The Professional Practice of Tertiary Teaching

PROF532-15C – Task 2:

Teaching Initiative

- Sean Dunne, 1237894 -
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Abstract:

In this research initiative, I will discuss the rationale behind planned changes to the teaching/learning for the year one interior design studies module of the Diploma of Interior Design at the Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec). The teaching innovation I am planning will take place in line with the first two assignments for my students, creating a deliberate model of integrated assessment/Assessment for Learning. This means that there will be direct alignment between what is taught in class and the assessment tasks. This will create constructive alignment between the graduate profile and the learning outcomes of the paper, the assessment structure and the in-class teaching/learning. In assignment 1, the teaching/learning will occur through a structured Mantle of the Expert approach, incorporating Expert Framing, Inquiry Learning and Drama for Learning to guide students through the process of working with a client with a fictional apartment. In assessment 2 the students will be framed as expert interior designers and will use an Inquiry Learning approach to create a residential design proposal for a beachfront apartment in Mount Maunganui for a real client. This teaching/learning innovation will test the ability of the students to work in an industry-based environment after being scaffolded through a design process that involves communicating with a client in a safe, drama-based environment for assignment 1.

Research Question: How does using a Mantle of the Expert approach prepare students for working with a real client?
Theoretical Framework:

In 2012 & 2013 I based my teaching of interior design studies on the way it had been taught for many years before I arrived at Wintec. This involved taking the learning outcomes from the module descriptor and focusing on a few words in each and testing those. This meant that in assignment 1 the students created client documentation and a mood board at home, while taking part in far more complex design tasks in class. In assignment 2, they created a kitchen design proposal based on the mood board and client documentation created in assignment 1. This meant that they were guided very calmly and carefully into the design process, but I always sensed a loss of interest from students. Upon receiving feedback supporting this loss of interest from students in their yearly feedback surveys, I realised that although the assessments and the teaching/learning seemed logical and orderly, they were boring to the students. In 2014 I responded to this feedback by giving students the opportunity to create mood boards and client documentation for three different clients, including the creation of drawings and other more challenging pieces of work to keep it interesting. I then found the students a real client for their second assignment to put together a design proposal for. This was exciting, but I don’t believe that assignment 1 prepared them to work through a full project yet, as evidenced by two students failing this assessment and many others exhibiting very high stress levels.

I believe that the boredom of the assessment tasks was due to a few different reasons. The first was that the assignment tasks for assignment 1 lacked in authenticity, as in 2012 & 2013 the classroom learning was more interesting than the assessment, and in 2014 the assessment structure overshadowed the classroom teaching. Birembaum et al. (2006) suggest that an increase in authenticity can be aided by the use of integrated Assessment/Assessment for Learning. This is a method of embedding assessment into the learning curriculum, generally mirroring real life situations. They suggest that increasing the authenticity of assessment tasks can aid in developing problem-solving skills, and allow for students to receive multiple forms of
feedback throughout the process from many different sources during class time (2006). Boud & Falchikov also discuss the importance of authenticity of assessment tasks, and make mention of the fact that while we can get close to creating authenticity in many forms of assessment, they are still taking place in the ‘as-if’ world of a tertiary institute (2007, p. 66).

I also believe that in 2012-2014 there was a lack of constructive alignment in the assessments. Biggs states that in constructive alignment, the learning outcomes, teaching/learning activities and assessment tasks are directly aligned, as opposed to some other forms of alignment wherein the teaching/learning activities may not be directly involved (2003, p. 99). This was certainly the case with two very different iterations of the teaching of this module. In the first instance, the teaching and learning was not being assessed, and may have lacked in authenticity. In the second instance, the assessments were too overwhelming to allow time for the skills discussed in the teaching/learning to be reflected on by the students.

