



Ref. No.

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**Projects on Promoting Outcome-Based Approaches in Student Learning
2007-08
Application for OBA Funding**

PART I: General Information

1. Title

Assessment of Programme Outcomes by Capstone Project at School of Design

2. Name(s) of Applicant(s)

Project Leader

Name	Dept	Post	Groupwise	Ext.
Alice Lo	SD	Associate Professor	sdalichel@polyu.edu.hk	5465

Team Member(s)

Name	Dept	Post	Groupwise	Ext.
Violet Chan	SD	Lecturer	sdviolet@polyu.edu.hk	8259
Francis Hung	SD	Assistant Professor	sdhung@polyu.edu.hk	5489
Anthony Lee	SD	Lecturer	sdalee@polyu.edu.hk	6300
Henry Ma	SD	Assistant Professor	mchenry@polyu.edu.hk	4739
Sharon Poggenpohl	SD	Professor	sdsharon@polyu.edu.hk	5477

3. Total funding requested

4. Expected duration of project: 18 months

Proposed commencement date: 2 May 2008

Expected completion date: 31 October 2009

PART II: DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

1. Project objectives and significance

(What are your objectives in initiating this project? How does it align with institutional goals and targets in implementing outcome-based approaches in student learning?)

Background

Programme outcomes assessment is an integral component of outcome-based education. It is important both for programme improvement, and for demonstrating and communicating programme quality and effectiveness to key stakeholders. Programme outcomes can be assessed in a variety of ways. Capstone Project provides an opportunity for an authentic and holistic assessment of the programme learning outcomes. Capstone Project is different from Final Projects. It requires students to integrate and apply knowledge and skills learned across subjects in dealing with a real life problem.

The School of Design has been assessing students based on their Final Projects for more than a decade. Comparable to the Capstone Project, the Final Project assesses students' overall learning from design programmes. It is offered near the end of a design programme and requires students to demonstrate integration of the knowledge, abilities, and values acquired through a self-initiated project guided by a tutor (playing the role of facilitator and adviser).

In terms of assessment process, more than one teaching staff will grade the student work to minimise subjectivity. An assessment form with a checklist of criteria will also be used to facilitate consistency among different assessors. The teaching team will then meet afterwards to review the range of quality in student work to make necessary improvements to the programme.

The Project Leader conducted a pilot survey* of graduating students and teaching staff of the BA(Hons) in Design programme on their experiences of the Final Project.

Their concerns could be summarised under the following key points for further exploration:

- What should be assessed?
 - What to assess from an academic and industrial perspective?
 - How do the Final Project assessment criteria relate to the programme outcomes in terms of academic knowledge, professional skills and generic competences?
 - What are the standards of 'professionalism' expected by 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?

* This was a questionnaire survey conducted in March 2007 on graduating students and tutors' learning and teaching experiences in Final Project of BA(Hons) in Design. It was funded by the Learning & Teaching Development Grants Project: Changing design students' thinking paradigm for creative solutions, using the 'processes' approach.

- Who should do the assessment?
 - Academic staff only or should involve professionals from design industry?
 - Any requirement for peer and self-assessment? And at what stage(s) is most appropriate?
 - How to schedule progress review in terms of formative and summative assessment?

- How to assess in a systematic and practical way?
 - What are the ways of making the assessor's task easier?
 - Is rubric with defined assessment performance descriptors an effective assessment tool?
 - The rubric was regarded as cumbersome. How could it be communicative and user-friendly to students and assessors?
 - When assessment descriptors are too descriptive, they can be restrictive too.
 - How far can subjectivity be avoided or valued in assessing project-based subjects?
 - Are second markers and grade moderation necessary in the OBE system?
 - How could bench-marking of graduates' competence and performance be done?

Project objectives and significance

The above concerns are mainly Final Project assessment issues, while the design of project learning outcomes does not explicitly mapped with the programme learning outcomes. We would like to evaluate and improve our current Final / Capstone Projects on both the design and assessment issues. This OBA Project aims to:

1. Align the assessment of professional and generic competences in Capstone Projects with intended programme learning outcomes
2. Design a School-wide Capstone Project assessment framework to collect evidence on students' attainment of programme outcomes that could be adapted to different programme levels. This will provide a holistic programme learning outcomes assessment plan in the School of Design and a shared understanding of the learning goals and performance standards of sub-degree, degree and master degree programmes. It will enable a more accurate mapping of the Capstone Project's intended learning outcomes with the programme outcomes
3. Develop appropriate assessment methods for Capstone Projects and pilot the methods in sub-degree, degree and master degree programmes of the School of Design
4. Design a mechanism to report and act on outcome assessment data from Capstone Projects to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the programmes

2. Target users

(Who are the intended users of the 'deliverables' of the project – faculties / departments management or programme/subject teams or students?)

The primary target users are graduating students and teaching staff of Capstone Projects of UGC funded programmes at the School of Design i.e. Higher Diploma in Multimedia Design & Technology and BA(Hons) in Design. The experience will be spilt over and applied to our Master Degree programmes.

If the target users are students, complete the table below:

Programme/ subject code	Programme/subject title	Credit units	Mode of study	Student intake quota per year
73026/SD3004	Higher Diploma in Multimedia Design and Technology / Independent Project	6	Full-time	135
73016/SD4832/ SD4833	BA (Hons) in Design / Final Project	12	Full-time	119
73034/SD5900 /SD5901	Master of Science in Multimedia & Entertainment Technology / Master's Project	6	Full-time & Part-time	60
73035/SD5302	Master of Design / Demonstration Project	4	Full-time & Part-time	90

3. Outcomes and deliverables

(a) Major outcomes and deliverables

(What will be the major outcomes and deliverables of the project?)

