Industry Certification Courses: Embedding Microsoft's MOC 2774

Garry Roberton
Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec)
Hamilton
Garry.roberton@wintec.ac.nz

Andy Fendall
Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec)
Hamilton
andy.fendall@wintec.ac.nz

Abstract

Embedding industry certification courses into tertiary programmes is well established in many tertiary institutes, both here in New Zealand and overseas.

This poster documents the Wintec School of IT recent initiative to offer the Microsoft 2274 MOC [Microsoft Official Curriculum]; Managing a Microsoft® Windows Server™ 2003/2008 Environment.

Keywords

Industry certification, MOC, Moodle

Introduction

In 2002 the Wintec School of IT embedded the Cisco CCNA 1 to 4 courses into its diploma level 5 and 6 programmes. In 2004 the Cisco CCNA [Cisco Certified Network Associate] courses, as developed by Wintec, were published in the 10th edition of the NACCQ 'Blue Book'. By 2006 the CCNA 1 to 4 courses were embedded into the Wintec Bachelor of IT degree programme.

In 2009 the Wintec School of IT decided, as a result of consultations with its Employers Partnership Group [EPG], to embed the MOC 2274 course into its level 6 diploma programme. This course is being offered for the first time in semester 1 of this year to all students in the Programming, Systems Support, and Technician streams.

Content

According to Roberton and Corbett [2004] Microsoft and Cisco qualifications featured strongly in advertisements across a range of media, including the NZ Herald and Seek IT online. Recent Seek ICT job advertisements continue show a strong preference for tertiary qualified applicants with industry certifications [Fig 1]. This has helped provide a

further incentive for Wintec to embed the MOC 2274 course into its level 6 Diploma in ICT.

ITP tutors must qualify as Microsoft Certified Trainers [MCT] in order to access the Microsoft e-Learning online material, set up class access and teach MOC courses. Students access their e-Learning courses independently and complete virtual exercises, virtual labs and a series of practical lab exercises in an off-line computer lab. Wintec have developed a series of formative tests in Moodle, based on Microsoft's style of questions. These tests, covering the 10 chapters, or modules, contribute to the overall student outcomes, are open book and help provide an incentive for student learning.

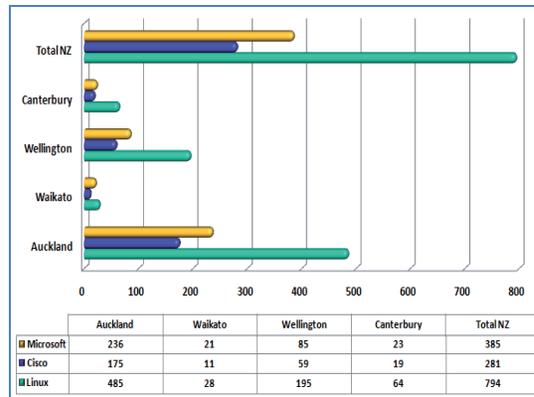|	Auckland	Waikato	Wellington	Canterbury	Total NZ
Microsoft	236	21	85	23	385
Cisco	175	11	59	19	281
Linux	485	28	195	64	794

Figure: 1 Seek NZ ICT Job Advertisements by Industry Certification [March 2011]

Placing them in Moodle automates the marking and recording of the test results, thus helping tutors manage the administrative workload.

Students also complete a series of practical labs, corresponding to the 2274 course modules/chapters 1 to 10, in a network lab exclusive to the School of IT. They prepare a removable hard disk, install and configure Windows Server 2008, including Active Directory [AD] services, and join the course-based domain running on two preconfigured servers.

The final exam, available via the Microsoft e-Learning course, is based in Moodle so that the assessment can be administered in a secure, proctored environment.

Conclusion

The MOC 2274 e-Learning course, published in the 13th Edition of the CITRENZ [Computing & IT Research & Education NZ] Blue Book as a 7 credit module, NA600, is challenging. While the online material is comprehensive, the Microsoft-based assessment questions, pitched at the application level, are somewhat convoluted. The labs lack a level of instructional detail required by students new to the Microsoft® Windows Server™ 2003/2008 environment.

Students have recently completed an online module evaluation. The authors of this poster look forward to analyzing the responses and fixing any perceived problems.

References

Roberton, G. & Corbett, E. (2004) Creating Intriguing Synergies with Course Offerings: An ITP Perspective on Integrating Industry Qualifications Retrieved April 7, 2011 from
http://www.naccq.ac.nz/bacit/0203/2004Roberton_Indust Integ.htm