



# Outduction: Enhancing the Final Year Experience

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## *Mini-project – statement of intent*

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**Suggested title of your mini-project:** Final Year Project: Weekly tasks.

### **Aims and objectives:**

Aims:

Aim for students: To enhance the quality of critical analysis and reflection in evidence in students' written project reports and portfolios.

Teaching aim (in order to achieve the aim for students above): To increase the amount of support and feedback given to students within the lecture strand of the module, through the use of short written tasks, marked weekly.

Objectives:

To enhance students' ability to achieve the following outcomes:

On completion of this module students should be better able to:

1. Manage their time effectively in the context of a long and complex subject-specific project
2. Write a high quality academic project report which contains rigorous justification of chosen methods and techniques.
3. Present a high quality portfolio that shows convincing evidence of progress towards a number of module outcomes and shows a depth of reflection on own progress.

### **How does your mini-project connect with Outduction final year experience themes?**

To develop a framework that makes linkages between and brings cohesion to the following elements of the final year experience:

- Transition.

- Project work, individual and collaborative.
- The development of learner autonomy and confidence.
- The development of self-awareness and skills.

### **What methodology will you use?**

An in-depth evaluation of this module was conducted. A number of issues pertaining to the module emerged from this evaluation, viz.

- that many students had difficulty in producing written reports that were sufficiently rigorous and written in an appropriate academic style
- that many students had difficulty managing their time within the project
- there was variability in the student experience of supervision
- students had difficulty writing reflective pieces showing what they had learned in their projects in a convincing way
- there was an uneven use of formative feedback by students

The identification of the issues above lead to a number of recommendations, two of which have been implemented in the module this academic year. See following section.

### **Likely activities:**

The implementation of two of the recommendations of a recent in-depth module evaluation, viz:

1. To introduce short weekly written tasks that are to be submitted within the lecture strand of the module. These tasks are designed to enhance the students' critical thinking skills and use of convincing evidence when justifying the choice of methodology, software, type of application etc. associated with their projects. Detailed formative feedback will be given on individual task achievement. General feedback will also be given to the whole cohort and peer marking will be used as an additional source of feedback.
2. To redesign the assessed portfolio task brief in order to deepen the quality of student reflection on their progress in the project.

### **How can student interns contribute to the project?**

Student interns could contribute to the project by conducting focus group interviews of students doing their Final Year Projects. The aim of conducting focus group interviews of students (and possibly project supervisors) would be to explore themes that emerged from the mid-semester evaluation conducted in November 2010, in more depth.

### **When do you envisage your project starting?**

Later than March 2010

### **When do you envisage your project ending?**

After August 2010

**What are the potential outputs from your project?**

A written case study that details this innovation and evaluates its effectiveness.

**Do you have any further comments?**