	Major outcomes and deliverables with descriptions
(a)	Identifying and mapping of key Programme Learning Outcomes (PLO) that should be assessed in the Capstone Projects
(b)	Design of Capstone Project that requires students to demonstrate their achievement of the key PLO i.e. what tasks / artefacts should students be required to do / produce to enable a valid assessment of the PLO?
(c)	A School-wide Capstone Project design and assessment framework that could be adapted to different design programmes
(d)	A mechanism to report on programme assessment outcome data and systematically make use of the evidence collected to continually improve programme effectiveness

(b) Plan for developing and piloting / implementing the deliverables

(Detail the plan and procedures that you will adopt to develop and pilot/ implement the outcomes and deliverables. Also specify the dates of the pilot / implementation period)

Stage One (May 2008 – August 2008)

- Evaluate the current design and assessment methods of Final / Capstone Project for 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

Responsibilities of the Project Team Members

Alice Lo & Francis Hung: BA(Hons) in Design

Henry Ma & Violet Chan: Higher Diploma in Multimedia Design and Technology

Anthony Lee: *Master of Science in Multimedia & Entertainment Technology*
Sharon Poggenpohl: *Master of Design*

- Review the current Final / Capstone Project design and assessment criteria for alignment with individual programme outcomes
- Identify good practices, gaps and deficiencies
- Survey students' and teaching staff's experience of past Final / Capstone Projects
- Interview professionals from design industry on their expectation of the Capstone Project, particularly in the assessment criterion of 'professionalism'
- Explore other suitable methods for assessing the Capstone Project

Stage Two (September 2008 – December 2008)

- Develop a common design and assessment framework based on experiences of the Final / Capstone Project in different programmes and international best practices
- Project team members adapt the common framework to their individual programmes

Stage Three (January 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
- Design a mechanism for reporting and using assessment outcome data to further improve the programmes

Planned pilot / implementation period of the deliverables:

Start Date (dd/mm/yyyy): 2 May 2008

End Date (dd/mm/yyyy): 31 October 2009

4. Dissemination and sharing plan

(How are you going to disseminate and share the outcomes and deliverables of your project?)

- Sharing of experiences and deliverables at EDC sharing sessions and OBE website
- Publication of papers in design education journals and paper presentation at international education conferences

5. Evaluation plan

(How do you plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the project, particularly its impact on the implementation of outcome-based approaches in student learning in the PolyU?)

There are multiple ways of evaluating effects and impact by:

- conducting a questionnaire survey on students' learning experience during the pilot implementation of the new Capstone Project design and assessment framework
- interviewing teaching teams and external assessors for feedback
- bench-marking

6. Impact

(How will the project contribute to the success of the implementation of outcome-based approaches in student learning in the PolyU/ department/ programme/ subject?)

- Generate effective design and assessment methods of Capstone Projects for programme outcomes assessment purposes
- Through this project, students and teaching staff will be more aware of the Outcome-Based Approach in student learning and how Programme Learning Outcomes could be assessed through Capstone Projects.
- Teaching staff from different programme levels can collaborate on the development of capstone assessment tools
- This will have a wider impact by sharing our Capstone Project design and assessment framework with other disciplines across the University.

7. Target date(s) for submission of progress and completion reports

	Planned submission date (mm/yyyy)
1. Progress report <i>(for projects whose duration lasts more than 1 year; to be submitted mid-way through the proposed project period)</i>	January 2009
2. Completion report <i>(to be submitted within 3 months after the project completion date)</i>	January 2010

PART III: BUDGET OF PROPOSAL

***Important Notes**

1. Funding requests for equipment and/ or software will be considered only if:
 - a. the equipment / software is essential to the successful implementation of the project, AND
 - b. it is not available in the department concerned. The Project Leader has the responsibility to check this out.
2. The purchasing policies and procedures of FO must be followed for the procurement of approved items.
3. Funding request for conference attendance will not be considered.

Project Leader

Name: ALICE LO
(in block letters)

Signature: 

Dept: School of Design

Date: 31 January 2008

PART IV: DEPARTMENTAL ENDORSEMENT

Endorsement by Chair of FLTC/ DLTC:

Comments on the proposal:

FIRST PRIORITY

Name: FUNG He YIN Signature: [Signature] Date: 31/1/08
(in block letters)

Endorsement by Dean/ HoD:

Comments on the proposal:

This is an important part of our student's final learning and the assessments are important. This work should be going on regardless in our school. This is a worthy project focus.

By endorsing this proposal, I agree that:

1. The proposal suitably addresses the School/Department's needs in promoting and implementing outcome-based approaches in student learning and will be considered as part of the School's/Department's Business Plan.
2. The School/Department will receive a funding as calculated for item (e) in the Budget section which I will use for providing the time release recommended by the project proposers, based on the Total Workload Model, to support them to work effectively on the project.

Name: Lorraine Justice Signature: [Signature] Date: Jan 31, 08
(in block letters)

Please return this form to Miss Miranda Fung, Secretary of Working Group on Outcome-based Education,
c/o Educational Development Centre
by 31 January 2008