

A Brief Overview of the Government Gateway

Background

The government has set several targets for making services available online, including:

- 50% of transactions should be available electronically by 2002 and 100% by 2005
- public services will be customer centric
- services will be delivered in a joined-up manner
- all electronic services must be secure and trusted

Electronic service delivery will help to provide better, customer-focused and more efficient public services. Citizens and businesses will be able to transact electronically with government organisations and agencies. The Government Gateway forms a major part of delivering against this strategy and vision. Use of the Gateway's e-government services will:

- save both time and money
- reduce the risk of launching successful e-services
- ensure that the Government's overall joined-up vision is achieved

As the use of the Gateway's e-services are transparent to end-users, government organisations retain and strengthen their direct customer relationships through their own portals and web sites. Use of these common components – including authentication and authorisation, transaction handling, secure messaging and payments – enable organisations to direct their resources into providing richer online services which exploit these facilities rather than duplicating expenditure on common infrastructure components.

The Government Gateway

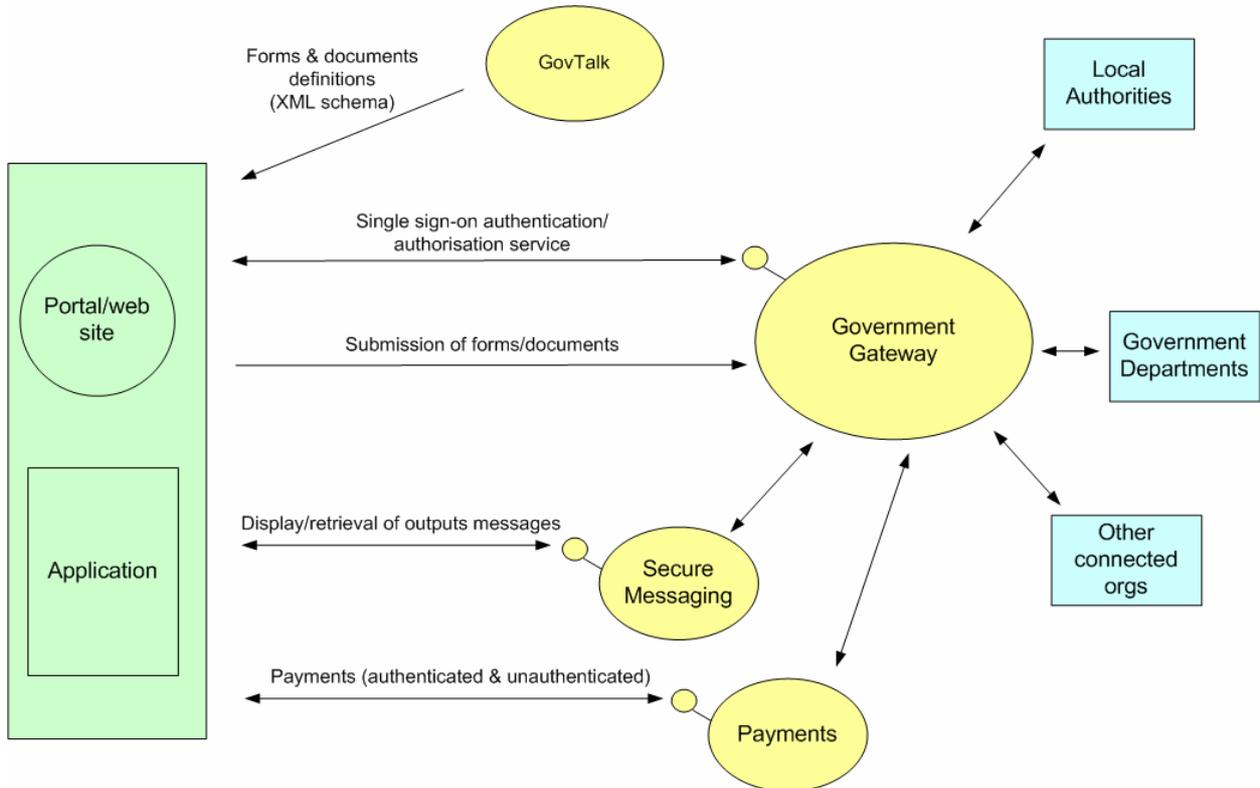
The Government Gateway acts as a secure, intelligent, Internet-based hub that helps to enable and deliver effective electronic service delivery. It provides authentication services, verifies the integrity and validity of transactions, and routes them to or between appropriate government organisations.

By providing a common mechanism for individuals and businesses to communicate with different government organisations, the Gateway facilitates joined-up working between all participating parties. This allows all government organisations to communicate with their electronic business users and citizens via the same mechanism. The infrastructure also enables them to communicate between themselves – so a central government department, for example, can use the Gateway to securely route forms to a local authority. Use of these Gateway services by government departments, local authorities and other related organisations ensures:

- **a reduction in the costs to e-enable services** – using core Gateway functionality such as single sign-on, secure two way electronic communication, common document authentication and routing, open standards/multi-platform support, and support for multi-channel delivery through open programmatic interfaces ensures that public sector organisations do not need to develop their own solutions for transactions, secure e-mail, authentication etc. Instead they can make rapid use of these common Gateway components within their own e-services whilst also ensuring integration with the wider joined-up government initiative
- **the ability to deliver customer-centric projects** – the Gateway provides the infrastructure to enable joined-up transactions where one customer service can be directed to many parts of government. The complexity of back-office systems are masked from the citizen and business
- **single sign-on to government** – the Gateway delivers a single credential for use across all government services
- **a reduction in the time to deliver projects** – organisations can narrow the scope of the work required to deliver e-services since the Gateway already delivers part of the solution. Their focus can be on delivery of rich online services, rather than on all the peripheral components (such as authentication, payments etc) that sit around the service
- **interoperability** – through GovTalk, the UK Government's data interoperability standard, the

Gateway promotes best practice on the use of XML and schema creation to provide interoperability based on open standards

Gateway Overview



Gateway Interoperability Standards

The Gateway uses Internet standards for all of its interfaces and data, combined with strong, independently audited security. The use of open interoperability standards eases integration with the many different systems used in government.

Gateway Services

The Gateway supports a wide a range of online services. For citizens, the Inland Revenue's Tax Self-Assessment uses the Gateway, enabling users to submit their tax returns electronically in a trusted and secure fashion. For businesses, the Gateway provides support for the Inland Revenue's PAYE services and also for HM Customs and Excise VAT returns. New Gateway-powered services are being enabled all the time.

Further Information

More detailed information is available from the Office of the e-Envoy web site (www.e-envoy.gov.uk). Departments requiring assistance in developing or launching Gateway-enabled services should send an email request to:

gatewayservices@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk

Queries from partners or developers, and comments about the site structure or content, of the Gateway Partnerlink site should be sent to:

gatewaypartnerlink@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk