Developing a Pathway for Information Technology Courses at the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic

Nick Wallingford
Pam Fleming
Bay of Plenty Polytechnic
Tauranga, New Zealand
nick.wallingford@boppoly.ac.nz

ABSTRACT

The poster identifies the process by which the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic is considering its current portfolio of information technology related qualifications for future provision.

The introduction in 2003 of the Bachelor of Computing Systems (BCS) degree resulted in some duplication of services, requiring consolidation and integration of offerings.

The poster examines the range of options that have been identified and describes some of the parameters that will be used in the ultimate selection of a preferred set of options.

1 POSTER OVERVIEW

Historically, the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic has promoted and delivered the Diploma in Information Technology and Communications (Levels 5 and 6), formerly known as the Certificate in Business Computing (CBC) and National Certificate in Business Computing (NCBC).

Reduced student numbers in information technology courses for the February 2003 intake has motivated the investigation into the best pathway for the future provision of courses.

The poster presents a series of proposals that have been considered by staff, based mostly on models employed by other institutions. The application to the particular situation at the BOPP is discussed.

2 DEVELOPING THE MODELS

2.1 The Current Situation

The current provision involves the delivery of Community Computing, National Certificate in Computing (Level 3) (NCC L3), Diploma in Information and Communications Technology (Level 5) (DipICT L5), Diploma in Information and Communications Technology (Level 6) (DipICT L6), National Diploma in Business Computing (NDBC) and Bachelor of Computing Systems (BCS).

Perceived duplication of offerings at the levels 5, 6 and 7 levels have led to confusion among students as to the 'right' or 'best' pathway for their studies.

Small enrolment numbers have enforced the need to review the range of offerings to identify those that:

* Best contribute to the development of an integrated pathway for students, with

* Clearly defined exit points, with recognised qualifications, while

* Recognising the skills and strengths of current tutorial staff.

2.2 "Waiariki Model"

This model is based on the delivery of the programmes at Waiariki Polytechnic, effectively delivering only the second and third years of the BCS degree. It utilises cross-crediting from the DipICT (L5) to compensate for not offering year one of the degree.

2.3 "Waiariki Variant Model"

Utilising the basic premise of the previous model - a reduction in the duplicated delivery of year one programmes - this variation would go further and eliminate the NDBC delivery, with the assumption that students anticipating three years of study would choose/prefer the BCS pathway.

2.4 "UNITEC Model"

Providing exit qualifications at the end of each year of the BCS could be used to reduce reliance on the DipICT programmes as a pathway.

2.5 A New "BOPP" Model

The model currently being considered would involve a staged withdrawal from offerings of NDBC and DipICT (L6) and the first year of the BCS degree. The intended pathway for students would be entry into DipICT (L5) for all students intending higher levels of study.

Cross-crediting into the second year of the BCS would provide a pathway toward the degree, while the reduction in courses being offered would allow the polytechnic to remain competitive.