so that's been good. I think the nice thing is you get a sense that there are real people behind it who are actually interested in what you're doing, as well as having the virtual communication."

Private training provider, West Midlands, 26 to 50 pilot learners

- 7.12 A couple of respondents did feel a bit hassled by the Ning group, feeling that they were being constantly pressed to get involved.
- 7.13 Amongst those who had not yet used Ning, most were aware of it but some had misconceptions about its purpose and value. For example a couple of centres complained that there had been no scope for discussing Online Basics with other centres yet they were aware of Ning's existence. It must be made very clear to centres what Ning's purpose is and who fellow users would be if it is to be the successful tool it could be for the national roll-out of Online Basics.

Marketing Materials

- 7.14 All centres had received marketing materials from UK online. Around half had received posters and leaflets/flyers, a third the branded mobiles and monitor attachments and a handful had received Online Basics booklets. In virtually every case, centres had used all the materials they received. Where centres hadn't used all the materials it was not a reflection on the quality of the materials; for example one centre had not used the monitor attachments simply because they are too big for the netbooks they use for teaching. The majority of centres felt that the marketing materials had been very effective indeed.



- 7.15 Several centres took their marketing campaign in to the local community, putting up posters and leaving leaflets in public spaces such as cafes, doctors' surgeries and shopping centres. A handful of these centres felt that the marketing materials had brought in new users that made up the bulk of their Online Basics registrations:

"The posters really grab your attention – people come in and say 'what's all that about?'"

Community Centre, North West of England, more than 100 pilot learners

- 7.16 Virtually all the centres promoted the course on-site, using the branded mobiles, monitor attachments and empty belly posters (which were particularly popular with centres). These were thought to have helped convert existing users to Online Basics registrations.

- 7.17 A couple of centres found that using a combination of materials and active staff promotion had been the key to successfully encouraging registration among existing users – for example one library inserted an Online Basics flyer in to the pages of each book withdrawn.

- 7.18 While the marketing materials were viewed positively, libraries in particular had found that the most effective way of gaining registrations was to speak directly to existing users and encourage the spread of word-of-mouth. In these cases, centres were clear that in their local community this would always be the most effective means of promotion. Similarly in centres where staff and existing users are on familiar terms with each-other, this would be the key to promotional success.

"I found it has been quite effective but a lot of our users we got from the initial survey of people who were visiting our library."

Library, Yorkshire and Humber, 25 to 50 pilot learners

- 7.19 One lifelong learning centre interviewed had circulated the marketing materials to other lifelong learning centres in the region and local partnership organisations such as schools, colleges, libraries and Connexions and had organised steering groups amongst local Online Basics providers to ensure marketing was consistent and encourage referrals between centres. This centre viewed this activity as very effective means of increasing the marketing's coverage of the local area.

- 7.20 Centres were asked what would help them better promote Online Basics. A minority mentioned that staff confidence in the UK online servers would be key to their active promotion. A couple of others felt that word-of-mouth would spread once the course is rolled-out permanently. More tangible suggestions included:

- Large print materials particularly for older prospective learners
- Local press and radio advertisements
- A national media campaign

"Locally what we are doing seems to work. But to make it even better, people should be aware of it before they come here. It should be part of a national campaign...I don't know much about advertising methods but there needs to be general awareness. People need to be told about it."

Library, North West of England, 25 to 50 pilot learners



Centre resources

- 7.21 Centres felt that there had been little or no logistical or resourcing issues as a result of their involvement with Online Basics. Where extra time or resource has been required it is viewed as par for the course where a new course and new learners are involved. For this reasons centres accept that some extra time and effort is necessary.

"...Only in terms of new people coming through the doors and so having to process any additional information. I don't think it's been a difficulty for us because it's part of our process anyway"

Community Centre, Yorkshire and Humber, 76 to 100 pilot learners

- 7.22 A small minority of centres had been obliged to re-shuffle their offer of other courses to fit in Online Basics. Generally this was not viewed as a problem but one centre felt that Online Basics could detract from their ability to provide other courses.

"If we're taking an Online Basics class we're doing less MyGuide classes and we only have a finite amount of resources that include PCs and people to take the classes."

Library, Yorkshire and Humber, 25 to 50 pilot learners

- 7.23 Around a quarter of centres had changed or extended their staff's working hours, but again this had not caused any significant problems.

"We've had additional working hours so we've had additional staff payments to make, but other than that we did have a bit of capacity...having part time staff meant the team could take on extra hours."

Community Centre, Yorkshire and Humber, 76 to 100 pilot learners

- 7.24 The majority of centres had found little or no extra demand for paperwork or admin as a result of Online Basics. At most centres were spending a few hours a week on additional admin and this would link back to what centres expect to do for new learners – making starter packs, keeping learner records, evaluation forms and logging problems or issues.

- 7.25 One centre mentioned that Online Basics actually creates less of a demand for paperwork and admin than other MyGuide courses.

- 7.26 Two centres mentioned that they had brought in or updated their equipment and software so they could offer Online Basics. In both cases this UK online were involved in this process, either supplying the equipment or recommending the upgrade, so the centres were positive about these events.

- 7.27 One library noted that their status as local authority funded meant that their software might not always be up-to-date with new course software.

"It's not necessarily Online Basics, but the MyGuide programme uses the most up to date versions of Flash and Java and if you are County Council run you only get an upgrade once a year. You could go for months being unable to use something."

Library, South West England, 26 to 50 pilot learners

- 7.28 This is clearly something that must be considered for the national roll-out if the profile of centres nationally is similar to those involved in the pilot scheme.



Costs

- 7.29 Centres were asked if they had incurred any additional costs as a result of offering the Online Basics course. Around half the centres stated that they had incurred additional costs. But just as with the logistical or resourcing issues caused by Online Basics, these were minor and expected by centres.
- 7.30 Costs resulting from running Online Basics were generally perceived to be integrated in to centres' usual running costs – i.e. not separate as running courses such as Online Basics is what centres do anyway. Several felt that if they weren't involved with Online Basics, they would be incurring costs for another activity or offer.
- 7.31 Costs mentioned were:
- Staff training – typically £20 per week or a £100 one off fee
 - Admin time – typically £15 per week or a £100 one off fee
 - Stationery and training packs – typically £6 to £100 per week
- 7.32 A minority of centres felt that there might be additional costs for IT equipment, but this was difficult to quantify and perhaps misleading as no computers are used exclusively for Online Basics.
- 7.33 A couple of centres had made one off expenditures on marketing; one for £25 and one for £200 to £300. The general consensus among other centres was that the marketing material they had received from UK online was more than sufficient so further spending was not necessary.
- 7.34 A few centres mentioned that their involvement with Online Basics was a possible 'opportunity cost' because they could be generating income through other means if they were not spending time and resource on Online Basics. Realistically though, this logic could be applied to any course or activity a centre gets involved with.



