



# Project-Based Delivery and Assessment of NACCQ Qualifications

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## ABSTRACT

This poster proposes a different model of teaching and testing students within the NDBC courses, particularly at Diploma level, and seeks feedback on the proposal. Two factors in particular are driving this.

Firstly, an intensive assessment regime has the effect of pushing many students into a shallow learning mode that is aimed only at passing that particular assessment. They then tend to forget that material as they prepare for the next assessment thus failing to develop an integrated body of knowledge. Full-time students take at least 18 modules a year with at least 2 assessments for each module resulting in an average of an assessment every week of their course. This is a heavy load on both students and tutors and does not promote deep and lasting learning.

Secondly, as the emphasis in many Polytechnics has moved from the NDBC to degree qualifications one of the key components of the NDBC has been lost. Students who do not progress to a degree course can no longer do the project (PJ300), thus they miss the integration of their knowledge that the project provides.

The proposal is to package associated modules into projects that are taught, and assessed together, over an appropriate time-span. Each project would have a set of deliverables applicable to the subject(s) being covered. For example a systems development project could include the content and outcomes of RA200, SA200, SD200, DA200, SI200, and PM200. The student would carry out the investigation, analysis, and design of a system including a development plan and

implementation plan. Material would be delivered in a logical sequence to match the project rather than a specific module. Students could assess their own progress throughout the project by a set of formative tests, preferably computer delivered, that would provide immediate feedback to the student on their progress and guide them to further study if necessary. These tests could also provide feedback to tutors as to where further teaching effort could profitably be directed

The final assessment of the project would be against a set of outcomes derived from each module in the grouping. A final examination might also be required to confirm individual competence. Students would still be credited with individual modules.

It is expected that this approach would operate generally in the second year of the diploma (DipBC) although there is no reason why it could not be used for at least part of the first year (CBC). Polytechnics would group modules to suit their own subject areas and the number of modules grouped together would be flexible.

Some of the benefits to this approach include the reduction of assessment workload on both students and tutors, and savings in teaching time resulting from the elimination of duplication between some modules. Students would benefit from the integrated approach and also by being able to demonstrate their achievements to prospective employers

To allow this approach a number of significant issues must be addressed. These include the possibility of taking this approach under the current regulations, and, as no two Polytechnics would necessarily be using the same groupings of modules, dealing with a more complex moderation process.

**Keywords:** Assessment, Education, Project.

