



Completion Report

Project Supported by LTC/OBA Funding*

(Period covered: 1 July 2010 – 31 Dec 2010)

Part I: General Information

Funding Source (please tick ✓ as appropriate): LTC OBA Funding

Project Code: 2007-08/OBA/RS1

Host Department: RS

Project Title: Prof. Programme Outcomes of BSc (Hons) in Physiotherapy: Review & Assessment

Project Leader (Name & Dept):

Project Team: Margaret Mak, RS

Team Member(s) (Name & Dept):

Gladys Cheing, Stephanie Auyeung,
Grace Szeto

Part II: Project Details

1. Financial Information

(a) Overview

Approved Funding: + Additional Funding Received (if any): HK\$ = Total Funding Received:

Source of Additional Funding: N.A.

(b) Project Expenditure

¹ Please give reasons for the revised budget and quote the relevant authority's approval reference where appropriate.

2. Project Schedule

Dates as Stated in Original Proposal: Start date (dd/mm/yyyy): Sept 2008 Completion date (dd/mm/yyyy): Aug 2009

Actual Start and Completion Dates: Start date (dd/mm/yyyy): 1 Jan 2009 Completion date (dd/mm/yyyy): 31 Dec 2010

Project Period Extension(s) (if any): Total no. of extension(s) obtained : 1 time(s) Obtained during the project period: For a total of 24 month(s)

Reason(s) for Extension(s) (if any): The team granted approval to postpone the start date and extension to 24 months for completion of the project by Dec 2010 due to change of

* LTC: Learning and Teaching Committee
OBA Funding: Funding for Promoting Outcome-Based Approaches to Student Learning

3. Project Implementation

(a) Project objectives

- (1) to review the programme outcomes of BSc(Hons) in Physiotherapy with reference to international benchmark and expectations of stakeholders including statutory governing body.
- (2) to generate a curriculum map that reflects the holistic perspectives of intended learning outcomes to be taught and assessed in the programme.
- (3) to develop curriculum-embedded assessment to assess the professional programme outcomes.

(b) Overview of specific work undertaken for achieving the project objectives (including any changes to original proposal)

The fieldwork to meet the first two objectives of the project has been completed and the report summarizing the research result is on schedule for completion. Actions undertaken included a review of intended learning outcomes of PT program (April 2009), an interview design for key stakeholders (May 2009), some 30 key stakeholders being interviewed (May-June 2009), and prior to the above research activities, the project leader and relevant personnel of the team attended OBE workshops held by EDC (Jan - Mar 2009). A questionnaire survey has been conducted in July and August 2009. The first part of the third objective of the project has been accomplished. 20 year 2 PT students were invited to participate in a newly designed pilot course-embedded assessment (Jan - April 2010). The second part invited participants for a focus group discussion. (Sept - Nov 2010).

(c) Difficulties encountered, if any, which have affected progress, and remedial actions taken

There have been no significant difficulties. The only change from the original application was the postponed time-table of research actions due to extra time taken for recruiting an appropriate project associate. A project associate was in post starting 30 June 2009. And the time table of research actions since started in July 2009.

(d) Deliverables/useful findings/good practices emerged

Deliverables:

Key stakeholders' view on learning outcomes via face-to-face interview; Review of intended learning outcomes of PT program; comparison between our PT programme and world standards; Alumni's view on intended learning outcomes; employer interview and PT students' focus group discussion data; Year 2 students' experiences in the newly designed pilot course-embedded assessment method; result of the pilot course-embedded assessment.

(e) Dissemination activities taken/planned to sustain impact

Dissemination findings

Findings and reports will be shared with all subject leaders and DLTC, program leader and teaching teams. Currently, part of the findings has been shared with EDC for the aim of orientating PT students with the importance of intended learning outcomes. Two original research designs developed by our research team, namely the "employers' questionnaire" and the "reflective memo" proved to be useful and effective in reviewing and assessing the PT programme.

Dissemination Plans

Two original research designs -- "employers' questionnaire" and "reflective memo" will be introduced and recommended to subject leaders and DLTC for future use. The "employers' questionnaire" designed to understand their views on PT intended learning outcomes and competence will be reused against PT students' view on the same topic in the future so that a comparison of perceptions between employers and students would be possible. The original method developed by our

team for the pilot course-embedded assessment will be tested again for future use.