8 Conclusions and recommendations

- 8.1 The overwhelming message of the pilot evaluation is that of positivity about Online Basics. An almost unprecedented 99% of learners in the follow-up survey had found the course useful and centres, despite some reservations about the UK online servers, are unanimously upbeat about course content and learner experience. Negative feedback about the course itself is scant.
- 8.2 To summarise, in its current form, Online Basics:
- Works well
 - Is liked by learners and centres alike
 - Has a potentially high demand
- 8.3 The most fundamental recommendation that can be made is therefore to roll-out with the current course as this has been a success. Further to this, UK online must ensure their IT infrastructure is capable for the national roll-out. As mentioned, Online Basics has a potentially high demand – we would advise planning for learner take-up over and above anticipated levels.

Marketing strategy

- 8.4 In terms of marketing, the research has shown that the pilot materials were well liked and effective. We would recommend continuing with these materials. Word of mouth has been flagged up as key for many centres, particularly libraries and community centres which act as hubs for local areas; centres must endeavour to tap in to and encourage learners to spread the word about Online Basics.
- 8.5 There is a great deal of scope of close partnership working to increase Online Basics registration. Centres should make the most of their links with local partners – nextstep, Connexions, Job Centre Plus, local schools and colleges. UK online and centres should ensure they promote the course and inform partner organisations of its content and potential benefits for learners; if these organisations have a good understanding of Online Basics their referrals to centres will increase.
- 8.6 Similarly, UK online can promote Online Basics to non-pilot scheme centres to maximise uptake. A few centres mentioned that they view Online Basics as a means of getting learners on the MyGuide journey and continuing to learn at the centre. UK online could use this as a selling point – Online Basics will bring in and hook new learners for centres.

“Our aim is to get people onto other courses, and for that it’s invaluable – it offers a holding area, it offers immediate engagement to new students who we can then transfer onto the other courses and on to their accredited journey.”

Community Learning Centre, North West of England, over 100 pilot learners

- 8.7 Centres should also be made aware that Online Basics is accredited. There was some evidence of misunderstanding here – a handful of centres stated, incorrectly, that the course ought to be accredited.

Entry-level Learners

- 8.8 The evaluation has shown that the course content and level is an effective and appropriate starting point for learners with little or no prior experience of computers or the internet. However, several centres noted that because of learners' prior skill levels, the registration process often proved to be a stumbling block as mouse and keyboard skills are needed to enter details before these are actually covered in the course.

“There could be a bit more practice on the mouse where you have to click on certain things. The mouse is the hardest part for beginners. They have to try and ignore the physical mouse in their hand and concentrate on the cursor on the screen, so more practice on that would be good....could always do a few more practicals.”

Community Centre, North West of England 26 to 50 pilot learners

- 8.9 It is essential therefore that the initial assessments that most centres offered during the pilot is encouraged as standard practice for new learners when the course rolls out nationally. Centres felt that this was an important means of determining learners' suitability for the course and flagging any extra attention or support needs that learners might have when registering and getting started on the course itself.
- 8.10 We would also recommend introducing a practical 'getting to know' session (or possibly a game) for learners with zero previous experience. This could involve moving and clicking exercises with the mouse and basic typing tasks with the keyboard and would not only set up a basic skills base but give these learners an initial kick of confidence before moving in to the course proper.
- 8.11 These issues surrounding learners with no prior experience could potentially become more problematic as the roll-out starts to move away from centres and in to learners' homes. It is intended learners undertaking the course at home will be accompanied by another, more experienced, person when they start the Online Basics course – but it would be advisable to set-up a facility whereby remote learners can access advice and guidance on the course and any other potential IT queries they might have when getting started. This could be the telephone number of their local UK online centre or possibly a dedicated national support service.

Course content

- 8.12 Clearly the course content has been well received and is appropriate. However, centres in particular did have a few, minor, suggestions that could improved the course content:
- Integrating the practical 'getting to know' exercises for keyboard and mouse use
 - Add an 'overview of computers' element to set the scene for new learners
 - Create a print-out showing keyboard functions for learners to refer to and take away – a couple of centres were doing this and felt that learners found it useful
 - Re-designing the UK online email account so it looks more like a commonly used email provider account e.g. Hotmail or Yahoo.
 - Using as many real world examples wherever possible
 - Covering mouse function for laptops and netbooks



9 Appendix A: Centre Exit Interview Questionnaire

Intro - Intro

Thank you for choosing to complete our short survey. We are really interested in knowing a bit more about you and value your opinions of the services offered by UK online centres. There are four fantastic prizes that consist of a Home Access Package* on offer if you complete our survey and agree to take part in the Online basics evaluation. Each of the Home Access Packages include a computer, free software and a year's free broadband access, everything you need to use your new skills and get online. To qualify for the prize draw, please tick the box at the end of the survey allowing one of our researchers to contact you in order to conduct a short telephone interview about your experience of using Online basics. The competition closes on 30th April 2010 and prizes will be drawn on the 7th May 2010. * For those already in receipt of a Home Access Package through the national scheme there will be an equivalent prize.

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Your views and opinions will be used to improve the services we offer. The survey will take about 5 minutes to complete and is being conducted by the UK online centres research team. Please click on the "Next" button at the bottom of the page to start the survey. For more information about the survey please click here.

Q1a - First Name

Please enter your first name below

(1) _____

Q1b - Last Name

Please enter your last name below

(1) _____

Q2 - Age

What is your age?

- 16-24 years (1)
- 25-34 years (2)
- 35-44 years (3)
- 45-54 years (4)
- 55-64 years (5)
- 65 or more years (6)
- Rather not say (97)

| | | | | |
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| CONDITION | qf('quota1') | | | |
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Q3 - Gender

And are you?

- Male (1)
 Female (2)

