



The University of Canberra

Assessing Group Work in Media and Communication

<http://creative.canberra.edu.au/groupwork/>

Report prepared for the
Australian Learning and Teaching Council

by

Dr Greg Battye, Dr Ian Hart, Dr Coralie McCormack and Dr Peter Donnan,
University of Canberra

March 2008



The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of The Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Ltd.

This work is published under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-ShareAlike 2.5 Australia Licence. Under this Licence you are free to copy, distribute, display and perform the work and to make derivative works.

Attribution: You must attribute the work to the original authors and include the following statement: *Support for the original work was provided by The Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Ltd, an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations*

Noncommercial: You may not use this work for commercial purposes.

Share Alike. If you alter, transform, or build on this work, you may distribute the resulting work only under a license identical to this one.

For any reuse or distribution, you must make clear to others the license terms of this work.

Any of these conditions can be waived if you get permission from the copyright holder.

To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/au/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 543 Howard Street, 5th Floor, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA.

Requests and inquiries concerning these rights should be addressed to The Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Ltd, PO Box 2375, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 or through the website: www.carrickinstitute.edu.au

2008

Support for this project has been provided by The Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Ltd, an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of The Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Ltd.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	v
Executive summary	vi
1 Overview of project	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 The aims of the project	1
1.3 The project team	2
1.4 The significance of the project	3
1.5 Key terms and definitions	4
2 The project rationale and context	5
2.1 Rationale for project methodology	5
2.2 The context for the project	5
2.3 Research questions guiding the project	6
3 The project methodology	7
3.1 Initial methodology	7
3.2 Consultation and dissemination strategies for the project	7
3.3 Ethics approval	9
3.4 Advisors	9
3.4.1 Advisory group	9
3.4.2 International Expert Advisor	10
3.4.3 Other advice: Carrick National Assessment Forums	10
4 Website development and dissemination	10
4.1 Introduction	10
4.2 The website development process	11
4.3 Review and feedback process	11
4.4 Dissemination of the website URL	12
5 Project outcomes and concluding remarks	12
5.1 Project outcomes and deliverables	12
5.2 Concluding remarks	12
References	14
List of appendices	15
A. Qualifications and experience of project team	16
B. Performance indicators	19
C. Survey on Group Assessment Information	22
D. Summary of participants	29
E. Conference papers delivered to date	30
F. Challenges and successes	31

Acknowledgements

The project team would like to acknowledge the contributions made by everyone who took part in this project. Many staff and students at the partner universities contributed significant time and effort to the rich media case study materials that are the main substance of the resulting web-based resource. Professor Belle Alderman launched the project as initial leader and provided a thoughtful case study from her award-winning online teaching. Dr Sam Hinton and Dr Mitchell Whitelaw contributed software and other expertise to the practical design of the project, as well as case studies. Professor Sharon Bell offered insights that combined the eye of a practitioner, the experience of a teacher and the overview of a Deputy Vice Chancellor.

From our partner universities, Rick Bennett at the University of New South Wales contributed case study material, software examples and consulting expertise, while also assisting other participants in the project. Professor John Hedberg from Macquarie University consulted on both project and website design from beginning to end, and played a key role in clarifying the site's final design and function.

At EdMedia in Vancouver (2007), many interested conference visitors took time to discuss our project in detail and to offer useful insights. Particular thanks are due to Professor Tom Reeves, Associate Professor Jan Herrington and Professor Ron Oliver for offering those insights in the form of video interviews that are now enshrined in the project.

Matt Bacon, Designer in Technology and Educational Design Services (TEDS) at the University of Canberra, added both functional design sense and aesthetic sophistication to the design and configuration of the site, and organized supplementary materials to assist with dissemination of information about its ongoing role. Dr Peter Donnan and Dr Coralie McCormack maintained an expert critical perspective on the project throughout its development, gave feedback at numerous progress discussions, and provided academic content in the form of both site additions and external conference papers.

Professor Dai Hounsell, the keynote speaker at the 2006 Carrick National Assessment Project Forum at CSHE in Melbourne in December 2006, provided Drs Hart and Battye with helpful advice and encouragement. Other participants in the forum offered useful critical insights, particularly in terms of the need for the finished website to incorporate a means by which continuing input and discussion could continue to enrich and develop the site.

Finally the project team would like to thank the Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education for funding and supporting the project.

Executive Summary

This project, **Assessing Group Work in Media and Communication**, was funded by the Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education to address a tension that frequently arises in University teaching of Media and Communication in Australian universities: the need for collaborative group work on the one hand, and negative student attitudes to group assessment on the other. Such negative attitudes stem generally from the perception that group assessment does not reflect individual contributions and may compromise the best students' chance of receiving a fair mark.

Collaborative work is, however, both an essential ingredient of the learning process, and a vital attribute of subsequent professional work in these and other disciplines following graduation. Group work and group assessment are open to many design approaches and strategies, but this diversity may not be readily apparent to those without the time or resources to look for it. This project's central goal was to construct a sophisticated but useable resource for a broad range of academics in these and related disciplines, through which they might be able to discover and adapt new and contextually appropriate strategies and approaches to group assessment.

The project team collected information in the form of video interviews with staff and students, video footage of actual classes, course outlines and other course materials, and student work samples. All these were collected for a range of disciplines in the partner universities and beyond, and deliberately reflect diverse practice as well as good practice. As it became obvious that not all of the approaches that might ultimately be useful in Media and Communication would necessarily come from within that field, the project team extended its purview to some key projects and activities outside these disciplines, such as the Assessing Teamwork project in Medicine at the University of New South Wales (UNSW).

This video material was then edited into chapters so as to provide access either to the whole, or to issue-related segments. In the completed site, video content is supplemented by linked textual information on course structure, assessment items, and formal academic resources on learning theory and other relevant issues.

It is clear, even from early responses to the site, that the presence of student views in the video material imparts a particular level of credibility to the discussion of issues and principles. While academics who 'own' courses may clearly enunciate the virtues of their various assessment strategies, only student perceptions of those same strategies are perceived as providing real validation of their merit.

An initial intention to produce a hard-copy manual, which would have consisted principally of the materials listed in the above paragraph, was discarded in favour of adding these materials to the website. While this made the site more complex than was initially intended, it increased the usefulness of the site by making it the single point of contact for all the content assembled during the project, and the single entity to be managed as the site goes forward to incorporate new material and new conversations between users.

Several interfaces for the website were built over the life of the project, representing successive attempts to reflect the structure of the initial project brief in the arrangement of the content, and in the avenues for access to that content. In the end, consistent

feedback from trial users established clearly that the video material spoke to the issues so strongly that it should be the foremost aspect of the site, and the principal means of navigating through it. The final iteration of the site's structure reflects that belief, and also allows for future ongoing upgrades and additions without time-consuming structural alteration.

