

10

Ten Principles for successful E-learning



E-learning has been developed to cost-effectively provide auxiliary and improved learning experiences beyond those available in the classroom. Students facing economic, family, physical or geographic constraints can take advantage of online learning opportunities. Furthermore, students learning in the classroom can augment their learning outcomes by participating in hybrid or fully online courses.

In 2005, Professors Anderson and McCormick wrote **A Common Framework for E-learning Quality and Ten Pedagogic Principles of E-learning** describing an approach to the development of effective e-learning programs for Becta, the British government body which promotes technology in learning. According to the two authors, the Ten Principles may help designers to construct pedagogically sound e-learning materials and related activities. The principles may also help teachers to choose resources; design teaching and learning activities based on those resources; and support such activities while they take place.

Anderson and McCormick state that there is an implicit assumption in their approach that the more of the ten principles are embodied, the better the quality of the pedagogy; and the fewer embodied principles, the lower the quality. Pedagogy is defined as the actions which shape the learning experience ranging from technical infrastructure to course design to teaching. The authors further state that, “learners are not passive recipients, indeed, one of the pedagogic principles draws on the idea that learners have agency.

Learning does not take place without the learner exercising this “agency”; a passive learner exercises no agency and hence learning will be limited.”¹ Therefore, successful e-learning programs must provide students with an active role in the learning process.

This paper will explore the Ten Pedagogic Principles of E-learning as defined by Anderson and McCormick, and present their application through the **it's learning** platform.

¹Anderson, John and McCormick, Robert, 2005. Ten Pedagogic Principles of E-learning, Observatory for New Technologies and Education

PRINCIPLE 1: MATCH TO THE CURRICULUM

The pedagogy should be matched with and aligned to the appropriate curriculum through clear objectives; the relevance of content covered; the appropriateness of student activities; and the nature of the assessment.

Learning objectives or learning goals are statements that describe what a learner should be able to do as a result of the learning process.

it's learning supports the import of learning objectives from regional standards, district or school standards, or even teacher-defined course goals. Imported learning objectives can be edited and adapted as needed. Teachers can then tie the learning objectives to the various learning activities and assessments in their course. Reports track performance on assignments, and against learning objectives.

The screenshot displays the 'it's learning' platform interface. The main window is titled 'Add assignment' and shows a form for creating a new assignment. The title is 'Case 3'. The text area contains the following text: 'Marketing plan for small business: Write a marketing plan for a small business enterprise in the UK. Use at least 2 of the analysis methods you have learned.' Below the text is a diagram showing three overlapping circles labeled 'Product', 'Price', and 'Target'. The 'Deadline' is set to 'At a specific time' on '30/04/2010'. The 'Mandatory' checkbox is checked. The 'Active' checkbox is checked. The 'Files' section is empty. The 'Learning objectives' section is empty. The 'Assessment' dropdown is set to 'Do not use assessment'. The 'Use groups' dropdown is set to 'Do not use groups'. A secondary window titled 'Select learning objective - Google Chrome' is open, showing a list of learning objectives. The objective '3c) Business enterprises details' is selected.