Q4 - Q4

Which of the following UK online centres are you currently using?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Acorn Resource and Business Centre (1) | <input type="radio"/> Lewisham College (23) |
| <input type="radio"/> African Caribbean Association (2) | <input type="radio"/> Limehurst Library (24) |
| <input type="radio"/> Barnsley Central Library (3) | <input type="radio"/> Northern College (25) |
| <input type="radio"/> Barnsley College (4) | <input type="radio"/> Oaks Millennium Technology initiative (OMTI) (26) |
| <input type="radio"/> Barnsley MBC (5) | <input type="radio"/> Oldham Library (27) |
| <input type="radio"/> Barnstaple Library (6) | <input type="radio"/> Oldham Lifelong Learning Centre (28) |
| <input type="radio"/> Barnstaple Pathfinder Centre (7) | <input type="radio"/> Penistone E-Learning Centre (29) |
| <input type="radio"/> Barton and Tredworth Community Trust (8) | <input type="radio"/> Roundhouse Lifelong Learning Centre (30) |
| <input type="radio"/> Blackerhill Learning Centre (9) | <input type="radio"/> Royston Lifelong Learning Centre (31) |
| <input type="radio"/> Camden Town Library (10) | <input type="radio"/> Thurnscoe Lifelong Learning Centre (32) |
| <input type="radio"/> Chadderton Library (11) | <input type="radio"/> Voluntary Action Barnsley (33) |
| <input type="radio"/> Coldhurst Lifelong Learning Centre (12) | <input type="radio"/> Werneth Park Lifelong Learning Centre (34) |
| <input type="radio"/> Crompton Library (13) | <input type="radio"/> Worsborough Common ICT Resource Centre (35) |
| <input type="radio"/> Cudworth Centre of Excellence (14) | <input type="radio"/> UCanDoIt (36) |
| <input type="radio"/> Dearne Enterprise Centre (15) | <input type="radio"/> VCAW Wirral (37) |
| <input type="radio"/> Exeter Central Library (16) | <input type="radio"/> Brake Farm (38) |
| <input type="radio"/> Groundwork Oldham & Rochdale (17) | <input type="radio"/> Bridgegate Drug Services (39) |
| <input type="radio"/> Highway To Opportunities (18) | <input type="radio"/> Carole Longden (40) |
| <input type="radio"/> Jump Children Adult Learning Centre (19) | <input type="radio"/> Derby College (41) |
| <input type="radio"/> Kendray Learning Centre (Resource Centre) (20) | <input type="radio"/> Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership (42) |
| <input type="radio"/> Kensington Community Learning Centre (21) | <input type="radio"/> None of these (99) |
| <input type="radio"/> Lees Library (22) | <input type="radio"/> Rather not say (97) |

Q5 - Visit Number

We would like to know if you have visited a UK online centre before?

- This is my first time (1)
 I have visited a centre before (2)
 Never (3)

COND || f(' Q5') == ' 2'



| | |
|-------------|--------|
| true | fal se |
| Question () | |

Q5a - When last visited centre

When did you last visit a UK online centre?

- Within the last week (1)
- Within the last 2 to 4 weeks (2)
- Within the last month (3)
- Within the last 3 months (4)
- Within the last 4 to 6 months (5)
- Within the last 6 to 12 months (6)
- More than 12 months ago (7)
- Rather not say (97)

Q5b - When last visited centre

How often do you visit a UK online centre?

- Every day (1)
- Every week (2)
- Every month (3)
- Every two months (4)
- Every three months (5)
- Less often (6)
- Rather not say (97)

| | |
|-----|-----------------------------|
| END | Condition f(' Q5') == ' 2' |
|-----|-----------------------------|

| | |
|------------|---|
| CONDI TION | f(' Q5') == ' 1' f(' Q5') == ' 3' f(' Q5') == ' 2' |
| | true |
| | fal se |
| | Question () |

Q6 - Visit Reason

What is the main reason for you to want to use the internet?

(Please tick all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> To keep in touch with family and friends (1) | <input type="checkbox"/> For leisure/entertainment (6) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To learn with my family (9) | <input type="checkbox"/> To find information about government services (7) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To learn how to shop online (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> To find information about Local Council services (8) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To learn how to find general information online (3) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please write in) (95)_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To improve my chances of getting a job (4) | <input type="radio"/> Rather not say (97) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> For education (5) | |

END

Condition f('05') == '1' || f('05') == '3' || f('05') == '2'

Q7 - How found out about centres

How did you first hear about Online basics?

(Please tick all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family member (1) | <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine (paid for) (12) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine (free) (13) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employer (3) | <input type="checkbox"/> National newspaper (paid for) (14) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colleague (4) | <input type="checkbox"/> National newspaper (free) (15) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jobcentre Plus (5) | <input type="checkbox"/> Poster (16) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Connexions (6) | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio (17) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community organisation (7) | <input type="checkbox"/> School (18) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Got a leaflet from someone on the street (8) | <input type="checkbox"/> TV (19) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Had a leaflet posted through my door (9) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please write in) (95)_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local/regional newspaper (paid for) (10) | <input type="radio"/> Rather not say (97) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local/regional newspaper (free) (11) | |

Q8 - Education

Which of the following BEST describes your current HIGHEST level of education?

- 1 to 4 GCSEs or O Levels at any grade, Foundation GNVQ, NVQ Level 1 or equivalent (1)
 5 or more GCSEs or O Levels at Grades A-C, Intermediate GNVQ, NVQ Level 2 or equivalent (2)
 A level or above (3)
 No qualifications (4)
 Rather not say (97)

Q9 - Employment status

Which of these best describes your current status?

- Full time employed (1)
 Part time employed (2)
 Self employed (3)
 Unemployed (4)
 Looking after home and family (5)
 In education (studying for formal qualification) (6)
 Unpaid volunteer worker (7)
 Retired (8)
 Other (please write in) (95)_____
- Rather not say (97)

Q10 - Income

...and please can you indicate what your personal annual income is:

- Up to £9,999 (1)
 £10,000-16,999 (2)
 £17,000-19,999 (3)
 £20,000 and above (4)
 Rather not say (98)



Q11 - Benefits received

Which of the following state benefits, if any, do you receive?

(Please tick all that apply)

- Job Seekers Allowance (1)
- Incapacity Benefit, or Employment and Support Allowance (2)
- Income Support (3)
- Working Tax Credit (4)
- Housing Benefit (5)
- Other (please write in) (95) _____
- None (99)
- Rather not say (97)

Q12 - Housing

And do you:

- Own your own home (1)
- Live in a house rented from the council or a housing association (2)
- Rent from a private landlord (3)
- Live in sheltered accommodation (4)
- No current home (7)
- Living with someone else (5)
- Rather not say (6)
- Other (please write in) (95) _____

Q13 - Internet Access

Do you have access to the internet at home?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

QQ14 - QQ14

Which of the following courses have you completed?

- Starting with a keyboard (1)
- Starting with a mouse (2)
- Using email (3)
- Using online searches (4)
- Using the internet safely (5)
- I haven't completed any courses (6)

QQQ14 - QQQ14

How many hours have you spent completing ^{f('11')}?

- Less than 30 minutes (1)
- 30 minutes to 1 hour (2)
- 1-2 hours (3)
- 3-5 hours (4)
- 5-10 hours (5)
- More than 10 hours (6)
- Rather not say (7)



Q14 - Your experience of Online basics

Please rate your experience of the following aspects of your time with Online basics

| | Poor (1) | Fair (2) | Good (3) | Very good (4) | Excellent (5) | Not applicable/Don't Know (6) |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| First contact with the Centre (1) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Advice and Guidance to help you through the course/programme (2) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Access to centre computers when you need it (3) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Online basics course learning materials (4) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Support from centre staff (5) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Facilities in the centre (6) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Overall quality of your learning experience (7) | <input type="radio"/> |

Q14aa - Q14aa

What did you think of the level of difficulty of Online basics? Would you say it was...

- Too easy (1)
- Too hard (2)
- About right (3)
- Rather not say (97)

Q14a - Overall opinion

What is your overall opinion of the service offered by Online basics?

