



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Policy

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg ac yn Saesneg | This document is available
in Welsh and English

Contents

1	Introduction.....	3
2	Purpose.....	3
2.2	Benefits.....	3
3	Scope.....	4
4	Policy	4
4.1	Access to the service	4
4.2	Course materials and resources	5
4.3	VLE responsibilities	5
4.4	Data protection and privacy	6
4.5	Training and support.....	7
4.6	Technical	8
5	Monitoring	9
6	Misuse of policy	9
7	Links to other policies / procedures	9
8	Document version control.....	10

1 Introduction

University of Wales Trinity Saint David's (UWTSD) commitment to academic excellence is our dedication to providing students with rich, dynamic learning experiences. With the increasing use of technology as a tool to deliver high-quality learning materials, the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) stands as a cornerstone in delivering opportunities for educational growth and exploration.

This policy underlines our commitment to fostering an environment where the VLE serves as a catalyst for learning, encompassing online, blended, and face-to-face modes of education. The purpose of this document is to articulate a clear framework that promotes effective and inclusive utilisation of the VLE, aligning with the University's mission to empower students with the tools and resources necessary for success.

By actively engaging with the VLE, our academic staff play a pivotal role in shaping the educational landscape. This policy encourages their involvement while maintaining consistency through adherence to the VLE Baseline Standards and Digital Teaching and Learning Good Practice. Through these guidelines, we aim to enhance the quality of content delivery, foster interactive learning experiences, and ensure that every student benefits from the best that technology-enhanced education has to offer.

2 Purpose

- 2.1.1 University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) is committed to providing students with opportunities for learning via the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This includes the provision of information about programmes and modules, learning materials and activities for learning.
- 2.1.2 The purpose of this policy is to promote the effective and inclusive use of the VLE across all modes of learning, including online, blended, and face-to-face delivery.
- 2.1.3 The policy is designed to encourage staff to actively engage with the VLE while ensuring consistency and adherence to a set of essential principles as outlined in the [VLE Baseline Standards and Digital Teaching and Learning Good Practice](#).
- 2.1.4 Furthermore, it seeks to safeguard the rights and interests of all stakeholders by integrating policies related to copyright, intellectual property, data protection, GDPR compliance and Welsh Language Standards.

2.2 Benefits

- 2.2.1 This policy has been crafted with the primary aim of guaranteeing that each enrolled student gains online access to programme information and educational resources according to a baseline standard.
- 2.2.2 Its core objective is to empower educators in elevating their pedagogical methods, fostering academic excellence and innovation in teaching and learning.
- 2.2.3 By encouraging widespread use of the VLE, this policy allows a “students as partners” approach, ensuring students have the ability to take charge of their own learning and become more independent in their studies.

- 2.2.4 Moreover, an optimised VLE creates an environment where all students from various backgrounds, including mature students, part-time learners, and international students, can engage and learn together, fostering a diverse and inclusive learning community.

3 Scope

- 3.1.1 The University currently has multiple instances of the VLE, aimed at different audiences within the University's reach, ensuring the relevant content on each is fit-for-purpose. These include an internal, student-focused, teaching and learning instance, and an external/commercial instance.
- 3.1.2 The VLE serves as a centralised digital platform for the creation, delivery, and management of course content, learning resources, activities, communication and collaboration. The VLE co-exists alongside other digital learning tools to support teaching, learning, assessment and the student experience.
- 3.1.3 This policy applies to all university staff, students and other external stakeholders involved in any aspect of teaching, learning, or administrative tasks that utilise the VLE, and outlines the guidelines and expectations for the use of the VLE to ensure a consistent and effective learning experience across the University.
- 3.1.4 The VLE is primarily used to support teaching and learning, but it also offers online tools and facilities that can be used for other purposes, such as staff training, administrative processes, and secure file-sharing. However, it is important to note that there may be other more suitable systems available for these activities. To help with decision-making, contact the VLE team for support.

4 Policy

4.1 Access to the service

The VLE is accessible from any device for users with a University IT account.

The University will endeavour to ensure that the VLE is available 24 hours a day. However, access to the site may be temporarily suspended in case of system failure, maintenance or repair, or due to reasons beyond the control of the University. Information about issues or planned maintenance will be shared on the [IT Service Status](#) web page in a timely fashion.