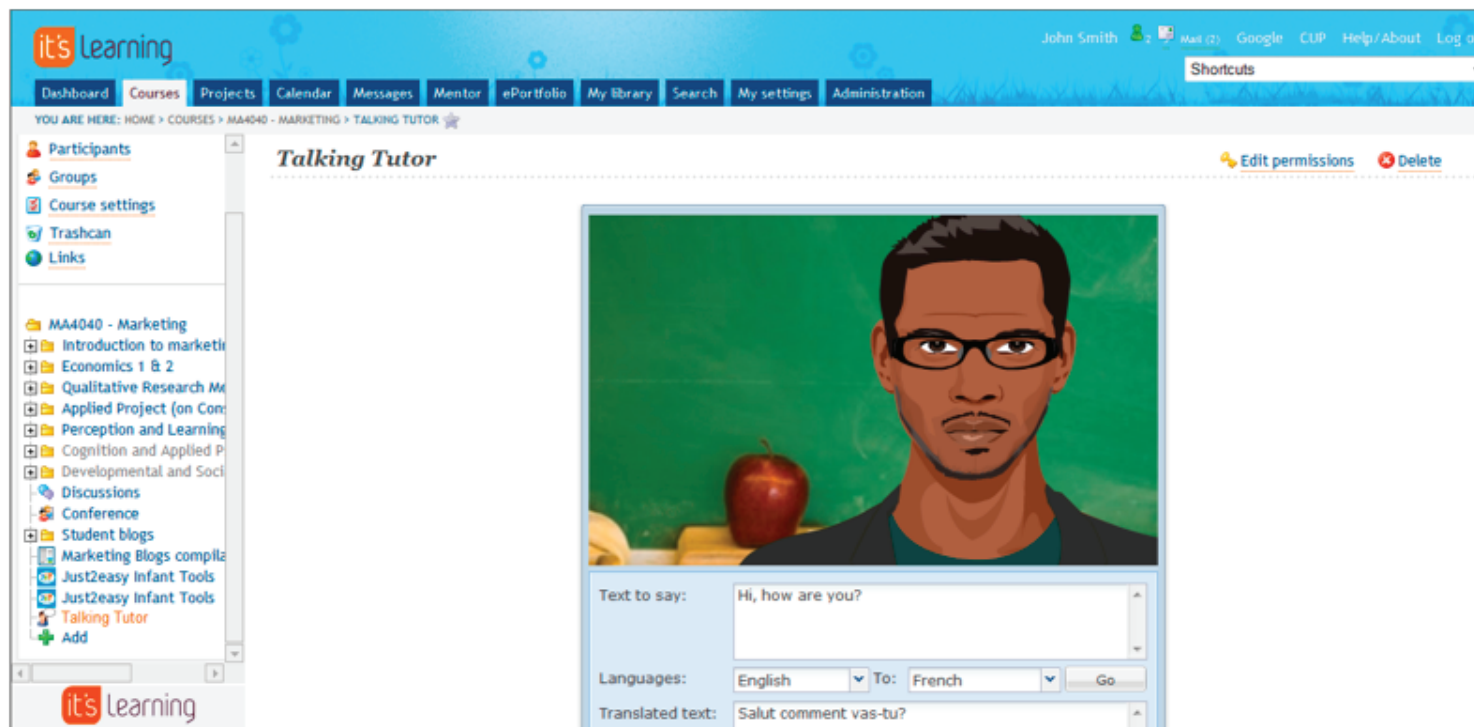
Linking a learning objective to an assignment in it's learning

PRINCIPLE 2: INCLUSION

The pedagogy should support inclusive practice seen in terms of different types and range of achievement; physical disabilities that can be particularly supported by e-learning; different social and ethnic groups; and gender.

it's learning is designed to place the student in charge of their own education. Students can set and work toward their own goals. The **it's learning** platform supports aids including Braille, magnifying and audio displays and serial navigation used by the blind and the dyslexic.

The range of communications approaches provided support the practices of a wide variety of social, ethnic and gender preferences.



Talking Tutor in it's learning. Speaks and translates from several languages.

PRINCIPLE 3: LEARNER ENGAGEMENT

The pedagogy should engage and motivate learners. This engagement should be evident in an ethos of being both educational and motivating.

it's learning provides the means to deliver high quality digital learning applications fully integrated into any course. Students learn by creating text and multimedia content, and by embedding Web 2.0 content in their assignments, discussions and projects. The user interface is friendly and accessible, avoiding confusion or discouragement of students and teachers. Progress reports and task lists keep students fully up-to-date of their status against their goals at all times.

