

## **A GRADUATE CAPABILITY FOCUSED TOP DOWN APPROACH FOR DEVELOPING THIRD LEVEL PROGRAMMES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Employers of engineering graduates are looking for what exactly the new recruits can do as opposed to just what knowledge base they have. For any Engineering Programme it has to become more important to ensure that each subject taught identifies a definite link to a set of “Learning Outcomes” or “Ability Markers” which the student completing that subject/module will acquire.

When developing a new programme, the approach taken can be top down in which the graduate’s capabilities are identified first. This follows selection of subjects/modules with associated “Learning Outcomes” which provide the foundation for the competence and capability of the graduates.

The alternative is the “Bottom Up” approach in which all the modules are compiled and the Learning Outcomes of each module are established and listed. The Programme Learning Outcomes are then synthesised from the global list of the module Learning Outcomes. This approach suits better for reformatting existing programmes which have not been previously planned in the context of Learning Outcomes.

In the presentation, the Top Down approach for planning couple of engineering degree programmes will be illustrated in a step by step procedure.

Additionally, an exercise will be given to the audience for Top Down planning of the structure of an arbitrary degree programme to re-enforce the presented procedure.