One element that was very successful about the iteration of the teaching and learning for assessment one in 2014 was that it provided multiple points of assessment built into the assessment structure, so peer assessment was a regular occurrence. Carless discusses the importance of timely feedback in his writing as a prompt for student engagement in their work and action moving forward (2007). Nicol goes further to stress the importance of students building understanding of what is required by them through a combination of regular feedback on their progress, while still empowering them to develop ownership over their own learning (2009, p. 6). As assessment one is the first opportunity for my students to work through a design project, it is important that I retain these opportunities for students to receive multiple forms of feedback. This leads me to the area of Assessment literacy, which Smith et al. discuss is an important area for students to develop, as it helps them to understand what is required of them, how they can meet these requirements and learn to judge their work against pre-set requirements (2013).
Bennett et al. (2002) stress the importance of the support and proper scaffolding into case-based learning exercises, and I believe that this is the final element in building a successful model of integrated assessment over the first two assessment tasks for 2015. My approach will centre on creating a safe environment for students to work through assignment one by having students work through the design process through using a Mantle of the Expert-based assessment for assignment 1 and mirroring the experiences that they will go through with a real client for assessment 2. This will mean that the transition from working on assignment one into working with a real client will be much clearer for students in 2015.

A Mantle approach to Assignment 1 will involve putting the students at the centre of their learning, with each student playing an important role within a fictionally constructed company working together toward an equally fictional commission (Heathcote & Bolton, 1994). In the context of the teaching/learning for assignment 1 this will involve the creation of a design company within which each student will be Expert-Framed as a practicing interior designer who is a member of this company, with the students having the ability through Drama for Learning to switch between the role of designer and client. According to Aitken (2013), it is necessary for teachers planning to teach using a Mantle approach to be knowledgeable in and ready to use a combination of Inquiry Learning, Expert Framing and Drama for Learning in their teaching (see Figure 1). Inquiry learning involves the teacher as a facilitator of learning, posing questions for the students to find their own answers for, discovering learning in their own way (Spronken-Smith & Walker, 2010). In the case of interior design studies, students will not be provided with a set of design rules, they will be provided with the ability to interview their client and well written assessment tasks that give them opportunities to discover information for themselves. Like Inquiry learning,
Aitken (2013) states that Expert Framing is also a student-centred approach with the teacher as facilitator of learning, with the addition of the students being framed as qualified experts in their field. This takes building belief in a fictional company they are working in, and can be assisted by the use of Drama for Learning (Aitken, 2013). Andersen discusses Drama for learning as a student-centred approach to teaching/learning that does not involve creating a stage show with actors and an audience, but a constant shifting of improvised roles in the classroom leading students to further comprehension of what the needs are of the person they’re in the role of and giving them an opportunity to try things out in the ‘as if’ (see Figure 2) world that they may not otherwise have the chance to try in the ‘as is’ world (Andersen, 2004)(Edmiston, 2003). Edmiston stresses the use of Communities of Practice in a Mantle context, stating that students bring a wealth of information from their community context from the ‘as is’ world into their experiments in their learning in the ‘as if’ world in the classroom (2003).

This confirms for me that just creating an assessment task that is similar to one taken on in industry today may not create true authenticity, and the recognition of the use of Drama for Learning in my planned assessment task may work well to build another level of authenticity and engagement in the task for the students. This authenticity of the classroom activities will add further to the ability to create integrated assessment (Birenbaum et al., 2006)

As an over-arching conceptual framework for the teaching/learning activities that I plan, I must start by exploring my personal beliefs as an educator, formed from my own educational and professional background as a student, a designer and a teacher. There are two key teaching/learning theories that I integrate into my teaching and learning to help build a healthy classroom culture. The first is Bandura’s Social Learning Theory (1977), in particular
Learning through Modelling (1977, p. 5) and Learning by Direct Experience (1977, p. 3). The second is Lave & Wenger’s Communities of Practice (Wenger, 1999).

Bandura states that in developing who we are as people, we use Learning Through Modelling. We observe the behaviours of those around us and then we embody those behaviours, gaining understanding, appreciation for and learning through the experience of being like those people. For example without Learning Through Modelling as children, we would not learn to speak (1977, p. 5). I feel this is ever-present in my classroom in the students scrutinising my behaviour and that of the industry professionals I introduce into the classroom. I see this evidenced in the way students begin adjusting the way they present their projects, the way they dress and the language they use to describe their work over the course of their studies. These are all important elements in the way they work through their assessment tasks, so in planning my teaching/learning for this initiative it is important that I am mindful of my own professionalism and that I give students the opportunity to witness other designers, both in their classroom environment and through organising visits to local industry. Bandura also discusses the use of Direct Experience, which states that we learn by taking part in actions, then dealing with the consequences thereafter, whether they be good or bad (1977, p. 3). In 2015 I endeavour to meet this by giving students multiple opportunities to experience learning through direct experience by putting together proposals for clients and presenting them in formal and informal environments to each other and to invited guests from industry.

