Project Title: **Dual-Purpose Mentoring: Building confidence in programming for beginners and engendering leadership skills in later year students.**

Project Leader: **Daryl D’Souza**  
Date Submitted: **19 December 2007**

Project Team Members: **Margaret Hamilton, James Harland, Jeanette Holkner, Peter Muir, Charles Thevathayan, Cecily Walker**

Please return by:  
**31 August 2007 (Interim Report) & 19 December 2007 (Final Report)**

Email: **Megan.Kek@rmit.edu.au**
A. Progress to date (Action research cycle: plan – act – observe – reflect)

Double click on appropriate boxes, then click “checked”.

1. Activities

☒ Ethics application written & submitted
☒ Ethics approval received
☒ Literature review conducted
☒ Research strategy/design/plan conducted
☐ Liaised with external partner
☒ Classroom activity
☐ New technology trialled
☒ Data collected through observation
☒ Met with mentor
☒ Hired research assistant
☒ Other

Hired software developer

2. Observations / Analysis

☐ Reflective journal, diary or log book maintained
☒ Questionnaire drafted/administered
☒ Focus group/ Interview questions drafted/conducted
☒ Data entry/transcription completed
☐ Data analysed
☒ Other

Data partially analysed/summarised

3. Reflection

Please list some brief dot points.
What have you learnt? What were the changes? What were the barriers? How can you do them differently or improve them in the future? These may be about yourself as a teacher/lecturer, your team, the university, teaching or the project etc.

• Timelines (barriers)
  o Earlier project proposal/approval deadlines needed for preparation
  o It took some considerable time to find a suitable RA and programming/technical support

• Team composition
  o Team diversity has made this project a most enjoyable experience
  o As a result, ideas flowed from different perspectives

• What have we learnt?
  o First and foremost that mentoring is unique in what it offers to students. It is complementary to lectures, tutorials, laboratories and traditional consultation.
  o It offers differentiated learning not otherwise offered by lectures, tutorials, laboratory sessions. Indeed, consultation, which perhaps comes closest to mentoring, also differs. Consultation does not offer a daily, 9-to-5 service as does mentoring. Moreover, students feel far more comfortable discussing problems with their peers. The location next to a lab allows students to explore ideas in a hands-on context and to then wander between lab and mentor room
  o Benefits to mentors were also better understood, another (equally important) aim of the project

• Team composition
  o Team diversity has made this project a most enjoyable experience
  o As a result, ideas flowed from different perspectives

• Future work
  o Much scope, including cross-university implementation of scheme
  o Many disciplines (other than Computer Science) have student learning “bottlenecks” at foundation level and could implement and utilise the service; one example is the “statistics bottleneck” in psychology
  o LEAD initiative or similar initiative is critical if scheme is to work
  o Mentoring is broadened to all first year courses in Semester 1, 2008
4. Planning

☐ Planned next cycle of action
☐ Please attach a timeline for the year till December

B. Scholarly activity

☐ Investigated relevant journals/conferences
☐ Chose journal/conference
☐ Submitted abstract/confirmed submission process
☐ Completed 1st draft of journal/conference paper
☐ Completed 2nd draft of journal/conference paper
☒ Submitted journal/conference paper
☒ Worked on SET Portfolio Teaching & Learning Forum presentation
☒ Other

Work presented at MCEC2007, to be presented at ACE2008

C. Funding

1. Statement of Accounts for Project Funds Allocated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Amount Budgeted</th>
<th>Actual Expenditure</th>
<th>Fund Balance</th>
<th>Projected Expenditure*</th>
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<td>Staffing</td>
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* Projected expenditure for next phase

2. Total spent to date: $________________

3. Is spending within the planned budget? ☒ Yes ☐ No

4. Are you concerned about your ability to cover future expenses? ☐ Yes ☒ No

5. If yes, please list details: