The possibilities for the design of capstone experiences vary significantly: different frameworks may be used (for example, a disciplinary or inter-disciplinary focus or to satisfy professional accreditation requirements); rationales and objectives may differ; and a variety of models utilised (for example, an integrated final year program, a single subject, a suite of subjects or modules within several subjects). Broadly, however, capstone experiences should provide final year students with an opportunity both to look back over their academic learning, in an effort to make sense of what they have accomplished, and also to look forward to professional and personal futures that build on that foundational learning.

In the context of an increasing regulatory and quality focus on assuring academic standards and student achievement of program learning outcomes, capstone experiences should also be intentionally designed to promote reflection on, and the integration and synthesis of, whole-of-program learning by requiring student demonstration of consolidated, integrative and transferable learning. In this way, capstone experiences may contribute to assurance of learning and provide students with a sense of closure and completion as a graduate of the discipline.

This presentation will discuss issues around designing and assessing capstone experiences, with assurance of learning particularly in mind. Leveraging the findings of an OLT funded project, which articulated a set of research- and evidence-based curriculum design principles for the
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final year, attendees will be invited to consider both the design and assessment of capstone experiences and the favourable conditions that promote effective capstone design.

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