

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

**Final Evaluation Report**

**Project No. : 17/QEGS/2011**

## Part A

**Project Title** : Implementation of an Open Source ePortfolio for Sub-degree Students

**Name of Grantee** : Hong Kong Community College

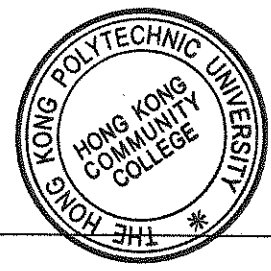
**Project Period** : From 9/2011 (month/year) to 8/2013 (month/year)

## Part B

Please use separate A4-size sheets to provide an evaluation of the Project with regard to the following aspects:

1. Project activities contributing to the attainment of Project objectives, extent of attainment of the objectives, evidence or indicators attesting to the attainment of the objectives, and if applicable, reasons for not able to achieve the objectives.
2. Impact or benefits of the Project to the participants, the target institution(s) or the sector.
3. Cost-effectiveness of the Project against clear indicators, e.g. utilization of available resources, unit cost per beneficiaries, sustainability of Project activities/impacts, applicability of Project outcomes/deliverables to other institutions, or alternative approaches for equivalent benefits at less cost, etc.
4. Outcomes and deliverables of the Project.

Signature: 

Organization Chop: 

Name of Authorized Person: Dr. Simon Leung

Name of Grantee

Organization: PolyU HKCC

Position of Authorized

Person: Director

Date: 29 November 2013

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

## QEGS Final Evaluation Report

### 1. Attainment of Objectives

| Objective Statement   | Activities related to the objective  | Extent of attainment of the objective | Evidence or indicators of having achieved the objective  |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. To provide a platform for students to set and discuss with others their academic goals for self-reflection | Construct the ePortfolio Platform  | Fully achieved                        | An open-source ePortfolio Platform named Mahara and a project website have been established since January 2012.  |
|   | Establish a project website which consists of three major parts:<br>(1) The Project ethos;<br>(2) How could the ePortfolio improve learning;<br>(3) Teachers' sharing. | Fully achieved                        | The project website address is: <a href="http://158.132.50.65/">http://158.132.50.65/</a>  |
|   | Publish a pocket-sized guidebook   | Fully achieved                        | 200 copies of the pocket-sized guidebook introducing the concepts of ePortfolio were distributed mainly to HKCC teachers and students, as well as visiting teachers from secondary and tertiary sectors. |
|   | Conduct workshops  | Fully achieved                        | Nine user training workshops were held to demonstrate the functions of the ePortfolio Platform and share some good examples of ePortfolios.  |

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

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|---|--------------------------------|----------------|---|
|   | Hold an ePortfolio competition | Fully achieved | A campus-wide ePortfolio competition titled "The e-Portfolio Competition for Future Leaders" was held. All participants were required to prepare their own ePortfolios which could demonstrate their learning progress.       |
| 2. To help students identify and diagnose their learning problems, so that they could know what and how to improve their work | Conduct Pilot I & II studies   | Fully achieved | In the two pilot studies, three different courses were revised and multiple strategies were included in the courses to encourage students to set their own goals and motivate them to reflect on their own learning.          |
|   | Conduct workshops              | Fully achieved | At our workshops, students were encouraged to reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses in learning. Mock interviews were included in two of the workshops and advice was given to students on how to improve their work. |

