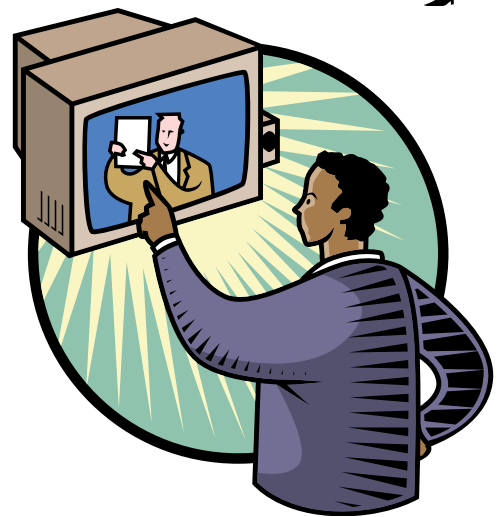
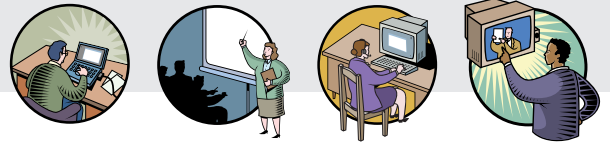


Creation of New Materials





Creation of New Materials

Even though your learning package is going to be using existing materials/resources, you will need to create some supporting text and materials to give the selected materials/resources some context. This new learning material should be developed whether you are creating links to the materials, embedding the material or adapting some of the materials as you integrate them into your learning package.

The first thing you need to decide is whether your learning package will be delivered through a Virtual Learning Environment (VLEs). There are a number of reasons you may want to use a VLE and the **Working with VLEs** guidelines explain what these are. If you are going to use your Institution's VLE then the first thing you should do is consult the technical support team for the VLE. As well as being able to provide training on how use the VLE they will have their own guidelines on how to design and create materials to go into the VLE.

It is impossible to write guidelines for creating materials to go into a VLE here as each combination of VLE and Institution has their own specific requirements which can vary a great deal from case to case. Some Institutions may create the web pages for you and you will be expected to provide your storyboard and all the materials (text, images, references to external materials, etc.) needed to complete the learning package. Sometimes you can create all the materials you need for yourself using editing tools within the VLE. Often the reality is somewhere between these two cases which is why you need to consult with your own VLE team.

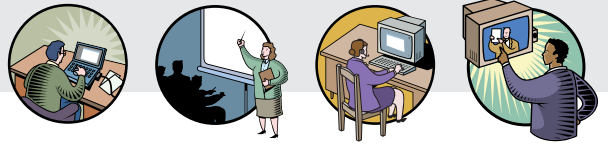
If you are not using a VLE then you will need to think about how your learning package is going to be delivered and consequently what will you use to create your learning package. Again, you may want to consult your local technical support team as they may have access to certain tools and training that will help you in your task, but the following options should give you a good starting point.

Delivery on paper

If your learning package is going to be used as a handout then by far the most common editing tool for this is Microsoft Word. If you do not have this on your computer then there will be a simple word processor tool supplied with your computer. In the case of PCs you can find WordPad by clicking on the Start menu then Programs then Accessories. WordPad allows you much of the formatting you will need for your handouts.

Hints and Tips

You are not expected to know how to do everything when it comes to creating a learning package. Look for support within your own institution regarding VLEs and authoring tools. They can help you decide what tools are best for the task you wish to achieve and how to use those tools - they may even do some of it for you (e.g. creating images or animations).



Delivery as face-to-face presentation

Your learning package may take the form of some kind of face-to-face presentation. Again, one tool dominates this market and it is Microsoft PowerPoint. Many types of media can be included in PowerPoint including images, audio and video. For example, some tutors use Flash interactions (see below for more about Flash) embedded in PowerPoint to great effect, allowing them to demonstrate certain concepts in their presentation.

Delivery on the Web

If you are delivering your learning package on the Web, but not through a VLE then you will have to establish where your package will be hosted. Usually your institution will have an area of their web site specifically for materials like this and sometimes departments have space on their own websites. There are a number of tools available for authoring web pages:

Microsoft Word

Many editions of Microsoft Word now come with A "Save As Web Page" option in their "File" menu. This allows you to convert Word documents into Web Pages. While this is probably the tool you will most likely have access to, it can result in some bad formatting of your materials.

Macromedia Dreamweaver

This is the best Web Page editor out there (in our opinion) so if you are able to get a licence for it, this would be your best choice.

Adobe GoLive

This Web page creation tool puts a lot more emphasis on the layout of your documents and the Web pages it produces are not always compatible with some of the older Web Browsers.

Hints and Tips

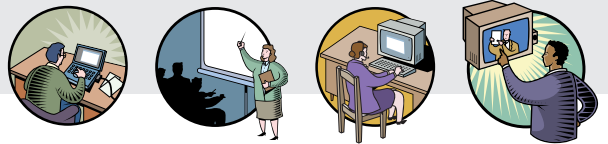
Web Graphics

If your image is destined for a web page then you should save it as either a gif or jpg. For the best images at the lowest file sizes you should save photographs as jpgs and images with sharp lines (like diagrams) as gifs.

Creation of materials requiring technical know-how

Regardless of whether you using a VLE or not, there may be some non-text elements in your learning package that you need to edit or create from scratch. If don't have any experience of doing this you should consult with your local technical team about the following techniques:

To create simple simple images like diagrams you could use whatever drawing tool is provided with your computer (Paint in the case of PCs). The creation of complex images or



Hints and Tips

Flash animations

As Flash is vector based the file sizes can be very small which is a big plus when delivering materials on the Web. Vectors also provide another big advantage; the Flash movie can be scaled with no loss of information so can be used in a number of different platforms. For example, a Flash animation used in a Web page can be enlarged to cover the entire screen for effective use in a presentation.

audio and video files is beyond the scope of these guidelines, but your Institution may have have a central service to provide some, if not all, of these media.

Macromedia Flash is a vector-based application that allows you to create animations and interactions, primarily (but not necessarily) for delivery on the Web. While the creation of Flash movies is certainly beyond the scope of these guidelines, if you can get support to do this there are some large benefits (see Hints and Tips).

Assessment Interactions

Some VLEs allow you to integrate quizzes (e.g. multiple choice questions) into your learning package. If this is not the case you may need to create your own and there are tools out there that will allow you to do this.

Hot Potatoes

This is a tool for creating a range of different quizzes for the web. It is freely available to publicly-funded non-profit-making Educational Institutions, who make their pages available on the web. More details at <http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/halfbaked/> where you can also download the application. Unfortunately this does not produce quizzes based on interoperability standards which means it will be difficult to move the quizzes from one learning package to another. To learn why interoperability standards are important see the [Making your Learning Package Reusable](#) guidelines.

QuestionMark Perception

Much like Hot Potatoes, Perception is a system for running online assessments, both formative (self testing) and summative (assessed). Perception does use interoperability standards, but it is not free. See <http://www.questionmark.com/uk/home.htm> for more information

User Interface

Rightly or wrongly, the appearance of your materials will affect your learners' motivation to use your learning package and in some cases bad design can prevent them from effectively using your learning package even when they are keen to. If you have graphic design and user interface skills available to you within your institution it is best to make use of them.

These guidelines were produced as part of the JISC-funded project X4L Healthier Nation. You can find out about JISC at <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/>, the X4L Programme at http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=programme_x4l and X4L Healthier Nation at <http://extranet.lauder.ac.uk/x4l/>.