



NPTLG Learning Platform

Vision

ICT increasingly allows learning and work to take place regardless of location. Where students and teachers connect to each other and the resources they need, simply, quickly and securely. And where education is engaging and personalised – so that every one of our students has the chance to reach their full potential.

At the heart of delivery of this vision of transformed learning lies ICT.

The Authority believes that Information & Communications Technologies (ICT) will play a major and increasing role in re-shaping and improving the nature of teaching and learning within the County Borough.

Learning Platforms

'Learning platform' is a term used to describe software systems which manage learning materials and access for learners. It is a general term covering a wide range of software whose core role is to manage the learning of learners. Learning platforms include integrated learning systems (ILS), content management learning systems, virtual learning environments (VLE) and managed learning environments (MLE).

The facilities provided by different learning platforms include the management and curriculum mapping of learning materials, assessment and tracking of learner progress, tools for teacher support and communications.

Connected Learning Community

Our vision for schools/learning establishments of the future lie within a connected learning community; consisting of a web of connections involving parents, local businesses/services and the wider world.

A connected Learning Community such as this requires 5 key technology components:

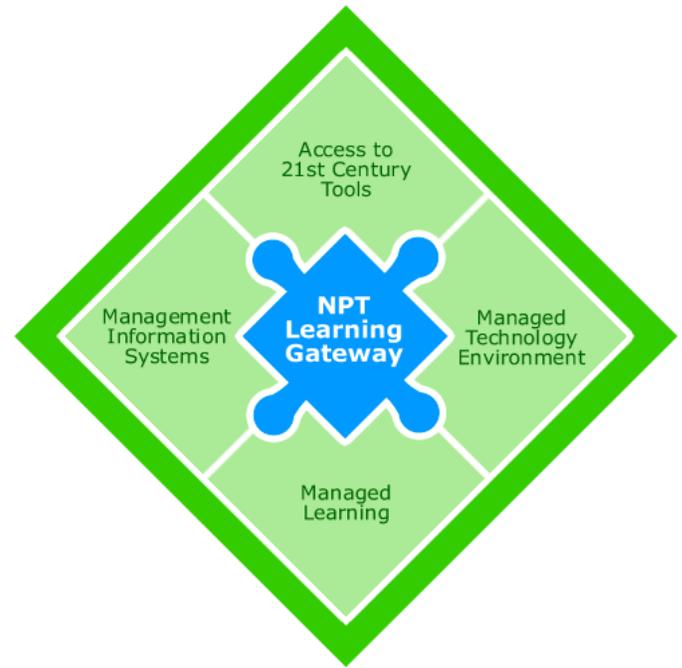
- Effective Management Information Systems (MIS) – Information held in Management Information System should be up to date and accurate. It is important that data is entered once but can be used many times by different people to meet differing needs.
- A Learning Gateway – A single point of entry where the user is recognized and access can be given to the resources and areas to which the learner has appropriate permission. For example the NPTLG will know if the user is a pupil, a member of staff, or a parent.
- Access to 21st Century Tools – This means both current technology devices and current facilities. For example, learners may want to take part in a WIKI using their mobile phone.
- Managed Learning – Access to data on the MIS system should enable a learner to track progress and for the teacher/tutor to plan the next steps setting appropriate targets.
- Managed Technology Environments – The learner/Teacher/Tutor should not need to worry about the technology. It should meet their needs as transparently as possible.
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NPT Learning Gateway – NPTLG

At the heart of the Connected Learning Community is e-portal technology. E-Portals can bring disparate information and data together and present it to users according to their unique requirements. For example, the portal can be used to bring parents into the learning process by providing them with real-time information showing how their children are progressing, what their current learning tasks are and giving them access to relevant learning materials.

Teachers/Tutors can also use the portal to collaborate on projects and share materials within and beyond the traditional school boundaries, saving time and improving quality. The challenge to schools is to bring communication under a single technology umbrella whilst extending boundaries to include the wider community.

The challenge to Neath Port Talbot is to bring school and other learning communities together into an overarching infrastructure. The answer to these challenges is the Neath Port Talbot Learning Gateway (NPTLG) that connects people by connecting systems through Microsoft SharePoint portal technology.



NPTLG will be easy to access and offer the flexibility to enable users to:

- **Communicate** – Share ideas through e-mail, discussion, WIKIS (A wiki is a collection of web pages designed to enable anyone who accesses it to contribute or modify content) and Blogs (A blog (an abridgment of the term web log) is a website, usually maintained by an individual, with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video.). The use of these functions are an expectation of the current generation of learners.
- **Collaborate** – Share teaching and learning materials. Work together on projects and themes.
- **Create** – Develop their creativity skills and for teaching and learning to be accessed in a creative way.

- **Content** – Gain other users views on content. Present effective practice which can be made available to specific groups or all users.
- **Contribute** – Add ideas and views to documents, policies and wider educational issues.
- **Community** – Meet online with other like minded users to discuss ideas.

The NPTLG will be accessible over the Internet allowing users to work at a place and pace convenient to them. There is the potential that such a development could transform teaching and learning.