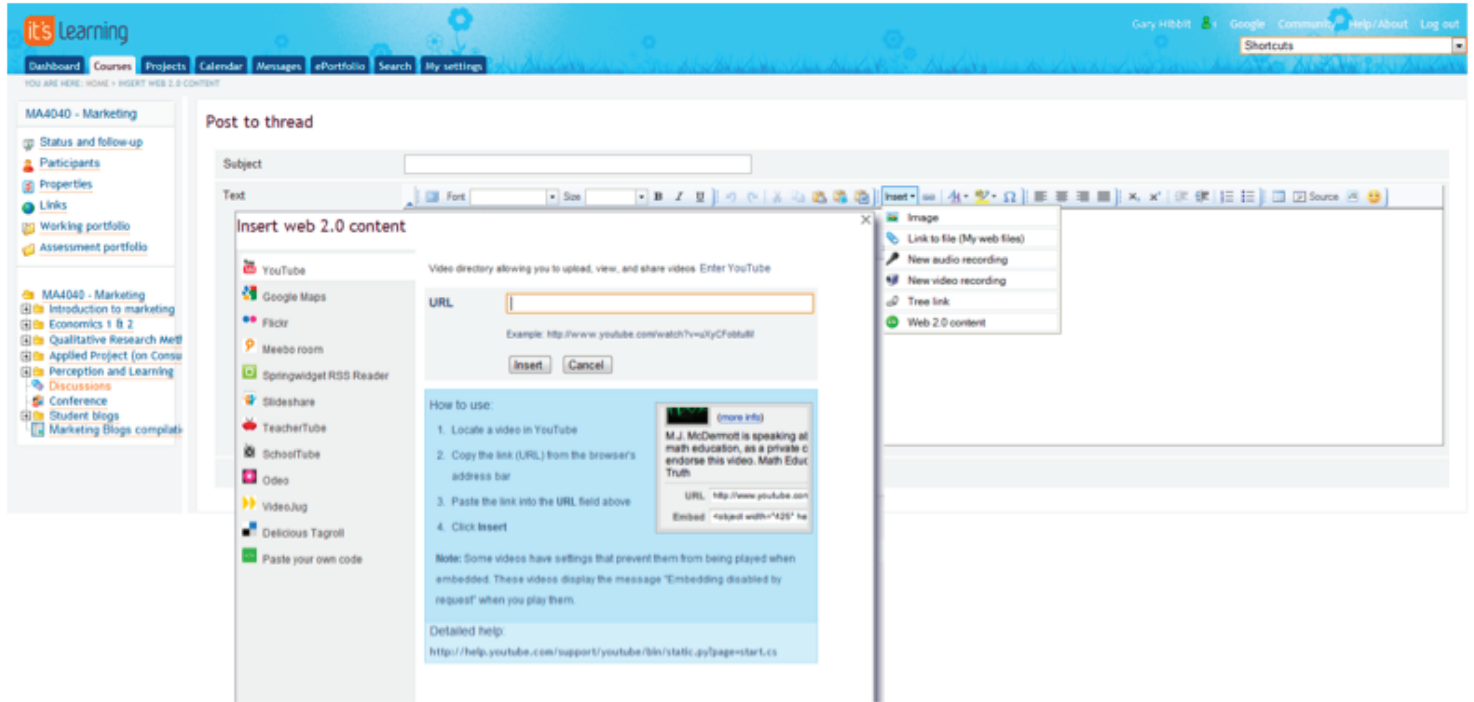


Personal "Dashboard" for a student in it's learning

PRINCIPLE 4: INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

It should be evident why learning technologies are being used, rather than a non-technological approach which achieves the same end as effectively. E-learning should be fit for purpose.

it's learning provides the technology, tools and professional development that makes it easy to create a connected, personalised learning environment that challenges students to practice problem-solving, to work together and to use creativity to construct, share, and present their ideas, thinking and learning.



Embedding web 2.0 content in the it's learning editor.

PRINCIPLE 5: EFFECTIVE LEARNING

This principle can be demonstrated in a variety of ways; for example, by using a range of different approaches in the learning platform that will allow the student to choose one that suits her, or that can be personalised to her, or by satisfying a number of the characteristics of good learning (learner agency; learner autonomy; enabling or encouraging collaboration).

Students have a wide variety of learning styles and needs. Language, experience, interests and ability all determine the ability and approach to learning. it's learning supports the needs of the individual students by offering an Individual Learning Plan for every student and by providing data on student performance on every assignment, and on the results of every curriculum and assessment element included.

The Assessment portfolios organise student work and create reflective moments in it's learning. Students can easily collaborate with fellow students and with teachers, administrators and parents to better support every student's educational needs.



