# Multimedia Advocacy Principles

A guide to using the process of Multimedia Advocacy with people

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# Working with People

The Multimedia Advocacy process involves many people; the relevant person, their friends and families, carers, supporters, and other community members.

There are seven principles that you should always observe when using the Multimedia Advocacy approach:

1)      Keep the person at the centre of all planning

2)      Follow the person-centred principles in everything we do

3)      Know the needs and wishes of the people we support

4)      Be creative and help to make things happen

5)      Provide opportunities to enable informed choices

6)      Provide accessible information for and about the person

7)      Consent

# Keep the Person at the Centre of all Planning

Multimedia Advocacy or rather 'Multimedia Self Advocacy' is very much about the service user or learner being at the centre and being in control.



To have control over one's life is an important principle of person-centred practice. It means that the person can say where they want to live, what they want to do, where they want to go, how they want to be supported, and by whom. These choices should be clearly captured and documented in the Multimedia Advocacy portfolio.

There should be evidence that clearly demonstrates how we know that this decision is what the person wants? The use of video can be very powerful here.

## Follow the Person-Centred Principles in Everything we do

In order for this to happen, the person-centred planning principles need to be embedded within every aspect of the organisation that we represent.



Ideally, the principles need to be visible in the various ways we work; the way we describe staff roles, the way we timetable our service offer or organize our curriculum, the way we work together as staff and how we apply our resources as an organisation.

A person-centred approach needs to be a part of our organisation's culture, to ensure that this is part of all our day to day operations.

## Know the Needs and Wishes of the People we Support

The person-centred approach enshrines the way in which we regard people with disabilities.



Our services, whether social care or educational, should not be driven by individuals' deficits but by their needs and wishes.

It is important that we work hard to identify the person's individual needs and support them to express their wishes. We then use this information to ask what we can do to ensure that this person has as normal and meaningful a life as possible.

How can we ensure that they can stay in control of their life? We really have to work together with families and friends to ensure that the person's voice is heard and listened to. This is where Multimedia Advocacy provides our organisations with the tools and ways of working that are required.

## Be Creative and Help to Make Things Happen

Once we identify the needs, let's think about how we respond to these needs and what it means for our work?



Remember, that person-centred planning does not mean getting everything the person wants. It means working towards things that the person wants the most.

How do you know that this is what the person wants the most?

Remember to clearly evidence this in the person's Multimedia Advocacy portfolio or plan. Be creative to ensure that the goal is being achieved.

## Provide Opportunities to Enable Informed Choices

For person-centred planning to work, individuals need to have lots of opportunities and access to various experiences.



By building a bank of personal experiences, individuals will grow a send of the ways in which they might like to fill their lives. This will enable them to make genuinely informed choices and therefore empower them to be in control.

Again record all of the opportunities and provide multimedia evidence that shows the person's choice.

## Provide Accessible Information for and About the Person

Informed choices also require easy availability of information about both the person and the opportunities that exist for the person.



Again, Multimedia Advocacy can facilitate this in our organisations.

## Consent

The Multimedia Advocacy approach involves working in partnership with other family members, carers, colleagues and professionals; working together to improve the life of an individual. Sharing information in this context is
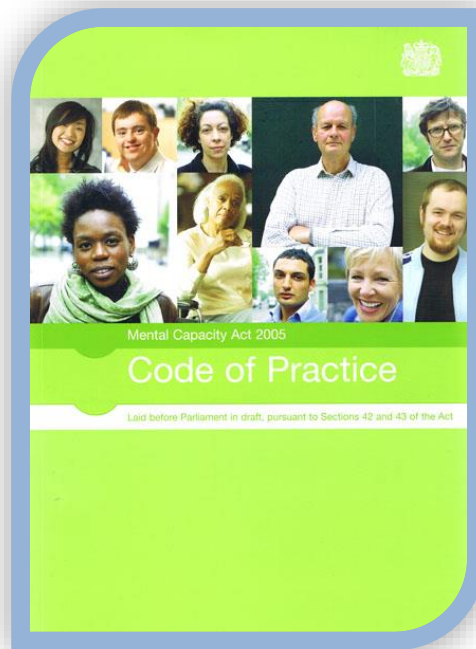


important, but always think of the person's best interests and remember that they have the right to consent.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 was designed to protect and give power back to vulnerable people who may be seen as lacking their Mental Capacity.

The act applies to anyone who works in health and social care and is involved in the care, treatment or support of people aged 16 and over who live in England and Wales and who are unable to make all or some decisions for themselves.

There are five Mental Capacity principles:

1)      Assume that the person has capacity

2)      Take as many steps as possible to enable the person to make a decision

3)      Everyone has the right to make an unwise decision

4)      If a decision needs to be made on behalf of the person it must always be made in the best interest of this individual

5)      The decision or action must be least restrictive for the person in terms of their human rights and freedom of action.