- 4.1.1 **Staff access:** All UWTSD members of staff with an active University IT account have access to the VLE. Access to courses will be granted to all UWTSD academic and professional staff who are actively involved in delivering or supporting courses and modules. Requests to grant or revoke access should be made by emailing moodle@uwtسد.ac.uk or via the [University's IT Service Desk](#). Further information can be found on the [IT Service Desk Webpage](#).
- 4.1.2 **Student access:** All UWTSD students have access to the VLE and relevant course materials for the modules they are enrolled in for the duration of their studies. The University will support the automatic access to relevant modules within the VLE based on registration data in the student record system (SITS).

- 4.1.3 **E-learning Moodle – Student access:** Learners on short courses such as Micro-credentials or Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) will have access via the eLearning Moodle platform, [Online Learning at UWTSD](#), to which they can self-register to the courses available, hence gaining access to course material and assessments.
- 4.1.4 **External access:** External access, such as for external examiners or other specified groups, to the VLE may be granted on a temporary basis, using the EE Account creation process. This allows sponsors or approvers to have direct control over the account creation and renewal processes via an interface embedded within their [MyTSD landing page](#).
- 4.1.5 **Partner institution access:** Access to the VLE is dependent on the agreement between UWTSD and its partner institutions, which can vary on a case-by-case basis.

4.2 Course materials and resources

- 4.2.1 The content within the VLE is primarily created by individual members of staff, and it is not subject to routine monitoring. However, staff from professional services may access and review content upon request from both staff and students to provide assistance and advice.
- 4.2.2 Adherence to the University's [VLE Baseline Standards](#) is mandatory for course creators and editors to provide a consistent student experience across all courses. This threshold standard articulates a baseline set of requirements that all programmes/modules must have in terms of a VLE presence.
- 4.2.3 Where possible, the use of in-built and university supported learning tools within the VLE should be used; these are preferred to externally available third-party tools, where features and services are broadly similar.
- 4.2.4 Content ownership: The ownership of Teaching Materials and other Academic Materials created and shared through the VLE is subject to the University's [Intellectual Property Policy](#).
- 4.2.5 External links: Content within the VLE may contain links to external sites. The University is not responsible for the content of these sites and gives no guarantee that the links will work all of the time. Any such references or links should not be taken as an endorsement by the University of websites, or the opinions expressed, or services provided at those sites.
- 4.2.6 Accessibility compliance: Course content is created by individual members of staff who are required to adhere to VLE Baseline Standards which set out detailed requirements for content, as well as training and support as outlined in [Section 4.5](#).
- 4.2.7 Copyright compliance: All staff and students must comply with copyright laws and the University's [Copyright Policy](#) when creating, uploading or accessing materials on the VLE. Further guidance can be accessed via the Library's [Copyright Hub](#).

4.3 VLE responsibilities

- 4.3.1 **The VLE team will:**
- endeavour to keep the VLE updated to the latest version;

- carry out the enrolment of new students, and the removal of past students at the beginning of each academic year;
- archive course content from the previous three academic years so that it can be accessed by staff and students to review within the VLE;
- endeavour to schedule maintenance work so to minimise disruptions to users, whenever feasible, and will provide users with timely updates and information via the [IT Service Status web page](#) and other institutional channels where relevant;
- ensure that the VLE systems provide appropriate accessibility as per the Accessibility Statement for UWTSD Moodle. Accessibility of specific course content is the responsibility of academic staff. UWTSD is committed to inclusivity and accessibility and aspires to high levels of accessibility for all of our information systems, including the VLE.

4.3.2 **Staff will:**

- ensure that course materials on the VLE are accurate, up-to-date, and relevant to the learning outcomes of the module;
- ensure that content created on the VLE is accessible and arrange provision of alternative formats as required;
- facilitate online discussions, assessments, and feedback through the VLE to enhance the learning experience;
- monitor and moderate online discussions and forums to maintain a respectful and inclusive learning environment;
- adhere to the VLE Baseline Standards, providing students with a consistent, inclusive and accessible student experience;
- ensure that linked resources are available and accessible. Advice on Online Resources links can be found here: [Online Resource Lists](#);
- comply with copyright law and the University's [Copyright Policy](#);
- adhere to the Welsh Language standards when designing course content on the VLE for courses that offer delivery through the medium of Welsh. Further advice and support can be provided by the Welsh Language Team: welshlanguage@uwtsd.ac.uk.
- report any technical issues or concerns related to the VLE promptly to the [University's IT Service Desk](#).

