

An Investigation into Intensive Mode Course Delivery

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Abstract

At UNITEC and many other tertiary institutes, departments frequently offer intensive mode courses to their students. Such intensive mode courses are normally delivered in block mode, Monday to Friday fulltime, or may be conducted during weekends over a number of weeks. The course contents, course credits, number of student/lecturer contact hours and assessment techniques of such courses are generally the same as those offered as full semester courses. This poster analyses the results of a survey conducted with students in a second year networking course (in the UNITEC BCS degree) which has been delivered in both intensive and extended modes.

Introduction

Intensive mode courses have been offered at UNITEC for several semesters in the BCS degree programme and numerous students have chosen this mode of delivery as an alternative for some of the courses in their pursuit of BCS. Such courses have been available in the first and second year of the three-year programme and students have undertaken them for a variety of reasons. It has been observed that students who have participated in an intensive mode delivered course are able to contribute in class activities more competently and achieve better results overall than their counterparts in full semester course.

Analysis

The survey of second year networking students established some significant differences between the students in the intensive class and those in the extended class:

- Students in the intensive class were older (70% aged 30 or more) than those in the extended class (44% aged 30 or more)
- More students in the intensive class (40%) had industry experience than those in the extended class (25%)
- Students in the intensive class scored higher grades than those in the extended class.

The survey also identified why students chose the intensive mode (half wanted to be able to concentrate on their other courses once the intensive course was complete), whether they were happy with their choice (nearly half would have preferred the extended course) and what they perceived the advantages and disadvantages to be. For 65% of the students the major advantages were the concentrated nature and/or "having it over quickly". However these were also major disadvantages for