Two research papers titled "Intended Learning Outcomes of Physiotherapy Curriculum: Employer perceptions of Competence and Importance" and "Generic Skills for Physiotherapy Practice: A Comparative Study of Management Expectations and Physiotherapists' Competence" will be drafted from submission to suitable journals for publication.

(f) Self-evaluation or additional information/remarks

This educational project is a unique experience of involving both quantitative and qualitative research methods for reviewing and assessing the PT programme. Quantitative methods included questionnaire for PT employers and qualitative methods included in-depth interviews of PT employers, focus group of PT students and content analysis of PT programme outcomes.

Two original research designs developed by our research team, namely the "employers' questionnaire" and the "reflective memo" provide methodological implications for future educational research.

Name of Project Leader:

Dr Margaret Mak
(in block letters)

Date:

3 March 2011

Part III: Evaluation by D/SLTC (or by HoD/Director of School[^])

(a) Rating and comments/recommendations on the following areas of the project

(please put a ✓ in 1 of the following 2 ratings and provide comments)

Areas	Rating		Comments and Recommendations
	Satisfactory	Needing attention	
Overall financial management/ use of funding	✓		Very controlled funding management
Overall project progress	✓		Though the project was delayed, it was acceptable due to change of project leader and difficulty in recruiting research associate.
Outputs /deliverables / dissemination	✓		
Overall rating / comments on the project (Please suggest remedial actions if the rating is 'Needing attention')	✓		This is a new form of study of involving both quantitative and qualitative research methods for reviewing and assessing the PT programme. The finding should be valuable to further enhance the teaching and learning process of PT programme in view of OBA education.

(b) Issues requiring the attention of FLTC/Director of School and/or the funding authority

(c) Outputs/deliverables/good practices of the project that can be shared with other subjects, programmes or departments within the Faculty, or with the wider PolyU community

The "employers' questionnaire" designed to understand their views on PT intended learning outcomes and competence will be reused against PT students' view on the same topic in the future.

Two research papers titled "Intended Learning Outcomes of Physiotherapy Curriculum: Employer perceptions of Competence and Importance" and "Generic Skills for Physiotherapy Practice: A Comparative Study of Management Expectations and Physiotherapists' Competence" will be drafted from submission to suitable journals for publication

(d) Additional comments/remarks

Name of D/SLTC Chair

(or HoD/Director of School): T. W. CHIU
(in block letters)

Date: - 6 APR 2011

[^] To be prepared by HoD/Director of School if the PL is also the D/SLTC Chair, or if the Centre/Unit/Office does not have a DLTC.

Part IV: Evaluation by FLTC/Director of School#

(a) Overall rating on the project (please put a ✓ in 1 of the following 2 ratings):

- Satisfactory
- Needing attention

(b) Overall comments and recommendations on the project:

Satisfactory

(c) Issues requiring the attention of the funding authority:

None -

Name of FLTC Chair/
~~Director of School~~:

Dr Danny Gohel
(in block letters)

Date: 12-4-2011

The Director of School or HoD of the Centre/Unit/Office needs not fill this part if he/she has already commented in Part III.

Part V: Response & Follow-up Plan by Project Leader

(Response and follow-up plan is required from the Project Leader if there is any area rated as 'needing attention' in Part III and/or IV.)

Name of Project Leader: DR MARGARET MAK
(in block letters)

Date: 18 APR 2011

Signature of Project Leader

Signature of D/SLTC (or HoD)@

Signature of FLTC/
~~Director of School~~

DR MARGARET MAK
(Name in block letters)

DR THOMAS CHIU
(Name in block letters)

Dr Danny Gohel
(Name in block letters)

@ To be signed by HoD if the PL is also the DLTC Chair, or if the Centre/Unit/Office does not have a DLTC; leave this blank if the PL is also the SLTC Chair.

The Project Leader and D/SLTC Secretary should each keep a copy of this *Completion Report* for records.
A copy of this *Completion Report* will be submitted along with the *F/SLTC Annual Report (Form 20)* to LTC/WGOBE as a supporting document.

Executive Summary

This report reviews and assesses the physiotherapy programme (intake 2009-2010) in Hong Kong, through identifying main issues in the designs and implementations of the programme, the competence of the curriculum, the teaching and learning system, the assessment methods and the needs of various stakeholders such as employers and current students.

The research project had 3 objectives. The data was collected both by qualitative and quantitative methods. Document analysis, in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and surveys were performed.

