

## La Trobe University Educational Technologies Glossary

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## GENERIC TERMS

### **e-learning (abbreviation of electronic learning)**

Refers to the use of technology in learning in a broad sense. All-encompassing term used to refer to computer-enhanced learning, use of mobile technologies such as PDAs and MP3 players, web-based teaching materials and hypermedia, multimedia CD-ROMs, web sites, discussion boards, collaborative software, e-mail, blogs, wikis, text chat, computer aided assessment, educational animation, simulations, games, learning management software, electronic voting systems and more.

It is broader than the terms Online Learning or Online Education which generally refer to purely web-based learning. [ref: Wikipedia]

### **Blended learning**

Learning that is facilitated by the effective combination of different modes of delivery, models of teaching and styles of learning. For example: self-paced, collaborative or inquiry-based study, accomplished through the use of virtual and physical resources. [ref: Wikipedia]

### **Hybrid learning**

Alternative term for blended learning, used mostly in North America. Also referred to as combined resource teaching. [ref: Wikipedia]

### **Technology-assisted learning**

The use of any form of information technology to assist with learning.

### **Online component**

A web-based section of a course/subject/unit.

### **Distributed learning**

An instructional model that allows teachers, students and content to be located in different, non-centralised locations so that instruction and learning occur independent of time and place. Comes from the concept of distributed resources.

The distributed learning model can be used in combination with traditional classroom-based courses, with traditional distance learning courses, or it can be used to create wholly virtual classrooms. [ref: Syllabus Magazine, <http://techcollab.csUMB.edu/techsheet2.1/distributed.html>]

### **Flexible delivery**

Using a range of strategies and technologies to meet the diverse needs of students regarding the location and time of study. Flexible delivery is applicable to both internal and external students. [ref: QUT policy]

### **Learning Management System (LMS)**

Also known as a virtual learning environment (VLE), a Learning Management System is a software system that enables the management and delivery of online content to learners. Most Learning Management Systems are web-based to facilitate "anytime, any place, any

pace" access to learning content and administration.

Typically an LMS allows for learner registration, delivery of learning activities, and learner assessment in an online environment. More comprehensive systems often include tools such as competency management, skills-gap analysis, succession planning, certifications, and resource allocation (venues, rooms, textbooks, instructors, etc.). [ref: Wikipedia]

### **Podcast**

Derived from Apple's portable music player, the iPod, a podcast is a media file that is distributed by subscription (paid or unpaid) over the Internet for playback on mobile devices and personal computers. Like the word radio, it can mean both the content and the method of syndication. The latter may also be termed podcasting. Though podcasters' web sites may also offer direct download or streaming of their content, a podcast is distinguished from other digital audio formats by its ability to be downloaded automatically, using software capable of reading feed formats. [ref: Wikipedia]

### **Web-based lecture technology**

A system which records events such as lectures and makes streaming / download / podcast versions of these recordings available on-demand soon after the recording is made, eg Lectopia. [ref: adapted from UWA]

### **Videostreaming**

Refers to streaming digital media (audio and video) that is continuously received by, and normally displayed to, the end-user whilst it is being delivered via the internet

[Reference: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video\\_streaming#Streaming\\_media\\_technologies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_streaming#Streaming_media_technologies). Accessed 21 February 2007]

### **Videoconference**

A videoconference is a conversation between people at different locations, which uses technology to exchange video (picture) and audio (sound) between participants at each location. To run a videoconference generally refers to the use of a dedicated system, available from a central teaching space.

### **Electronic communication tools**

Electronic communication tools send messages, files, data or documents between people and hence facilitate the sharing of information. Examples include: synchronous conferencing; e-mail; instant messaging; faxing; voice mail; wikis; web publishing.

