



## A “Flash” Solution: Alternative Assessment Methods in Blended Delivery

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UCOL introduced the delivery of the National Certificate in Computing (NCC), Level 2, in 2005. The Certificate is offered using a blended delivery mode where students complete the majority of their course work from home. There are regular intakes throughout the year and the course has high enrolment numbers.

One challenge associated with the large number of NCC students was the time required in marking assessments. Different units required varied time commitments from the markers. Staff wanted to streamline assessments without compromising the quality of the assessments.

Due to the minimal amount of face-to-face contact, and the students doing the majority of their course work and assessments in an isolated context, staff wanted to provide a range of assessment methods for the students.

A project team was developed to address both marker efficiency, and varied assessment methodology. The team selected Unit 6743 - Ergonomics, to pilot. This unit currently requires a student to use traditional methodology to complete the required work, in the form of a written assessment, resulting in marker time commitment. A decision to change the written assessment to an interactive multimedia assessment was made. The multimedia assessment would be capable of meeting all unit standard requirements.

Some of the challenges in the process of implementing such an assessment included:

- What type of software will be used for the assessment and what level of interaction will the student have with the programme?
- Will the students be disadvantaged by this level of technology?
- What are the portability challenges of the chosen software?
- Who will develop it and to what level?

The BICT (Bachelor of Information and Communications Technology (Applied)) Multimedia Application Development students were utilised to develop the required software. This gave the degree students a chance to develop a commercial application. The media package used was Macromedia Flash.

A client brief was developed for the degree students, outlining specific requirements related to the unit standard, but the brief also provided scope for creativity.

The application solution provided 5 interactive activities that would be returned to the marker for assessing.

Currently, the testing stage of the software is underway. This will ensure that the transition of the application to the user, and user hardware, is smooth.

It is predicted that in the future the Ergonomics multimedia assessment implemented in NCC will be a time saver for the markers, and will be an innovative, interesting, and motivating way for a student to complete the requirements of the unit standard.