



Free Courses

hosted by

 The
  Learning
   Link



The Learning Link is a **FREE** service which is dedicated to helping adults gain new skills and increase their self-confidence. The benefits of developing your skills and having the confidence to use them can be far reaching and life changing. It can also improve your health and wellbeing.

If you want to just brush up on your reading or writing skills, improve your numeracy skills, increase your digital skills, learn how to use the internet safely or improve your speaking and understanding of the English language, then get in touch.

For further information on what we offer or to register your interest in any of our classes please contact us.

Call: 01856 879200

email: thelearninglinkenquiries@orkney.gov.uk

or Scan the QR code to register with us online



All classes will be held at The Learning Link, 1 St Rognvald Street, Kirkwall, KW15 1PR unless stated otherwise.

Courses can only run if we have sufficient numbers. We will contact participants that have registered an interest with us and confirm dates, times and venue prior to the course commencing.

Microsoft Word

Would you like to learn the basics of Microsoft Word? Be able to create documents such as letters, flyers, reports, newsletters, posters etc, and know how and where to save them? The Learning Link are offering a bitesize course that will cover:

- ❖ Files and folders – create, open, close, save, delete, rename
- ❖ Editing tools – using cut, copy and paste, spelling and grammar checker
- ❖ Using bold, underline, italics, font size and colour
- ❖ Formatting text – line spacing, paragraphs, bullet points
- ❖ Page layout – fonts, colour, size, alignment, margins
- ❖ Inserting pictures, borders and tables
- ❖ Save and save as functions
- ❖ The opportunity to practice using the above to create a document

You will need your own laptop. If you do not have one, we can arrange for you to loan one of ours.

- *Tutor: Kathy Potts (4 sessions)*
- *Tuesdays*
- *20th & 27th January 2026*
- *3rd & 10th February 2026*
- *10:00 -12:00*

Numeracy

Have you always struggled with Maths?

Do you find sums difficult?

Do you wish you had a qualification in Mathematics?

We offer free support, whatever the level! We can help you work out your starting point and achieve your numeracy goals.

Courses we have offered previously include:

- SQA Numeracy qualifications at Level 3 and Level 4
- Mental arithmetic and number skills
- Working out fractions, decimals and percentages
- All things statistics and probability
- Understanding ratio
- Time – 12 and 24 hours
- Budgeting

Here is a chance to learn all those things that you never understood!

Microsoft Excel

This course is for people who have *some* digital skills but need help and support to better understand safely using Excel. You will learn tips, tricks, and have the opportunity to ask questions.

You will need your own laptop. If you do not have one, we can arrange for you to loan one of ours.

During the course, we will cover:

WEEK 1 - Excel Basics & Navigation

- ❖ Getting into Excel
- ❖ Enter, edit, and format data
- ❖ Work with basic formula
- ❖ Excel interface (Ribbon, worksheet, cells, columns, rows)
- ❖ Data types (text, numbers, dates)
- ❖ Adjusting column widths/row heights

WEEK 2 - Working with Tables

- ❖ Basic formatting (font, alignment, colours, borders)
- ❖ Using formulas
- ❖ Making tables impactful
- ❖ Learn essential formulas
- ❖ Understand cell references

WEEK 3 - Tables, Charts, and Data Tools

- ❖ Creating Excel Tables
- ❖ Sorting, filtering, slicers
- ❖ Basic charts (Column, Line, Pie)
- ❖ Formatting charts
- ❖ Conditional formatting (highlight duplicates, colour scales, icon sets)
- ❖ Create 1–2 charts from your data

- *Tutor: Kate Wilden (3 sessions)*
- *Mondays*
- *19th & 26th January 2026*
- *2nd February 2026*
- *13:30 -15:00*

Basics of Internet and Email

This course is for people who have *some* digital skills but need help and support to better understand safely using the Internet and email. You will learn tips, tricks, and have the opportunity to ask questions.

You will need your own laptop, iPad or Android tablet. If you do not have one, we can arrange for you to loan one of ours.

