

**title of project:**

Assessment of Programme Outcomes by  
Capstone Project at School of Design

# background

- Capstone Project by definition requires applying integrated knowledge from across subjects in dealing with real life problems.
- As such, Capstone Project can provide an opportunity for a holistic and authentic assessment of the programme learning outcomes.
- and programme outcome assessment is an integral component of OBA.

**This project is about  
the assessment of Programme outcomes  
by Capstone Projects for the school of design.**

# key questions asked

- What to assess from an academic and industrial perspective?
- How do assessment criteria of the Capstone Project relate to the programme outcomes in terms of academic knowledge, professional skills and generic competences?
- What are the standards of 'professionalism' expected by the industry?
- Are we preparing students for immediate industry needs or for the future?
- What should be included for generic competences?
- What are the contents / deliverables and standards expected?
- Should industry people be involved in the assessing process?
- **How to assess in a systematic and practical way?**

# three stages

- **Stage One (Sept 2008 – Feb 2009)**

To evaluate the current design and assessment methods of Final / Capstone Project.

## **Programmes under study:**

1. Higher Diploma in Multimedia Design & Technology
2. BA(Hons) in Design
3. Master of Science in Multimedia & Entertainment Technology
4. Master of Design to identify strengths, gaps and deficiencies

- **Stage Two (March 2009 – April 2009)**

Develop a common design and assessment framework based on experiences of the Final / Capstone Project in different programmes and international best practices

Design a mechanism for reporting and using assessment outcome data to further improve the programmes

Project team members adapt the common framework to their individual programmes

- **Stage Three (May 2009 – October 2009)**

Pilot implementation of the new Capstone Project design and assessment framework in individual programmes.

Survey on students' and teaching staff's feedback.

# **Rico and Martina report**

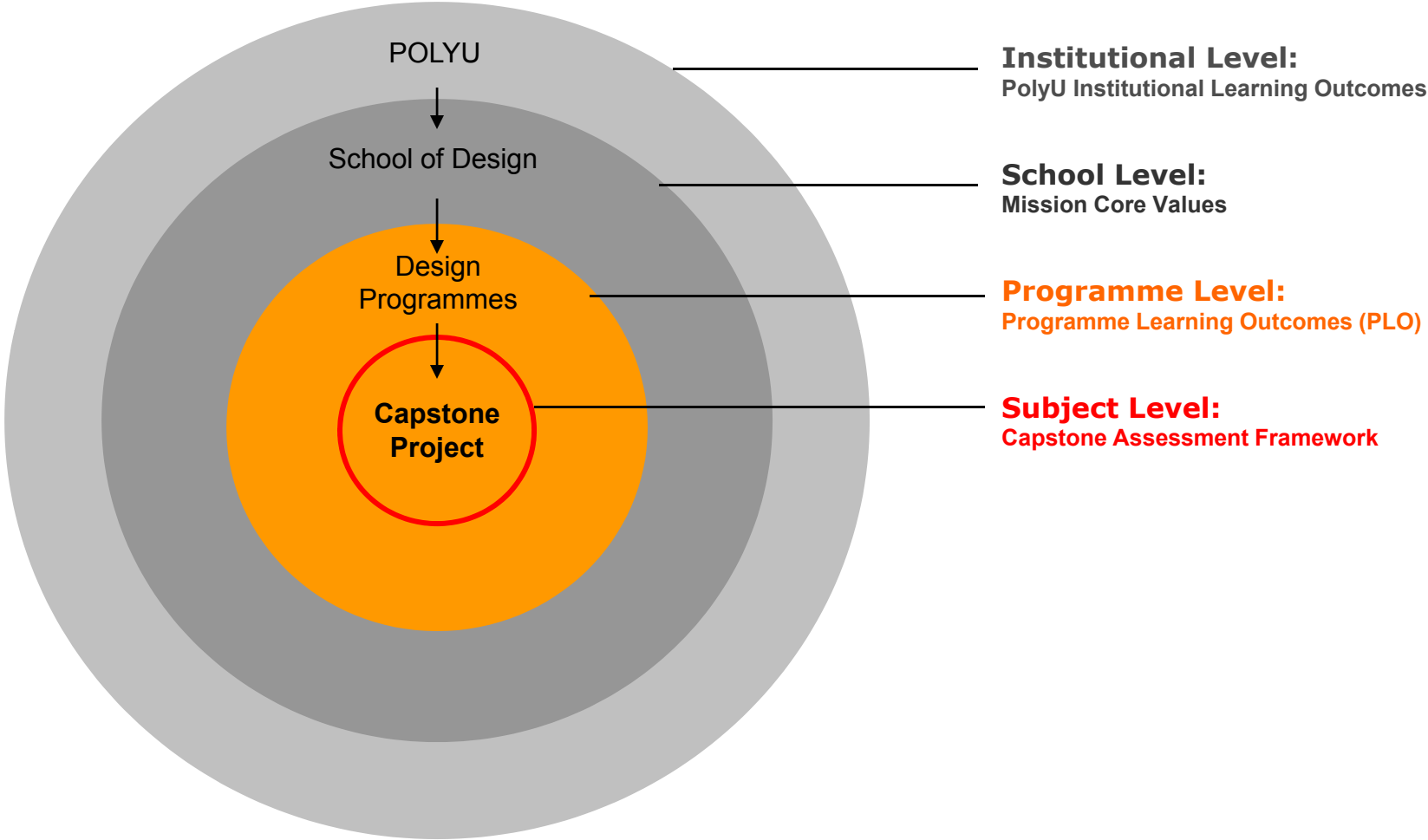
# **Assessment of Programme Outcomes by Capstone Project**

