

Chapter 1

A Guide for Project– Based Assessment

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ABSTRACT

This chapter is based on module assessment through project-based learning. Project-based learning (PBL) is learner-centred and enables students to build their knowledge and capabilities, and acquire complete understanding of the module content. PBL in its simplest form usually culminates in a report that demonstrates the mastery of the module content by the students. In some areas of study, students are required to submit prototypes to support their problem solving abilities. In general, PBL starts with the allocation of assignments to students. The assignments can be of diverse nature and may involve more than one problem. The next step comprises of the students analysing the problems in view of identifying the possible solution procedures. The students will thereafter come up with the final solutions and analysis. As

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mentioned above, the end product is frequently a report encapsulating the problem statement, methodology, analysis and conclusion, amongst others.

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is based on module assessment through project-based learning. Project-based learning (PBL) is learner-centred and enables students to build their knowledge and capabilities, and acquire complete understanding of the module content (Houghton, 2023; Kubiatico & Vaculová, 2011). PBL in its simplest form usually culminates in a report that demonstrates the mastery of the module content by the students. In some areas of study, students are required to submit prototypes to support their problem-solving abilities. In general, PBL starts with the allocation of assignments to students (Castelan & Bard, 2018). The assignments can be of diverse nature and may involve more than one problem. The next step comprises of the students analysing the problems in view of identifying the possible solution procedures. The students will thereafter come up with the final solutions and analysis. As mentioned above, the end product is frequently a report encapsulating the problem statement, methodology, analysis and conclusion, amongst others.

Project-based assessments (PBAs) are an alternative to time-based assessments and may also complement the latter (Gratchev, 2023; Tal et al., 2000). PBAs usually require the students to seek out a more comprehensive understanding of the subject concepts, and to make rational decisions and to support them. PBAs are student-centred and contribute in the development of creativity and critical thinking abilities. PBAs may allow the students to have a broader view of the subject matter, particularly when there is a link with concepts from other modules. PBAs also enable students to learn by doing as it promotes the integration of theory and practice, and also develops students' employability, entrepreneurial, teamwork and communications skills. Such learning skills will help students in better translating knowledge into practice through real-life case studies which involve review of the literature, methodology, design, problem-solving, decision-making and concluding the project with realistic recommendations. Such real-life assignment(s) will provide students with challenges to examine academic theories to practice and thereby also boosting students' self-confidence when they enter the world of work and developing market-demanded skills.

PBA promotes deeper and richer learning by motivating the students to engage with their learning, giving them the opportunity to work autonomously to develop their own knowledge and at the same time giving them ownership over their work. This may lead the students to demonstrate their knowledge of the subject innovatively, solve real-life problems and promote the development of decision-making abilities.

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