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

|   |  |                       |   |
|---|--|-----------------------|---|
| <p>3. To conduct research on students' and teachers' perspectives on the ePortfolio</p> | <p>Conduct Pilots I &amp; II studies</p> | <p>Fully achieved</p> | <p>Students' perspectives on the use of the ePortfolio Platform for learning were collected at the end of each pilot study via questionnaires and focus group interviews. Detailed recommendations, which have been collected, are useful to teachers who are interested in ePortfolios.</p>  |
|   | <p>Conduct workshops</p>                 | <p>Fully achieved</p> | <p>Students' perspectives on the use of the ePortfolio Platform for learning were collected at the end of each workshop via questionnaires.</p> <p>A workshop on sharing-of-good-practice was organised in Phase IV. 29 teachers from secondary and tertiary education sectors attended. Through discussions, the participants could know more about the implementation of ePortfolios in different educational settings. This could broaden teachers' horizons and stimulate ideas on this new pedagogy.</p> |
|   | <p>Conference Presentations</p>          | <p>Fully achieved</p> | <p>Our team members have conducted presentations in international conferences. Through discussions with participants, we could know more about teachers' perspective about ePortfolio, as well as the strategies they adopted ePortfolios assessment at their own educational settings.</p>   |
|   | <p>Journal/conference publications</p>   | <p>Fully achieved</p> | <p>Three papers describe the project experience and students' perspectives have been published.</p>   |

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

## 2. Project Impact

- 2.1 A major benefit of the project is the construction of an ePortfolio Platform which trains the College students to better meet the technological and social demands. A total of 292 students learnt how to develop their own ePortfolios within the project period. In addition, the Platform provides opportunities for students to share their ideas online, so that they could continue their discussions without geographical and time constraints.
- 2.2 The project offered five teachers an opportunity to design learning activities which encourage peer sharing among students and self-reflection. The five teachers are in the fields of language, health science, business, sociology and design. The teachers could make use of this experience and incorporate more multimedia elements into their courses in the future. (Note: three interested teachers carried out pilot studies in their own subjects. They became partnering teachers. Two more teachers later showed their interest in Phase IV of this project. They revised their course contents to fit the use of the ePortfolio Platform.)
- 2.3 Two of our partnering teachers conducted presentations at an international conference held in Osaka, Japan from 23-27 October 2013 and shared their experience in using ePortfolios in their courses. The audience members are educational experts from Hong Kong and other countries.
- 2.4 Two sharing-of-good-practice workshops were designed for secondary and tertiary teachers. The first one was conducted on 8 August 2012. 15 teachers attended. The basic functions of the ePortfolio Platform were shared and discussions were held on how to incorporate ePortfolios into their teaching. The second one was conducted on 3 March 2013. 29 participants from tertiary and secondary sectors attended. The Project proposal, implementation details, challenges encountered and solutions adopted were shared. A reference list and analytical data were also shared so that teachers could further explore a teaching topic should they wish to do so.

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

## 3. Cost-effectiveness

The financial status of the project is shown as follows:

(For the period from 1 September 2011 to 31 August 2013)

(In Hong Kong Dollars)

| <b>Budget Items</b><br><i>(Based on Schedule I of Agreement)</i> | <b>Approved Budget</b> | <b>Actual Expense</b> | <b>Balance</b>   |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Manpower   | \$417,700              | \$177,183             | \$240,517        |
| Equipment/Facilities   | \$300,900              | \$52,131              | \$248,769        |
| Services   | \$200,000              | \$34,900              | \$165,100        |
| General expenses   | \$44,400               | \$24,004              | \$20,396         |
| Others   | \$8,000                | \$5,000               | \$3,000          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>\$971,000</b>       | <b>\$293,218</b>      | <b>\$677,782</b> |

The project's cost-effectiveness should be evaluated with regard to:

### Manpower

After the first user training workshop, many students shared that the ePortfolio Platform was very user-friendly and they could find their ways to use the Platform themselves. In addition, our students revealed that they were heavily involved in their studying and they might need to consider if they would spend a considerable amount of time attending these workshops. Considering the effective use of the funding, the project team therefore organised nine workshops (a total of 12 hours) rather than 48 hours stated in the proposal. As a result, some funding for hiring visiting lecturers was left unspent.

Moreover, the project assistant resigned from her position in November 2012. Again, considering the efficient use of the funding, the project leader took up the administrative duties rather than hiring a new project member until early June 2013. Again, as a result, some funding under the "Manpower" in the proposal was left unspent.

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

## Equipment/Facilities

While the procurement of physical servers was suggested in the “Equipment/Facilities” of the project proposal, it was later found that renting a virtual server was a lot more cost efficient. Thus, the team later chose the private cloud service offered by PolyU to support this project.