Background data about the current entry level undergraduate students showed that the current PT programme have been welcomed by excellent secondary students whose HKCEE score was on average 24 points. The students enrolled in master degree are mostly highly competent clinical physiotherapists or full-time research students.

The PT programme was compared to the keyword syllabus of the "World confederation of Physiotherapy", looking at its entry level requirement, curriculum designs and assessment methods and items. It showed that the current PT programme is comparable to the world standard with important adjustment from the world standard to adapt to local health education system and work culture. The refined programme has been viewed as satisfied to provide the entry level education for students to register for physiotherapy qualifications.

The PT programme had adopted the OBE teaching and learning approaches since 2003. The clarification of intended learning outcomes in the programme level and subject levels have been proven to be helpful to students in their learning and learning plans. It facilitates in setting learning goals and in meeting assessment requirements. Overall, the OBE approach has been useful and effective. The intended learning outcomes stated in the definitive document are mostly matched with the expectation of the stakeholders.

The teaching and learning methods were reviewed firstly through document analysis. It confirmed that the holistic teaching and learning approaches, which appear in the definitive document as well as the teaching practice of teaching staff, have been implemented throughout the programme. Besides, teaching staff are in general very

responsive to students' individual needs, the market requirements and the changing healthcare practices. The research identified several good teaching practices currently conducted in the PT programme; highly interactive teaching and learning is one example. Small group discussion method is also widely practiced.

The outcomes of the PT programme as demonstrated by the performance of students were investigated. Two separated procedures were conducted to meet this end. Firstly, graduate employment rates were checked and it found that our PT graduates have been among the mostly needed job candidates among all PolyU graduates. Secondly, the employers' satisfaction over our PT graduates and programme in relation to necessary physiotherapy practices were examined. The result showed that employers interviewed have been generally highly satisfied with graduates' level of competence in key professional areas. However, employers expect PT students and graduates to improve more in areas such as inter-personal communications skills and cultural competence.

A new course-embedded assessment method was piloted with 20 current students who were with clinical education experiences. The method was called "reflective memos", which meant to be a part of students' portfolio assessment currently employed by some teaching staff. The pilot showed the method serves to meet the two aims: to assess students effectively without increasing student's pressure. The method assesses students' ability to reflect on their learning path and learning experiences. By submitting two reflections within 3 months, students' learning problems and progress would be conveyed to teaching staff. Mostly importantly, students are not having pressures as the method looks like a diary to them rather than an exam or quiz.

Recommendations

This research project identified the best of PT programme as well as some area which required more attentions. The following recommendations were suggested based on the findings of the research.

1. OBE and Learning outcomes

- OBE proves to be effective in helping students to understand their learning goal and to meet assessment requirements. It has many desirable outcomes. However, many students inform that they only start to aware the meaning of intended learning outcomes from year 2. It would be more useful to them if

they are more familiar with the OBE system earlier.

- It is suggested that OBE teaching and learning methods and idea of intended learning outcomes could be introduced to students in a deeper way and as early as in orientation weeks. For example, the role and value of intended learning outcomes could be explained in detail to make it relevant to students' learning.
- The employers' survey designed by this project on the importance of intended learning outcome proves effective in knowing the priority of intended learning outcomes from the employers. It is suggested that the same survey could be used to examine students' understanding of intended learning outcomes.

2. Professional competence and generic competence

- From the employers' response, it was understood that there has been no compliant over the professional competence of PT graduates. If there is, it is the lack of clinical experiences. More in employers' expectation is the improvement of some items in generic competences. These include communications skill, English proficiency and mastery of Potunghua. It is recommended to have more education of undergraduates in the above areas.
- Since the generic competence was in nature not to be nurtured only after student's entering University education, it is suggested that the importance of generic skills be introduced to potential PT candidates and secondary schools, for example, during the information days.
- Collaborations among different disciplines to nurture students' generic skills are encouraged.
- It was also suggested that students' be encouraged to participate in volunteering activities to gain experiences in inter-personal relations and communications.

3. Holistic teaching and learning practices

- The report identified that the teaching staff are doing a lot while students' participation was not comparatively assertive. It is suggested that the concepts of "active learning" and "holistic teaching and learning" "small group learning" "interactive learning" are to be conveyed to students, as a concept, for them to motivate themselves to initiate more active participation.
- It is suggested that by doing so, students can be encouraged to take more responsibility for their own learning goals and life. This will certainly pave the ways for their life-long learning.