- Excellent (1)
- Very good (2)
- Good (3)
- Fair (4)
- Poor (5)
- Rather not say (97)

Q14b - Likes

What, if anything, did you like about the Online basics service?

(Please type your answer in the box)

Q14c - Improvements

What, if anything, would you like to see improved in the Online basics service?

(Please type your answer in the box)

Q15a - Changes/developments

Have you started any new activities since joining Online basics?

- Enrolled on a new course (1)
- Joined a local community group (2)
- Applied for a job (3)
- Produced a CV (4)
- Joined an online group (5)
- Other (please describe) (6) _____
- None (7)

Q15b - Next steps

Which of the following will you do as a result of completing the Online basics courses?

(Please tick all that apply)

- Do more learning towards a formal qualification (e.g. GCSEs, NVQ, City and Guilds etc.) (1)
- Do more learning which doesn't lead to a formal qualification (2)
- Use the internet for job related activities (e.g. CV writing, job search, getting a job or volunteering) (3)
- Arrange a formal careers and skills advice session (4)
- Other (please write in) (95) _____
- None of these (99)
- Rather not say (97)

Q16 - Disability

Which of the following, if any, do you have?

Note: this question is to enable UK online centres to ensure that they are reaching all people regardless of disability.

- Deafness or hearing impairment (1)
- Blindness or visual impairment (2)
- A condition that limits basic physical activity, such as walking, climbing stairs or lifting (3)
- A learning disability (4)
- Mental health problem (5)
- Other (please write in) (95) _____
- None of these (99)
- Rather not say (97)

Q17 - Ethnicity

Which ethnic community do you associate yourself with?

Note: this question is to enable UK online centres to ensure that they are reaching all people regardless of ethnic community.

- White – British (1)
- White – Irish (2)
- White – European (3)
- Asian or British Asian – Chinese (7)
- Asian or British Asian – Other (8)
- Black or British Black – African (9)



- Asian or British Asian – Bangladeshi (4)
- Asian or British Asian – Indian (5)
- Asian or British Asian – Pakistani (6)
- Black or British Black – Caribbean (10)
- Other (please type here) (95)_____
- Rather not say (97)

Q17a - Dependants

Are you responsible for any children under the age of 18 years?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q18 - Further Research

We would like to invite you to take part in further research, which will give you a chance to share your views with us as well as be entered into a competition to win one of 4 free Home Access Packages. Each of the Home Access Packages include a computer, free software and a years free broadband access. Your answers to this survey and your contact details will be held by UK online centres and any research company working on our behalf.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)



i 56 - Close

Thank you for filling out this survey, the information will be useful in helping us to develop the UK online centre services. Now please click the 'Finish Survey' button below to complete the survey and close this window. `function hideNext() { var elem1 = document.getElementById('forwardbutton'); elem1.style.visibility = "hidden"; var elem2 = document.getElementById('backbutton'); elem2.style.visibility = "hidden"; } function redirect() { <!-- window.location="http://www.onlinebasics.co.uk"; //--> }`

STOP ||| Compl ete –

END ||| Condition f(' Q18') == ' 2'

Q22 - Q22

I would like to be enter the prize draw and accept the 'Terms & Conditions'

- Yes (1)
- No (2)


```
elem2 = document.getElementById('backbutton'); elem2.style.visibility = "hidden"; } function redirect() { <!--  
window.location="http://www.onlinebasics.co.uk"; //--> }
```

STOP ||| Complete –



10 Appendix B: IFF Follow-up Survey Questionnaire

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- S1 ASK PERSON WHO ANSWERS PHONE**
Good morning / afternoon / evening. Can I speak to <NAME>?

| | | |
|--|----|-----------------------|
| Respondent answers phone | 1 | CONTINUE |
| Transferred to respondent | 2 | |
| Hard appointment | 3 | MAKE APPOINTMENT |
| Soft Appointment | 4 | |
| Respondent no longer lives at address – CONTACT DETAILS KNOWN | 5 | TAKE TELEPHONE NUMBER |
| Respondent no longer lives at address – CONTACT DETAILS UNKNOWN | 6 | CLOSE |
| Refusal | 7 | |
| Not available in deadline | 8 | |
| Engaged | 9 | |
| Fax Line | 10 | |
| Repeated (8+) No reply / Answer phone | 11 | |
| Business Number | 12 | |
| Dead line | 13 | |

- S2 IF CODE 1 OR 2 AT S1**
Good morning / afternoon, my name is <>, calling from IFF Research, an independent market research company. We are conducting a survey on behalf of Becta, the government agency who are evaluating the Online Basics computer and internet course that you [IF HAS CENTRE=1: did at <CENTRE NAME> / IF HAS CENTRE=2: recently took part in]. We are talking to people about their experience and opinions of the course and whether it met their needs. The questions take around 15 minutes, and could help Becta improve the course.

ADD AS NECESSARY: As you were one of the first people to have taken part, your opinion is particularly valuable in making improvements to the Online Basics course.

The course is run by UKonline through their network of centres.

INTERVIEWER NOTE: THIS IS A SEPARATE SURVEY TO THE ONLINE 'EXIT' SURVEY RESPONDENTS COMPLETED AFTER THEIR COURSE.

| | | |
|------------------|---|------------------|
| Continue | 1 | CONTINUE |
| Hard appointment | 3 | MAKE APPOINTMENT |
| Soft Appointment | 4 | |
| Refusal | 7 | THANK AND CLOSE |

REASSURANCES TO USE IF NECESSARY

- **All the information that you provide will be combined with those of other people and reported as anonymised statistics. Your answers will not be reported to our client in any way that would allow you to be identified.**
- **We work strictly within the guidelines of the Market Research Society Code of Conduct**

- Your name and contact details were supplied to us by UKonline who run the Online Basics course and the online survey about the course.
- If respondent wishes to confirm validity of survey or get more information about aims and objectives, they can call:
 - IFF Research: Emmy Rahtz or Peter Hall: 0207 250 3035
 - Becta: Chris Kelland: 02476 797082
 - MRS: Market Research Society on 0500 396999

ASK ALL

S3 According to our records, you took part in the Online Basics course [IF HAS CENTRE=1: at <CENTRE NAME>] on <START DATE>. Do you remember this?

ADD AS NECESSARY: The Online Basics course contained up to 5 short modules of which you may have done some or all. These are: how to use a keyboard and a mouse, how to email, and how to search for information and stay safe online.

