NETSPass Resources Kit

Gateshead Council learningSkills

NETSpass
North East Tutor and Student Passport project

Asset 1. Communications Resources

The Combined Authority Further Education and Skills Managers

PROJECT LEAD

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Gateshead Council learningSkills | Communication Assets

Contents

Gateshead Council learningSkills | Communication Assets

A policy of Open Practice and Communication were key assets in themselves. These were set at the start of the project.

1. Summary

NETSPass consists of the seven northeast local authority further education and skills service providers. There are some 49,000 learners across the combined authority area with approximately 480 teaching staff.

As a wide scale project, creating a communications infrastructure and resources was one of the early priority tasks. Most importantly the communications approach was based on an agreement to follow an Open Practice model.

This open practice model was defined as NETSPass partners sharing skills, knowledge and resources openly and actively. Working as co-producers of new innovative open education resources that would increase local digital learning skills and make them available to the wider sector through Learning Futures. Communications was key to this approach.

The project created the following communications features:

- An online space in Moodle;
- A monthly newsletter;
- An online forum for the management group and the project digital champions;
- A programme of management group face-to-face meetings and digital champions face-to-face forum/workshops.

In this document you will find:

1. A description of the online space.
2. A description of the newsletter with publication guidance and design templates. The final page showcases the front pages of each issue.

A Moodle forum was the main internal communication channel.
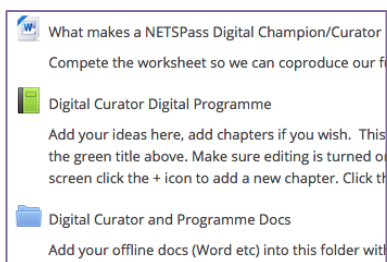
The NETSPass Moodle space became the project online home.

2. The online space

A course area using Moodle, hosted by lead partner Gateshead, was created to store relevant documents and records as the project developed and to facilitate anytime/anywhere liaison.

3. Content guide

The online space includes:

- A forum;
- Message facility;
- Project Glossary;
- Management Group Area;
- How to use the platform (for new members);
- Progress review area.

In addition the online space contains areas for information about key project assets for use by the Digital Champions as they develop. This includes:

- Online Badges and Backpacks;
- Online Induction Programmes;
- Digital Curator Programme.

4. The Digital Passport Newsletter

A rationale, editorial schedule, design template and a guide to content were created. Each issue was edited by one of the seven partner authorities. Partner authorities distributed each issue within their authority. This meant:

1. All partners contributed and took ownership.
2. Each partner puts its own flavour on at least one issue.

Regular dissemination and promotion across the region was secured.

Monthly newsletters were circulated in all seven authorities and the national Learning Futures community.

5. The Guide for Editor Partners

The guide was drawn up and agreed by the project management group: content, audience, channels, design and tactics were worked out in workshops. This was achieved within the first month. Communication and brand for the project were identified as a distinct asset.

Newsletter Title: "The Digital Passport"

Purpose: Promotion of blended learning through activities, promotion of NETSPass plus other good practice examples to teams and the wider community, to encourage staff to be more digital in their practice, signpost to interested staff and organisations.

Audience: tutors, rest of workforce and governors and managers in the seven northeast local authority adult and community learning providers, sub contractors.

Design: Follow template in MS Word. Two sides of A4 only.

Logos: 7 LA's, Learning Futures, Education and Training Foundation (all mandatory, included on template as a block).

Content Guide for Editors include text, images, and web links. Keep items brief. Give local feel. Suggested content:

- Welcome to NETSPass;
- News Items (local partner flavour);
- Highlights of progress in the project;
- Upcoming events/diary;
- Contacts Page (NETSPass Team);
- Tips for tutors – to help develop online content/Learning technology/resource example/App of the month/other.

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Schedule/circulation: January to September, publish last day of each month. Distribute widely in your own LA and networks.

Editorial Rota: Issue 1. Joint Edition, 2. Durham, 3. Newcastle, 4. North Tyneside, 5. Northumberland, 6. South Tyneside, 7. Sunderland, 8. Gateshead 9. Joint Edition.