In addition, the project team planned to purchase some digital devices at the beginning. It was later found that the equipment and devices in our College were already enough to support the project. Hence, part of the funding was left unspent.

As the expenses were carefully monitored, the project spent \$293,218 with a funding of \$971,000.

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

## 4. Deliverables and Modes of Dissemination

### 4.1 The ePortfolio Platform

The whole ePortfolio system was set for a production run in January 2012. Multimedia elements supported by the ePortfolio Platform were added to the original curriculum.

### 4.2 Project Website

An official website was established to introduce the key ideas of Learning and Showcase ePortfolios. Good practices on using the ePortfolio Platform were also shared.

### 4.3 Workshops

Nine user training workshops were conducted for teachers and students. Our participants were exposed to the innovative elements that were embedded in the ePortfolio Platform. The ninth workshop included a sharing session which aimed to share the project results, problems encountered and suggestions with educational stakeholders from tertiary and secondary sectors. Also, since the ePortfolio is one of the key areas of the new education reform, it is believed that the shared experience could help to stimulate discussions among teachers who are interested in ePortfolios.

### 4.4 The Best ePortfolio Competition

An ePortfolio competition was organised in the second year of the project



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## 4.5 Conference Participation

During the project years, our project members have contributed to international conferences and shared our project experience with educational experts both from Hong Kong and overseas.

Details are:

| Date/Place                                | Conference Title   | Presenter          | Presentation Title   |
|---|--|--------------------|--|
| August 3-5, 2012,<br>Hokkaido, Japan      | 2012 International Symposium on Information Technology in Medicine and Education (ITME 2012) | Ms Catherine Cheng | Challenges and rewards in the implementation of an ePortfolio project in a higher education institution in Hong Kong |
| October 23-27<br>2013, in Osaka,<br>Japan | The International Academic Forum   | Mr William Leung   | e-Portfolio: A Cutting Edge or A Double-edged Sword in a Sub-degree Learning Environment?                            |
| October 23-27<br>2013, in Osaka,<br>Japan | The International Academic Forum   | Mrs Ella Yu        | 'Feedback Loop' Learning in Health Studies: Phase 1 - Phase III  |

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

## 4.6 Project Publications

Three journal/conference papers have been issued for the project:

- Cheng M.S. C, (2011). Integrating assessment for learning in the classrooms of higher education institutions in Hong Kong. *Hong Kong Teachers' Centre Journal* 10, 35-43
- Cheng, M.S. C. (2012, August). Challenges and rewards in the implementation of an ePortfolio project in a higher education institution in Hong Kong. In *Information Technology in Medicine and Education (ITME), 2012 International Symposium on* (Vol. 1, pp. 129-135). IEEE.
- Cheng Mei-seung, C. (2013, August). A Slow Train or a Quick Flight----A Deep Reflection on Students' Choices Concerning Their Own Learning Strategies. In *2013 International Conference on Education, Management and Social Science (ICEMSS-13)*. Atlantis Press.

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

## 5. Activity List

Two pilot studies and nine user training workshops were organised during the project period. The number of participants for the pilot studies is 292 while the user training workshops is 185. In addition, the total number of workshop hours is 12.5.

| Types of activities          | Brief description   | No. of participants |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Pilot I study                | <p><u>Period:</u><br/>January-June 2012</p> <p><u>Venue:</u><br/>HKCC (PolyU Hung Hom Bay Campus)</p> <p><u>Description:</u><br/>Students were encouraged to collect peer feedback on their assignments via the ePortfolio Platform for self-improvement.</p> | Students: 164       |
| Pilot II study               | <p><u>Period:</u><br/>September 2012- February 2013</p> <p><u>Venue:</u><br/>HKCC (PolyU Hung Hom Bay Campus)</p> <p><u>Description:</u><br/>Students were instructed to showcase their own work via the ePortfolio Platform.</p>                             | Students: 128       |
| User training—<br>Workshop I | <p><u>Title:</u><br/>Introduction to the use of Multi-media functions of the ePortfolio Platform</p> <p><u>Date:</u><br/>8 March 2012</p> <p><u>Venue:</u><br/>HKCC (PolyU Hung Hom Bay Campus)</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 1.5 hours</p>                         | Students: 10        |