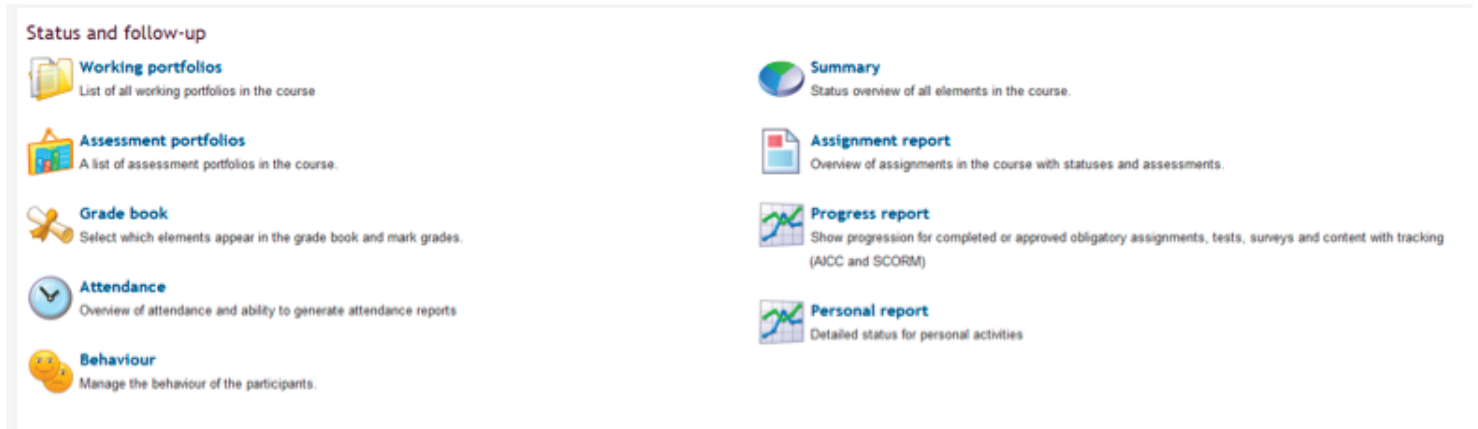
Element of a student ePortfolio in it's learning.

PRINCIPLE 6: FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

The pedagogy should provide formative assessments.

it's learning formative assessments provide immediate feedback on performance, supporting learning from the assessment experience. Projects, discussions and various other formats support peer assessment, and students are encouraged to reflect on their progress against their own goals in their personal portfolios.

In the **it's learning** platform a student's behavioural, social and academic objectives are brought together for action, reflection and feedback. The Progress Reports provide a clear report to the student and teachers about the students progress against expectations.

