

Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

Progress Report

Project No. : 17/QEGS/2011

Reporting Period : From September 2011 (month/year) to February 2012 (month/year)

Part A

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

Name of Grantee : Hong Kong Community College

Project Period : From September 2011 (month/year) to August 2013 (month/year)

Part B

Please use separate A4-size sheets to report the progress with regard to the following aspects:

1. Types and brief descriptions of Project activities held/completed during the reporting period (*the information may be presented in the form of a table*).
2. The dates, time, venues and number of participants / beneficiaries of Project activities held, and resources (e.g. equipment, manpower) used for the implementation of Project activities.
3. Project milestone(s) and deliverables attained at the end of the reporting period and evidence showing the attainment of milestones and deliverables.
4. The percentage, in terms of key tasks, of the Project completed at the end of each reporting period.
5. Project variation*, if any, during the reporting period, together with details and justifications.

Signature: _____



Organization Chop: _____



Name of Authorized Person: Dr. Simon Leung

Name of Grantee

Organization: PolyU HKCC

Position of Authorized

Person: Director

Date: 27 March 2012

*Rec'd on 21 May with
Clarifications.*

* A separate written application should be submitted to the Grantor for prior written approval.

Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

Progress report on QEGS Project-Implementation of an Open Source ePortfolio for sub-degree students

Project Code: 17/QEGS/2011

Part B

1. Types and brief descriptions of project activities held

The main purpose of this project is to set up an ePortfolio platform (ePortfolio) which can systematically reflect a holistic view on students' progress of learning. The project consists of four phases, and this progress report summarizes the activities held in phase I-- Project Preparation(Sept 2011-Feb 2012).

The major activities in the mentioned period are shown in the following table:

Table 1

Project Activities	Descriptions
<i>A. Formation of a project team</i>	A project team of five core members (four full-time teaching staff members and one project assistant) was formed. Later, three teaching staff members showed their interest in the ePortfolios and agreed to be the partnering teachers in the project.
<i>B. Confirming details of Pilot I</i>	The ways of using the ePortfolio into the course of teaching are confirmed by the partnering teachers.
<i>C. Setting up of the ePortfolio System</i>	The project scope, system functionality and requirements were confirmed after having meetings with potential service providers. The project team has finally selected the private cloud computing service supported by Information Technology Service Office (ITS) in the Polytechnic University of Hong Kong (PolyU). An ePortfolio system called "Mahara" was selected for the project. An external company was invited to install Mahara in the private cloud platform. A project website which provides brief descriptions of the project was developed. Users can login to the ePortfolio system via this link: http://158.132.50.65/
<i>D. Delivery of workshops</i>	A workshop delivered by a visiting lecturer was held on late February to about 80 students from Pilot I. A survey evaluating the project workshop was developed (Appendix I). One booklet was written on January 2012 to support the workshop.
<i>E. Publication of a scholarly Output</i>	One journal written by the project owner, Ms Catherine CHENG, regarding the use of ePortfolio in the higher education sector was published in the <i>Hong Kong Teacher's Journal</i> .(Appendix II)

2. Details of project activities held used for the implementation of project activities

This section explains the details of the project activities held within the reporting period.

A. Formation of a project team

There are totally eight members in the project team. Seven of them all full-time teaching staff in the Hong Kong Community College (HKCC), and a new recruit, Ms Ruby Liu, was on board on mid Nov 2011. Ms Liu was recruited to provide administrative support to this project, and she was directly under the supervision of the project owner.

Table 2: The membership list and the member' roles

Roles	Key Duties	Members
Core members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To plan, execute, and finalize project activities according to strict deadlines and within budget; - To coordinate the efforts of third-party contractors in order to deliver project according to plan; - To develop the appropriate content or activities and monitor the project progress. 	Ms Catherine CHENG Ms Vera SUN Dr Ken TSANG Ms Phoebe SIU Ms Ruby LIU (left on 5 Feb 2012)
Partnering Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To adjust their course contents, if any, and integrate the Platform to their teaching; - To develop the assessment rubrics of ePortfolio, if appropriate; - To promote the ePortfolio systems to their students; - To assist the delivery of workshops; 	Dr Simon CHUNG Mr Brian HUNG Dr Kit Ling LUK

B. Confirming Details of Pilot I

As more than one subject lecturers have shown their interest in this project, the number of participants in Pilot I was more than proposed. 170 participants were registered in Pilot I. The course titles, subject lecturers, the number of participants and the ePortfolio activities are described as followed:

Table 3: The courses that have adopted ePortfolio and the details of the activities

Course Titles	subject lecturers	no. of participants	Brief descriptions of ePortfolio activities
CC 3724 Sociology of Culture	Dr Simon CHUNG	about 140	Students are asked to write online reflective journals in their ePortfolios and to share their work with their peers.
CC 3444 Integrative Self studies	Dr Kit Ling LUK	about 20	Students are asked to write online reflective journals in their ePortfolios by using the multimedia interactive tools in the platform.
CC 3759 Digital Video Production	Mr Brian HUNG	about 20	Students are asked to keep their assignments in the ePortfolios, and submit them to the teachers.