NOTE: if remembers course and/or location but not the exact date then code as 'Yes'

| | | |
|------------|---|---|
| Yes | 1 | IF HAS COURSE=1 GO TO Q1; IF HAS COURSE=2 ASK S4 |
| No | 2 | ASK S3A |
| Don't know | 3 | THANK AND CLOSE |

IF S3=2

S3A Would it be possible to call you back in a few weeks' time when you may have completed some of the modules in the Online Basics course?

| | | |
|-----|---|--|
| Yes | 1 | BOOK AS AN APPOINTMENT FOR 4 WEEKS' TIME AND MAKE RECORD IN COMMENTS |
| No | 2 | THANK AND CLOSE – DP CODE AS A REFUSAL |

IF HAS CENTRE=2

S4 Before we start the interview, can you confirm where you took part in the Online Basics course?

| |
|----------|
| WRITE IN |
|----------|

REASONS FOR UNDERTAKING ONLINE BASICS COURSE

ASK ALL

Q1 Before you started the Online Basics course, when was the last time you used a computer?
READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Within the week before the course | 1 |
| Within the month before | 2 |
| Within the six months before | 3 |
| Within the last year | 4 |
| Over a year before | 5 |



| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Never used a computer before | 6 |
| Don't know | 7 |



IF NOT Q1=6 (Have ever used a computer)
Q2 And before you started the Online Basics course, when was the last time you used the internet?
 READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Within the week before the course | 1 |
| Within the month before | 2 |
| Within the six months before | 3 |
| Within the last year | 4 |
| Over a year before | 5 |
| Never used the internet before | 6 |
| Don't know | 7 |

ASK ALL
Q3 Had you ever taken a course about computers or the internet before the Online Basics course?

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| Don't know | 3 |

IF Q3=1
Q4 Can you tell me a little bit about this course?
 PROBE FOR:
 NAME OF COURSE
 WHAT COURSE WAS ABOUT
 LOCATION

| |
|----------|
| WRITE IN |
|----------|

ASK ALL
Q5 What were your reasons for wanting to develop your computer skills, what was it you hoped to get out of the course?
 PROBE FULLY.

| |
|----------|
| WRITE IN |
|----------|

IF UNEMPLOYED FROM SAMPLE
Q6 Were you referred on to the Online Basics course by a Job Centre Adviser?

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| Don't know | 3 |

IF Q6=1 (If referred by JCP)
Q7 Did the Job Centre Adviser explain the help you could get to learn how to use computers and the internet when they referred you to the Online Basics course?

| | |
|------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| Don't know | 3 |

Q8 Has the Adviser checked with you to see whether you had completed the Online Basics course?

| | |
|------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| Don't know | 3 |

OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT

ASK ALL

IF HAS CENTRE=1: **Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about your experience of the Online Basics course at <CENTRE NAME>.**

IF HAS CENTRE=2: **Thinking now about where and when you took the Online Basics course...**

Q9 Did a member of staff at [IF HAS CENTRE=1: <CENTRE NAME> / IF HAS CENTRE=2: the centre] speak to you about or assess your computer skills before you took the course?

| | |
|------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| Don't know | 3 |

ASK ALL

Q12 You may remember that the Online Basics course was divided in to five modules. Which of these did you complete?

READ OUT. MULTICODE.

| | |
|--|---|
| Starting with a keyboard – ADD AS NECESSARY: where you learn the functions of different keys and practicing typing. | 1 |
| Starting with a mouse – ADD AS NECESSARY – which was simple step-by-step instructions to learn how to use a computer mouse. | 2 |
| Using email – ADD AS NECESSARY: where you learn how to send and receive emails, how to use an address book and how to store emails in folders. | 3 |
| Using the internet safely – ADD AS NECESSARY: where you learn practical techniques to help you stay safe online. | 4 |
| Using online searches – ADD AS NECESSARY: where you learn how to search the internet, find websites and bookmark them so you can go back to them quickly. | 5 |
| [DO NOT READ OUT] Don't remember | 6 |

IF Q12=1-5 ASK Q13 LOOP.

IF Q12=6 GO TO Q14.

Q13 DUMMY - MULTIPUNCH

| | | |
|-----------|------------|--------------------------|
| Q12 VALUE | Q13 DUMMY= | <Q13 LOOP COURSE> |
| Q12=1 | 1 | Starting with a keyboard |
| Q12=2 | 2 | Starting with a mouse |



| | | |
|-------|---|---------------------------|
| Q12=3 | 3 | Using email |
| Q12=4 | 4 | Using the internet safely |
| Q12=5 | 5 | Using online searches |

DP NOTE – ASK Q13A-D AS A LOOP FOR ALL CODED AT Q12.
DP NOTE – RANDOMISE Q13 DUMMY LOOP ORDER.



Q13A Thinking specifically about the <Q13 LOOP COURSE> module, how useful did you find this part of the course? Was it very useful, fairly useful, not very useful or not at all useful?
SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Very useful | 1 |
| Fairly useful | 2 |
| Not very useful | 3 |
| Not at all useful | 4 |
| DO NOT READ OUT Don't know | 5 |

Q13B And how would you rate the difficulty of the <Q13 LOOP COURSE> module? Was it too easy, too difficult or about right for you?
SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Too easy | 1 |
| Too difficult | 2 |
| About right | 3 |
| DO NOT READ OUT Don't know | 4 |

Q13C Was there anything you required help or support with from a member of staff at [IF HAS CENTRE=1: <CENTRE NAME> / IF HAS CENTRE=2: the centre] while you were going through the <Q13 LOOP COURSE> module?
PROBE FULLY.

YES

WRITE IN

NO
DK

Q13D Was there anything that was not covered in the <Q13 LOOP COURSE> module that you would have liked to have learned about?
PROBE FULLY.

YES

WRITE IN

NO
DK

DP NOTE: LOOP ENDS.

Q10 In total, roughly how long would you say it took to complete the course?
TAKE NUMBER IN HOURS. INTERVIEWER NOTE – RECORD AS A WHOLE NUMBER ONLY.



WRITE IN

DK



Q11 And would you say that the course was too long, too short or about right?
SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Too long | 1 |
| Too short | 2 |
| About right | 3 |
| Don't know | 4 |

ASK ALL

Q14 Thinking about the Online Basics course as a whole, to what extent would you agree or disagree that...

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

| | Agree strongly | Agree slightly | Neither Agree nor disagree | Disagree slightly | Disagree strongly | DK | |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----|-----|
| A - The appearance and design of the course on screen was good | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| B - The instructions given on screen were clear and made sense | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| C – You understood the language used in the course | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| D – The language used in the course struck the right tone | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| E – The course was enjoyable and engaging | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| F – The course was well organised and managed by [IF HAS CENTRE=1: <CENTRE NAME> / IF HAS CENTRE=2: the centre] | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | N/A |

DP NOTE: ASK APPROPRIATE QUESTION FROM Q15-19 DIRECTLY AFTER CORRESPONDING RESPONSE AT Q14

IF Q14A=4/5 (disagree that appearance or design was good)

Q15 and What was it about the appearance and design of the course on screen that you did not like and how could it be improved?

PROBE FULLY.

WRITE IN

DK

IF Q14B=4/5 (disagree that the instructions made sense)

Q16 In what way were the instructions given on screen unclear and how could they have been improved?

PROBE FULLY.

