

ONLINE

A GUIDE OF SAFE PRACTICE



MAKING
'WORK FROM HOME'

WORK FOR YOU



MYELIN ACADEMIA



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GLOBALISATION

Traditionally, tuition has provided a bespoke face-to-face service. But with exponential improvements in technology and increased user accessibility to the internet, on almost any device, the online sector is booming. For more information on this consult our blog post [Adapting to Tutoring in a Post Covid World](#) 

IT'S GOOD FOR TUTORS

Tutoring online allows a tutor to work remotely and offers a flexibility to dial in from anywhere. Anywhere that has internet access! This remote set-up means tutors spend less time travelling between client, which frees up their availability for clients at peak times.

IT'S GOOD FOR CLIENTS

With the commute no longer an issue it also liberates access to tuition for the client. This means that great tuition doesn't have to be localised, so you can be based in John o'Groats or Lands End, with immediate access to great tutors at the end of your fingertips.



VIRTUAL RELATIONSHIPS

The increasing use of social media has altered the way we form relationships, shifting from the traditional face-to-face (FtF) relationships to virtual ones, also known as computer-mediated communication (CMC).

SELF-DISCLOSURE

Self-disclosure is the process of communication where people reveal information about themselves to one another. *How much* we reveal and *how quickly* we reveal it can be influenced by our online experiences.

Virtual relationships typically lack in non-verbal cues such as physical appearance, tone of voice & facial expression which can produce feelings of increased anonymity and a state of de-individuation. This lowered inhibition makes people feel freer from the constraints of social norms and less accountable for their behaviour. As such they can disclose more than they would than in a FtF relationship. This early self-disclosure means that CMC relationships develop quickly because intimacy occurs sooner than in real life, but they can also end more rapidly because of ease of termination and low levels of trust.

These factors increase the risk of:

- cyber bullying
- group manipulation & coercion
- victimisation
- exploitative relationships



Sign up



DATA

The currency of the 21st century!

Make sure you know what information you're handing over when you sign up to different platforms or learning portals and the consequences this has for your students.

- Before you recommend using a particular site or watching videos and media, familiarise yourself with the Privacy Policies and Terms & Conditions of their use.
- Check the age restriction of apps and online content of material, making sure these are age appropriate.
- Gain parental approval in advance for usage with any new platform.
- Ensure that the sites you use do not share data with third parties.
- Maintain confidentiality and conceal passwords and login-in details. Warn your students in advance about this, for example temporarily disable screen sharing.

Consider how you will maximise the safety of your online tutoring sessions in order to protect yourself and your client. The digital revolution creates a lot of opportunity for positive educational benefits in learning, but these are also met with new dangers and precautions.

GDPR

Children need particular protection when it comes to collecting and processing personal data as they are less aware of the associated risks and consequences. Seek guidance from the **Information Commissioner's Office** (ICO), the UK's independent authority set up to uphold information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and data privacy for individuals.

All online content from a student can be considered as personal data and should be treated in accordance with the **Data Protection Act**.

- This means data can only be used for its specific intended purposes
- Handle securely & protected responsibly
- Only share with authorised people

The **GDPR** sets out seven key principles which should lie at the heart of how you collect and process personal data.

- Lawfulness, fairness & transparency
- Purpose limitation
- Data minimisation
- Accuracy
- Storage limitation
- Integrity & confidentiality (security)
- Accountability

[Guide to the General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/) 

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>

[Data Protection Act](https://www.gov.uk/data-protection) 

<https://www.gov.uk/data-protection>

Tip: Password-protect work computers and documents that contain sensitive and personal information about your students. Do not publish or share student work without prior written consent.

SAFEGUARDING

LESSON RECORDINGS

The question you should be asking yourself:

Do you really need to be recording your session?

- What purpose is it for?
- What personal data has been captured (email addresses, voices, student faces, student names?)
- Where will the recording be saved?
- How will it be protected?
- Can you ensure you're maintaining confidentiality in accordance with GDPR?

Unless you have been given explicit prior written consent, you should not be recording your sessions.

Working alongside a school

Seek the school's policy for online distance learning and familiarise with their procedures to ensure safeguarding for their pupils on the platforms they allow. They may only allow use of certain platforms because some terms & conditions and privacy policies are more rigorous than others. In addition, they may already have parental consent to use these. Most school conferencing platforms are only accessible with a school email. For more information on this, see our blog ['Working in Schools, Time for Collaboration'](#)

Represented by an agency

Consult your agency for their suggested online safeguarding procedures. Some agencies have affiliations with companies such as Bit Paper / Bramble etc as their preferred platform. If this is the case, they will probably have a support guide or offer training to help you familiarise with these, but you should still ask the right to record and maintaining student confidentiality.

If you are an independent tutor

If you have found the client via your own means such as word of mouth or your own website, this responsibility is all yours. You should be confident with the data storage and GDPR functionality of the platforms you suggest and it is always advisable to gain parental consent before using any new platform.



