

# Enhancing employability: a new teaching and learning model to manage the increasing complexity of technology in tertiary digital media design education

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Recent studies show that current tertiary digital media design education fails to equip students with the expertise and skills suited to the requirements of the digital media design industry. This is a result of design education adhering to a curriculum model developed for and applicable to multimedia design practice in the 1990s. Utilisation of this model persists, although it has become increasingly unviable due to rapid technological advances and a resultant shift in the industry away from the individual designer and towards design within collaborative teams. In response to the increasing complexity of design technology, attempts have been made to introduce interdisciplinary learning and teaching into design education. However, these attempts have been sporadic and have had no enduring effect on design education's adjustment to the ongoing dynamics of the digital media design market.

Currently under development and testing at James Cook University is a new model, referred to as the *POOL Model*. This new model is a multidisciplinary system of interdependent collaboration and expertise exchange across university, industry and community sectors. It consists of a teaching pool and a learning pool containing specialists (students, academics and industry professionals) from diverse but connected disciplines. The *POOL Model* is intended to facilitate an integrated interdisciplinary problem-solving teamwork experience, resulting in embedded soft skills development. Integrated collaboration between industry and design education ensures the relevance of curriculum content in today's fast-changing technological environment.

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