WRITE IN

DK





IF Q14C=4/5 (disagree that language was understandable)

Q17 What didn't you understand and how could it have been improved?
 PROBE FULLY

WRITE IN

DK

IF Q14D=4/5 (disagree that the tone was appropriate)

Q18 What was it about the tone that was inappropriate and how could it have been better?
 PROBE FULLY

WRITE IN

DK

IF Q14F=4/5

Q19 How was [IF HAS CENTRE=1: <CENTRE NAME> / IF HAS CENTRE=2: the centre] not well organised, what could they have done better?
 PROBE FULLY

WRITE IN

DK

ASK ALL

Q20 And still thinking about the Online Basics course as a whole, how useful did you find the course? Was it very useful, fairly useful, not very useful or not at all useful?
 SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Very useful | 1 |
| Fairly useful | 2 |
| Not very useful | 3 |
| Not at all useful | 4 |
| DO NOT READ OUT Don't know | 5 |

IF Q12=6

Q21 Was there anything you required help or support with from a member of staff at [IF HAS CENTRE=1: <CENTRE NAME> / IF HAS CENTRE=2: the centre] while you were going through the Online Basics course?
 PROBE FULLY.

YES

WRITE IN

NO



DK



ASK ALL
Q22 Was there anything that was not covered in the course that you would have liked to have learned about?
 PROBE FULLY.

YES

WRITE IN

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

NO
 DK

IT SKILLS / CONFIDENCE

ASK ALL
Q23 As a result of taking the course, have your skills or knowledge of the following improved a little, or not at all...?
 lot,
 READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

| | A lot | A little | Not at all | DO NOT READ OUT - DK |
|---|-------|----------|------------|----------------------|
| Using a keyboard | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Using a mouse | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Opening, reading and sending emails | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Managing email folders | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Managing an email address book | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Keeping personal data safe online | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Making payments online safely | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Protecting children when they are online | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Locating and using internet search engines effectively | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Bookmarking websites | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Saving images and files from the internet | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Customising a computer to best suit your needs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Q24 Since you completed the course, how many times have you used a computer?
 DO NOT READ OUT. PROMPT IF NECESSARY.

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Once | 1 |
| 2-4 times | 2 |
| 5-9 times | 3 |
| 10 times or more | 4 |
| Have not used a computer since | 5 |
| Don't know | 6 |





Q25 And since you completed the course, how many times have you been on the internet <TEXT SUB IF Q24=5: using a device other than a computer, such as a mobile phone>? DO NOT READ OUT. PROMPT IF NECESSARY.

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Once | 1 |
| 2-5 times | 2 |
| 5-10 times | 3 |
| More than 10 times | 4 |
| Have not used the internet since | 5 |
| Don't know | 6 |

IF Q24=1-4 OR Q25=1-4

Q26 In the times that you've used a computer <TEXT SUB IF Q25=1-4: and been on the internet>, to what extent would you say you've put to use the skills you learnt in the Online Basics course? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|---|---|
| To a great extent | 1 |
| To some extent | 2 |
| Or have you not used these skills? | 3 |
| DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know | 4 |

ASK ALL

Q27 And as a result of the Online Basics course, in terms of using computers, do you feel? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|--|---|
| A lot more confident | 1 |
| A little more confident | 2 |
| Neither more nor less confident | 3 |
| A little less confident | 4 |
| A lot less confident | 5 |
| DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know | 6 |

Q28 Similarly, as a result of the Online Basics course, in terms of using the internet, do you feel? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|--|---|
| A lot more confident | 1 |
| A little more confident | 2 |
| Neither more nor less confident | 3 |
| A little less confident | 4 |
| A lot less confident | 5 |
| DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know | 6 |



IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT

Q29 IF NOT EMPLOYED FROM SAMPLE & AGED <65 FROM SAMPLE
Since the Online Basics course, have you...?
 READ OUT.

| | Yes | No | REF |
|--|-----|----|-----|
| A: Sought careers or skills advice online | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| B: Applied for any jobs | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| C: Applied for any jobs online | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| D: Been for any job interviews | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| E: Started a job | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Q30 IF EMPLOYED FROM SAMPLE OR Q29E=1
Have you used any of the skills you learned in the Online Basics course in your current job?

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| No longer employed | 3 |
| Don't know | 4 |

Q31 IF EMPLOYED FROM SAMPLE & Q30=NOT 3 (still employed)
Have any of the following things happened at work as a result of your completing the Online Basics course?
 READ OUT.

| | Yes | No | Don't know |
|--|-----|----|------------|
| A) You are doing more interesting work | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| B) You are getting more job satisfaction | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| C) You have better job security | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| D) Your pay and promotion prospects have improved | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Q32 ASK ALL AGED <65 FROM SAMPLE
To what extent would you agree that as a result of the Online Basics course...?
 READ OUT.

| | Agree strongly | Agree slightly | Neither Agree nor disagree | Disagree slightly | Disagree strongly | DK |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----|
| You have applied or will apply for more jobs now | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| You have or will apply for jobs involving computers that you wouldn't have applied for before | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| You have or will include the fact that you completed the Online Basics course on your CV or on a job application | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| You have or will create a CV using a computer | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| ONLY ASK IF Q29E=2 OR REF: You feel you have more chance of finding work now | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| You have improved your career prospects generally | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

IMPACT ON FURTHER LEARNING

ASK ALL

- Q33** Have you undertaken any further learning related to computers and/or the internet since completing the Online Basics course?

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| Don't know | 3 |

IF Q33=1

- Q34** Was this further learning...?
READ OUT. MULTICODE.

| | |
|---|---|
| An online course through Myguide such as 'using a mobile phone' or 'using a digital TV' | 1 |
| Another type of online course [PLEASE SPECIFY] | 2 |
| A taught course at a college or with a private training provider | 3 |
| Trying to improve your knowledge about computers or teaching yourself a skill without taking part in a formal, taught course | 4 |
| [DO NOT READ OUT] Don't know | 5 |

ASK ALL

- Q35** How likely or unlikely do you think it is that you will undertake further learning in the next two years, whether this is related to computers or anything else?
READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Very likely | 1 |
| Fairly likely | 2 |
| Fairly unlikely | 3 |
| Very unlikely | 4 |
| [DO NOT READ OUT] Don't know | 5 |



SOFT IMPACTS

IF Q24=1-4

Q36 Since you completed the Online Basics course, have you done any of the following things for the **FIRST** time?
 READ OUT. MULTICODE.

| | |
|--|----|
| Written and sent an email for the first time | 1 |
| Used a computer programme such as Microsoft Word or Excel for the first time | 2 |
| Helped your children with school work or helped them with computers for the first time | 3 |
| Started playing computer games for the first time | 4 |
| Made an online purchase for the first time | 5 |
| Joined or used a social networking site e.g. Facebook or MySpace, for the first time | 6 |
| More generally 'surfing the internet' | 7 |
| Used a computer or the internet in another way (SPECIFY) | 8 |
| None of the above | 9 |
| [DO NOT READ OUT] Don't know | 10 |