E-SAFETY CHECKLIST

The best approach to e-safety is a proactive one with online safety being reinforced as part of every lesson.

E-safety reinforcements

- Students should be made aware of the risks of going online and the content they access.
- Students should be encouraged to validate the accuracy of information.
- Students should be encouraged to question their own contributions to online forums and groups, ensuring their impact is neutral and not one that facilitates victimisation.
- For any concerns about the online safety of a student, such as suspected grooming, cyber bullying or victimisation, your first line of action is to report back to your tuition agency as part of your safeguarding responsibility.

Online code of conduct

- Online working should not lead to relaxation of tutor-student protocol.
- Always behave as you would in a face to face relationship (don't lower your own levels of self-disclosure).
- Set appropriate boundaries to maintain the same professional standards.
- All digital communication should be conducted in a professional tone.
- Do not follow or interact with students on personal social media accounts.

Screensharing

- Ensure you do not have work open that contains sensitive personal details about you or others. This can be considered a breach of GDPR.
- Ensure you do not have any inappropriate tabs open.
- Ensure notifications from emails and other apps are disabled to avoid exposure of personal data, unsolicited messages and cause of disruption to the lesson.
- Avoid screen recordings due to GDPR and student / parent consent issues.

Choosing a venue

- Ensure you have chosen a suitable venue with an appropriate background, avoiding inappropriate personal items, posters or paintings.
- Try and ensure a quiet space with minimal background noise.
- Make sure there is never a possibility of strangers having access to your screen.

1-2-1 VS GROUPS

For more information on this consult our blog

['Tutoring in a Post Covid World'](#) 

1-2-1: Online vs F2F

(+) Independence: In F2F it is easier to do more than we need to assist our learner, so when we transfer to online, we are physically less able to do it for them. Students need to get themselves online and navigate the platform which encourages greater independence and forwards planning.

(-) Intensity: 1-2-1 online is often even more intense than in person, so shorter but more frequent sessions should be considered.

Less is more: Window tabs and Screen time. Consider practical activities and tactile work to help break up screen time. Avoid using too many online resources at once where students have to jump between multiple tabs.



Group: Online vs F2F

(+) Cursor contribution: You can monitor group even more easily than in F2F, as you can monitor the cursor activity when working from a live document such as Google Drive. The cursor indicates where each student is writing so you can be sure everyone has contributed, or assign each learner a different colour.

(+) Real time feedback: You can write live feedback and comments on these documents in real time as students are working on them, so students are able to action this more readily. You can also provide tailored feedback in the chat functionality.

(-) Connectivity: Some people's connection might not be as strong, which can affect interactivity during group tasks and act as a barrier to their online learning.

(-) Tech savvy students: You need to make sure students are competent with the online tools you are using, so this doesn't negatively impact their learning, as well as making sure you're up to scratch so they don't play you at your own game!

LEVEL 1: GET ME ONLINE

SETTING UP THE BASICS

1. **Internet connection**

2. The right device

INTERNET

The key to working remotely is a rock solid internet connection. Data travels in two directions so your internet connection will have an upload speed and download speed. Don't let a dodgy connection become barrier to learning.

DOWLOADS

Activities like streaming music, watching online videos or scrolling social media pages require download speeds. Aim for 25Mbps (megabits of data per second).

UPLOADS

Although downloading is more common, some activities require you to send information from your device to another device. These are known as uploads, and include sending emails, videoconferencing & posting online. Aim for 3Mbps. Web conferencing platform such a Zoom require a minimum of 2.0 Mbps up and down for single screen share.

You can conduct periodic speed checks to make sure your upload and downloads speeds aren't the reason for poor connectivity in your lessons. A simple Google of the words 'internet speed test' will point you to a provider to run a free test.

LEVEL 1: GET ME ONLINE

SETTING UP THE BASICS

- Internet connection
- **The right device**

THE RIGHT DEVICE

Choose your device, ideally a desktop or a laptop. The reason for this is tablets and phones offer less functionality with smaller screens.

The Health & Safety Executive provide the following guidance for using display screen equipment (desktops and laptops) if you are using them for **an hour or more at a time**.

IN SUMMARY:

- **Posture:** Forearms should be horizontal and the users eyes should be in line with the tops of the screen. Make sure there is space under the desk to move legs and a foot rest can be useful for easing pressure from the seat.
- **Set up:** Make sure the working area is lit appropriately and avoid glare and reflections from the screen.
- **Breaks:** Take regular short breaks from the screen to avoid headaches, tired eyes temporary shortsightedness. Alternative activity when possible, remembering to stretch and change position.

[Working Safely with Display Screen Equipment \(DSE\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/dse/) 

Full guidance available via: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/dse/>

LEVEL 2: I'M ONLINE, NOW WHAT?

SWITCHING FROM THE TRADITIONAL TOOLS TO THE NEW AGE PLATFORMS

There are a plethora of tools to help you tutor online. Below is a short summary of some of the most used platform and what they can offer. Firstly let talk about web conferencing platforms, so you can see your learner, and they can see you in your lesson.

