

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 Institution : The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Participating Institution(s) : Hong Kong Baptist University, The Education  
University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong University  
of Science and Technology, The University of Hong  
Kong

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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 institutions specifically addressing this area of need is currently carried out in individual institutions 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 institutions (PolyU, EdUHK, HKBU, HKU and 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 The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) and The Education University of Hong Kong (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 institutions. EdUHK will build the capacity of academic departments for blended learning by

adopting a grassroots approach towards development. Their emphasis will be on the formation of professional learning communities, customized department-based support, creation of a common vision and development of a prototype alternative model of professional development in higher education.

Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) will also make a significant contribution in sharing ten 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 institutions.

The University of Hong Kong (HKU) and The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (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.