The other key theory that forms a part of my teaching is Lave & Wenger’s Communities of Practice. Wenger states that we all belong to different communities of Practice, whether they be clubs, teams or workplaces and that learning takes place within these communities, and that a classroom should be treated as a community in the same way as those others, rather than a remote place of learning separate to the rest of the world (1999). This theory is highly reminiscent of my own experiences of design education when my tutors were practicing designers, and students were treated as practicing
designers from day one. My classes took the form of informal design studios, where we would sit at work stations and discuss our work with the other students/designers, just as in a contemporary design office. The open-plan teaching spaces/design studios, the constant involvement of industry professionals in the teaching and the recognition of the importance of working together were instrumental in creating a very strong Community of Practice within the classroom and the wider design community. This is something I aim to create in my classroom and endeavour to allow for in my planned teaching/learning activities.

**Description of the planned teaching initiative:**

As I will be implementing a planned integrated assessment model, I will be discussing my teaching/learning initiative through explaining the assessment structure. For assignment 1, students will be assessed on three key learning outcomes – the ability to work through the design process, the ability to create industry-standard documentation and the ability to recognise and participate in graded assessment. The teaching/learning of these outcomes will occur through a Mantle of the Expert approach to guide students through the process of working with a client with a fictional apartment. In assessment 2 the students will be assessed on their ability to work through the design process to create a residential design proposal, including a kitchen design. In order to meet these criteria, they will be provided with a real client with a beachfront apartment in Mount Maunganui that they will propose design solutions for. This client approached Wintec to have the students put forward the proposal, and the likelihood of some of their work being featured in the apartment is reasonably high. This will test their ability to work in industry after having had the opportunity to go through a design process that allowed them to communicate with a client in a safe, drama-based environment for assignment 1.

I will still break the first assignment up into three parts, as I did in 2014, with each given formally assessed feedback. This will work to align the project with
the learning outcome related to recognising and participating in graded assessment, however this year I use a Mantle of the Expert approach to create a single project with just one client in order to more closely align the process with the process of working with a real client for assessment 2. The teaching/learning will follow along with the students as they undertake the assessment tasks, allowing plenty of opportunities to work on their assessment tasks in a studio environment, creating moments for peer assessment within class instruction. In the past the teaching that has related to assignment 2 has included long teaching sessions/lectures about kitchen design principles, early in the project. This year, however I plan to follow the progress of the project and treat any teaching moments as professional development when it is needed, rather than before it is needed, allowing students the opportunity to discover information for themselves through inquiry-based approaches by the students based on the requirements of their client/projects.

