Online Learning System

To deliver its programs onshore and offshore APIC relies on the Internet technology. APIC will further develop its online learning system based on robust technology including an increasing use of real time communication tools and multi-media contents.

APIC provides the following learning resources and support systems online:

1. e-Library
2. Access to online database (EBSCO Business Premier)
3. Online Learning System (OLS)
4. Competency Assessment Tool (CAT)
5. Learning and Development Planner (L&D Planner)
6. Project/Program Health Check

Figure 1 shows a screenshot of the OLS. As seen, it provides access to all online resources and support systems. APIC's e-Library hosts a collection of specialised papers and presentation slides often not found in the online databases and representing a mixture of academic and industry-focused studies in project, business and general management. The collection is expanding as more resources are obtained and placed on this resource.
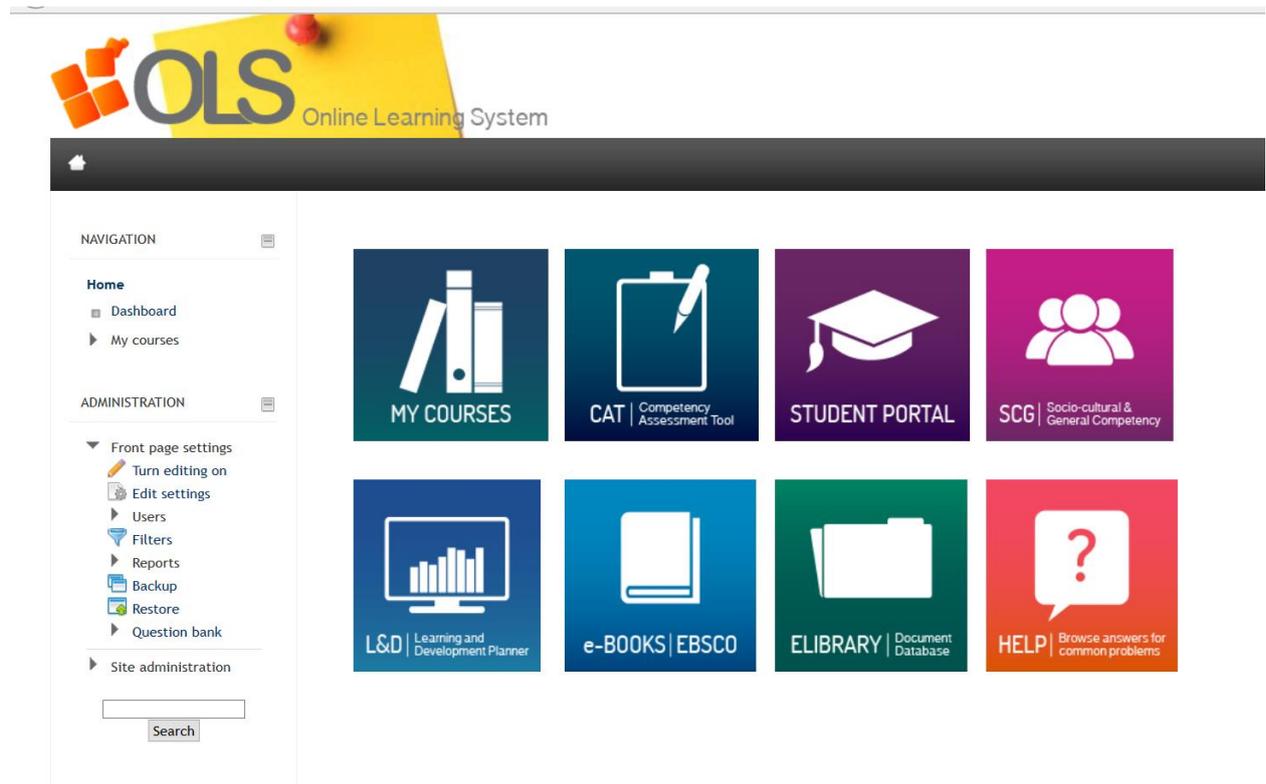

Figure 1: APIC Online Learning System

Each unit of study in each semester has its own dedicated unit website that is maintained and updated frequently. The unit websites provide 24-hour access to course unit information, library and other learning resources etc. The local and offshore (distance) students prefer to study via the Online Learning System during the project phase. Their work

is supervised by the Course Convenors and tutors through the OLS as well as email and audio-video conferencing.

