

## Sample – capstone project outline

*This is a sample of a project-based capstone subject covering common outline components. This capstone project assumes a classroom-based and staged process in which students have a broad project brief but are expected to develop individual responses. It is also team-based, although there is a light touch on those elements in this outline.*

*Outlines are limited to an overview of the basic curriculum elements, and as such, are not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive. Elements can and should be adapted to meet your needs and context, and additional documentation provided to students for each learning activity.*

## Subject Aims

This unit aims to provide students with a significant capstone project experience that requires the application of discipline expertise in a real-world context. Projects enhance professional skills such as team work, project management and self-direction, through engagement with authentic professional activities and challenges. Exploration of client and stakeholder relationships and the wider contexts of a project extend discipline knowledge to critical, reflective and lateral thinking, skills highly valued by employers.

## Learning Objectives

In this subject, students will be expected to:

- Collaboratively select and define an area for in-depth investigation within a broad project brief
- Identify existing knowledge and skills, and evaluate additional resources/skills required to effectively address identified issues
- Undertake professional project management processes through the use of project planning and team management tools
- Generate and present proposals that utilise peer, expert and stakeholder views and articulate a clear understanding of the project requirements
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the project process through reflective reporting and peer review
- Develop and present a resolved project outcome that demonstrates understanding of, and engagement with, the major issues, challenges and opportunities presented.

## Learning and Teaching Method

This unit is project-based, and activities and resources are designed to support the project process. Students are expected to work independently to gather materials and develop skills that help them to fulfill the requirements of the project brief. Academic staff provide guidance to teams and individuals aimed at developing project management and self-directed learning skills.

Learning activities are designed to support the project process, and may include:

- Supervised and independent group meetings
- Class-based group activities
- Independent inquiry
- Stakeholder and peer meetings/discussions
- Presentations

## Content

Project briefs are real-world and feature authentic professional activities. They may originate from industry and community clients, competitions or research questions. Content will focus on appropriate methods for successfully completing a project, and topics/resources may include:

- Applying discipline knowledge to a real-world context
- Interpreting and responding to project briefs
- Team dynamics, management tools and processes
- Communications issues and stakeholder expectations
- Critical and reflective practices
- Research methods
- Documenting project developments and recommendations
- Presentation skills
- Principles, overviews and discipline issues that relate to the project context

## Assessment

Assessment will focus on evidence of understanding and application of project processes to a coherent project outcome in response to a brief, as described by the learning objectives of the unit.

Students are expected to deliver some assessable items during the semester for feedback prior to final assessment dates. Students are responsible for ensuring that deadlines are adhered to and review documents are presented appropriately for feedback as required. Deliverables and deadlines will be notified at the commencement of the unit.

## Indicative assessment schedule

Item	Weighting	Due
Team management plan	10%	Week 2
Short project proposal	10%	Week 4
Progress report	10%	Week 7
Presentation	30%	Week 11
Project report	40%	Week 12

*The assessment is staged in this outline as many institutions require staged summative assessment. Including more ungraded/formative assessment points will encourage students to practice and persevere with difficult tasks rather than playing it safe.*

## Texts and References

The following is an indicative reference list only. Students will be expected to locate resources independently, although further references may be provided depending on the project context:

- Bradbury, D. *Herding Chickens: Innovative Techniques for Project Management*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2006.
- Cielens, M. *The business of communicating*. Sydney: McGraw-Hill, 1999
- Harris, C. *Building innovative teams: strategies and tools for developing and integrating high performance innovative groups*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- Jeston, J. *Business process management: practical guidelines to successful implementations*. Oxford, UK: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2006.
- Schwalbe, K. *Introduction to project management*. Boston, Mass.: Thomson Course Technology, c2006.
- Shephard, K. *Presenting at conferences, seminars and meetings*. London: SAGE, 2005.