These principles also apply when we are working with multimedia. We should always ensure that the person we are supporting is giving their consent to take part in activities, to share information with other people, to be filmed or photographed etc.

# Working with Technology

The process of Multimedia Advocacy will require you to work with various technologies. When using these technologies there are two basic principles that you must always observe:

1)      Privacy

2)      Security
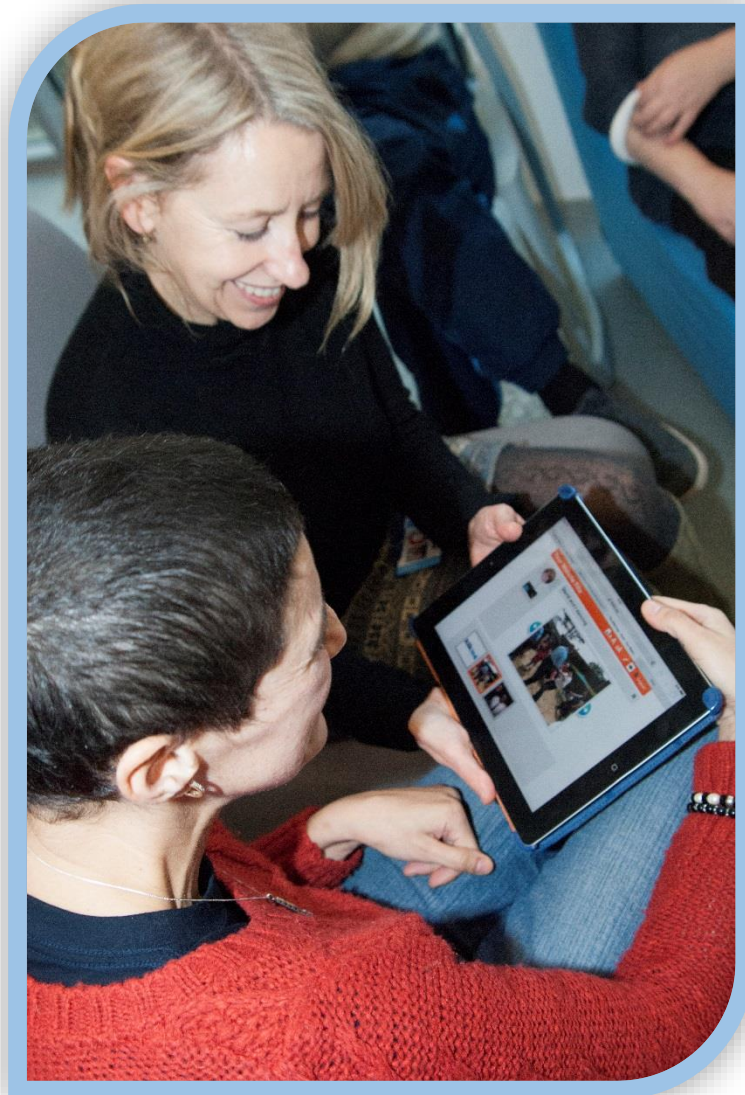
## Privacy

Privacy is one of the basic human rights. When using the Multimedia Advocacy approach, always ensure that the person knows their basic Human Rights, such as the right to privacy; support them to exercise this right for example by adding a note on their door: 'Please knock before you enter'.
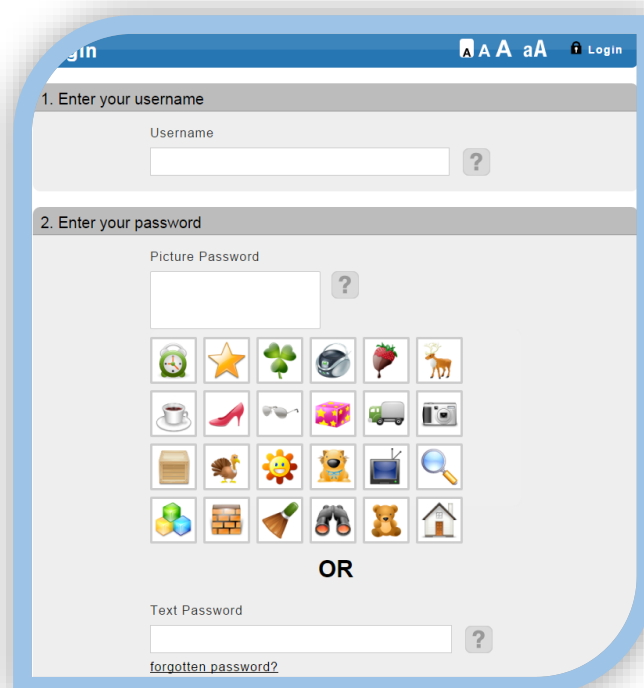


Privacy also relates to information. There might be some information that is important to include in the person's Multimedia Advocacy portfolio but it is not something that the person wants to share with everyone e.g. 'My morning routine' – the personal assistant might need to have access to such information but others may not.