**at School of Design**

**Stage One**



# Programme Outcomes & Capstone Project Assessment Alignment



# Learning Outcomes Alignment

**Institutional Level:**  
PolyU Institutional Learning Outcomes



**School Level:**  
School of Design Core Values



**Programme Level:**  
Programme Learning Outcomes (PLO)

e.g. BA (Hons) in Design

- Global Outlook
- Interest in Local & International Affairs
- Problem Solving
- Critical & Creative Thinking
- Communication & Interpersonal Skills
- Sense of Social & National Responsibility
- Cultural Appreciation
- Lifelong Learning
- Biliteracy & Trilingualism
- Entrepreneurship
- Teamwork & Leadership

- Humanistic Design
- Mastery of Making
- Strategic Thinking
- Creative & Critical Engagement
- Envisaging Design as Process
- Sustainability
- Sensitivity to History & Culture
- Cross-disciplinary Collaboration
- Clarity & Conviction in Communication

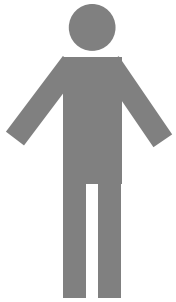
- Critical Thinking
- Creative Problem Solving Skills
- Excellence in Making
- Designing for Sustainable Contexts
- Communication & Presentation Skills
- Real-life Experience in a Professional Context
- Project Management & Team Management Skills
- Literacy in Design Cultures
- Design as Processes
- Research -Driven Design



# Feedback on Capstone Project from Stakeholders

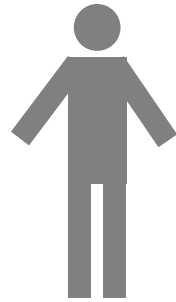
## External

## Internal



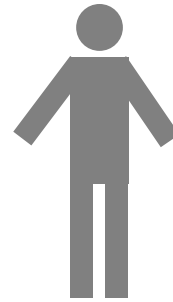
**Industry Practitioner**

- Impression of Graduates
- Recruitment Criteria
- Portfolio Expectation
- Input for Capstone Project



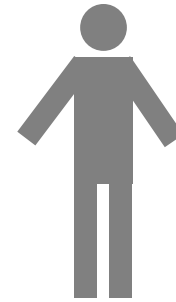
**Alumni**

- Learning Experience
- Job Hunting Experience
- Application & Practicality of Knowledge/ Skills Learnt



**Teaching Staff**

- Review Learning Outcomes of Capstone Project
- Review Current Assessment Methods



**Student**

- Review Current Learning Experience
- Awareness of Capstone Project Learning Outcomes & Assessment Criteria

Interviews of Industry Practitioners  
on Important Competences of  
Advertising Students

December 2008

expectations  
and meeting expectations

**OBA** is a tool used to assist your Programme in meeting its promises.

“say what you do and do what you say.”

It is about **effectiveness** & **accountability**.

As such it is an **Assessment System**.

with which you use to improve on the **outcome**.



## **NATURAL DISPOSITION** OF OBA:

- TO BE EXACT.
- USE TANGIBLE QUANTIFICATION.
- TO BE CERTAINTY.
- TO BE EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE.

## **PROBLEM FOR DESIGN DISCIPLINE:**

Meeting between the world of

**ART &**

the world of

**SCIENCE**

# Sketches of Frank Gehry

# Sketches of Frank Gehry

Example of a design process

sensory immersion, intuitive groping

# DESIGN

## SCIENCE

- A universe measured.
- Go for universal truth.
  - Objective approach.
- Disassociation as an attribute.
- Validation through precedence.
  - Strive for repeatability.
  - Methodically sequencing.
    - Governed by logic.
  - Hard to get out of the box.
- Values defined in tangible quantification.



## ART

- A universe interpreted.
- Go for individual insights.
  - Subjective approach.
- Personalization as an attribute
- Validation through uniqueness.
  - Shy away from repeatability.
    - Happy accidents.
  - Liberated by free association.
- Absolutely requires getting out of the box.
- Values defined by abstract descriptors.

# problems for rubrics

## **Rubrics for design discipline:**

Forcing **OBA** and **imposing the efficiency of science upon the “not just science”** You will have the following problems:

- Create convoluted rubrics with convoluted descriptors.
- Create unworkable rubrics with complicated descriptors.
- Create an assessment system that is incomplete because you conveniently throw away things you cannot describe but are essential to the nature of the subject.

Case in point: Outlaw the words: “creativity” and “subjectivity” in a programme that deals with creativity and subjectivity.

“It would be possible to describe everything scientifically, it will make no sense; it would be without meaning, as if you described a Beethoven symphony as a variation of wave pressure.”

Albert Einstein.

Another Einstein saying:

“Not everything that counts can be  
counted,

And not everything that can be counted  
counts.”

# remedies

The question to ask is **where do you draw standards for judgment** if not objectively and scientifically? Some of the ways are:

- Trust subjective judgment by trusting the people you hire for their expertise.
- Get an independent second opinion from the professional world.
- Use both subjective qualifiers and objective qualifiers together.
- Use abstract descriptors that are indicative but flexible.
- Apply contextual relevancy to give a well rounded referenced verdict.



# conclusion

**OBA** is a tool used to assist a Programme in meeting its promises

**OBA** is **most useful** when it is **tailor made to serve** and **not served straight up**. It is **more generous towards science subjects** because of its **natural disposition to act scientifically** .

**OBA should not be abused** to restrict creative processes no matter how difficult it is to accommodate such processes. The guiding principle should always be the **Programme Aim** .

That Programme Aim is the **promise**.

## solutions for designing rubrics for the design discipline:

subjective judgment from experts.

Get independent evaluation from the professional world.

Use both subjective qualifiers and objective qualifiers together.

Use abstract descriptors that are indicative but flexible.

Apply contextual relevancy to give a well rounded referenced verdict.