**Format of the teaching/learning initiative:**

On the next page you will see a full 15-week breakdown of the basic order of teaching/learning over the course of the first two assignments:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week:</th>
<th>Activity:</th>
<th>Homework:</th>
<th>Bring to class:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 -</td>
<td>Introduction to course &amp; ass. 1 - build company</td>
<td>Forum # 1 + personal mood board</td>
<td>Pen and paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th Feb</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2 -</td>
<td>Presentation - personal mood boards Assignment 1 - introduced</td>
<td>Work on assignment 1, part 1</td>
<td>Your personal mood boards + pen &amp; paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24th Feb</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3 –</td>
<td>Presentation – ass. 1, pt 1 Launching – ass. 1, part 2 Creating mood</td>
<td>Forum # 2 + work on ass. 1, part 2</td>
<td>Your completed work for ass. 1, pt 1 + Pen &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd March</td>
<td>boards Design sketching</td>
<td></td>
<td>paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 -</td>
<td>Full day class – Auckland field trip Visits to: Design 55, Icon Textiles</td>
<td>Complete ass. 1, part 2</td>
<td>Pen &amp; paper, cameras etc; lunch &amp; snacks,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th March</td>
<td>Textilia, Home Ideas Centre, Auckland Mini-bus leaving @ 8.15a.m</td>
<td></td>
<td>sketch books for ass. 1, pt 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5 -</td>
<td>Presentation – ass. 1, pt 2 Launching – ass. 1, part 3</td>
<td>Forum # 3 + work on ass. 1, part 3</td>
<td>Your completed work for ass. 1, pt 2 + Pen &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th March</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>paper + laptops to present on, if owned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6 -</td>
<td>Today you will work on Assignment 1, part 3 with additional guidance from</td>
<td>Work on assignment 1, part 3</td>
<td>Bring with you all you need to continue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24th March</td>
<td>interior designer, Michael Tolmay.</td>
<td></td>
<td>working on your projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7 –</td>
<td>Presentation – Ass. 1, pt 3</td>
<td>Reflect on assignment 1 over the holiday</td>
<td>Your completed work for ass. 1, pt 3 + Pen &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31st March</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOLIDAY</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HOLIDAY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8 –</td>
<td>Introduction to assignment 2 Mood + space planning started</td>
<td>Work on assignment 2 at home</td>
<td>Pen and paper, sketchbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21st April</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9 –</td>
<td>One-on-one Client meetings Continue to build projects based on feedback</td>
<td>Work on assignment 2 at home</td>
<td>All work already completed + work to get on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28th April</td>
<td>you’re your client</td>
<td></td>
<td>with for your project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10 -</td>
<td>Full day class: Kitchen design workshop Visits to: Kitchen studio, Tile</td>
<td>Work on assignment 2 at home</td>
<td>Your completed space planning + work to get</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th May</td>
<td>Warehouse, Charteris flooring, Zip Plumbing, The design depot</td>
<td></td>
<td>on with for your project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11 -</td>
<td>Materials/furnishings workshop workshop</td>
<td>Work on assignment 2 at home</td>
<td>iaptops if you have them + work to get on with for your project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th May</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 12 -</td>
<td>Presenting current floor plan layouts to class</td>
<td>Work on assignment 2 at home</td>
<td>Your current kitchen layout drawings + work to get on with for your project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19th May</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13 –</td>
<td>Design studio class</td>
<td>Work on assignment 2 based on in-class feedback</td>
<td>Your work so far &amp; all you need to keep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26th May</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>working in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 14 –</td>
<td>Final presentation workshop</td>
<td>Complete assignment 2 at home</td>
<td>Your work so far &amp; all you need to keep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd June</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>working in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 15 -</td>
<td>Presentation to classmates, client, client’s architect and head of Dept.</td>
<td>Reflect on assignment 2 over the holiday</td>
<td>Your completed work for ass. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th June</td>
<td>Fashion &amp; interior design – assignment 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 16</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At the start of this project, the students were a very quiet group, extremely shy and waiting for teacher prompts to act. On their first day, they sat in a circle and waited for me to enter the room for them to even introduce themselves to each other. I spent the majority of their first session building the values of the group, and building their ability to move between the worlds of ‘as-if’ and ‘as-is’. By the end of the 15-week semester, the group dynamic had changed considerably. They are now a group who laugh together and who critique each other’s work in a careful, precise and fun way. I will give a brief description of each week below:

Week 1:
We played drama games related to interior design in order to build a fictional design company with strong group values, and at the end of the day in small groups the students presented the work of past students to build their understanding of expectations and their skills in peer assessment and feedback. This was a difficult day as the students were very quiet and unresponsive, they did however manage to take on all tasks and complete to a high standard.

Week 2:
The students presented personal mood boards to the group that showed visually who they were and what they valued. They then received the brief for assignment 1, including their client profile and started writing questions. A core element of Mantle is the drama convention of a central tension – this was achieved through the information that their client was coming in in fifteen minutes and they needed to be ready for them! They then raced through their questionnaires, receiving peer feedback from the students around them as they did. They were then put in their groups and told that drama would form a part of their process, so they got into their groups and started to get to know their clients. This was very funny, and the tension in the room started to dissipate. The final hour of the class was spent working on writing up a design brief for their project and starting to gather visual research on Pinterest.com, receiving formative feedback from their peers and their teacher.
Week 3:
This week the students presented their findings in Pinterest.com to their classmates, framed as a company meeting where the clients were kindly asked to stay at home. After each student presented their Pinterest board to the group, the group were encouraged to ask questions or comment on what they had seen. All students were given the opportunity to give at least two pieces of feedback. Following this presentation, they were given a blank copy of the marking rubric, and asked to grade themselves and answer the questions — “what went well?” & “what did I learn through this process?” This was great as it led to lots of lively class discussion about things the students had forgotten to do, and led to them making decisions about what they would do differently in future. They were then given the brief for the next stage of the project (mood board + sketchbook of ideas), and the final hour of class to work on these, gaining formative feedback as they went.

