The real thing about the Industry Experience subject is that it brings together all the knowledge and skills we have developed over our 3 years of study at Monash University, and allows us to apply them to a real situation. Life skills, friendships, technical knowledge and application - the subject provided by Monash delivers everything the title promises, a rewarding industry experience."  

IE Student

Overview

- Capstone project (2 units)
  - Bachelor of Information Technology
  - Bachelor of Business Information Systems
  - Multi-campus
- Proud History – has been in existence since the 1970s
- Students work in teams to develop and implement an IT application for a real-world client
- Clients – local business and not-for-profit organisations
- Approx. $ 2.5 million value in 2012 to our clients - Australian campuses – 43 projects at Caulfield/ Clayton

Objectives

- Experience ambiguity and complexity in developing innovative IT solutions, in a supported university environment
- Research and develop new skills (fearless) and apply the knowledge and skills they have gained, in the delivery of an IT application to a real world client
- Work as a committed, professional in a diverse team for an extended period of time
- Manage a project through all of its stages, communicate effectively with all stakeholders
- Encourage transition to being independent lifelong learners - mentor role, peer learning
- Develop their communication, team work, time management skills, as well as the capacity to deal ethically and competently with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds

Critical success factors

1. Source suitable clients / projects

- Strong relationships with a number of partners who help source suitable projects using their membership base
- Run information sessions highlighting
  - Benefits to the business
  - Commitment required
  - Risks
- Students understand that the projects make a difference to the clients
  - REAL WORK, BIG IMPACT
2. Committed and engaged staff

- Strong support from senior management
- Staff allocated to the units committed to engaging with and mentoring the students
- Together the team have the range of expertise required to successfully complete the projects

3. Collaborative learning environment

- The 'studio – learning by doing' rooms are built to facilitate team work and mentoring
  - Work hubs with 4-6 chairs, access to computers, a whiteboard and AV equipment
  - Board room style table in the centre of the room to bring all the students together to share ideas.
- Social space
  - Created especially for students doing this subject with a television, tables, chairs, beanbags, microwave and a fridge
  - Space regularly used for work and play

4. Active team formation

- Students are allocated to teams of 3 or 4 based on a range of criteria:
  - results of basic personality testing
  - subjects completed, academic performance
  - students' skill sets, based on a skills audit
  - gender
  - domestic / international
  - students' capacity to meet with each other based on their academic timetable, home location, transport options, part-time work
- After moving to this model the number of groups who failed to complete their project reduced dramatically

5. Timetabled participation

- 3 hour mentoring studio sessions
  - 5 teams, 2 mentors per studio
  - Studios run in parallel where possible
- 1.5 hour seminar
  - revise key concepts required for the project
  - industry speaker who focuses on a current IT issue.
- Attendance mandatory – treated like work

6. Regular mentoring

- Mentors key role is to:
  - assist with the project
  - assist with the system
  - help with team issues
  - facilitate peer learning
  - ensure educational outcomes met

6.1 Active, regular project monitoring

A number of strategies are in place to ensure that projects stay on track, and that students contribute equitably to the work. These include:

- one-on-one meetings with each of the teams during the studio session to review progress and manage any issues that arise;
- fortnightly, individual, confidential reflective diaries written by students
  - reflect on what they have learnt
  - raise issues in these diaries which are then followed up by staff
  - Staff provide feedback, offer advice
6.2 Active, regular project monitoring

- Self and peer reviews to help monitor contributions against a range of criteria.
  - used to provide pastoral care as required
  - part of the assessment
- Project management software/time sheets
  - to assess individual contributions
- Attendance strongly encouraged
  - monitored and followed up

NO PASSENGERS

7. Celebrate

“This unit consolidated all my knowledge and skills acquired throughout the BITS degree. It was the practical, hands-on experience that I was hoping to get from Monash. IT WAS AN AWESOME EXPERIENCE!!”

“IE has really changed the values I believe in and where I see myself going. I came here thinking I was an IT student but I left wanting to be an IT professional”

Critical Success factors

- Excellent relationship with the partners
- Monitored, assessed placements
- Academic involvement
- High quality placements
- Placements
  - Real work
  - Paid

Overview

- An opportunity for students to gain real-world practical experience, and apply the skills and knowledge they have gained in their IT degree.
- Operating successfully since 1988
- 22 week placements with our industry partners
- Close to 100% employment rate for IBL graduates
  - 70 – 80% with our Industry partners
Contact

Chris Gonsalvez  
Director, Industry & Community Engagement  
Faculty of Information Technology  
Monash University - Monash Provider No. 00008C  
Tel: 9905 5806 Mobile: 0418 533 957  
email: chris.gonsalvez@monash.edu

Questions