C. Setting up of an ePortfolio Platform

The Platform

In the proposal, a server hosting service is suggested with the purchase of physical hardware and equipment. From September to November 2011, the core team investigated the service packages available in the market, and a detailed tender specification of the project was then written and submitted to the Finance Office in PolyU in November 2011.

It was later recommended that the security issue of the Platform should be given more consideration so as to ensure that the users will have better privacy protection. However, the budget could not cover the additional cost of data protection.

To avoid over-budgeting, the project team then turned to a new computing service: private cloud computing. The project team has chosen the ITS in PolyU as the service provider. After having meetings with ITS, the project has granted a three-month trial service (from 23 Jan to 22 April 2012) of their private cloud computing service.

The Software

The project team has investigated the existing ePortfolio systems that were used in the higher education sector, and finally Mahara was selected for the project. Mahara is an open-sourced software, which is free to use and it can be integrated into a wider Learning Management System like Moodle. As HKCC currently adopts Moodle as the Learning Management System, Mahara might be more suitable for the college.

The team has invited an external IT service provider to install Mahara in the virtual machine environment provided by the ITS in PolyU.

Project Website

A website specifying the project objectives, scopes and activities was developed.

D. Delivery of workshops

An one-hour workshop titled "Introduction to Mahara" was delivered by a visiting lecturer on 27 Feb 2012. There are about 80 students from Pilot I attended. To support the workshop, a one workshop booklet introducing the major functions of Mahara was prepared and published on 18 January, 2012. In addition, an evaluative survey for the workshop was developed.

E. Scholarly Output

One journal written by a full-time staff member, Ms Catherine CHENG, regarding the use of ePortfolio in the higher education sector was published in the *Hong Kong Teacher's Journal*.

3. Project milestones and deliverables attained at the end of the reporting period

1. *An ePortfolio Platform: an open-source software called Mahara is installed in a virtual environment provided by the ITS in PolyU. The purpose of setting the platform is to allow students to have a more holistic view of their learning.*
2. *Project Website: a project website is developed which shows the benefits of using ePortfolio in learning. The link is: <http://158.132.50.65/>*
3. *Workshops: one workshop is delivered to Pilot I students in the reporting period.*
4. *Scholarly Output: a journal was published in the Hong Kong Teacher's Journal.*

4. The percentage, in terms of key tasks, of the project completed

Below are the key tasks that were done/ achieved during Phase I.

Milestones or deliverables scheduled for completion during the reporting period	% attained	Remarks
1. Outsourcing the ePortfolio system and the construction of the project website	100%	The team is waiting for the quotation the Finance Office in PolyU to confirm the purchase of service from ITS.
2. Recruitment of Manpower	100%	An interview panel was set up and 4 candidates were called for interviews. The project assistant, Ms Ruby Liu, was finally selected on Oct 2011. She resigned and left the team on Feb 2012.
3. The First Pilot Run	100%	The ePortfolio system was used in three different subjects and about 180 participants were involved. The Pilot I was started on Jan 2012 and a survey will soon be conducted on May.
4. Delivery of workshops	100%	One 1-hour workshop titled "Introduction to Mahara" was conducted to Pilot I students on late Feb 2012.

5. Project variation

Hardware variation

Currently, the project has been granted a three-month trial service of private cloud computing service from ITS in PolyU. The decision of adopting a virtualized server hosting service from the ITS instead of using a physical server is because it is more economical, with a better privacy protection.

As PolyU is a UGC-funded entity, the ITS will charge the project at a cost with no subsidy. The actual price will be confirmed after checking with the Finance Office in PolyU.

Approval from the EDB was sought by the project team in Nov 2011 regarding the use of the private cloud computing service offered by a UGC-funded entity. The project team was required to obtain a formal quotation from the ITS and submit it to the EDB for further confirmation.

While the project team is waiting for the quotation, a free three-month trial is granted by the ITS and the trial service is in use.

6. Financial position as at the end date of the reporting period

Expenditure Items	Approved budget (a)	Committed or actual expenditure (b)	Balance [(a)-(b)]
a. <u>Manpower</u>			
Salary of a full-time Project Assistant (from 14 Nov 2011 to 5 Feb 2012)	\$417,700	\$42,089.36	\$375,610.64
b. <u>Equipment / facilities</u>			
The purchase of a desktop computer (for the project assistant)	\$300,900	\$5,207	\$295,693
c. <u>Services</u>			
Outsourced services for developing the ePortfolio system	\$200,000	\$6,800	\$193,200
d. <u>General expenses</u>			
Photocopying: \$440	\$44,400	\$5,196.18	\$39,203.82
Editing manuscript: \$3,100			
Miscellaneous: \$1656.18			
e. Others	\$8,000	0	\$8,000
Total	\$971,000	\$59,292.54	\$911,707.46
Project Income (if any)			(nil)
Total Balance			\$911,707.46