

## Achieving eLearning success at the National Deaf Children's Society

A group of committed individuals at NDCS made a sound business case for eLearning within the organisation. Their efforts paid off, and by focusing on evaluation and clear evidence-based reporting of two pilot projects, they achieved their aim of organisation-wide implementation. Judges in the Charity Learning Awards 2013 were particularly impressed with this planned approach, which set foundations for success and NDCS were declared worthy winners of the award for Organisational Buy-In.



Effective Stakeholder Management is crucial to the success of any project - and that's certainly true when it came to introducing eLearning at the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS). Limited resources meant it was difficult to support all staff using a traditional training approach. It was time to introduce cost effective eLearning into the mix.

The initial goal at NDCS was to get buy-in from senior management to roll out i-learn – *the name given to the new learning management system provided by the Charity Learning Consortium (CLC)* - to all staff. Initially NDCS wanted to be able to offer this as a generic learning resource to staff, with the aim that bespoke content could be added over time.

The decision makers were five executive directors of the charity. Many of the directors were new to eLearning, but demonstrating clearly how the programme could help deliver results ensured i-learn got given the go ahead.

Welcome to NDCS i-learn

NDCS recognises the value of learning. We are committed to supporting your learning and development using various methods of delivery to meet individual learning styles. NDCS will use e-learning along with other methods of learning and development to release the potential of our staff and volunteers and support the achievement of NDCS's strategic aims.



Here you can find a wide range of online courses which can be used as part of your NDCS learning and development programme, or for your own personal development.

Courses can be completed in one go or in bite-sized chunks as many times as required and are available 24/7. This site is accessible from any computer with internet access, so you may also find it convenient to use in your own time at home.

**Please note:** If you input your username and password and both fields return empty, you are inputting incorrect details. Please check and try again. If you have forgotten your password please reset it by clicking [here](#)

If you have any questions about logging in please email: [ITHelpdesk@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:ITHelpdesk@ndcs.org.uk)  
We hope you enjoy your learning!

Username:  Password:



The i-learn journey for NDCS began in December 2012 when Lisa Warner, Deputy Director of Operations, presented a briefing paper for directors focused on the response to a recent staff survey, which identified a clear need to improve L&D. This could be met via the CLC's Moodle eLearning platform. The report clearly identified the cost savings – online IT courses alone would recoup the annual subscription fee. Directors agreed that a small pilot could be run and NDCS became members of the CLC in January 2013.

The pilot ran from January to March 2013 and was managed by a business group of senior managers, the majority of whom were supportive of the potential benefits of eLearning. Each manager agreed to nominate up to three members of staff to take part in the pilot and feedback on their experience. Each senior manager also agreed to commit time to undertake at least one course during the pilot.

In March 2013, evaluation of the pilot found that:

- 96% of staff found i-learn easy to navigate
- 76% were able to find their course easily
- 89% stated they found it easy to learn on their computer
- 89% stated they would recommend the course they completed to a colleague
- 96% stated that they would undertake another i-learn course
- 100% either agreed or strongly agreed that they were comfortable in applying what they learnt

Based on this positive feedback, the Executive Board agreed to a larger pilot to 120 staff from the Children, Young People and Families directorate. In July 2013 Sabina Talib, Project Officer at NDCS, was recruited and given responsibility for the larger pilot. Sabina developed a number of support documents, including an A-Z course list and a communications plan which included the launch of the i-learn brand.

Sabina re-launched and continued to develop the i-learn brand. She introduced the concept of incentivising learning via a prize draw and also started a fortnightly newsletter. Staff information sessions were organised in the various offices to promote i-learn.

Several different methods were used to measure the success of the second, larger pilot: Survey Monkey course evaluations enabled reporting on staff L&D, and reports from i-learn itself made it possible to evaluate cost savings and value for money.

In October 2013 Sabina submitted an i-learn progress report to the Executive Board, which highlighted the impact of the campaign. Since re-launch in mid-August 2013:

**i-learn online**  
New letter: 24 October 2013

**Scared of online learning?**  
Don't be! 100% of our learners said:  
 • They found their i-learn course useful  
 • That they would recommend the course to colleagues  
 • That they would do another i-learn course  
 Try it.. *You never know you might like it!*

**Top 5 Courses**  
Most popular on i-learn

1. Excel- Creating Charts
2. Facilitation Skills
3. Budgeting Basics
4. Dealing with Stress
5. Project Management

**IT Update:**  
Error on your i-learn? Print screen and e-mail to [helpdesk@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:helpdesk@ndcs.org.uk)