The project is already a strong resource, but has strong potential for further growth and development. The plan for guaranteed development over 2008, through the forum and through continuing material contributions to the site, will see it grow to the greater resource it can potentially be, and should facilitate the establishment of links to related resources, creating a whole greater than the sum of its parts.

1 Overview

1.1 Introduction

This report describes a national project led by the former School of Creative Communication (now incorporated into the Faculty of Design and Creative Practice) at the University of Canberra, in partnership with experts in teaching and learning in the Communication, Media, Design and Information and Communication Technology disciplines from UNSW and Macquarie University. It was funded by the Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, with a view to providing resources that university teachers could employ to improve their own approaches to group work and group assessment.

The project team recorded video interviews with staff and students from a range of relevant disciplines, mainly in the partner universities but from other institutions also. To this the team added course/unit documentation such as outlines, learning objectives and descriptions of assessment tasks, and formal resources such as publications and websites. Keynote interviews with leading authorities in assessment, reflecting summaries of more extensive input to the project via several small-group discussions with the project team, were also added. These were all combined in a website which allows multiple modes and styles of exploration of the material, foregrounding the video content as the main way into each of the issues and approaches covered.

While the website has a focus on group work in the Media and Communication disciplines, broadly construed, it both draws on other disciplines and is also in large measure applicable to aspects of other disciplines. A strategy to continue to develop the site is in place, and while remaining closely focused on the Media/Communication area, it is likely to both deepen and broaden as academics engage with the site materials and contribute from their own knowledge and experience.

The website is self-contained, and this report deals with its context, development and approach, rather than seeking to duplicate the site's approach or content.

1.2 The aims of the project

Assessment can be a powerful tool in determining the type of skills and outcomes that graduates need to possess. When the learning task is shared and the product is difficult to measure, as with the collaborative and leadership skills needed for successful group work, assessment decisions are often contested. Group assessment itself, where marks are frequently awarded to all members of a group, brings its own unique challenges. This project set out to produce a web-based resource for university teachers who set assessable collaborative work for their students in Communication and Media and related disciplines, where the use of group work and group assessment is frequently driven by parallel but unrelated phenomena: the need to teach in groups where expensive but essential equipment cannot be provided to students on a one-to-one basis, and the need to develop the collaborative skills necessary for professional work in these disciplines following graduation..

The needs of those who employ group assessment are similar however, regardless of

the circumstances that lead them to use it. The intention of this project was to provide a resource grounded in a collection of best practice case studies, framed and presented so as to make the material maximally engaging for its audience, and linked to contemporary assessment theory.

The aims as stated at the onset of the project were to:

- investigate current Australian best practice for group assessment in Media and Communication courses, identifying common target areas for improvement;
- construct and test a range of practical tools and techniques for improving assessment in these areas;
- disseminate the results, and the products, of this testing to the Media and Communication teaching community; and
- provide a forum for ongoing evolution, discussion, testing and feedback on the products, by the teaching community.

1.3 The Project Team

The University of Canberra was the applicant and Lead Agency. Team members came from University of Canberra (UC), UNSW, UNSW College of Fine Arts (COFA) and Macquarie University.

Overall Project Manager: Dr Ian Hart. Dr Hart combines a 30 year record of educational video and multimedia production with teaching and research in both Media and pedagogy. Immediately prior to this project, he was the team leader in a major ICT and Teaching Project at UC.

Academic Team Leader, UC: Dr Greg Battye. Dr Battye was the Head of the School of Creative Communication (now part of the Faculty of Design and Creative Practice) during the course of the project, and has more than twenty years experience in teaching in Media and Communication. Together with another member of the UC team, Associate Professor Jen Webb, Dr Battye was a joint team leader in a successful UC Teaching Grant in 2002.

Note: Dr Battye took over as academic Team Leader from Professor Belle Alderman, who retired during 2006. Professor Alderman is widely published in tertiary teaching and learning, and is Australia's first Professor of Children's Literature. She was National Finalist in the AUTC Australian Awards for University Teaching, Humanities and the Arts (2000). Prof. Alderman remained an interested member of the Advisory Group for the remainder of the project.

Team members, UC: Assoc. Prof. Jen Webb. Assoc Prof. Webb is Director of the Communication, Media and Cultural Studies research area, and a writer and communication theorist. Dr Mitchell Whitelaw: Head of Media/Multimedia Production at UC. Dr Whitelaw has taught digital media theory and production at several other institutions including UNSW and UTS. Published internationally in the history, theory and criticism of creative practices in new media and sound, he was also joint leader of a UC Teaching Grant in 2003.

Academic Team Leader, UNSW: Brigid Costello, School of Media, Film and Theatre. Brigid is a practising multimedia artist with expertise in programming and visual design. Her research interests include human-computer interaction and interface design.

Academic Team Leader, COFA: Rick Bennett, Head of COFA Online. Mr Bennett is the creator of the Omnium Project, a software framework for Creative Online Interaction.

Academic Team Leader, Macquarie University: Prof. John Hedberg, Prof. Hedberg is Millenium Professor of ICT and Education, in the Australian Centre for Educational Studies at Macquarie University in Sydney. He was formerly Professor of Learning Sciences and Technologies, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University in Singapore from 2003 to 2005.

International advisor: Prof. Tom Reeves, of the University of Georgia. Prof. Reeves is a professor of instructional technology at The University of Georgia in the United States, where he teaches program evaluation, multimedia design, and research courses.

Further information on the project team appears at Appendix A.

1.4 The significance of the project

Increasingly many employers at a national level in Australia are seeking graduates who possess teamwork skills that enable them to deal effectively with the dynamics of working in groups. While university policies on assessment commonly advocate the value of group work, a study by Burdett (2003 p.71) of 344 final year business degree students at the University of South Australia concluded that student frustration with unfair group assessment practices was a major concern. Such a finding is neither surprising nor atypical, given that university assessment policy and indeed all university marks are finally translated into individual grades that are carefully validated to maintain the credibility of degree-conferring status. Universities do not award degrees to teams or groups in the way that Nobel prizes for example may be awarded to groups, recognizing multiple inputs from individuals.

Most Australian universities have policies on Graduate Attributes that recognize the value of group work but at an institutional level this is conceptualized in different ways. The University of Technology Sydney (2008), for instance, describes a broad profile of communication and interpersonal skills and understands that specific attributes are best developed in relation to the professional and disciplinary contexts of each course. Similarly, the University of Sydney (2008) has communication as an over-arching attribute and then links this to learning and negotiating with others. The University of Canberra (2008) and Griffith University (2008) specifically list working with others as part of a group or in a team as a major attribute.

