

14 March 2011

## NEWSLETTER FROM DQAC

### Dear Colleagues

Starting from 2010/11 Semester 1, the Departmental Quality Assurance Committee (DQAC) has tried to identify good learning and teaching practices for sharing among colleagues with an aim to promote excellence in learning and teaching in the Department. As a start, the DQAC invited our colleague Dr Bonnie Law who taught the subject "EIE432 Web Systems and Technologies" in 2010/11 Semester 1 to attend the 2nd DQAC Meeting (2010/11) to share her good teaching practices and experience. After listening to her sharing, we believed that her experience could be shared with our colleagues and so we are sending this newsletter to you.

Bonnie mentioned that the class size of EIE432 in 2010/11 Semester 1 was small with around 30 students registered for the class. She had taught these students since their first year at the University and had become familiar with most of the students. A new component, project, was added to the subject while the laboratory experiments/ practical works were simplified so that they became easier to be handled by the students. Students worked in pairs on the project and they were given the requirements of the project in week 1 such that they had sufficient time to complete the project which was due the last week of the semester. With the support from the subject lecturer, a tutor and a postdoctoral fellow at laboratory sessions, the setting of deadlines to check the progress of the projects as well as the provision of timely guidance, students were able to finish the laboratory experiments and projects without much problem. Overall, the students found the laboratory experiments useful and felt a sense of achievement for being able to complete the laboratory experiments and projects. Moreover, different levels of difficulty were set for the practical works. Those students who aim higher and want to learn more could attempt the more difficult part which was not required for all students, while the other students could choose to do only the mandatory part for the fulfilment of the basic requirement. In this way, students could make a choice on the level of coursework in accordance with their abilities and expectation.



From Bonnie's experience, we found that the following might have led to the positive feedback from students:

- (i) coursework of the subject was designed in a way which instilled in the students a sense of achievement and avoided creating frustration to students;
- (ii) students were given a choice on the level of assignment they would like to achieve in accordance with their abilities and expectation;
- (iii) sufficient tutor support was in place for tutorial and laboratory sessions; and
- (iv) students had the chance to realize the usefulness of the things they learnt and did in the subject.

The DQAC will continue to identify good learning and teaching practices for sharing. If you have any teaching practices and experience that you want to share with colleagues, you are welcome to send us your views anytime.

**Departmental Quality Assurance Committee**  
**Department of Electronic and Information Engineering**