Reference: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collaborative\\_tools](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collaborative_tools). Accessed 21 February 2007

### **Electronic conferencing tools**

Electronic conferencing tools facilitate the sharing of information, but in a more interactive way. Examples include:

- Internet forums (also known as message boards or discussion boards) — a virtual discussion platform to facilitate and manage online text messages
- Online chat — a virtual discussion platform to facilitate and manage real-time text messages
- Desktop videoconferencing — networked PCs share video and audio signals
- Data conferencing — networked PCs share a common whiteboard that each user can modify
- Application sharing — users can access a shared document or application from their respective computers simultaneously in real time

[Reference: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collaborative\\_tools](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collaborative_tools). Accessed 21 February 2007]

For example

### **Digital rights management**

An umbrella term that refers to any of several technologies used by publishers or copyright owners to control access to and usage of digital data or hardware, and to restrictions associated with a specific instance of a digital work or device. [ref: Wikipedia]

### **Open source**

Describes the principles and methodologies to promote open access to the production and design process. The term is most commonly applied to the source code of software that is made available to the general public with either relaxed or non-existent intellectual property restrictions, such as the web browser Mozilla. This allows users to create user-generated software content through either incremental individual effort or collaboration.

*Open source curricula* are instructional resources whose digital source can be freely used, distributed and modified. Curriki – Global Learning & Education Community, MIT OpenCourseWare and Connexions are one way in which the concept of open source curriculum is being explored. With these online repositories, a curriculum framework for a particular course is created by an instructional designer or author in conjunction with content experts. Learning objectives are clearly identified, and learning activities and instructional sequences and assessments are developed and offered to support the attainment of the objectives. However, all users (from students to educators) are empowered to add, delete, and modify the learning activities, resources and generally contribute to the learning environment. In short, each user contributes to the repository and is able to select curricula based on individual interests.

[ref: Wikipedia]

### **Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**

Information and Communication(s) Technology, also known as Information technology (IT) and Infocomm (in Asia). Concerned with the use of technology in managing and processing information, especially in large organisations. For La Trobe University,

[ref: Wikipedia]

### **Bandwidth**

A communication channel's capacity to carry information. [ref: <http://www.knowledgenet.com>]

Literally is a measure of a frequency range and is typically measured in hertz. When used to discuss digital communication, the meaning of "bandwidth" usually refers to data transmission rates when communicating over certain media or devices, measured in bytes. It is also used more colloquially to describe channel capacity, the rate at which bits may be transmitted through the system. [ref: Wikipedia]

### **Web browser**

A software application that enables a user to display and interact with text, images, and other information typically located on a website on the World Wide Web or a local area network. Web browsers format HTML information for display, so the appearance of a web page may differ between browsers.

Some of the web browsers available for personal computers include Internet Explorer, Mozilla, Firefox, Safari, Opera, and Netscape. Although browsers are typically used to

access the World Wide Web, they can also be used to access information provided by web servers in private networks or content in file systems. [ref: Wikipedia]

The La Trobe University standard operating environment for personal computers supports Internet Explorer as the preferred web browser.

### **Web-based learning**

The use of the internet to assist with learning.

### **M-learning**

Is the common abbreviation of mobile learning, has different meanings for different communities. The term covers:

- learning with portable technologies, where the focus is on the technology (which could be in a fixed location, such as a classroom);
- learning across contexts, where the focus is on the mobility of the learner, interacting with portable or fixed technology;
- learning in a mobile society, with a focus on how society and its institutions can accommodate and support the learning of an increasingly mobile population.

Although related to e-learning and distance education, it is distinct in its focus on learning across contexts and learning with mobile devices. [ref: Wikipedia]

### **e-Portfolio**

An electronic portfolio or digital portfolio is a collection of electronic evidence (eg inputted text, electronic files, images, multimedia, blog entries, web links etc.) assembled and managed by a user, usually online. ePortfolios are both demonstrations of the user's abilities and platforms for self-expression, and can be maintained dynamically over time. Some ePortfolio applications permit varying degrees of audience access, so the same portfolio might be used for multiple purposes. [ref: Wikipedia]

### **Wiki**

A website that allows visitors to add, remove and edit content, typically without the need for registration. It also allows for linking among any number of pages. The term wiki can also refer to the collaborative software itself (wiki engine) that facilitates the operation of such a site. [ref: Wikipedia]

### **Blog**

Short for Weblog; a user-generated website in the form of an online journal and displayed in reverse chronological order. May contain texts, images and links to other blogs and websites.