Collaborative learning at university, with its associated networking and communication skills, clearly establishes a foundation for patterns of effective effort that are immediately and generally applicable in employment settings, and that can be further built upon in the workplace. Success in collaborative learning, however, depends on the ability to contribute to authentic assessment activities, genuine group processes, and the opportunity to work with a broad range of students. Mutch (1998) also observes that students need to have time, skill and motivation to work through the group stages of group work.

Working initially from the perspective of producing Media content - a task common to several Communication disciplines - the project described in this report sought to identify examples of best practice in group assessment, collaborative learning and feedback that might successfully enhance learning in broader areas of Communication. It also sought to present this information in the manner most likely to be readily useable and

understandable by its constituency and thus to provide information, as far as possible, through media content of the sort that might be the subject of teaching in these disciplines. It further sought to provide a clear means of ongoing engagement and interaction for users, both with the body of collected information and with each other, and to present the whole information package integrated within a context of selected contemporary learning theory.

As it became clear that some very useful approaches to group learning in media and communication were likely to come from outside the original fields of Media and Communication, the project widened its scope to bring in some examples of group work in other disciplines. It is intended that the ongoing interactions with the resulting project website will allow further widening of this focus, and it is also anticipated that its relevance and utility to that wider range of disciplines might also increase in a corresponding fashion. Initially however, the emphasis will remain in Media and Communication, broadly understood.

1.5 Key terms and definitions

The only term considered likely to require definition or amplification in this study was "Media and Communication," which is interpreted and institutionalized variably in different universities, schools and professional contexts.

Those involved with the project took the view that there was little use in attempting to confer, on the meaning of this term, a clarity that simply does not exist. Communication Studies is a discipline that sprang from the work of nineteenth century philosophers but which now also embraces, among other things, elements of Psychology, Sociology, Linguistics, Literary Criticism, Engineering, Cultural Studies (itself a grab-bag of other disciplines) and Information Technology. While these disciplines themselves are in constant flux, Communication is also under constant change as a professional field, and as an institutional academic discipline.

The study of Media suffers from the same issues, and may variably either include Communication or be included by it.

The approach of this project was to be broadly inclusive of any or all of the disciplines potentially likely to be grouped under either heading (Media or Communication), regardless of whether they were actually so classified at any particular institution from which subjects were drawn. In practice, the project also extended its catchment area to disciplines for which group work was intrinsic (such as theatre and dance) and correspondingly de-emphasized those which, though typically an aspect of Communication, were more likely to concentrate purely on individual assessment (creative writing would frequently be an example, although writing units do appear in these case studies in instances where group work is used).

2 The project rationale and context

2.1 Rationale for project methodology

The main goal of the project was to provide a practical means by which teaching staff in Media and Communication in Australian universities could improve their approaches to group learning and group assessment. It sought also to promote the positive benefits of group learning and assessment to those for whom the perceived disadvantages of group work seemed to outweigh the benefits, and to allow a continuing mechanism through which interested parties could discuss ongoing issues in group learning and assessment.

The project team has collaborated broadly across a range of institutions and programs in the areas of Media and Communication and, in doing so, set up some concrete commitments to ongoing activity that will preserve and supplement the currency and usefulness of the resulting resource. In addition the project team has, in the course of consultations on the final shape and structure of the web-based resource, formed links with related projects that are likely to further extend the long-term influence of the project.

The approach taken to this project:

- Addresses established pre-existing needs for group approaches to teaching and assessment, such as the availability of physical teaching resources and the intrinsic group nature of some discipline areas;
- Directly addresses one of the five issues (assessing group work) identified in the 2002 AUTC report **Assessing Learning in Australian Universities**.
- Addresses the project's audience via multiple media that are appropriate to the subject areas of the study and the expertise of users;
- Provides both a finished interactive resource for university teachers as well as a means by which that resource can continue to develop;
- Supports practical tools with formal academic learning theory, and
- Gives voice to the views of both teachers and students.

The project method is also clearly applicable to other disciplinary areas, and the completed project resource constitutes a readily adaptable framework for extending its reach in this fashion. The design of the resource allows it to respond flexibly to the demands and inputs of its users, through any or all of case studies, academic content, or discussion/critique.

2.2 The context for the project

In 2002 the Australian Universities Teaching Committee (AUTC) commissioned Melbourne University's Centre for the Study of Higher Education to develop a set of resources on aspects of assessment, resulting in the report **Assessing Learning in Australian Universities**. The report identified five major issues: on-line assessment, assessing large classes, minimising plagiarism, assessing group work and assessing overseas students.

In 2005 the University of Canberra, in collaboration with the University of NSW and

Macquarie University, was awarded a grant from the Carrick Institute to develop resources on the assessment of group work in Media and Communication, following up the AUTC work in a narrower disciplinary area. The University of Canberra has a long history of media teaching from as far back as 1976, and the former School of Creative Communication (now part of the Faculty of Design and Creative Practice) currently offers courses at undergraduate and postgraduate levels while the former School of Design and Architecture (now also part of the Faculty of Design and Creative Practice) offers an undergraduate degree in Graphic Design. The UNSW teaches a variety of media and performance courses within the School of Media, Film and Theatre and in the College of Fine Arts: the project drew on staff from both of these. Macquarie University's contribution to the study comes from the ICT Innovations Centre within the Australian Centre for Education Studies.

Many of the difficulties that afflict group work and group assessment would seem to be intuitively predictable, but there are marked variations between types of course and types of assessment. James, McInnis and Devlin (2002) note that students are keen that grading practices are established to properly reflect the levels of performance of each student and that where necessary, grade adjustments occur to better reflect these levels. Isaacs (2002) suggests there is no clear 'yes' or 'no' answer to this question and that decisions should be based on the goals for the course and for the assessment exercise. Having the group share the same mark should enhance collaboration in his view, so the important question becomes one of how to deal with those who do not participate adequately in the group's work.

The success or failure of group assessment is also, however, influenced by matters that are not strictly assessment issues in themselves, and may also interact in a subtle and unpredictable fashion with the requirements of particular disciplines. Isaacs (2002) notes that the logistics of group formation and group interpersonal working — problem areas frequently raised in discussions of group work — are not strictly assessment issues but that quite obviously, if the group can not function well, or possibly not at all, this will have an effect on learning and assessment outcomes. While certain issues crop up in all group assessment, Crossley (2006) argues that in the performing arts, controversy and drama represent positive opportunities; students need to engage with conflict constructively rather than attempt to avoid it; and controversy may allow for the entry of new ideas that might otherwise be suppressed in the interests of 'groupthink'.

These influences are difficult if not impossible to untangle other than in a single extremely narrow disciplinary framework. Working at a practical level in this tangled context however, this project sought to sensitize teachers to the range and complexity of influences they might face, to provide new assessment options for those with limited experience or knowledge and, through interactive case studies supported by academic resources, to provide field-tested options for handling those influences, voiced by those who have actually experienced them as teachers and/or as students.

