

Project Based Learning: Making Media



What are the aims of this project?

This project aims to embed and evaluate learner autonomy via the delivery of a new module at Level 4 across the Communication Portfolio (Making Media) as a basis for students taking ownership of learning throughout their undergraduate experience. Further, the knowledge learnt through this proposal will feed into post graduate level, through staff seminars.

Making Media requires Communication students to develop materials for the clients from Project Based Learning. The LTI member of staff will lead the technical skills development of filming with students (users as makers), and the academic will take over this role for future delivery. SASD Careers staff will act as advisors to the students with regard to interpersonal skills. They will be key to the evaluation of the project.

The key objectives include:

- Lay a foundation for developments of learner autonomy in subsequent years.
- Extend skills of academic staff as learning facilitators.
- Enable students to successfully undertake problem based learning.

What is the background / rationale?

Making Media involves 200 Journalism, PR and Media students developing promotional materials for a client: groups of Computing and Network Engineering and Computer Network Students L5 (60 students). The Communications students develop promotional tools (e.g. magazine articles, press releases, films) for 'clients' in CNE (taking Project Based Learning) who need to market their business ideas during semester 2. Both cohorts gain autonomy from cross disciplinary working using their subject skills in small group activities. The relationship to the real world and employment is also a key aspect.

What are the benefits to student learning?

This approach aims to engage learners to shift their understanding of learning from receiving to participation of learning. There is a greater ownership of the course, participation in modules, and thus higher pass rates and student retention. Another key benefit is the demonstration of how learner autonomy can remain focused on degree outcomes yet impact on learning, teaching and assessment across diverse subjects.

This proposal aims to test how far Learner autonomy leads to:

- Improved module marks and pass and retention rates
- Improved student feedback
- Earlier engagement with employability and career focus

How will this project be evaluated?

A logical framework will be developed by staff and student reps to monitor, verify and evaluate the project. This methodology enables a multidisciplinary team to agree targets and to revisit aims and anticipated outcomes, thus, adjusting the working frame to account for unanticipated issues.

SASD staff and the student representatives will be used to verify the assumptions against the strategic indicators and the performance. This process of evaluation enables qualitative and quantitative evidence to be considered to review the beneficiaries of the project.

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