During the course, we will cover:

- ❖ Using Web Browsers, Improved searching for reliable information, save webpages
- ❖ Using VPN's and joining secure connections,
- ❖ Staying Safe Online + your digital footprint
- ❖ Using online forms & creating accounts + using and understanding OTP/2FA
- ❖ Use common online services (Comparing prices, Checking bus timetables, Ferries, etc...)
- ❖ Buying online from legitimate companies, how to check & see real reviews, options to pay securely for goods/services
- ❖ Folders - Inbox, Sent, Drafts, outbox, spam
- ❖ Read an email, send an email, reply, forward
- ❖ Attachments (photos, documents)
- ❖ Phishing and scam email awareness
- ❖ Reporting scams & phishing attempts
- ❖ Where to get help & report incidents

- *Tutor: Chrissie Matthews (4 sessions)*
- *Wednesdays*
- *11th, 18th, 25th February 2026*
- *4th March 2026*
- *14:00 – 16:00*

Expressive Writing

Are you looking for something fun and different to do? Do you fancy learning new skills with new people?

Expressive writing may be exactly what you are looking for!

In this form of self-expression, expressive writing is personal and can be a way of self-discovery and personal growth, it can improve your health and wellbeing as well as give you confidence to convey yourself by using words and images more creatively.

In an informal group setting, you will be encouraged to write freely and creatively to communicate your thoughts and feelings on a few topics of your choice.

We will use creative prompts to ignite a spark in your imagination on different themes, for example: memories, seasons, music etc.

A variety of art media can be used to illustrate your words on paper including images, stencilling, stamping and colour to capture moods. Let your imagination flow freely without worrying about the product – just be yourself!

Communication

Brush up on your communication skills and gain a qualification to help improve your confidence and widen your job opportunities or further education.

- Develop reading skills through reading a range of texts i.e. articles, emails, leaflets etc.
- Writing in different styles i.e. emails, messages and instructions.
- Learn how to organise writing in sentences and paragraphs, and how to use punctuation and grammar correctly.
- Improve confidence in speaking clearly and effectively, by joining in group discussions and activities.
- Develop listening skills for understanding different situations i.e. discussions and podcasts.
- Communicate in different ways for different purposes i.e. giving information, instructions, and using persuasive language.

This short course is perfect for anyone looking to boost their communication skills and will help participants to speak with more ease and impact.

Communicate better, feel more confident, be heard.

SQA Accredited Courses

National 3 & 4 Communication & Literacy Skills

National 2, 3 & 4 ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)

National 3 & 4 Numeracy

These core skills are paramount to applying for work or further learning

Absolute Beginners Course (ABC) – Introducing a Digital World

If you have **no digital skills** and would like to learn, we are keen to hear from you and help you start your learning journey.

Learning digital skills can be good for your health & wellbeing, reduce social isolation, learn new skills, connect with people and services, and so much more.

Do you ever wonder....

- What is digital and what is on the Internet?
- What is an email and how do I use it?
- What can I do if I go on the Internet?
- How can I keep in touch with my family and friends?
- Is it for me and can I use the internet safely?

Learning to use the internet and other digital skills can be daunting at first, but in each session, we will ensure we work at your pace and on topics you need to learn, or that you are interested in.

Bring your own device (if you have one) or you can borrow one whilst learning.

You have nothing to lose but lots to gain

Digital Support Hub – Kirkwall Library - MacGillivray Room

every Friday 2pm – 3.30pm (Last session: 27th March 2026)

This friendly and informal group is for people who have some digital skills but want to learn and improve their current knowledge, share ideas, seek guidance, or support.

You can drop in when you need support, or like many others, attend each week as part of their learning and social circle. Bring your own digital device with you, be that a smartphone, tablet, laptop, iPhone or iPad, and we will do our best to support and answer your questions.

Common themes to date include:

- Emails including phishing, scams etc.
- Problems getting online.
- Checking if a text or email is legitimate.
- Improving online safety.
- Buying goods online and paying for them.
- Accessing online services and registering for them.
- Communicating using WhatsApp, Messenger, etc.
- Privacy settings on social media and following topics of interest to you.

Technology made simple - learn, connect, and thrive!