2.3 Research question guiding the project

Bearing in mind the complexities outlined above, the project was guided by exploring the range of responses, across the very diverse spectrum of practical activities and pedagogical approaches included under the rubric of Media and Communication, to a single multifaceted question:

How can teachers and students co-construct authentic group work assessment tasks in Media and Communication subjects so as to be both developmental and summative, and to align learning outcomes, assessment criteria and the assessment product?

3 Project methodology

3.1 Initial methodology

The project methodology was developed initially as a three-pronged approach:

1. Collecting data, via a structured email survey, on best practice in Media/Communication group assessment
2. Designing templates to assist the assessment process. This step was planned to involve observation, qualitative and quantitative data collection and formative feedback.
3. Publishing the emerging outcomes of our research, firstly at conferences with the aim of obtaining external feedback; then on conclusion of the study, at further conferences, in print and on the web site.

The methodology as a whole was contextualized within the principles of Design-Based Research (DBR), a methodology that can accommodate the skills of creative designers with rigorous scholarship and attention to theory. According to Dede (2004, p.105) "DBR differs from conventional design and traditional research (in) its emphasis on adapting a design to its local context, a vital attribute for scaling up an innovation successful in one place to many other venues with dissimilar characteristics." Accordingly, there was some emphasis on the applications of our research to constructivist theories of learning through authentic tasks and environments.

3.2 Consultation and dissemination strategies for the project

The project began with a series of exploratory meetings between the collaborating institutions, clarifying what each member had to offer in the way of experience and expertise. A comprehensive definition of Media and Communication was adopted, to include not just television and multimedia, but performance-based disciplines (particularly theatre and dance), as well as creative courses in design and writing which had some elements of collaborative work and/or peer assessment. The project team was also anxious to include courses taught fully or partly on-line where group collaboration was associated with assessment.

The project used a two-part approach to gathering data: (a) an on-line questionnaire sent to more than 30 Australian universities teaching media and communication, and (b) the Project Manager visited universities in Australia and overseas to present the project and interview lecturers and students on current practice.

The presentations and interviews elicited a great deal of interest and provided valuable input to the project, whereas the survey had a relatively poor response rate. In retrospect this unbalanced response should probably not have been surprising, though at the time it seemed highly inconvenient, and an apparent barrier to the intended rate of developmental progress. Group assessment is a contentious topic, particularly among

students, and while teachers may sometimes seem eager to compare their own group assessment experiences with how it works in other institution, they are not always willing to share their own practices through an impersonal survey.

Visits by the Project Manager were far more successful. Interviews were conducted on video so that they could be used both as input and content for the case study material and as design information for the ongoing construction of the site vehicle. As indicated in the third 'prong' of the initial methodology, an interim conference presentation was circulated first to the Advisory Group and then presented as a poster session at the ED-MEDIA conference in Vancouver in July 2007.

This conference was an opportunity to gather information from a large number of international university staff with experience in group work and group assessment, both in Media/Communication and in other areas. It also provided an opportunity to seek more detailed feedback from our International Adviser, Prof. Tom Reeves of the University of Georgia, and to record a keynote video interview with him. Two Australian Advisory Group members were also recorded in short keynote videos for use on the final site.

Interviews and direct visits to selected staff for the purposes of recording and videotaping by the Project Manager intensified in the latter part of 2007, with increasing clarity being conferred on the role and nature of the website as interview material accumulated. However, at a two-day conference of site contributors, advisers and partner universities in November 2007 at which the interim site, now incorporating much of this material, was presented, major changes were suggested to the site. It was now obvious, particularly to those looking at the whole site after a gap of some weeks or months, that the media case studies constituted such a rich interface to the issues with which the project was dealing that the site would have to be reworked completely in order to make them the main information vehicle and the main navigating principle.

This reworking has intensely occupied the period up to the end of the grant — and beyond. In one sense the project starts now, with the Forum providing an ongoing 'live' connection through which users may make comments on the available material, volunteer themselves for new case studies, provide links to other resources, and connect to other ongoing projects. The project has catered for a commitment for one year to:

- Host the site, including technical maintenance and any necessary software or hardware changes;
- Respond either on the site or by email to forum postings, suggestions for links, suggestions or requests for supplements to learning theory resources, and
- Edit, compile and add to the site further video case studies or course/unit-based materials volunteered by users.

Dissemination has commenced and will continue, via several strategies:

- Formal papers at relevant conferences
- Articles in refereed journals
- Distribution of 500 CD copies of the site as at 21 March 2008 to all universities in Australia, to parties who registered an interest in the project at the ED-MEDIA conference in Vancouver, to conferences at which presentations from this project

- will be made, and through lead and partner universities to interested visitors. The CD will display a prominent link to the live site.
- Circulation of information to relevant professional groups. Dr McCormack and Dr Donnan have already publicised the URL and invited evaluation feedback about the Group Assessment Toolbox to some 2000 members of ASCILITE, HERDSA and ODAA.
- Giveaway materials such as bookmarks, containing the URL for the live site.

3.3 Ethics approval

The project team submitted an ethics application for the project to the Committee for Ethics in Human Research at the University of Canberra, which was subsequently approved. The partner universities were provided with this documentation and accepted this approval for the purposes of their own involvement. Material likely to be the subject of any ethical issues — interviews in particular, plus samples of course materials — were all collected directly by either the UC Project Manager or another member of the UC academic team.

3.4 Advisors

3.4.1 Advisory Group

A project advisory group was formed, with members selected for their expertise in either education research, teaching of Media or Communication subjects using group-based methods, or complex educationally-oriented website development. Several advisory group members had experience in more than one area. The group was composed of the following people:

- Dr Sam Hinton, Lecturer in Media Production, UC
- Dr Coralie McCormack, Senior Lecturer in the Centre for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Scholarship (CELTS), UC.
- Dr Peter Donnan, Senior Instructional Designer, CELTS, UC.
- Professor Ron Oliver, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), Edith Cowan University (ECU) and formerly Professor of Interactive Multimedia in the School of Communications and Multimedia at ECU.
- Assoc Prof. Jan Herrington, Director, Research Centre for Interactive Learning Environments (RILE), University of Wollongong.

Professor Belle Alderman, the initial Academic Team Leader for UC, also remained as a de facto Advisory Group member for the life of the project.

Advisory Team members were generally consulted informally, at key stages in the project and in respect of their individual fields of expertise. As already mentioned above, Professor Oliver and Assoc. Professor Herrington provided keynote video contributions to the website, while Prof. Alderman provided an extensive interview and exemplary course materials in her capacity as the writer and teacher of an award-winning fully-online UC postgraduate unit, Writing for Young People PG.