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

|  |   |                     |
|--|---|---------------------|
| <p>User training—<br/>Workshop II</p>  | <p><u>Title:</u><br/>What is self-reflection? What benefits will it bring to our learning?—Using ePortfolios to reflect our learning</p> <p><u>Date:</u><br/>8 March 2012</p> <p><u>Venue:</u><br/>HKCC (PolyU Hung Hom Bay Campus)</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 1.5 hours</p>         | <p>Students: 11</p> |
| <p>User training—<br/>Workshop III</p> | <p><u>Title:</u><br/>Incorporating ePortfolios into sub-degree courses</p> <p><u>Date:</u><br/>8 August 2012</p> <p><u>Venue:</u><br/>HKCC (PolyU Hung Hom Bay Campus)</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 1 hour</p>   | <p>Teachers: 15</p> |
| <p>User training—<br/>Workshop IV</p>  | <p><u>Title:</u><br/>Effective interview skills—what learning evidences should be kept in your ePortfolios and shared with your interviewer?</p> <p><u>Date:</u><br/>29 October 2012</p> <p><u>Venue:</u><br/>HKCC (PolyU Hung Hom Bay Campus)</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 1 hour</p> | <p>Students: 35</p> |

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

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|--|---|---------------------|
| <p>User training—<br/>Workshop V</p>   | <p><u>Title:</u><br/>Cover letter and resume writing workshop—<br/>whose views should be collected for your student<br/>development activities? How should they be cited in<br/>your cover letter, resume and ePortfolios?</p> <p><u>Date:</u><br/>1 November 2012</p> <p><u>Venue:</u><br/>HKCC (PolyU Hung Hom Bay Campus)</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 1 hour</p> | <p>Students: 40</p> |
| <p>User training—<br/>Workshop VI</p>  | <p><u>Title:</u><br/>Enhancement of career opportunity workshop—<br/>How to tailor-make a fit-for-purpose ePortfolio which<br/>could enhance your career opportunities? (Mock<br/>interviews were offered)</p> <p><u>Date:</u><br/>6 November 2012</p> <p><u>Venue:</u><br/>HKCC (PolyU Hung Hom Bay Campus)</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 1 hour</p>                 | <p>Students: 6</p>  |
| <p>User training—<br/>Workshop VII</p> | <p><u>Title:</u><br/>Impress your potential employers with a winning<br/>ePortfolio</p> <p><u>Date:</u><br/>3 March 2013</p> <p><u>Venue:</u><br/>HKCC (PolyU Hung Hom Bay Campus)</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 1.5 hours</p>  | <p>Students: 13</p> |

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

|                                 |  |              |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------|
| User training—<br>Workshop VIII | <p><u>Title:</u><br/>Preparing an ePortfolio for a journalist’s interview<br/>(Mock interviews were offered)</p> <p><u>Date:</u><br/>3 May 2013</p> <p><u>Venue:</u><br/>HKCC (PolyU Hung Hom Bay Campus)</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 1 hour</p>   | Students: 26 |
| User training—<br>Workshop IX   | <p><u>Title:</u><br/>“Use of ePortfolio and iPad in learning and teaching” by<br/>HKCC Project SHARE—workshop with a sharing<br/>session on project experience</p> <p><u>Date:</u><br/>10 May 2013</p> <p><u>Venue:</u><br/>HKCC (PolyU Hung Hom Bay Campus)</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 3 hours</p> | Teachers: 29 |

## 6. Difficulties encountered and solutions adopted

The actual project implementation was on the whole aligned with the original plan. How to motivate students to prepare their own ePortfolios was a challenge. This issue was addressed by encouraging students to talk to professionals and let them understand the importance of early planning. In addition, conducting mock interviews also helped students understand their own strengths and weaknesses. By evaluating students’ ePortfolios and their interview performance, students’ presentation skills would be polished, which could in turn facilitate their learning.

(End)