LMS Transition @PolyU: An opportunity for change and enhancement in learning and teaching

OVERVIEW

The project “LMS Transition @ PolyU” will manage the introduction of Blackboard (Bb) 9.1 as the centralised, officially supported Learning Management System (LMS) for PolyU. During the period of transition to the new system (Feb 2011 to August 2013) the project will coordinate the change management process across the university. This will include developing appropriate policies, processes, communication and marketing strategies, technical infrastructure and professional development (Online and Face-to-Face) for all staff and students.

Acknowledged are the potential synergies of exploring the integration of existing PolyU systems that support Teaching and Learning such as the; SPECIAL ePortfolio, The Library, Grade reporting through AS; potentially SFQs to eSFQ’s, OBE support, accreditation and tracking and CPA alignments and that these will be developed as sub-projects of the main LMS Transition Plan.

“The move to Blackboard (Bb) represents a change in technology usage but the focus and significance of the transition is about changing pedagogy.

The project is not simply organising the migration of courses from one system to another but intended to encourage a cultural change in making eLearning part of mainstream teaching and learning, resulting in an increase in both the quality and quantity of blended learning”

ORGANISATION

- EDC will play a key role in supporting the University and VP(AD) in developing a pedagogically led vision for the transition to the new LMS.
- A Blended Learning Advisory Committee (BLAC) has been established to act as a key sounding board regarding educational technology issues broadly and the LMS Transition specifically @ PolyU.
- A Project Board has been established to ensure transparency of the project and potential inter-relationships / strategic alignment.
- A “Community of Practice” change management model will be adopted.
- Recommended is a minimum of 2 ‘Early Adopters’* from each Department with a key person being identified as the LMS Transition departmental contact
  *NOTE – Departments can negotiate to have more staff be part of the ‘Early Adopter’ cohort
- A Bb user group at PolyU will be formed representative of interested staff (technical support staff and teaching staff)
- Communication will be regularly sent to the PolyU community
MARKETING and COMMUNICATION
- A LMS Transition Project website will be established to ensure transparency of the plan
- A monthly eNews will be sent out to all PolyU staff
- During the student Common Orientation Programme specific sessions will be offered for students
- Roadshows will be conducted early in the project to all Faculties and Schools to promote awareness of the change and potential adaptations of the BB system to PolyU’s Learning and Teaching context
- All faculties, schools and support units have representation to the project through the Blended Learning Advisory Committee and Early Adopters.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT
- **F2F WORKSHOPS** will be provided as; Open to All Introductory Sessions; Advanced workshops on specific features and their pedagogical application; ‘Early Adopter training and Departmental specific workshops
- **ONLINE resources** will be developed to assist staff with ‘Just-In-Time’ access to professional development
- Early Adopters will be supported in Summer and Sem 1, 2011
- A Bb ‘Sandpit’ environment will be established to allow academic staff to access the system and explore its functionality
- Learning Design Templates will be developed to assist staff in some efficiencies re common tasks and guidelines re best practice
- Specific Training and Resources will be developed for CLO’s / support staff
- Student support will be offered through the Common Orientation Program
- Existing ITS support systems will be adapted to include technical as well as pedagogical support (in collaboration with EDC)