Darrall Thompson of UTS in Sydney, who appears in one of the case studies, should be recognized here also. Though not formally a member of the Advisory Group, Darrall attended the November 2007 advisory conference, and provided strong and detailed

arguments for the reworking of the site design that subsequently took place. The planned collaboration between this project and Darrall's SPARK project, on which we are now embarking, was also initiated at this conference.

3.4.2 International Expert Advisor

The project was fortunate to secure the service of Professor Tom Reeves as an Expert Advisor. Professor Reeves is a professor of instructional technology at The University of Georgia in the US, where he teaches program evaluation, multimedia design, and research courses.

The UC academic team as a whole met once with Prof. Reeves in Canberra towards the beginning of the project, and at a second meeting in Vancouver during the ED-MEDIA conference, Drs Hart and Battye were able to record a keynote video address for the website as well as consulting him extensively on progress and design for the site in its mid-term completion mode.

3.4.3 Other advice: Carrick National Assessment Forums

All assessment projects then currently funded by the Carrick Institute were invited to attend the Carrick National Assessment Forum in December 2006, in order to share ideas and approaches on assessment projects. Participants were asked to submit questions and issues of particular interest in connection with their projects, before the commencement of the Forum. Drs Hart and Battye presented an interim version of the project as it then stood, and Professor Dai Hounsell of Edinburgh University, keynote speaker for the forum, provided useful project feedback that was instrumental in simplifying the design of the intended final resource.

Professor Hounsell also facilitated the Carrick Assessment Forum in Brisbane on 28-29 November at QUT, and on this occasion Dr Peter Donnan from CELTS at UC, a member of the Advisory Group, attended. Dr Donnan took the opportunity to raise and discuss the issue of, and mechanisms for, ongoing maintenance and supplementation of the website beyond the formal completion of the project.

4 Website development and dissemination

4.1 Introduction

The Website, Doing Group Assessment in Media and Communication, at: <http://creative.canberra.edu.au/groupwork/> is the main vehicle for the project team's findings, and the vehicle through which users of the material on the site will now be able to interact with the material provided, with the ongoing members of the UC team who are charged with maintaining and growing the site, and with each other. The site provides examples of best group assessment practice and, by virtue of its coverage of some discipline areas beyond the original rubric, some examples of practices that are novel to the Media/Communication disciplines but clearly applicable in those areas.

4.2 The website development process

As discussed elsewhere in this report, the project began with anticipation that the online survey would yield a greater degree of response and engagement than was actually the case. The hope was that this might provide aspects of the design approach, at least partly validated in advance by virtue of emanating from the population to whom the study applied. The first version of the survey was only online, and is no longer present on the server. The hard copy version distributed subsequently, which also yielded disappointing results, appears at Appendix C.

The conceptual model which then formed the basis for the initial version of the website, and which also actualized the perceived relationships between the problems of group work and the possible modes of assistance the site could offer, was based to a greater degree on theoretical concerns. While this made for a concept map that was eventually shown to be too complex and which was simplified in the latter stages of producing the actual site, it was a strength in terms of keeping the project team focused on what would be needed to make the final resource widely and flexibly useful.

This interim model experienced several iterations, all of which attempted to mirror the cycle of different facets of assessment, while simultaneously acting as a navigation structure linking to deeper information on each facet. Though a worthy goal, this became just too complex to maintain, in the face of the accumulating richness of some of the content and the apparent actual needs of the users.

The final design was prepared after consultations at a two-day conference of site contributors, advisors and partner universities in November 2007 at which the site, as it then stood, was presented. Those present were forceful in arguing that the site needed to change to reflect what was by then its manifestly greatest strength: the video content and its organisation into chapters through which access and navigation is provided to the other content. Though the large amount of work necessary in a very short time to achieve this major reworking of the site has proved slightly disruptive to the site's operation in the short term, the project team have no doubt that this change has been important and worthwhile. Other changes (structural changes in the operation of the site, mostly not visible to the user) made at the same time have also greatly simplified the ease with which site content can be supplemented and updated in future.

4.3 Review and feedback process

With the site going live, Advisory group members and other parties who have registered an interest in the site over the period of its gestation have been informed of the URL and asked to commence monitoring the site. Several small changes have already been made as a result of such interactions and observations. The project team anticipates that the dissemination plans outlined below, and in particular the ongoing dissemination through conferences and publications, should ensure a building interest in contributing to the site.

As remarked above, there is a sense in which this project starts from this point. The site is at the beginning of its life of public availability as a body of useful content, but it is also an initial version of something that has the potential to grow — in content, in the breadth of its usefulness across discipline areas, and in the links to other salient projects. The site is guaranteed full support, maintenance and content supplementation for a period of one year; beyond that, the University of Canberra undertakes to maintain the site as an operating entity indefinitely.

4.4 Dissemination of the website URL

Project team members and Advisory Group members have already presented papers at relevant conferences, and some papers are already in train for the near future. These will be translated into articles in refereed journals, targeted for their appropriateness to the field and the nature of the project.

500 copies of the site on CD, as it stands on 21 March 2008, will be widely distributed: to all universities in Australia, to parties who registered an interest in the project at ED-MEDIA or other conferences, and through lead and partner universities to any interested visitors, colleagues or professional associates. The CD provides a link to the live site.

Other materials such as bookmarks, containing the URL for the live site, are being produced and will be made widely available to staff at UC and partner universities for use on any occasion when interested academics and other professionals might like to take one. Members of the project team will optionally incorporate the URL in their email address blocks.

5 Project outcomes and concluding remarks

5.1 Project outcomes and deliverables

The project team are confident that their work has honoured the goals with which they set out. The main deliverable, the website at:

<http://creative.canberra.edu.au/groupwork/Intro/Frameset.html>

includes all of the originally intended elements of the project, and has the potential to grow and to move with developments in the fields to which it applies. The concrete plans for maintaining and continuing the site are bearing fruit already, with a commitment to work with Darrall Thompson's Self And Peer Assessment Resource Kit (SPARK) project at:

<http://www.educ.dab.uts.edu.au/darrall/sparksite/>

SPARK was developed by a multidisciplinary team at UTS over a five year period with CUTSD funding received in 1999. At the time of writing this report Mr Thompson is testing version 2 of SPARK, and members of the project team have agreed to do a pilot project linking the Group Assessment site with SPARK as soon as is practicable in 2008. It is anticipated that other collaborative activities of this kind are likely to spring from the work described in this report, and this exemplifies the multiplying effect that Carrick Institute sponsorship can have on the development of tools for the improvement of teaching and learning.

