

# **ECDL for Educators:**

a formative evaluation of ICT skills training in context

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**Preface by Wendy Swann**



## Preface



When asked, why did we feel a need to write our own ECDL courseware when others already existed, my reply was simple, “Because teachers don’t want to make that leap of faith from learning computer functionality and then having to re-apply those skills to their everyday needs – when they could be learning those skills in context.”

ECDL for Educators courseware is a unique suite of ICT training programmes with exercises and exemplars solely developed in context for the ICT skills training needs of teachers in schools and colleges working towards the ECDL qualification.

Aston Swann commissioned this MirandaNet research programme, with the support of the British Computer Society, to investigate the effectiveness of ECDL for Educators – ICT skills training in context. In differentiating the dedicated ECDL for Educators courseware from other generic ECDL courseware this formative evaluation has also, fascinatingly, raised other factors that impact on the learner’s complete ECDL experience.

Not only is learning in context important, but also the pedagogy of how that learning is delivered. Understanding the teacher as a learner; their preferred learning styles and how best to support them are vital elements to the success of each candidate. This is also reflected in the assessment and testing environments of each candidate.

To quality assure delivery of the learning process, we address all these issues in our Teacher training implementation and support programme.

Aston Swann is very proud that, during the period of this formative evaluation, we were awarded the Naacemark for ICT Education Resource Development.<sup>1</sup> Our feedback procedure has also enabled us to respond to demand for ECDL courseware in context for the 14-19 age group. I anticipate accreditation of the ECDL for Education – Student Programme as this report goes to press.

Recognition in the National Qualifications Framework of the BCS IT User Certificates that incorporate the ECDL modules means the qualification attracts school performance indicator points (in England).

I am very grateful for the huge amount of work put into this evaluation by Christina Preston, Margaret Danby and the MirandaNet team and look forward to incorporating their feedback and ideas into future developments of the ECDL for Educators programmes.

Wendy Swann. Programme Director, Aston Swann.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.naace.org/nqas.asp?menuitemId=5>