IF Q36=1-8

Q37 Do you think [TEXT SUB IF Q36=SINGLEPUNCH: **this has** / TEST SUB IF Q36=MULTIPUNCH: **these have**] taken place directly as a result of you attending the course, do you think doing the course helped, or do you think the course made no difference?
 PROMPT IF NECESSARY. SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Directly because of the course | 1 |
| The course helped | 2 |
| The course made no difference | 3 |
| [DO NOT READ OUT] not sure | 4 |

ASK ALL

Q38 And thinking about the impact the Online Basics course has had on you, to what extent would you agree that...?
 READ OUT

| | Agree strongly | Agree slightly | Neither Agree nor disagree | Disagree slightly | Disagree strongly | DK |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----|
| You're glad you did the course | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| [EXCEPT THOSE AGED >65 FROM SAMPLE] You have a better idea about what you want to do in your life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |



| | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| You are more enthusiastic about learning | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| You feel better equipped to make decisions about your future in terms of career, training or learning | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| The course has improved your general self-confidence | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| You have or will take part in more voluntary or community activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |



IMPACT ON OTHERS

ASK ALL

Q39 Have you showed or passed on any of the skills that you learnt through the Online Basics course to anyone else, be it [TEXT SUB IF (EMPLOYED FROM SAMPLE & Q30=NOT3) OR Q29E=1: friends, family or colleagues / TEXT SUB IF Q29E=2/3 OR Q30=3: friends or family]? PROBE FULLY. INTERVIEWER NOTE: RECORD THE SKILLS THAT HAVE PASSED ON – RATHER THAN TO WHOM

YES

| |
|----------|
| WRITE IN |
|----------|

NO

DK

Q40 And have you recommended the Online Basics course to anyone since you did it?

| | |
|------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| Don't know | 3 |

IF Q40=2/3

Q41 Would you recommend the Online Basics course to [TEXT SUB IF EMPLOYED FROM SAMPLE & Q30=NOT3) OR Q29E=1: a friend, relative or colleague / TEXT SUB IF Q29E=2/3 OR Q30=3: a friend or relative]?

| | |
|------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| Don't know | 3 |

IF HAS CENTRE=2

Q41a And just to help us with the study, in which of the following regions are you based?... INTERVIEWER NOTE: THESE ARE THE 5 REGIONS WHERE UKONLINE CENTRES ARE OFFERING THE ONLINE BASICS COURSE. READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Devon | 1 |
| London | 2 |
| Oldham | 3 |
| Barnsley | 4 |
| Gloucester | 5 |
| (DO NOT READ OUT) Other - Specify | 6 |
| (DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know | 7 |
| (DO NOT READ OUT) Refused | 8 |



Q41b IF HAS CENTRE=2 & Q41a=NOT REFUSED
And can I take your postcode please?
 INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF RESPONDENT UNWILLING – TRY FOR FIRST HALF OF POSTCODE ONLY – WE AREN'T TRYING TO SELL / SEND ANYTHING.

| |
|----------|
| WRITE IN |
|----------|

ALLOW REF

Q42 ASK ALL
Finally, further research about your experience of this course may take place in the future, would you be happy for Becta or researchers working for them to contact you again?
 SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| Don't know | 3 |

Q43 IF YES
Can I check, is this the best number to contact you on?
 SINGLE CODE.

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No – RECORD PREFERRED NUMBER | 2 |
| Don't know | 3 |

CLOSING STATEMENT

I would like to thank you very much for your time and help. That is the end of the interview. I would like to stress that this interview has been conducted in line with the Market Research Society Code of Conduct and all your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence.

THANK RESPONDENT AND CLOSE INTERVIEW

| | | |
|---|------------------|------|
| I declare that this survey has been carried out under IFF instructions and within the rules of the MRS Code of Conduct. | | |
| Interviewer signature: | Date: | |
| Finish time: | Interview Length | mins |

11 Appendix C: Centre Topic Guide

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this valuable piece of research.

EXPLAIN TO RESPONDENT:

We are conducting research on behalf of Becta, the government agency who are evaluating the pilot of the Online Basics course. We are speaking to UK Online staff such as you who have been involved with the Online Basics course over the last couple of months. We are doing this in order to understand how well the course and the pilot scheme more generally are working.

ADD IF NECESSARY: The research is not looking to evaluate the work or performance of specific UK Online centre staff. We are only interested in the usability and usefulness of the course itself and in finding out about centres' experiences of setting up and implementing the Online Basics course and the support they have had from UK Online. The information we gather will be used to improve the course and its implementation when it is rolled out nationally next year.

OBTAIN PERMISSION TO RECORD INTERVIEW

Background

1) **First can you tell me a little about <CENTRE NAME>?**

PROBE FOR:

- **Type of centre;**
- **How many staff – PROBE FOR: Full-time, part-time & volunteers;**
- **How long have been delivering IT training more generally;**
- **Sources of funding that currently support the centre. How the centre is funded.**

2) **What is your job title and role in implementing the Online Basics course?**

3) **How many staff at your centre have some sort of formal adult learner support or teacher/tutor qualification?**

4) **How many users have registered to do the Online Basics course in your centre since the pilot began?**

5) **What type of users were they in terms of...**

- **Age (generally)**
- **Gender (generally)**



- English language skills (for roughly what % is English their second language)
- Employment status
- Highest previous qualification
- Any other key / common characteristics?

6) Does this differ to your normal user profile? How?

7) How do users end up on the Online Basics course? Are they referred by other agencies? Do you directly target people through marketing?

IF REFERRALS: Which agencies/organisations are these? What proportion of users come through these?

IF MARKETING: What type of marketing have you done? What forms has this taken? Where do you advertise? What proportion of users come through these?

8) Do you assess users' IT skills before they take the course? What does this assessment involve?

IF YES: As a result of this initial assessment has it been deemed inappropriate for any users to take the Online Basics course? PROBE: due to IT skills being too advanced? Due to other concerns?

ALSO ASK: Are there any particular types or profiles of user for whom the course is not appropriate?

9) Do you offer any pre-course information advice and guidance, or post-course advice and guidance?

IF YES: Is this provided in your centre? Is it delivered by a trained IAG advisor? IF NOT: How do you provide it?

Perceptions of the course

Now we would like to ask about your perceptions of the course and how it is working in practice.

10) Overall, what do you particularly like about the Online Basics course? PROBE: Why do you say that?

11) What don't you like as much about the Online Basics course? How could it be improved? PROBE: Why do you say that?

12) How does the course compare to...

- a) previous MyGuide courses?
- b) other similar (non-MyGuide) courses you have encountered?

13) How well has the course worked in practice? Thinking specifically about...



- The overall look and feel? PROBE: What do you think of the background / layout / colours / photos / branding used?
- The language used? PROBE: Is the level appropriate? Is the tone appropriate? Have there been any specific problems? For whom?
- Ease of use?