5.2 Concluding remarks

The project team believes that this site has merit and value as it currently exists, but that its possibilities for further growth and development are potentially of greater significance. Through economical management of the project, the team has been able to make good on its affirmation at the outset: that ongoing growth and development in the site and its uses would be catered for. Opportunities such as the SPARK one, for collaborative further work linking this project to other relevant resources, are worth fostering.

The project team would like to recommend that the Carrick Institute consider some formalized means by which these anticipated continuing aspects of funded projects can be supported. A website is not particularly useful as a static entity; it must grow and change with, and in response to, its users if it is to make a worthwhile contribution to any dynamic field. The disciplines contained within Media and Communication are inherently dynamic, and demand dynamic responses. This site, however, will not be the only one to which this applies. The project team asks that the Carrick Institute consider any ways in which the value of the work it has so generously funded can continue to grow dynamically in the future.

In that same connection, but perhaps of even more importance, is the need for more linkages between many of the presently separate assessment projects under the Carrick rubric. Project teams will make some of these links themselves, but there would be great merit in the adoption a broad systemic perspective of all these projects and some consideration of the most fruitful linkages between them. The project covered by this report contains outstanding case studies and supporting materials but it can be enhanced by a meta-analysis that sets group assessment within a broad range of other Carrick-supported assessment projects and provides linkages to them. Graduate attributes, and how they are embedded in group assessment, are also an integral part of this.

References

- Burdett, J. (2003). Making groups work: University students' perceptions. *International Education Journal*, 4(3), 177-191.
- Dede, C. (2004). Distributed-learning communities as a model for educating teachers. Paper presented at the Society of Information Technology for Teacher Educators (SITE), Atlanta, GA.
- Isaacs, G. (2002). Assessing group tasks. from http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/downloads/T&L_Assess_group_tasks.pdf
- James, R., McInnis, C., & Devlin, M. (2002). Assessing group work. from <http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/assessinglearning/03/group.html>
- Mutch, A. (1998). Employability or learning? Groupwork in higher education. *Education and Training*, 40(22), 50-56.

Appendices

- A. Qualifications and Experience of Project Team
- B. Performance Indicators
- C. Survey on Group Assessment Information
- D. Summary of Participants
- E. Conference papers
- F. Reflection on challenges and successes

Appendix A

Qualifications and Experience of Project Team

Dr Ian Hart – Project Manager

Combines a 30 year record of educational video and multimedia production with teaching and research in both Media and pedagogy. His doctorate is in the field of media and learning. He has been a visiting fellow at the *Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique*, Paris, the University of Poitiers, the University of Tennessee, the British Open University and Peking University.

2005-	Team leader, ICT and Teaching Project, Division of Communication & Education, University of Canberra
1992-2004	Associate Professor & Head, Interactive Media Group, Centre for the Advancement of University Teaching, University of Hong Kong
1988-1991	Head, Media Studies, School of Communication, University of Canberra
1982-1987	Director, Instructional Media Centre, University of Canberra

Dr Greg Battye — UC Academic Team Leader

Dr Greg Battye was Head of the School of Creative Communication at the University of Canberra between 2003 and 2008. He has taught in a wide range of units in Media, Communication and Writing since 1990, and his current research interests include: cultural studies, where he has published articles and book chapters on the Indian diaspora, photography and narrative theory, and the connections between culture and terrorism; applied media/communication techniques, with particular reference to the application of media technology to legal processes; and learning and teaching. He is currently a Chief Investigator on two ARC-funded Linkage grants investigating uses of media technology to improve jury processes.

Dr Battye has been at the forefront of developments in fully-online teaching at the University of Canberra, with key involvement in the design and writing of three online coursework Masters degrees and sole responsibility for the development of two units offered across those degrees.

He maintains a practical interest in media production. For the ARC-funded research project **Juries and interactive visual evidence: impacts on deliberation processes and outcomes**, he co-scripted and directed the mock trial DVD used to present evidence in the project's large-scale second-stage evidence evaluation. As principal supervisor of a PhD student working on this project, he is currently writing a content analysis of the television series **CSI**. His own creative photography is held in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia, the National Library of Australia, the Australian Defence Force Academy and the University of Wollongong.

Professor Belle Alderman (Initial UC Academic Team Leader; later member of Advisory Group.)

Dr Belle Alderman, Professor of Children's Literature, has lectured at the University of Canberra since the mid-1970s, in the fields of children's literature, creative writing for young people, archival theory and practice, and media materials. In 1999, she developed the University's first fully online subject as part of its initiative to deliver postgraduate courses in flexible, online and distance mode. During 2004-2005, Dr Alderman has managed the project, Integrating ICT into Teaching and Learning, an

academic staff development project involving over 100 staff and aimed at supporting and extending staff expertise in the flexible design and delivery of courses.

Professor Alderman serves on the Editorial Board of AustLit: The Resource for Australian Literature which provides web-based access to Australian scholarly literature. In 2000, she was a National Finalist in the Australian Awards for University Teaching, Humanities and the Arts, nominated by the Australian Universities Teaching Committee, Department of Education Training & Youth Affairs. In 2005, she was awarded the Vice-Chancellor's Distinction Award for Enhancing and Contributing to the University as a Community. During her career, she has delivered many conference papers and published widely in the field of children's literature, and in tertiary teaching and learning. Her most recent work is the co-authored book, *A Work-based Learning Model* published in the US by Scarecrow Press, Inc, 2005 (in press).

Project Collaborators

Prof. John Hedberg, Macquarie University

Dr John Hedberg is Millenium Professor of ICT and Education, Australian Centre for Educational Studies, Macquarie University in Sydney. He was formerly Professor of Learning Sciences and Technologies, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University in Singapore from 2003 to 2005. Prior to that he was Associate Dean of Education and Director of the *emlab* (educational media laboratory) University of Wollongong. Professor Hedberg has an international reputation in the field of instructional design and assessment as well as considerable practical experience in the production of educational video and multimedia.

Professor Hedberg was a consultant to the project in both DBR methodology and educational theory.

Rick Bennett, Senior Lecturer, COFA, UNSW

Rick Bennett followed undergraduate studies in fine arts (sculpture) at Bristol Polytechnic in the UK with six years in the UK tv/film industry .

In 1994 he became an Associate Lecturer at the College of Fine Arts (COFA) at UNSW. In 1998 he completed a Master of Higher Education at UNSW with an investigation of teaching practice in 'Design Studio' subjects. 'Omnium Research' was born from that investigation, and from contemporary advances in digital technology. Omnium is now a proprietary on-line software range specifically designed for collaborative work in creative disciplines, in particular graphic design, visual communication and digital media

Rick has published academic papers on collaborative on-line teaching in Academic journals such as *Education, Communication and Information*, and simultaneously maintains an active professional practice. He has collaborated with major Design Studios such as Tomato, Animal Logic and Deepend, and contributes regularly to design magazines such as Monument (Aus) and IdN (Hong Kong). In 2000 he was appointed Creative Director of 'the fridge', a University-based commercial design studio that encourages students from COFA to gain work experience in print and web media.