Week 4:
This week the students took a class trip to Auckland for a design inspiration/product sourcing trip — this led to lots of opportunities for formative feedback while the students worked on sketches for their projects, and for the students to experience an authentic part of contemporary design practice — getting out and seeing products/finding inspiration.

Week 5:
This week the students presented to their clients and received feedback via a client satisfaction form. These presentations were funny and relaxed, but the language the students were using was professional, accurate and the work they showed was of an extremely high level — the value that they were showing their clients was unlike anything I had seen before at this stage of a project. The students were then given another opportunity to self-assess, it was clear between this and the last time they had had this opportunity that they had a much better appreciation of what was expected of them for this part of the assignment, despite the much higher complexity of the requirements. The students then received the brief for the third part of their assignment, and immediately asked very insightful, interesting questions.
displaying that their assessment literacy had been raised considerably. They
then had time to work on their assignments in class, again receiving formative
feedback from peers and their teacher.

Week 6:
This week I had a guest come in from industry to go around and give
formative feedback to each of the students while they worked in a studio
environment. This was an incredibly exciting day, as each of the students had
a breakthrough on their projects, and the studio environment was clearly
working well because for the first time, the students were interacting without
any prompts to do so, and the environment was far more relaxed, yet more
productive than it had been before.

Week 7:
This week was the final week of the project, and the final student
presentation. The students came in 30 minutes early to prepare their
presentations, and a senior member of teaching staff and the same industry
guest came along to give feedback after each of the presentations. Many of
the presentations were better than many I had seen at the end of a first year
class, and the level of care, attention and professionalism that each student
had imbued in their presentation was incredibly impressive. The clients gave
great feedback to their designers after the presentation, as did the rest of the
class and the guests to the presentation. In their self-assessments the
students gave themselves very precise and accurate feedback, and were very
confident in the grades they felt they had achieved, which were in the most
part extremely accurate, if a little harsh. We reflected on the process and did a
visualisation activity where we closed our eyes and imagined the clients
arriving home, putting down their coat, making themselves a cup of tea, sitting
down somewhere, then we wished them luck, said goodbye to them and
closed the door.

Week 8:
We begin by talking about what the students have been up to over the two
week break, then assignment 2 is introduced to the students through a
slideshow containing visual information about the project like a site plan, some imagery from the client and a brief. Students are then tasked to start working in whatever way they deem appropriate, based on their experiences from assignment one. I wander around and talk to students individually about their work process, giving them helpful hints as I go.

Week 9:
Today is the client interview day. I arrive to set up the classroom half an hour before class, and an hour before the client is due to arrive, and already 8 of the 12 students are there, by 8.15 (class starts at 8.30) all students have arrived and are ready for their client interviews. Students come one at a time into a room with just the client and myself, while the rest of the class is in the next room working on their assignments. These interviews go really well and the client comes out at the end of them to say a few final words to the students as a group. I learn that the students have been sharing their findings with each other after each interview, which shows a great Community of Practice in action.

Week 10:
Today is a full-day class taken by interior designer and kitchen designer Michael Tolmay, who takes the students around Hamilton to visit his kitchen design studio and other local suppliers to help with their projects.

Week 11:
Today we take a break from working on our client’s project for the first half of the class, and the students are given a new client’s requirements to complete a quick spatial planning exercise and furniture/materials specification activity. This activity is done in groups to give it a quick turnaround, and was devised due to a sense of exhaustion I felt coming from the students around working so heavily on one client. We then spent the last 90 minutes of class back in a studio environment to work on applying their learning in the quick exercise to the project they were working on for their client.

Week 12:
This was framed similarly to the Pinterest presentation or ‘company meeting’ from assignment 1, where the students informally presented to each other their progress for their assignments and received feedback. This took the first two hours of class, leaving the final two hours for working on their feedback in a studio environment.

Week 13:
This was a pure design studio class, for students to work on their assignments with each other and me there for feedback. It was highly productive for the students, with them frequently commenting on how much they were getting done.

Week 14:
This was another design studio class, this time with a focus on putting together their final presentations, and with the possibility of having to ‘make do’ with what they had done, and the potential of not meeting the perfect ideals for the amount of drawings they could have possibly completed.