Since APIC courses are designed principally for project and team learning, and the members of the teams can collaborate in virtual teams, there are no barriers to their effective learning and delivery of the assignments. This mode of learning should not be confused with the pure e-learning mode. In the case of e-learning lecturers typically place the course contents online and students study the contents and sit for tests online or face-to-face in a designated location. In the case of APIC courses the initial contents are delivered face-to-face in intensive workshops though virtual technologies have also been utilised for this purpose in the past (e.g. Adobe Connect based on Cloud services).

The OLS serves a tool for quality assurance as it has a well-defined structure with full elements designed prior to commencement of a given semester. It regulates the entire delivery process in each semester (Figure 2). Our approach is to treat the delivery of each unit of study in each semester as a project. All learning activities and special learning resources pertinent to a given Unit are defined and double checked prior to going live with the Unit before the start of the Unit Project Phase.

The Unit's learning activities are all defined in detail together with the respective supporting documents (Figure 3).

Students are required to conduct self and peer assessments at the end of each activity using the College's Competency Assessment Tool. They are then required to reflect on their own progress systematically following the Self Reflection process that requires them to respond to a number of questions and take appropriate action. The results of self-reflection incorporating peer and self-assessment scorecards form the basis for the Final Report in each unit of study that is the basis for Viva (validation of the learning outcomes and presentation of the project work) at the end of that unit. Note that self-reflection forms a pillar of the education approach at APIC.
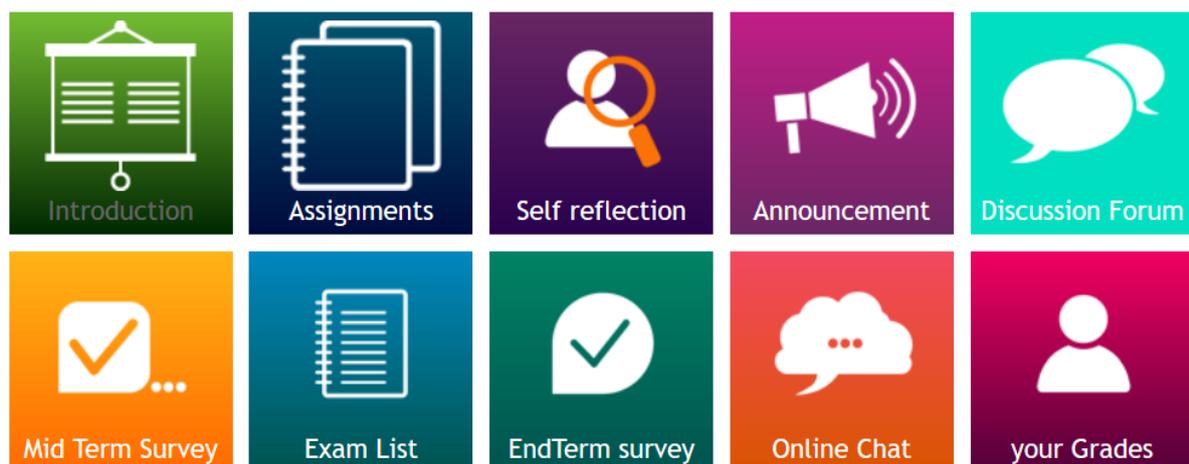

Figure 2: Components of a Unit of Study

Figure 3: Learning Activities in the Project Phase