### **Streaming**

Playing video or audio files from the internet usually but not always whilst they are being delivered to the internet by the provider. The name refers to the delivery method of the medium rather than to the medium itself. [ref: Uni of Wollongong, Wikipedia]

### **Content Management System (CMS)**

A web application or software used to facilitate the organization, control, and publication of a large body of documents, images and multimedia resources. A CMS often facilitates the collaborative creation of documents. A web content management system is a content management system with additional features to ease the tasks required to publish web content to web sites. [ref: Wikipedia]

**Access grid**

A collection of resources and technologies that enables large format audio and video collaboration between groups of people in different locations, i.e. it is advanced videoconferencing using multiple cameras and displays at each site. It includes multimedia large-format displays, presentation and interactive environments. [ref: Wikipedia]

**Text matching software**

Web-based software used for detecting and preventing plagiarism (eg Turnitin). Matches any coincidences between a submitted text and millions of other texts such as other student papers, published works, commercial databases, periodical abstracts, electronic books, and both a current and extensively archived copy of the Internet. [ref: <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/turnitin>]

## PROPRIETARY PRODUCTS

### Camtasia

A system for recording, editing and publishing high quality screen video presentations. It was designed to allow users who do not have any screen-recording experience to rapidly create video presentations for the web, CD-Rom and portable media players such as iPods. Camtasia can record screen, PowerPoint, multiple audio tracks, and webcam video. Camtasia was developed by the TechSmith Corporation. [ref: Camtasia website, <http://www.techsmith.com/camtasia.asp>]

### Lectopia

A lecture capture and delivery solution developed by the University of Western Australia (see web-based lecture technology above). [ref: UWA]

### MERLOT (Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching)

An online educational technology project hosted by the California State University System. MERLOT is a cooperative of higher education institutions whose stated goal is “to systematically enhance teaching and learning through the exchange, re-use and adaptation of learning resources and teaching expertise”. Through its public website, MERLOT provides an open repository of faculty teaching expertise with links to exemplary online learning resources. The public website is both a searchable database of recommended learning resources and a portal to 16 discipline-oriented community spaces, managed by Editorial Boards of university and college faculty. [ref: Wikipedia]

### Moodle

Free e-learning platform (also known as a Course Management System (CMS), or Learning Management Systems (LMS), or Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)). Designed to help educators create online courses with opportunities for rich interaction. Its open source license and modular design means that a diffuse network of commercial and non-commercial users can develop additional functionality. The Moodle company is based in Perth, Western Australia. [ref: Wikipedia]

### Sakai

The Sakai Project is developing free, open source educational software which includes many of the features common to course management systems, eg document distribution, a gradebook, discussion, live chat, assignment uploads, and online testing. It also includes a wiki, mailing list distribution and archiving, and an RSS reader. In addition to the course management features, Sakai is intended as a collaborative tool for research and group projects. Over 70 education institutions are contributing to the program financially and by submitting code to the project. [ref: Wikipedia]

### Turnitin

A web-based text matching software system used for detecting and preventing plagiarism.

Turnitin can identify and report on examples of coincidences between millions of student papers already submitted to Turnitin, published works, including the ProQuest commercial database, ABI/Inform, Periodical Abstracts, Business Dateline, tens of thousands of electronic books, and both a current and extensively archived copy of the publicly accessible Internet (more than 4.5 billion pages updated at a rate of 40 million pages per day). [ref: <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/turnitin>]

**WebCT**

An online framework to house unit study materials and tools to manage communication and interaction with and among students. [ref: LTU WebCT website]