Week 15:
This was the final presentation day, again the students came in early and prepared, they were well dressed and presented very well. They were respectful to the client and their work was of an extremely exciting level. After the presentation they reflected beautifully on their own presentations and gave great feedback to one another, again demonstrating how close their community of practice had become.

**Evaluation of implementation:**

After the presentation of assignment 1 I knew that this was going to be a special way to teach this content, as many of the presentations were better than I had seen from students at the end of their first year in the past, let alone the end of their first term. After the presentation of assignment 2, it has been confirmed. The quality of work in a first year class has never reached
this level before. Many of the class are showing work that is of a level higher than some of the second year students are creating. I believe that this is due in major part to the authenticity of the assessment criteria and the alignment created between the assessment structure and the teaching/learning through the use of assessment for learning/integrated assessment. I don’t believe it’s just because of this alignment though, I believe that the overwhelming success of all students can’t occur unless there is a strong community of practice in place. This was confirmed in the final post-presentation reflection with the students when one of the students became quite emotional about her presentation not reaching the standards she wanted it to, and the other students instantly rallying around her and thanking her for the help she had given them, telling her it wasn’t as bad as she thought, along with giving her constructive feedback to help her move forward. There was also an aspect of Social Learning theory present in the final presentations, with the majority of students dressing professionally, speaking clearly and talking about products in ways that they had seen many of the industry professionals they had been introduced to over the course of their teaching/learning. Their final presentations for assignment 2 were much improved from their first presentations for assignment 1, when although the work was of a very high standard, their nerves got the best of them in most cases and they did not present to their best standards.

In an online survey of 7 students who volunteered to be a part of this research initiative, participants were asked questions about their experiences in assignment 1 – the results are below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When I first met my client for assignment 2:</th>
<th>Participant A</th>
<th>Participant B</th>
<th>Participant C</th>
<th>Participant D</th>
<th>Participant E</th>
<th>Participant F</th>
<th>Participant G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt comfortable to meet my client and introduce myself</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt comfortable showing my client my work</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt comfortable asking my client questions</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was able to put my client at ease</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt like I was in control of the meeting</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I believe that my experiences in assignment 1:</th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>improved my comfort level with my client</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improved my confidence to show my work to my client</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
improved my confidence to ask questions of my client
Agreed
Agreed
Agreed
Neutral
Agreed
Agreed
Agreed

improved my ability to put my client at ease
Neutral
Strongly agree
Disagree
Agree
Neutral
Strongly agree
Agree

improved my ability to control the meeting
Strongly agree
Strongly agree
Disagree
Agree
Neutral
Strongly agree
Agree

In general:
I believe that my meeting with a drama-based client for assignment 1 was helpful when faced with a real client for assignment 2
Strongly agree
Strongly agree
Disagree
Strongly agree
Neutral
Strongly agree
Strongly agree

These questions centred around their confidence to work with a real client, and the one of the most important elements that could come out of this teaching/learning initiative, how well they had been scaffolded into this experience through assessment 1. The first thing to recognise when analysing these results is the indication that different participants had very different perceptions of the same experience. Participant A clearly had a very positive experience, answering ‘strongly agree’ to all but one question. Participant E clearly found it hard to judge their experience, answering ‘Neutral’ to the majority of the questions. Participant C clearly found the experience difficult, answering either ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ to the majority of the questions. It was necessary to conduct semi-structured interviews with the participants to triangulate the data and receive further feedback based on the initial survey responses.

The interviews give very rich data, and below I will list some quotes related to the teaching/learning over the course of the two assignments:

From one participant: “…if I didn't have that experience, I think I would have freaked out a lot more… Cos we, wouldn't have got all the skills we got from the first project…. I think assignment one was pretty good actually, because it had all the skills that we needed to learn… And, yeah, I think just testing the water with them and then really kind of getting a good understanding of what we should do and what we shouldn't do”