In 2002 he became Senior Lecturer in the School of Design Studies at COFA, where he coordinates the production of a suite of online Design subjects known as COFA Online.

Rick consulted to the project in providing software tools to run and assess collaborative group student projects in Design, Media and Communication units.

Brigid Costello, Lecturer in Media, UNSW

Brigid Costello is a Lecturer in the School of Media, Film and Theatre at The University of New South Wales. Her research interests include: interactive narrative, games and gaming, and human/computer interaction and interface design. She is also a practising multimedia artist with expertise in interaction design, programming and visual design, and was formerly a cinematographer. She is currently undertaking a PHD in Computer Science in the Creativity and Cognition Studios at University of Technology (UTS).

As well as having an extensive professional track record in multimedia art, interaction design, programming and visual design, Brigid has published specifically in the area of collaborative creative practice.

UC Team Members

Assoc. Prof. Jen Webb

Assoc Prof. Webb is Director of the Communication, Media and Cultural Studies research area, and a writer and communication theorist. With Dr Donna Lee Brien and Dr Axel Bruns, she leads a separate Carrick Grant on the Australian Writing Programs Network.

Dr Mitchell Whitelaw

Dr Whitelaw is Head of Media/Multimedia Production at UC. Dr Whitelaw has taught digital media theory and production at several other institutions including UNSW and UTS. Published internationally in the history, theory and criticism of creative practices in new media and sound, he was also joint leader of a UC Teaching Grant in 2003.

Appendix B: Survey on Group Assessment Information

SURVEY INFORMATION FORM

Survey of current group assessment methods (as one part of a major project funded by the Carrick Institute: Assessing Group Work in Media and Communication)

The research team for this project comprises Dr Greg Battye, Prof. Belle Alderman, & Dr Coralie McCormack (University of Canberra), and Dr Ian Hart, Project Manager (independent consultant employed by the project team).

The aim of this research is to:

- map and describe current practice in the assessment of group project work in Media and Communication courses in Australian universities; and from this mapping,
- construct, and make available on the project website, resources for the improvement of assessment and feedback in group project work in Media and Communication courses.

We are collecting initial information about current group assessment methods via this online survey. Participation in the survey is voluntary, and your identity as a contributor will remain confidential. We will not use your name in any published or unpublished accounts of this research.

The Survey seeks information on units (subjects) rather than individuals. However, in order to be able to offer the opportunity to participate in other, more detailed follow-up procedures such as interviews, the first section of the survey asks for basic information on the title, institution, lecturer-in-charge and department/school of the unit. Any information with the potential to identify individuals will be either removed or aggregated by the project manager before being made available to the remainder of the research team.

You may withdraw from any part of this project at any time; should you wish to do so, you may request the removal or destruction of any or all of the information you have provided.

The University of Canberra's Committee for Ethics in Human Research has approved the project.

All participants will have the opportunity to review a copy of the draft report, and/or receive a copy of the final report.

If you have any questions or suggestions about this project, or wish to indicate your willingness to participate in this research, please contact Dr Greg Battye, by phone on (02) 62012928, by fax (02) 62015300, or email Greg.Battye@canberra.edu.au

Please tick the box below, then use the TAB key to navigate through the survey. Save the document and return it to the Project Manager Ian Hart ianhart@mac.com

☐ I AGREE TO THE INFORMATION I PROVIDE BEING INCLUDED IN THE STUDY

Survey on Group Assessment

The survey has been broken into 5 parts, each with about 10 questions dealing with a particular aspect of group assessment. Please feel free to ignore sections that are not relevant to your particular case. If you have any questions or concerns about the survey please contact Dr Ian Hart ianhart@mac.com with the Subject "Carrick Survey"

Please tab through the document and fill in whichever fields apply to your situation.

1. Basic Data

The purpose of **Part 1** is to collect basic data about the unit.

Title of the Unit	
Institution	
Lecturer in Charge	
Department/School	
Level of the Unit	Undergraduate
The Unit is taught	Primarily face-to-face
How many years has the Unit been taught in this format?	First time
What proportion of the student grade is from group work?	%

2. Policy on Assessment

The purpose of this section is to establish the institutional or departmental policy on assessment of group work. If you have already filled out this section for another Unit, please proceed to 3.

Managing Group Projects

Is there an institutional/departmental policy on group assessment?	Yes
Please describe briefly what the policy covers	<i>If no policy, please type "No"</i>
What percentage of the final mark can come from group assignments?	% <i>If there is no restriction, put 100%</i>
Does the policy specify any of the following components of assessment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Self assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Client assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Not specified
Does the policy specify proportions of the mark allocated to different components?	<input type="checkbox"/> % <i>If so, please indicate the percentages. If not, please type "No"</i>
Does your institution specify that a Learning Management System must be used?	<i>Please provide the name(s) of the LMS or type "No"</i>
Is there a policy on student appeals against grades in group assignments?	<i>If so, please describe briefly. If not please type "No"</i>
Is there a central or departmental unit that provides support or guidance on group assignments?	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide staff development courses <input type="checkbox"/> Offer peer observation/feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct formal evaluations <input type="checkbox"/> No support

3. Managing Group Projects

The purpose of Section 3 is to collect information on the process of setting and supervising group work.

How is the group assignment topic set?:	Specified in unit handout or web site
Are students provided with assessment criteria at the beginning of the assignment?	Please describe briefly or provide URL to web site
How are groups formed?:	Top-down eg. random. alphabetical
How successful is this? Could it be improved?	
Are students provided with guidance on working in groups? If so, how?	Please describe briefly or provide URL to the web site.
How are disputes within a group handled? Can students change groups?	
How is progress monitored during the term of the assignment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular meetings with group and teacher <input type="checkbox"/> On-line discussion monitored by teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Formal or informal reports <input type="checkbox"/> Regular class presentations of work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> Meetings, feedback are voluntary
What feedback do groups get on their work in progress?	<input type="checkbox"/> Formal feedback from teacher at defined production stages <input type="checkbox"/> Formal feedback from peers. eg. results of survey <input type="checkbox"/> Informal feedback from teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Informal feedback from peers. eg. on-line forum <input type="checkbox"/> No feedback
Do you keep a record of discussion/ feedback with groups?	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary or notes of meetings <input type="checkbox"/> On-line record (eg. part of LMS) <input type="checkbox"/> Formal audit trail using template or on-line form

	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> No record
How is the group assignment submitted?	<input type="checkbox"/> In-class or on-line presentation to class <input type="checkbox"/> Displayed or performed for critical appraisal <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted to teacher or external client <input type="checkbox"/> Uploaded to web site

4. Assessing Group Assignments

There are many ways of assessing group assignments. In this section we ask you to describe how your unit is assessed.