4.3.3 **Students will:**

- respect the intellectual property rights of others and refrain from sharing or distributing copyrighted materials without proper authorisation;
- engage actively in the online learning activities and discussions facilitated through the VLE as outlined in the [Engagement Policy](#);
- use the VLE responsibly and adhere to the [Student Code of Conduct policy](#);
- report any technical issues or concerns related to the VLE promptly to the [University's IT Service Desk](#).

4.4 **Data protection and privacy**

- #### 4.4.1
- Whilst the VLE team will ensure the privacy features embedded within the VLE are GDPR compliant, it is the responsibility of members of staff that control each course to ensure the protection of personal and sensitive information that is shared on the VLE, in line with the University's data protection policy and student privacy notice.

- 4.4.2 All members of staff enrolled on a course such as editing teachers or support staff will have access to all data on the course. Access to sensitive data should be limited to authorised personnel only.
- 4.4.3 Each member of staff and student is responsible for the security and use of their username and password in adherence with the [Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy](#).
- 4.4.4 Personal data is stored securely and in accordance with the University's [Data Protection](#) and [Retention Policies](#). Information on how personal data is used can be found in the [Student Privacy Notice](#).
- 4.4.5 The University takes no responsibility for the privacy policies of any linked websites.
- 4.4.6 Removal of data, content and users can be removed upon request by [contacting the VLE Team](#).
- 4.4.7 Members of staff are required to complete the Data Protection and Information Security Awareness modules which can be found on the VLE:
- Data Protection E-learning Module: [Course: Data Protection](#)
 - Information Security Awareness Module: [Course: Information Security Awareness Training](#)

4.5 Training and support

- 4.5.1 Staff training: The University provides training and support to staff members on effectively using the VLE for course delivery and management.
- 4.5.2 Accessibility training: Mandatory e-learning on how to create accessible content is available on the VLE: [Course: Accessibility](#)
- 4.5.3 VLE training is provided centrally by the VLE team, supporting users with beginner, intermediate and advanced training options. Requests should be forwarded to moodle@uwtsd.ac.uk.
- 4.5.4 Digital Pedagogy and course design training can be accessed through the Digital Learning team who can support and guide staff through the development of pedagogical uses, design and delivery of content through the VLE. This includes elements such as how to design your online presence on the VLE and identifying appropriate communication, engagement, interactive, collaborative and assessment tools. Requests should be forwarded to DigitalLearning@uwtsd.ac.uk.
- 4.5.5 Further digital skills support can be accessed through the Digital Skills team who can provide training and 1:1 support in using specific digital tools: DigitalSkills@uwtsd.ac.uk.
- 4.5.6 Student support:
- 4.5.6.1 Students will have access to tutorials and resources to help them navigate and utilise the VLE effectively.

- 4.5.6.2 Video guides and resources are available via the [DigiCentre: Moodle and Turnitin resources](#).
- 4.5.6.3 Training and support can be accessed through the Digital Skills team. Contact DigitalSkills@uwtsd.ac.uk to arrange a 1:1 or training session.
- 4.5.6.4 If you experience any technical issues or concerns related to the VLE, report them to the [University's IT Service Desk](#).

4.6 Technical

- 4.6.1 Updates: Updates to the VLE are released regularly by the Moodle Development Community as defined in the [Moodle Release documentation](#). Minor version upgrades and security fixes are released every two months and major version releases every six months.

As development of the third-party integrations lags behind the major releases and often causes compatibility issues, we aim to maintain a production Moodle that is one full major release behind the most recent version. This provides the best compromise between incorporating the most up to date features, while still maintaining stability and compatibility. We aim to update Moodle once a year, at the end of the academic year, to the next major release but, where there are significant bugs or issues in a current release, we may need to apply minor release updates in between.