WEB CONFERENCING



ZOOM

<https://zoom.us/signin>

One of the **original** web conferencing platforms. No signups or downloads, any once can host a meeting.



SKYPE

<https://www.skype.com/en/>

Recently paired with **Microsoft**. No signups or downloads, any once can host a meeting.



Google Meet

GOOGLE MEET

<https://meet.google.com/>

You'll require a gmail to host a meeting. But it does offers **closed captioning** (like automatic subtitles which can be beneficial for users with learning needs)

All of these offer a chat function and the ability to share your screen during the call

Once you've chosen a web conferencing provider, you'll want be be able to create, store and exchange documents with one another.



LEVEL 2: I'M ONLINE, NOW WHAT?

SWITCHING FROM THE TRADITIONAL TOOLS TO THE NEW AGE PLATFORMS

When it comes to teaching a syllabus and sharing work regularly, email attachments are difficult to keep hold of and finding the most recent versions can be a nightmare. However, live working documents, which are updated in real time, allow for simultaneous editing by both parties and saved automatically to the cloud. Once you convert, it's difficult to imagine a world without it.

THE TRADITIONAL TOOL: EMAILS

- Static documents
- Difficult to find the most up to date attachment
- Delays between sending and receiving

THE MODERN ALTERNATIVE: CLOUD SHARING

- Live working documents
- Auto-saving, so no need to re-share different versions of the same file
- Instant live editing in real time by both parties

DOCUMENT SHARING



WeTransfer

WETRANSFER
<https://wetransfer.com/>

Excellent for transferring very large documents, imagery or media. Simply enter your email and their email, and bingo.

Couldn't be easier.



GOOGLE DRIVE
<https://www.google.com/drive/>

Free 15GB storage with gmail. Allows for file creation via Google Docs (Word equivalent), Slides (Powerpoint eq) & Sheets (Excel eq).

You won't regret it.



DROP BOX
<https://www.dropbox.com/>

Free 2GB storage. Like an online desktop, with the ability to have shared access to folders and documents.

One of the original online storage units.

LEVEL 3: WFH LIKE A PRO

THE NOT SO BASIC SET UP

The set up outlined so far is a fairly primitive one, but it will be more than capable of doing the job, with a dash of creativity and the appropriate resources! However, if you are already comfortable with these options, and are looking to up your game, the following tools might be of interest to you.

The most popular gadgets include digital whiteboards, and track pads. When you're diving into the digital world, almost anything is possible, and so is the variability in the price tags, so our advice is to consider the **needs of your learners** and the **subject** you teach, before deciding where to invest your money.



BEFORE YOU INVEST MONEY CONSIDER THE NEEDS OF YOUR LEARNER & THE SUBJECT YOU TEACH

THE TRADITIONAL TOOL: WHITEBOARDS

- Big old things
- Difficult to match up to the camera for your student to see your worked example
- Wipe clean for every new example
- Can't save what you've produced on the board

THE MODERN ALTERNATIVE: DIGITAL WHITEBOARDS

- Small little devices, often require a track pad and digital pen or mouse
- Immediate visual feedback for learner
- Can save a recording of the lessons for future reference
- Offers 'undo' functions
- Explore free options first, such as **Zoom Whiteboard**

THINGS TO CONSIDER

A CLOSING SUMMARY

it's easy to get carried away once you get researching the multitude of tools and programmes, all designed to facilitate your online tutoring practice.

Always weigh up the following:

- The needs of your learner
- The necessity of this tool for your subject
- The cost of the item or subscription to the volume of tuition you provide
- Your student's access to these shared resources (their ICT skills, their internet connection, their printing ability etc)

THE GOOD

- **Headphones** help to block out excess background noise, especially if your learner doesn't have their own work area.
- **Digital prompts** like adding tasks to calendars or setting reminders
- **Calendar invites** so the learner has the web link synced to their diary
- **Gamification** is an excellent tool for education, find one for your subject
- Use of **online quizzes** and digital assessments
- **Digital textbooks**

BE MINDFUL

- **Mix up digital and non-digital tasks** to help to minimise excessive screen time, or consider setting a non-digital homework. Have a proper ten-minute break within each hour away from the computer as the screen accelerate tiredness.
- **Technical problems** are a given so prepare early and ask your students to set up the night before
- Online lessons tend to be much more **focused and intense**, do consider shortening the length of tutorial but upping the frequency

AVOID

- Ensure that their environments as well as your background does not display **inappropriate images** or personal imagery
- GDPR compliance: Check the recording capacity of the software you use and **avoid recording personal information** or any face-to-face communication with your students
- **Turn off notifications** so you don't get distracted by FaceTime and all three devices going off at one or risk exposure of personal messages coming through

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Blog links



Tutoring in a Post COVID World

Adapting you tutoring in light of the disruption caused by COVID-19, including working with small groups in preparation for the National Tutoring...



Tutoring in Schools

An introduction for preparing to tutor in schools. How to work alongside teacher and differentiating to the needs of your learners and the importance of...