How is the group assignment submitted and assessed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Submitted to teacher (and/or external client) only <input type="checkbox"/> Presented in class, performed or exhibited <input type="checkbox"/> Uploaded to web site viewable by class <input type="checkbox"/> Other
What are the components of the final mark for the unit?:	Eg. Inputs from teacher, peers, self-assessment, client, combination of these
Product assessment: May comprise a combination of Teacher, Peer, Self & Client components. Please indicate what is used.	
How is the Teacher assessment arrived at?:	Please list the 3-4 main criteria for assessment
How is the Peer assessment component arrived at?:	If used, also indicate %age of total mark. If not used please type "None"
How is the Self assessment component arrived at?:	If used, also indicate %age of total mark. If not used please type "None"
How is the Client assessment component arrived at?:	If used, also indicate %age of total mark. If not used please type "None"
Process Assessment: May include an evaluation of generic skills acquired in the course of completing the assignment	
How is Process included in assessing the group assignment?:	If used, please describe briefly. If not please type "None"
How is the Process assessed in awarding the final grade?:	<input type="checkbox"/> Group feedback. eg. questionnaire <input type="checkbox"/> Individual feedback eg. critical essay <input type="checkbox"/> Audit trail eg, evaluation of on-line discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Records of meetings, discussions, formative evaluations <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Not considered
Do students receive a	

Group mark or an Individual mark?:	<i>Please add any comments you might have on this issue.</i>
---	--

5. Learning Management Software

We are interested to discover the range of learning management or content management (**LMS/CMS**) or other types of software such as **Blogs** and **Wikis** being used as well as to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the various systems for managing group assignments. •If you do **not** use any on-line components in your course, please ignore this section.

How is the on-line component used in this Unit? <i>Please tick as many boxes as apply</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Administration eg. enrolment, record-keeping <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Audit trail <input type="checkbox"/> Content delivery, links to external resources <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-group and class discussions <input type="checkbox"/> Student feedback, internal mail <input type="checkbox"/> Student progress or presentations
What type(s) of on-line software do you use to manage group assignments?:	<input type="checkbox"/> Proprietary LMS/CMS (eg. WebCT, Blackboard, Omnium) <input type="checkbox"/> Open-source LMS/CMS (eg. Drupal, Moodle) <input type="checkbox"/> Wiki (eg. Wikipedia, TWiki, Front Page) <input type="checkbox"/> Blog <input type="checkbox"/> Departmental/unit web page <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Why did you choose this software?:	
How would you rate your satisfaction with this software?:	Enthusiastic
What do students think of the on-line environment?:	Enthusiastic

NOTE: The following questions refer only to the management and assessment of *Group Assignments*:

What are the main strengths of this on-line software?:	
What are the main weaknesses of this on-line software?:	

What are the ideal qualities you look for in on-line software for teaching & learning?:	
---	--

Appendix C: Summary of Participants

Participants in this Carrick group assessment project were drawn from partner institutions through the initial survey, by direct invitation or approach by the Project Manager or by Academic Team members, and by invitations to participate extended through the professional association listservs of HERDSA, ASCILITE and ODLAA. The website contains thirteen specific case studies.

Table 1: Case studies presented in the site

Institution	Unit Title
1. University of Canberra	New Media Production
2. University of Canberra	Television Production
3. University of Canberra	Writing for Young People
4. University of NSW	OMNIUM
5. University of NSW	Aspects of Theatre and Performance History
6. University of NSW	Theories of Acting & Performance
7. University of NSW	Theatre Workshop Exercise
8. University of NSW	Multimedia Production & Industry Contexts
9. University of Technology Sydney	Visual Communication
10. University of NSW	Medicine
11. University of Canberra	Advertising and Marketing
12. University of Canberra	Brand Building
13. University of Canberra	Communication Foundations

Four invited keynotes presenters selected because of their scholarly reputation and research in the area of group assessment. The project views group assessment through the broad lenses of design, implementation and evaluation and each of the speakers presents good practice guidelines in one of these headings: Jan Herrington (Design, University of Wollongong), Ron Oliver (Implementation, Edith Cowan University), Thomas Reeves (Evaluation, University of Georgia) and Sharon Bell (Policy, University of Canberra).

Appendix D: Conference papers delivered to date:

McCormack, C., Donnan, P., Hart, I., & Battye, G. (2007). The group assessment toolbox. Best practice in group work assessment. A presentation to the *ATN Evaluation and Assessment Conference, Assessment and Evaluation for Real World Learning*, 29-30 November, 2007, Brisbane, Australia.

Hart, I., McCormack, C., Battye, G. & Donnan, P. (2007). *Assessing group work: A thorny issue. The Group Assessment Toolbox-Best practice in group work assessment.* A paper to the AACE (Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education) Conference, ED-MEDIA World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia & Telecommunications, Vancouver, Canada, June 25-29th 2007.

Appendix E: Challenges and successes

This project presented numerous challenges, at many levels and of many kinds. Initial assumptions about the ease with which survey data in particular, and other data on actual current group assessment practices, might be collected (even from those who had verbally affirmed enthusiasm for participating) was a source of some dismay, and appeared likely to make other dependent aspects of the project problematic. Technology presented us with the usual array of difficulties, some of them expected at least in principle, others new and surprising — and others, annoyingly resistant to amelioration even at the time of writing this report.

Filming and editing of video material was extremely time-consuming and interviews were often hard to timetable with busy academic staff and sometimes-hard-to-contact students. On occasion it was difficult to extract copies of course materials from staff, and a few gaps remain to be filled. Conversely however, it should be emphasized that the staff who have contributed so far, and those who are still scheduled to contribute, have been most generous with their time and their work, and have put extraordinary efforts into cooperating with the project, all for no tangible benefit beyond their devotion to the improvement of teaching.

Even more outstanding was the contribution made by students. The team were very keen to ensure that the views of students were represented wherever this was possible, and it is clear from the final result that this is a great strength of the resource. Students constantly surprised us with their articulate and thoughtful comments, and with the good-natured and pragmatic mix of idealism and practicality with which they approached what can often be a vexed issue for them.

In terms of the end result, the merit of the video case studies has been an unexpected success. Though viewed as very important right from the start, it was the ability to subdivide them and link each part to other information on the site that came to the fore as the main form of interaction with the available material. Though this itself was a challenge, particularly in the latter redesign of the entire site, the team would now view this as an extremely valuable approach for any similar project in which the user's ability to hear directly from model practitioners provides significant value.