





E- learning in Small and Medium Enterprises











What are our aims?

-  To develop e-learning and knowledge management tools, strategies, and training content packages, which help SMEs in Europe to use information and communication technologies in their companies more efficiently, creatively.
-  To launch an e-Corporate university portal
-  To organise on-site and online training events for employees to employ e-learning, e-commerce, e-business tools.
-  To develop a business model to market the tools, content, and training packages in Europe.





What are we doing?

-  Developing a portal
-  Developing learning materials
-  Developing tools for learning
-  Promoting and marketing courses
-  Supporting learners
-  Talking and listening to SMEs





Meeting real needs



Handbook for SME managers










Seven issues papers for researchers,
learners, policy makers and developers












Why is it important?

-  SMEs are a major and growing area of employment
-  ICT has great potential for learning in SMEs
-  There is a need for new policies in this area
-  Previous research is at best inconclusive
-  Learning in SMEs could prove the key to lifelong learning
-  Making e-learning work for SMEs could crack many of the problems with e-learning
-  Because we are interested and committed!











What we have found

-  There is little formal e-learning in SMEs
-  There are vast differences according to sector, occupation and especially size
-  ICT is widely used in SMEs
-  There is a great deal of informal learning using ICT - especially in ICT rich workplaces
-  The main application used for learning is email!
-  Approaches to problems solving seem to be important
-  The use of ICT is widening the divide between those with access to continuing learning opportunities and those without access





Barriers

-  Information, knowledge and understanding
-  Lack of a training or learning culture
-  Cost
-  Relevance
-  Availability of learning materials
-  Attitudes and commitment





People answers



Awareness raising campaigns



Develop support structures



Promote networking



Work with existing collective organisations








Show people examples



Develop sector approaches



Learning answers

-  Promote learning portfolios
-  Develop flexible and relevant learning materials
-  Recognise the value of informal learning
-  Integrate learning in the work process - 'work-flow learning'
-  Develop and promote wider pedagogies - in particular autodidactic learning and peer learning



Technical answers



Promote open content repositories



Promote standards



Develop reusable materials



Develop networked approaches



Research and develop 'work flow' approaches










Develop flexibility through web services





Policy options

-  Support industrial associations
-  Subsidise materials development
-  Subsidise programme delivery
-  Promote individual access to e-learning opportunities
-  Embed e-learning in existing provision
-  Support programme providers
-  Promote workplace learning partnerships



Where next?



Research and development in e-learning technologies and practice



Network based projects - regional, sector, SME networks, industrial associations, supply chain



Observatories and project interchange



Open access repositories



Develop partnerships



Want to know more? - the handbook

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Recognising training and learning needs
- 3 Accrediting and certificating learning outcomes
- 4 Choosing between traditional training and e-learning
- 5 Help, advice and support
- 6 How people learn – the pedagogy of e-learning
- 7 Supporting learners
- 8 Infrastructures for e-learning
- 9 e-learning technologies
- 10 Learning materials
- 11 How much does it cost
- 12 Selecting an e-learning provider
- 13 Informal learning and knowledge development



Want to know more? the papers

1. Issues in e-learning
2. Developing pedagogies for e-learning
3. Software and platforms for e-learning
4. E-learning and new basic skills
5. E-learning – contents and delivery
6. E-learning – why we need standards
7. E-learning and Small and Medium Enterprises