- 4.6.2 Year-end process: An end of year process is applied while updating the system at the end of the academic year. It involves:
- taking a 'snapshot' backup of the current live system as it exists on 31st August, and setting it up as an 'Archive' Moodle of the previous academic year for staff and students to access for reference purposes.
 - enabling the enrolment of students for the new academic year so they are fed in from the student record system as they enrol online, or their enrolments are entered manually by the Institute Administrators as appropriate for their courses.
 - enabling the global function in Moodle that removes student enrolments from pages (course and module) where they are no longer present on those courses or modules in SITS. This removes all completed modules from the students' profiles in Moodle, allowing their enrolments for the new academic year to be fed in.
- 4.6.3 Communication of planned updates will ensure both staff and students are aware of the scheduled Moodle system updates, minimising any potential disruptions and ensuring a smooth transition.

Key messages:

- Importance of the update in enhancing the Moodle experience for both staff and students.
- Clear instructions on how to prepare for the update to minimise any disruptions.
- Encouragement to reach out to the IT Service Desk for any assistance or queries related to the update process.

4.6.4 Communication channels

- **Teams Digital Resources Site:**
 - Post regular updates regarding the upcoming Moodle system update schedule.
 - Include a brief summary of the key changes and enhancements that will be implemented.
 - Encourage staff and students to visit the page regularly for the latest information.
- **Staff Bulletin/Intranet:**
 - Include dedicated notices regarding the upcoming Moodle system update in the staff bulletin and/or on the intranet.
 - Provide a detailed timeline for the update process and any anticipated downtime.
 - Outline the benefits and potential changes that staff may need to be prepared for.
- **Student HWB/Moodle Homepage:**
 - Regularly update the student HWB with notifications about the upcoming Moodle system update.
 - Provide a simplified explanation of the changes that students can expect.
 - Emphasise the importance of preparing for the update by saving any important data or coursework.

5 Monitoring

- 5.1.1 This policy is subject to periodic review within the Learning and Teaching Board, to ensure it aligns with the University's goals, best practices and meets the requirements for teaching and learning.
- 5.1.2 These are defined by the Learning & Teaching Enhancement Strategy 2022-2026, the Digital Strategy 2021-2023 and 2024-26, and the Digital Teaching and Learning Good Practice.
- 5.1.3 By adhering to these standards, the university can ensure that the VLE is being used effectively to improve student performance, satisfaction, learning outcomes and the overall student experience.

6 Misuse of policy

Digital Services will raise policy misuse issues with line managers and the senior management team. Where applicable users may be subject to formal disciplinary procedures.

7 Links to other policies / procedures

This policy should be used in conjunction with a number of University strategies, policies and regulations, including (but not limited to):

- [Copyright Policy](#)
- [Data Protection Policy](#)

- [Data Protection: Policy in relation to special categories of personal data \(and criminal convictions data\)](#)
- [Data Governance Policy](#)
- [Engagement Policy](#)
- [Intellectual Property Policy](#)
- [IT Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- [Online Resource List Policy](#)
- [Records Management Policy](#)
- [Records Retention Schedule](#)
- [Welsh Language Standards](#)

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8 Document version control

Version No:	Reason for change:	Author:	Date of change:
1.1	Updated links and policy titles	Chris Rees	05/06/2026

Approval

The policy will be formally considered and approved in accordance with Committee Terms of Reference outlined in the Academic Quality Handbook.

If the policy affects staff, advice should be sought from HR at the outset to ascertain if consultation is required at JCC. HR will also provide advice on the most appropriate stage to consult with JCC and on whether approval by Council is required

ALL policies submitted for approval must be accompanied by a completed:

- [Equality Impact Assessment](#)
- [Institutional Impact Assessment](#)
- [Data Protection Impact Assessment](#)

Prior to submission to committee, authors are asked to consult the Policy and Planning Team who will check that the document complies with University requirements. The Policy and Planning Team will complete the section below.

For completion by the committee secretary

Please tick to confirm the following:

An institutional Impact Assessment has been completed ☒

An EIA has been completed ☒

A PIA has been completed ☒

Matters requiring consideration by the approving committee:



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