Please respect the individual's right to privacy.

## Security

Multimedia Advocacy practice requires working with other peoples' personal information. Under the Data Protection Act 1998 you have the responsibility to protect this information. The most relevant principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 when using the Multimedia Approach are the protection of data and its accuracy.

We should also think about the security of information when using a digital camera for example. Always ensure that the files are transferred to a dedicated folder on a password protected computer and delete the files from the camera as soon as possible.

It is a good Multimedia Advocacy practice to password protect documents before adding them to the Multimedia Advocacy portfolio.

Keep all passwords for Multimedia Advocacy portfolios secure at all times, and do not share it with anyone who does not have the right to view the Multimedia Advocacy portfolio.

Review Multimedia Advocacy portfolios on a regular basis to ensure that the person's journey is continuous and that the information stored is always accurate and up to date.

# Working with Media

Multimedia Advocacy practice requires you to use pictures, sounds, text and video. There are two principles that we must always observe when using the Multimedia Advocacy approach:

1) Copyrights

2) Positive representation
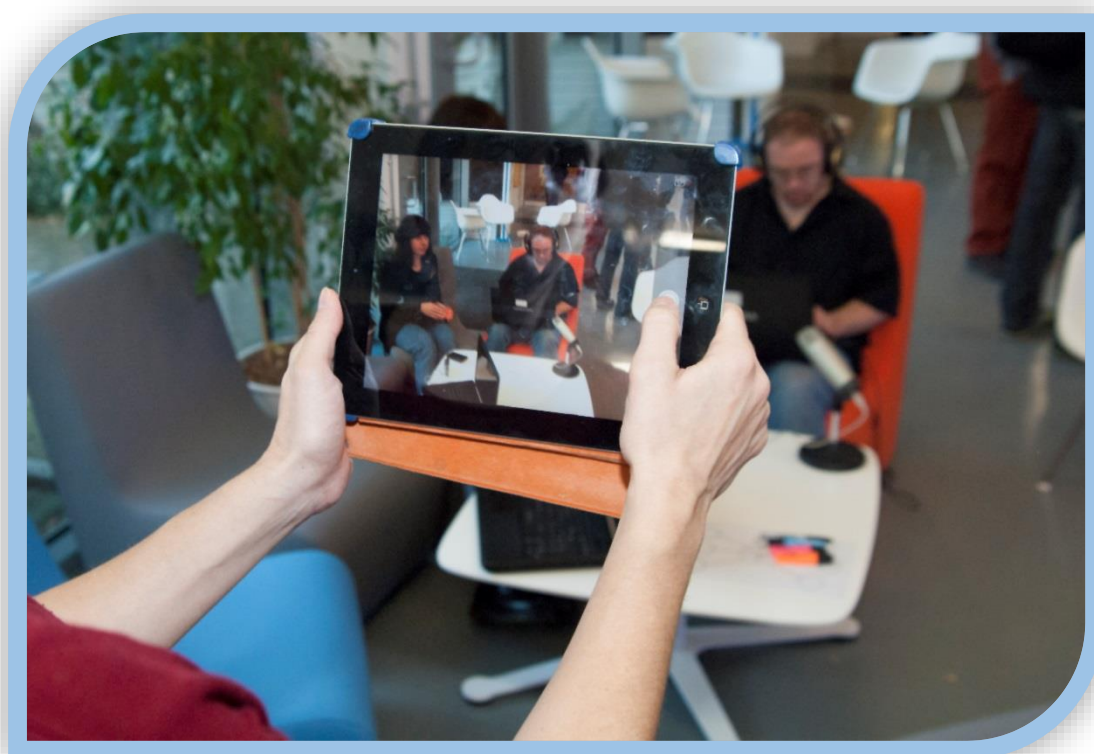
## Copyrights

There might be times where you will want to find a picture, a video or a piece of music rather than create your own.

If you are using other people's pictures, videos, music or text, always ensure that you have gained their permission first.

There are also many websites that offer royalty free media for others to use:

- o http://www123rf.com

- o http://www.stockfreeimages.com

- o http://www.istockphoto.com

- o http://www.freephotosbank.com

## Positive Representation

Always ensure that the information about the person is shown in a positive light. Never use images, video, sound or text that is derogatory and shows the person in a negative light, in distress or of a private nature e.g. having a bath, going to the toilet.

If you feel it is important to include some information about the person's behavior that could be seen as challenging;

Instead of saying 'John exhibits challenging behaviours when he first arrives at school', say 'Please ensure that John is greeted by one person when he arrives to school in the morning and allow him to take his time getting into the hall.'

In other words, always explain what support staff need to do to ensure that John stays calm and happy. When you are unsure check with your colleague if they would be happy if someone said this about you? If not, find a better way to say it.