

Project Title : The Blended & Online Learning & Teaching Project: Collaborative Professional Development for Capacity Building in Blended and Online Learning and Teaching in HK (BOLT)

Leading University : The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Participating UGC-funded University(ies) : Hong Kong Baptist University, The Education University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, The University of Hong Kong

Project Leader(s) : Mr Darren Harbutt, Education Development Centre, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

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Layman Summary of Proposal

There is widespread agreement on the importance of e-learning and educational technology in relation to innovation, educational quality and achieving pedagogic change. However, provision of professional development for teachers at UGC-funded universities specifically addressing this area of need is currently carried out in individual universities with little collaboration.

The project aims to unify professional development through a common foundation course and developing a model for the formation of learning communities in academic faculties. Five Hong Kong universities (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), The Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK), Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), The University of Hong Kong (HKU) and The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)) will work collaboratively to achieve the project's goals, which will enhance teachers' skills in blended and online learning.

The lead partners in the project are PolyU and EdUHK. PolyU will provide a formal professional development foundation course in blended and online learning and

teaching, open to the staff of all five partners. This will be conducted in a blended mode combining online resources and activities with face-to-face meetings, independent study and support mentors from all five participating universities. EdUHK will build the capacity of academic departments for blended learning by adopting a grassroot approach towards development. Their emphasis will be on the formation of professional learning communities, customised department-based support, creation of a common vision and development of a prototype alternative model of professional development in higher education.

HKBU will also make a significant contribution in sharing 10 workshops from their Faculty Professional Development Series in a flexible and blended mode so that they will also be available to staff from the five collaborating universities.

HKU and HKUST will collaborate at the level of having staff participating in the project's courses, workshops and activities. They will also collaborate by providing mentors to their participating staff.

All five partners are supporting their participating teaching staff to possibly apply for the international CMALT (Certified Member of the Association for Learning Technology) qualification. This is seen as an incentive for participants and a measure of quality assurance.

Overall the project will bring greater efficiency, coherence and consistency for professional development in e-learning through a more systematic approach. This has the potential to achieve a paradigm shift in higher education teacher professional development and the enhancement of learning and teaching in Hong Kong.

Layman Summary of Final Report

Beginning in 2014, the BOLT project brought together five Hong Kong universities in an attempt to provide consistent professional development to improve teachers' capacity in the online and blended arena. Combining a top down approach with bottom up initiatives, the BOLT project was shortlisted for the prestigious [Reimagine Education Awards](#) Hybrid Learning Award. The universities involved in the project were the following and their involvement ranged from providing participants for the BOLT Foundation Course (all institutions) to initiatives led by individual universities:

- PolyU;

- EdUHK;
- HKBU;
- HKU; and
- HKUST.

Multiple activities were undertaken during the project, with the principal elements as follows:

- *BOLT Foundation Course and Summer BOLT* – open to all participating institutions, the core top down element of the project, led by PolyU.
- “Grassroots” approach to building blended learning capacity – the key bottom up initiative, starting in a faculty, moving across a whole university and beyond, at EdUHK.
- *CMALT Professional Development module* – open to all, online module to guide [CMALT portfolio](#) preparation and achieve accreditation for the Association for Learning Technology ([ALT](#)) (led by PolyU).
- *Interactive Online Learning* – open to all, online module/blended course promoting sound video-based pedagogies and practices (led by HKU).
- *Faculty Professional Development Series* – starting within one institution, collaborating with others (led by HKBU).
- <https://www.bolt.edu.hk/> – the home of the project and a hub for coordinating the project, sharing resources and disseminating ideas.

The main objectives of the project were as follows, with the outcomes and deliverable included as a measure of the project’s success:

1. Provide structured professional development across all participating collaborators to facilitate the enhancement of teachers’ skills in blended and online teaching (220 participants followed the BOLT Foundation Course; 40 colleagues enrolled on the CMALT module; 272 participants completed the *Interactive Online Learning* module over five cohorts).
2. Build a professional learning community of blended and online learning “champions” (11 blended learning *Ambassadors* help promote blended learning with colleagues at EdUHK and BOLT Graduates help mentor and guide colleagues back in their own institutions at PolyU and HKBU).
3. Develop and share learning resources on BOLT in Hong Kong (Multiple resources are available on www.bolt.edu.hk as well as on login-protected pages in individual institutions).

4. Share expertise between collaborating institutions for enabling the quality development of BOLT, and identifying good practice (multiple presentations, showcases, international events promoted the project, along with three symposia in Hong Kong).
5. Establish the support and process for teachers in higher education to obtain local and international certification in using technology for learning and teaching that would be recognised across all Hong Kong higher education institutions (the project recognised participants' efforts via BOLT Certificates, BOLT Champion awards, CMALT Certification and institutional membership of ALT for colleagues at PolyU, EdUHK and HKBU).