From another participant: “…the previous assignment was we were showing it to our classmates and…. I know that they knew the assignment and (we) could kind of have real casual talk…. (but with our real client) I couldn't, I think I just
didn’t prepare myself for that part… I guess, if you just feel very intimidated, like, cos they're like a person of like high status who can afford an interior designer, and… knowing that they've already looked at like, a lot of the other classmates work and… I felt really just uncomfortable about the whole thing, and like, I'm kind of the person who that like sticks to those things and find it hard to like move… forward, so that was probably the hardest part of the whole assignment is just learning to move forward past that point… And then just like, enjoying my work and 'cos at the end of the day, the next time we were meeting Suzanne, is when we're doing our final presentation and that's the last day of the assignment… I think that that is such a good experience to have, like, right from the start… in second year they talk about how they have real clients as well, so it's like cool to maybe have… that experience under our belt for when we, cos like I think in second year they do… a display in like, a window so it's like, the one we have just done is quite like almost pretend, even though she is real, so… it's a good practice… I can see the method in Sean's teaching, as in he sort of puts us into a real situation having clients and stuff and before we've maybe been taught all the you know, all the little things and then now, this semester we are going back and sort of learning those things but with the perspective, knowing how we will put them, because we've already done it… Maybe if we'd learnt them first, they would have less meaning… learning something when you've already had that experience is so much more valuable, cos you can like, really understand it… it is sort of like going in reverse, but like, it's sort of like there's two steps and he's taken the first step and put it second, but it is still the gradual process of working up to the ultimate, like, it's still in the right order"

From another participant: “I really liked working with (our real client), it was nice to have a umm, real person, cos… the project that we did before… We interviewed each other but I could kind of put my own, I could sway them… I had an idea of what I wanted to do and… I was like, "oh, what about this “and… then we went that way because they don't care, cos it's not their thing… So Suzanne was good because you can't sway her, you have to listen, you have to pay attention and figure out what she wants and how you can work with what you want, and what she wants and make that work…”
(after assignment one) I sort of knew what the process was and I knew what to expect and I think because it was a real person… that upped the stakes a little bit so you work harder

From another participant: “…he threw us in there, we met a client. Before we met a client we did our own activities where we were each other’s clients, so we were always working with someone and always had a client questionnaire to ask. Um, I thought it was really good… And then like seeing that as a starting point and then progressing through and looking back, like I was really impressed how we first did it like we were thrown in at the deep end and we had really good results from it… because we had already (been through the design process once), we had a basic concept of how it worked. And so we were basically able to develop our own skills furthermore, so that worked really well… I felt like I was already an interior designer… I kind of forgot that I was at Wintec… before we met her, I had an idea of what I was going to do in my head and then once I met her, that idea completely changed and to begin with I really liked my idea and I didn't want to change any of it, I didn't want to alter any of it and then afterwards, I realised that actually I preferred her ideas better because it was something I hadn't explored before. So yea, I think I liked that I was finding out things about myself at the same time, that I didn't know, whilst we were doing the project… I think if we had for the first assignment met the client straight off the bat, and not really had done it before I would have been nervous… but (for assignment 2) I just felt professional, I felt really confident in my presentation as well. I thought it was really good… it doesn't feel like we are in semester two, It feels like I'm in year two”

From another participant: “…(assignment one) helped us to learn it straight away, rather than have to like study it, and then practice it… Practice it straight away and it's in your head forever… (for assignment two) It was really cool to like, work with a client and not just like, make up a client, actually to have like a guideline of what the client wants rather just kinda like "I kinda like this, I'll put it in"… But it was quite like, scary, meeting her, as well, quite intimidating and showing her our work… Rather than with a fake client, we could just add things in, whereas it had to be like, this is what she wants, so
you have to do it this way… the whole process of it all being practical was really surprising when I went in… I think you can't really prepare to meet a real person in terms of meeting a fake person… but I think we were really quite prepared in terms of what we needed to do… and not anything else, just right to the point."

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, I believe that through using assessments one and two as a deliberate method of integrated assessment, the first semester of year one was a complete success. This method gave the students an enjoyable, student-centred experience for learning both in and outside the classroom. This is evidenced in the extremely high level of work and the turnaround in the classroom environment from being quiet and unsure to being confident and jovial. My hope is that the students will continue to develop their Community of Practice in and outside of the classroom and be prepared to use what they have learned from assignments 1 & 2 to continue acting in a professional and self-directed way throughout the rest of their career here at Wintec and when they go out into industry. If this is the case, then these students will be demonstrating that this teaching/learning method has taken them a step in the direction toward being a group of lifelong learners.

**Reference list:**