**Don't forget all learning in work-time, needs to be approved by your Line Manager**

**Complete a course for you chance to win £25 worth of Vouchers!**  
Prize draw takes place 27 November

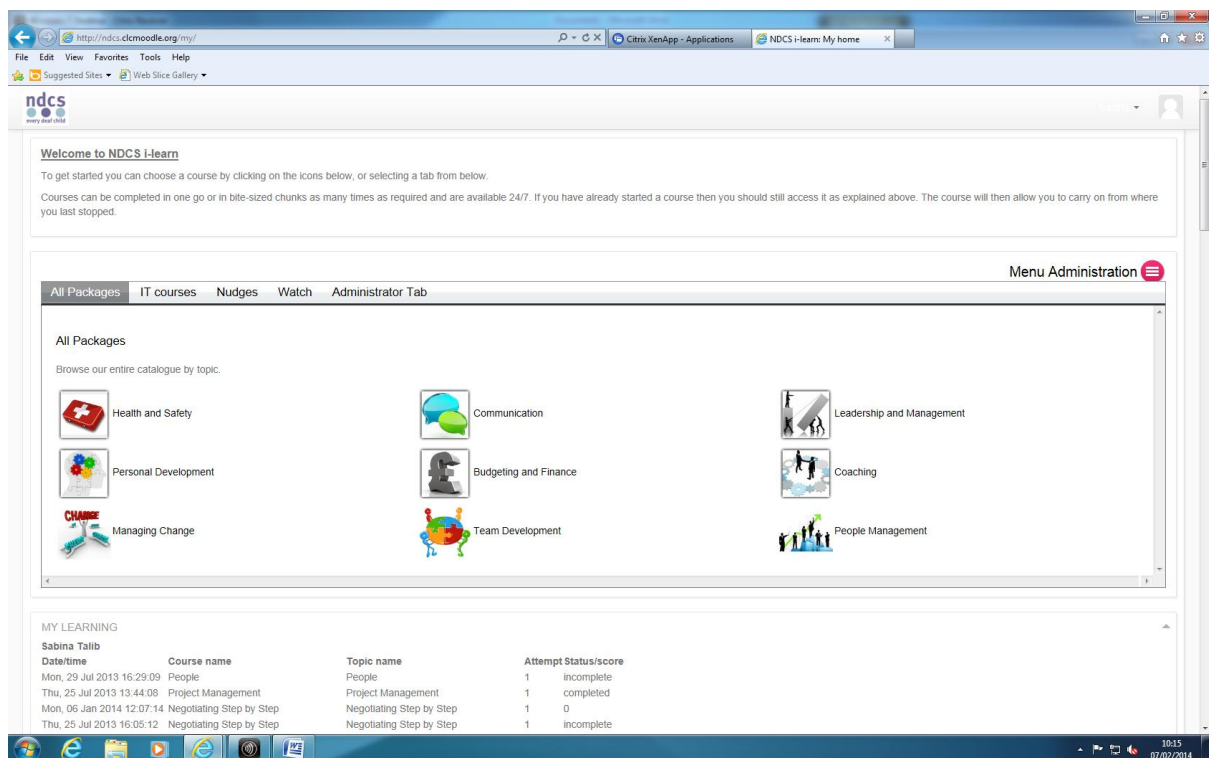
**i-learn available to all staff from 1st November**  
**Log on: [www.ndcs.clcmoodle.org](http://www.ndcs.clcmoodle.org)**  
Username: Your E-mail and Password: Changeme

This was one of the fortnightly newsletters that were created.

- 47 staff members had logged (40%) onto i-learn within a 11 week period
- 25 courses had been completed
- 100% of people had reported they found the course useful, that they would use i-learn again and would recommend the course to a colleague.

On the basis of these results, the Executive Board agreed to approve all staff access to i-learn from 1 November 2013. Objective achieved! They also requested work on two bespoke courses. The possibility of rolling the project out to volunteers and casual workers is also being discussed following the annual i-learn review in March 2014.

This is a huge achievement in 10 months. A small group of committed individuals took i-learn from proposal, through an initial pilot, then a larger pilot, focused on evaluation and clear evidence-based reporting to achieve the aim of organisation-wide implementation. There's still work to be done to increase usage across the organisation, but continued marketing and the planned use of reports for each directorate to encourage staff development are already tackling this.



Sabina Talib, Project Officer at NDCS said: “The National Deaf Children’s Society is delighted to win this award. We are working hard to increase the profile of Learning and Development within NDCS and are lucky to have support at Executive Board level.

“Through effective planning, evaluation and perseverance we have achieved our initial goal of organisational buy-in within a 10 month period. We have some way to go to ensure we create a positive L&D culture within NDCS and will continue to work hard to achieve this.”

**Top tips to getting buy-in from the board, from Sabina Talib,  
Project Officer at the National Deaf Children's Society:**

- Explain how on-line learning works and the benefits to the individual and organisation. You can't win everyone over immediately but you can try to understand their viewpoint and begin to eradicate their fears/ barriers through continual engagement. Focus on those that will engage, ensuring their experience is a positive, taking their feedback on board with an aim to continually improve.
- Provide options to stakeholders – explain the positives and negatives about on-line learning and also to *not* having on-line learning. The comparison should help people make a decision, and decisions equate to buy-in.
- Directors like to understand cost and benefits – so make sure you work out how much training is costing at present and how much you are saving per course by using on-line learning.
- Establish what your Executive Board regard as 'success' in terms of on-line learning – then you can focus on achieving this 'success' in order to get buy-in.
- Bring in or create resources to help deliver your project and keep the momentum going. This momentum will help you engage more effectively, and help keep the project a high priority.
- Create a brand for on-line learning that is recognisable to staff and continually market your offerings to ensure it is at the forefront of people's minds. Create a buzz with your marketing and a prize draw – incentivise log-in and celebrate learning!
- Evaluate learning and regularly report upon usage – utilise your learners to share their learning experience with others.



**About the National Deaf Children's Society:**

The [National Deaf Children's Society](#) (NDCS) is the leading charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children and their families. Given the right support deaf children can achieve the same as any other child. There are more than 45,000 deaf children in the UK. NDCS works to ensure deaf children get the support they need by providing impartial advice to families about the range of communication methods open to them and by campaigning on their behalf.

**About the Charity Learning Consortium:**

Consortium members save **twice** as much money on L&D compared to non-members in the sector; are **twice** as likely to report positive changes in staff behaviour and *almost three* times more likely to report that using learning technologies has improved their organisation's productivity.

More than 120 charities, housing associations and not for profits already benefit from collaborating with our unique organisation – would you like to find out more? Please go to [www.charitylearning.org](http://www.charitylearning.org) or connect with us on [twitter @charitylearning](#). We also love to chat, so do please give us a call on 08451 707 702.