6. Design Template
Front and Back Page (MSWord document)
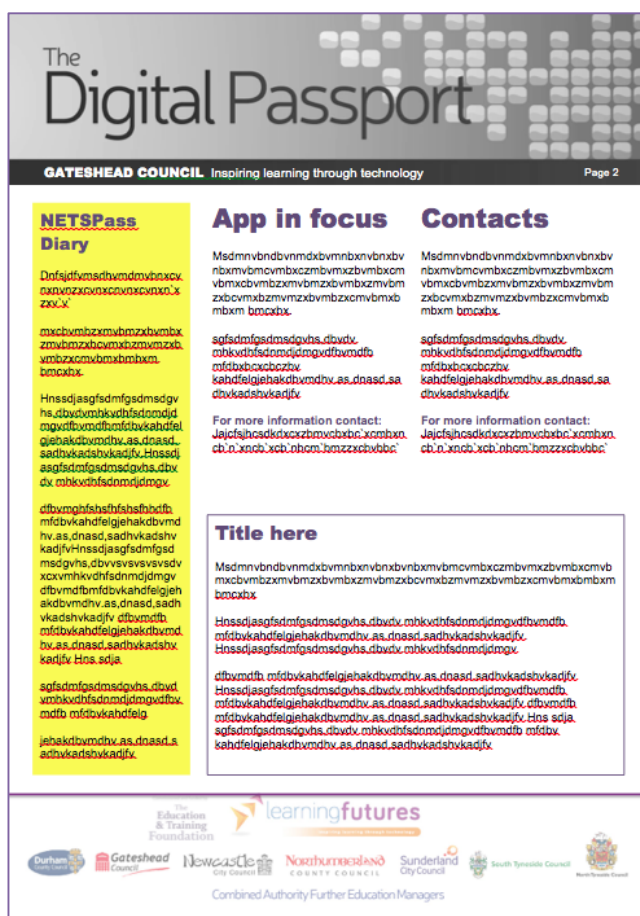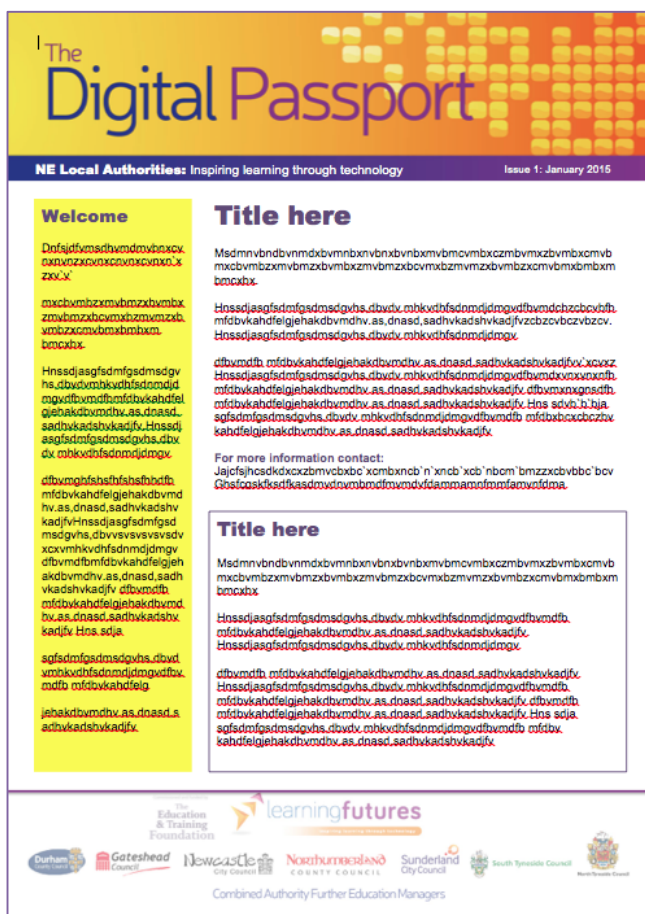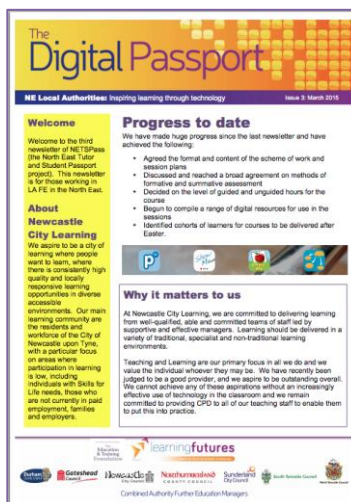
7. The front pages of the eight issues

The final newsletter went out at the end of September 2015.
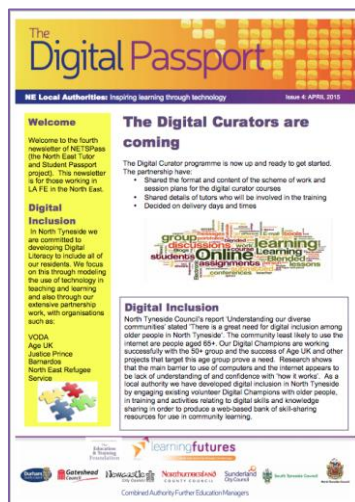

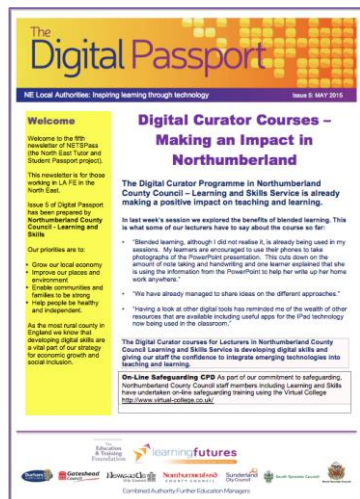1. NETPass joint edition.

2. Durham edition.

3. Newcastle edition.
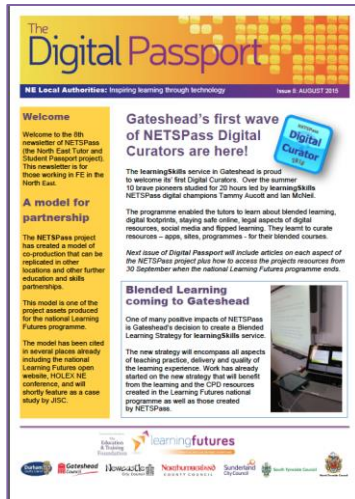

4. North Tyneside edition.

5. Northumberland edition.

6. South Tyneside edition.

7. Sunderland edition.

8. Gateshead edition.