TECHNICAL ASPECTS
- The structure of Bb 9.1 courses is VERY different to WebCT 4
- An imperfect version of the course can be expected after migration
- An online survey referred to as a ‘Migration Audit Tool’ will be sent to all staff to plan the migration process as well as the timing of the training.
- Teacher input **will be required** for checking, resolving broken links, missing graphics and formatting errors ... etc OR Recreating their course using the Learning Design Templates
- The BB default interface will be adapted to the PolyU Teaching and Learning context
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>LMS Transition Focus</th>
<th>Key dates</th>
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| Jan – June  | 1 Preparation/planning/    | LMS Transition Project officially launched  
LMS Transition Website established  
Competition to 'name' PolyU’s version of BB  
Roadshows - all Faculty and Schools  
Call for ‘Early Adopters’  
Migration Audit Tool sent to all PolyU staff  
Bb courses for Summer and Semester 1 migrated/created with associated training for Academic and Technical support staff | March 2011  
April 2011  
April 2011  
April – May 2011  
April 2011  
April / May 2011  
May 2011 |
| Aug 2011    |                            |                                                                                      |                                    |
| June – Aug  | 2 Summer Term 2010/11     | Early adopters teach an estimated 20-30 Bb courses in Summer Term Pilot.  
Early Adopters / DLTC to identify other staff from their context who plan to use BB in Sem 1  
Adaptation of BB to PolyU’s context finalised  
Training for CLO’s and departmental support staff  
Evaluation of Pilot  
Training for Early Adopters using BB in Sem 1 | June / July / August 2011  
July 2011  
August 2011  
August 2011  
July / August 2011  
July / August 2011 |
| SEP - DEC   | 3 Semester 1 2011/12      | Early Adopters teach an estimated 180-250 Bb courses in Semester 1.  
Departmentally Based Workshop series – (the number and structure to be negotiated with each department, a minimum of two is recommended)  
Courses for Semester 2 confirmed, migrated/created  
Training for CLO’s and departmental support staff | Sept 2011 – Jan 2012  
Sept 2011 – Jan 2012  
Dec 2011  
Dec 2011 |
| Aug 2012    | 4 Semester 2 2011/12      | Later adopters teach 1000+ Bb courses in Semester 2  
Open for ALL Workshops and Advanced workshops offered on specific BB features / pedagogical approaches  
Bb courses for Summer Term 2011/12 and S1 2012/13 confirmed, migrated/created.  
Most Summer courses run in Bb | Jan 2012 – June 2012  
May 2012 |
|             |                            |                                                                                      |                                    |
|             |                            | **WebCT no longer available**                                                        |                                    |
|             | 5 Full adoption            | Courses for S2 2012/13 confirmed, migrated/created.  
All S1 and S2 courses run only in Bb. This academic year is the last chance for migration of old WebCT courses.  
(WebCT archive available) | Semester 1 2012/13  
Semester 2 2012/13  
Summer Term 2012/13 |
If you have any queries, feedback or concerns please feel free to contact any of the following;

**KEY CONTACTS**

- Questions about the Project Management and Coordination of the transition….
  
  **Peter Duffy** – LMS Transition Project Manager  
  Ph: 27666316  
  Email: etpeterd@inet.polyu.edu.hk  

- Questions about the ‘Pedagogical Vision’ for the LMS transition and Professional Development and Training…
  
  **Ian Brown / Jenny Evans** – EDC Team Leaders  
  Ph: 27666287 / Ph: 27666318  
  Email: etian@inet.polyu.edu.hk / Email: etjeni03@inet.polyu.edu.hk  

- Questions about Technical Issues and Support…
  
  **ITS eLearning Technical Support Team / David Chui** – ITS Team Leader  
  Ph: 27664948 / Ph: 27667840  
  Email: itbb@inet.polyu.edu.hk / Email: itdavid@inet.polyu.edu.hk  

**KEY RESOURCES**


- Understanding the Change from CE4 – Information for Instructors
  
  [https://behind.blackboard.com/s/faculty/refcenter/docs/](https://behind.blackboard.com/s/faculty/refcenter/docs/)
  
  (7 page .pdf more suitable for teaching staff - Look under Release Notes on the right hand menu)

- Understanding the Change from CE4 to Blackboard Learn
  
  [http://www.usc.es/campusvirtual/learn/docs/CE4_to_Learn_9_Understanding.pdf](http://www.usc.es/campusvirtual/learn/docs/CE4_to_Learn_9_Understanding.pdf)
  
  (93 page .pdf more suitable for technical staff)

- Bb OnDemand Learning Center
  

- California State University’s BB Online Support Site*
  

*NOTE – PolyU will be developing its own BB Online support site with extensive just-in-time resources customised to our learning and teaching context.