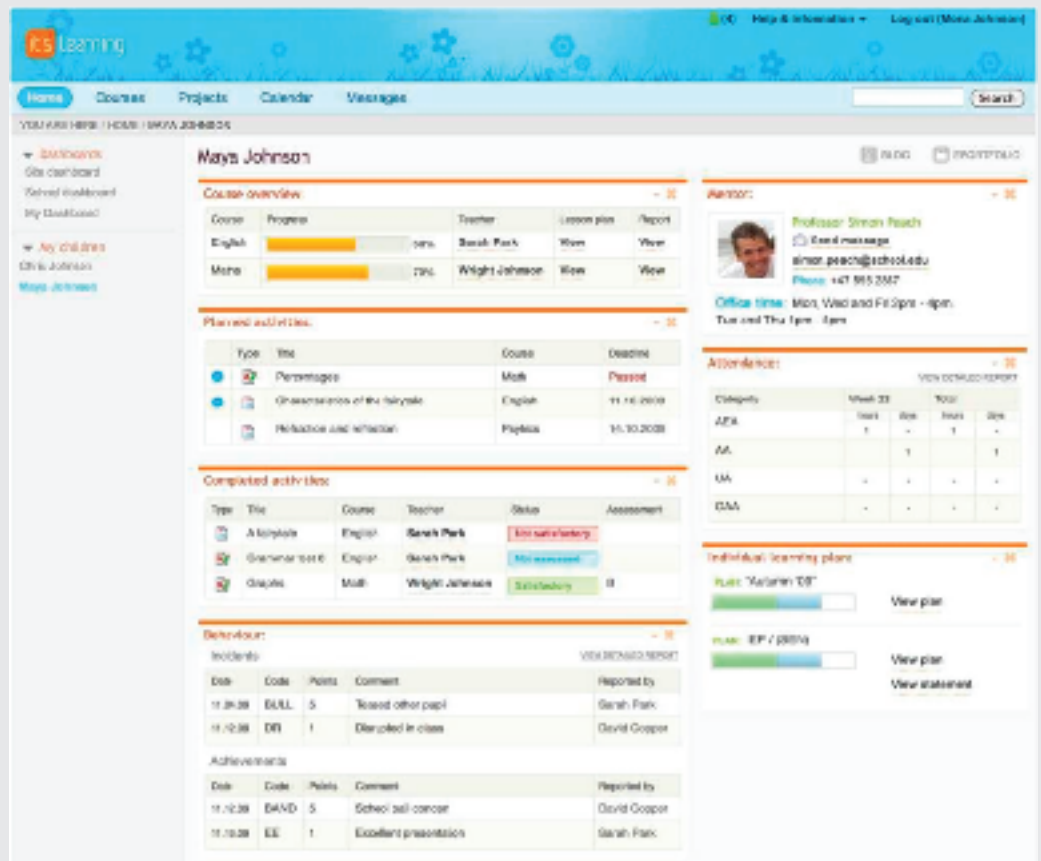


Example of the status and follow up page, which gives an in-depth overview of the students learning progress.

PRINCIPLE 7: SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

The summative assessments must be valid and reliable; comprehensible by teachers, learners and parents; able to deal with a range of achievement levels; and free from adverse emotional impact on the learner.

it's learning provides real-time data reporting for assessments and provides tools to develop and deliver valid and reliable summative assessments. Through the Application Program Interface (API), users can also integrate valid outside assessments for delivery through **it's learning**, or simply import the results in to the Grade Book.



Dashboard in **it's learning** giving a good overview of student's learning progress and performance.

PRINCIPLE 8: COHERENCE, CONSISTENCY & TRANSPARENCY

The pedagogy must be internally coherent and consistent in the way the objectives, content, student activity and assessment match to each other. It must be open and accessible in its design.

it's learning is known for its intuitive user interface. In **it's learning** technology never stands in the way of learning. The course planner helps teachers' organise courses for maximum impact, and easily structures the learning activities for the period in question and connects resources, tasks, progress, work hours and learning objectives in a single overview for the student. The result is a sophisticated yet easy to use course.



Example of a Course Dashboard in **it's learning**

PRINCIPLE 9: EASE OF USE

E-learning should be transparent in its ease of use.

Thousands of students and their teachers use **it's learning** with virtually no training! Our commitment and dedication to usability has created a long list of schools, colleges and universities with extremely high adoption rates; often exceeding 80% within the first year of implementation. The system is accessible from anywhere, on just about any platform.



Easy and efficient one click interface to add content and tasks into courses and projects

PRINCIPLE 10: COST-EFFECTIVENESS

Technology solutions need to be justifiable and affordable and the costs sustainable.

it's learning is priced to be accessible to any educational institution. The savings from using the **it's learning** platform can be substantial in reduced special education service requirements, reduced administrative costs, and reduced instructional support costs. Benefits typically include increased student engagement and the potential for improved academic outcomes.

SUMMARY

In summary, by selecting a platform, designing courses and teaching according to the ten pedagogic principals presented here, education institutions can leverage technology to achieve their missions at a lower cost, with greater reliability, in a scalable model for instructional delivery.

Reference:

Anderson, J. & McCormick, R.(2005)

'Ten pedagogic principles for e-learning',

http://www.xplora.org/ww/en/pub/insight/thematic_dossiers/articles/quality_criteria/equality2.htm

Contact details:

it's learning AS
P.O. Box 2686 - 5836 Bergen, Norway
Phone: +47 55 23 60 70 - Fax: +47 55 23 60 71
E-mail: post@itslearning.com