14) Does the course work as it should? Have there been any functional problems?

As I'm sure you are aware, the Online Basics course is split in to 5 modules. ADD AS NECESSARY: 'Starting with a keyboard', 'Starting with a mouse', 'Using email', 'Using the internet safely' and 'Using online searches'.

Thinking about the modules...

- 15) Do you think their content level is appropriate? PROBE: (IF APPLICABLE) Who / what type of user is this not appropriate for? Why do you say that? Does this apply to some modules more than others? Which ones?
- 16) Is there anything missing from the modules? IF YES - PROBE: Which modules does this apply to? Why would this be useful to include? Is this included in any other, similar packages?
- 17) Is anything covered in too much detail? IF YES – PROBE: Which modules does this apply to? Why is this much detail not needed?

Thinking about the Online basics course as a whole...

- 18) How well would you say the course works as an overall package? PROBE: Why do you say that?
- 19) And generally speaking, do you feel that the Online Basics course is a positive or negative experience for users? PROBE FOR: Why this is the case? Does this vary by types of user? Do they feel differently before, during and after the course?
- 20) Do you offer certain sections or modules to some users and not others? IF YES: Which sections and what type of users are these?
- 21) Do users tend to complete all the sections or do any give up? IF GIVE UP: At what point do they give up? Do they tend to give up on a particular module? What type of user are these?

Support provided by centres to users

22) How much support do users need when taking the Online Basics course?

IF NEED SUPPORT:

What kind of support? At what points do they need support? What have or haven't you been able to help with?

23) Does the support users need go beyond the course itself? (e.g. for literacy, numeracy or English language needs)

24) Are there any words or phrases that are too technical for some users to understand? Which ones? Have you found ways around this? If so, what are these?

ASK ALL:

25) Does the centre have the capacity and ability to provide the necessary support (e.g. for literacy, numeracy or English language needs) to Online Basics users who need it? Why do you say that?

26) Is the centre equipped to offer support for users with learning difficulties and / or disabilities?
PROBE: To what extent is it equipped / not equipped?

Support provided to the centres

27) Have you had all the support you needed from UK Online? Was there anything else they could have done? PROBE FOR: Financially; and in terms of guidance and instruction.

28) IF NOT: Why do you say they haven't supported you enough? What more could be done?

29) Have staff at the centre received any additional training on how to teach or run the Online Basics course?

IF YES: What sort of training? Was the training useful? In what ways? Was this training sufficient? Have you had to provide supplementary training?

IF NO: Do you feel you would have benefitted from training? Has this had a negative impact on the centre's ability to offer the Online Basics course? Why do you say that?

30) Has your involvement with the Online Basics course caused any logistical or resourcing issues with...?

- Ability to run / offer other courses
- Staff working hours



- **Computer or software capacity**
- **Training packs required**
- **Or any other form of logistical / resourcing issue?**

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF THIS IS A 'COSTS' INTERVIEW – PLEASE RESTRICT Q29 TO LOGISTICAL/RESOURCING I.E. NON-FINANCIAL RESPONSES ONLY.

- 31) **Do you have a specific Online Basics lead at the centre? IF YES: can you tell me a little about this role? Has this been useful?**
- 32) **Has providing the Online Basics course created any extra demand in terms of admin or paperwork? Why is this the case? IF EXTRA DEMAND: could anything be done to make life easier for you?**
- 33) **Thinking again about the marketing of the Online Basics course, were you sent any marketing materials by UK Online to help promote the course? IF YES: What did they send through?**
- 34) **What marketing materials have you used? Which have you not used? PROBE FOR THOSE MENTIONED ABOVE AND ANY IN-HOUSE MATERIAL.**

IF HAVE USED ANY MARKETING MATERIAL:

- 35) **How effective has the marketing you have used been?**
- 36) ASK ALL
- 37) **What would help you promote the course better?**
- 38) **Has there been sufficient communication with UK Online over the introduction of the Online Basics course? IF NOT: What would work better? Is there anything you need or needed more information about?**
- 39) **Have you used the online discussions; either on the UK Online website forums or the new 'Ning' discussion group? IF YES: What did you think of this? How useful was it?**

IF NOT USED: **Why not? Were you aware of them?**

Cost breakdown

ONLY ASK IF CENTRE HAS BEEN SELECTED TO GIVE A COST BREAKDOWN

- 40) **We would like to discuss with you any additional costs that have arisen as a result of the centre's involvement with the Online Basics course.**

For each of the following areas, could you tell us what the additional costs have been?



USE GRID

41) We will also need you to specify if each cost was a one-off cost, or a regular or recurring cost.

USE GRID

42) And we would like to know how much of this cost has arisen as a result of supporting those with learning disabilities or learning difficulties.

USE GRID

ADD IF NECESSARY: We would like you to think about costs that are additional to your usual running costs, and that are specifically related to setting up and running Online Basics.

| | Cost area | Q39 Cost in £ | Q40 Is this cost: One off? Weekly? Monthly? Other (specify) | Q41 How much (in £) from supporting those with learning needs? |
|--------------|------------------------------------|------------------|---|---|
| Staffing | Extra staff needed | | | |
| | Training for existing staff | | | |
| | Staff time spent with users | | | |
| | Additional administration time | | | |
| | Other staffing costs (specify) | | | |
| | Other staffing costs (specify) | | | |
| IT equipment | Extra computers | | | |
| | Internet costs | | | |
| | Other IT equipment costs (specify) | | | |
| | Other IT equipment costs (specify) | | | |
| Other | Stationery | | | |

| | | | | |
|-----------------|---|--|--|--|
| equipment | Training packs | | | |
| | Other equipment costs (specify) | | | |
| | Other equipment costs (specify) | | | |
| Building / Rent | Additional rooms or floor space needed for teaching | | | |
| | Other building / rent costs (specify) | | | |
| Marketing | Cost of materials | | | |
| | Cost of advertising | | | |
| | Other marketing costs (specify) | | | |
| | Other marketing costs (specify) | | | |

Additional thoughts

- 43) What advice would you have for other centres that are not yet offering the Online Basics course?
- 44) What, if anything, would you like to say to those developing the Online Basics course?
- 45) What, if anything, would you like to say to those evaluating the success of the Online Basics course?
- 46) Is there anything you would like to say to potential users before they start the course?

Close

- 47) Is there anything else you would like to say about the Online Basics course that we have not mentioned already?

Thank respondent.

EXPLAIN CONFIDENTIALITY AND FINDINGS PRESENTED IN AGGREGATE FORM – COMMENTS NOT ATTRIBUTABLE TO THEM.

| | | | |
|---|------------------|-------|--|
| I declare that this survey has been carried out under IFF instructions and within the rules of the MRS Code of Conduct. | | | |
| Interviewer signature: | | Date: | |
| Finish time: | Interview Length | Mins | |