

3. USING ONLINE COLLABORATIVE TOOLS



What is it?

Imagine a document that many people in different locations could work on simultaneously. A tool like this could be useful for teachers collaborating with each other. It could also be used in classroom activities and for setting assignments for learners.

Why collaborate using a shared document?

This is an efficient way to work collaboratively on a document with colleagues even if you're not in the same location. This helps you produce innovative ideas quickly and feedback is much faster too. By using online collaborative tools with learners, we build valuable life skills that they will require in their future education and jobs.

Collaborative writing with Google Docs

Google Docs is like Microsoft Word. However, it's online and many users can write, contribute and comment at the same time.



For your professional development:

- Work on an article or blog post with colleagues.
- Collaborate on a conference paper with peers.
- Co-write an e-book documenting best practices from your school.
- Create a lesson plan repository which can track different versions.
- Record your professional development activities on an on-going basis.



For your classroom teaching:

- Set a group assignment that requires learners to work together on an essay or project.
- Give feedback using the comments and review functions.
- Share a writing template through Google Docs that learners need to use to complete a task.
- Scan this QR code to learn more about using Google Docs.



This guide uses Quick Response (QR) codes. To scan these codes, look for the app in Google Play or App Store and download it for free. To access resources, open the app and hold it above a QR code.

Using online collaborative tools

Collaborative calculations with Google Sheets



Google Sheets is like Microsoft Excel. But like Google Docs, it's online and allows many users to work on it simultaneously.



For your professional development:

- Manage attendance and other administrative tasks with colleagues.
- Create flashcards (see **Flippity** for instructions).
- Organise links to resources for both peers and learners.
- Create report cards and student portfolios.



For your classroom teaching:

- Get learners to do data analysis.
- Ask learners to work in teams to create tables/graphs to include in their assignments and homework.
- Encourage learners to organise their research using Google Sheets to build the skills like referencing and crediting sources.

Collaboration with Padlet



Padlet is a powerful online tool that allows many people to contribute text, links, pictures, files and their own audio or video.

Here are some ideas to get you started:



For your professional development:

- Set up a Padlet that you and your colleagues can use to collect links and resources.
- Use Padlet to collaboratively reflect with colleagues using text, audio and video.
- Brainstorm ideas for an initiative by creating a collaborative mind map.



For your classroom teaching:

- Set a homework task on Padlet. They can write and add pictures and they can also record video or audio on the tool directly. Learners can give feedback to each other along with the teacher.
- Ask learners to post pictures related to your lesson topic before the lesson.

Padlet is a partially free tool that works effectively both as a website and a mobile app. After a certain number of dashboards you need to pay to use this app. Please check the terms and conditions for more details.

This guide is linked to the British Council CPD Framework for Teachers.

It develops the professional practice:

Integrating ICT: developing effective strategies for locating appropriate digital content.

Stage: Awareness