

# MERIT for use in University post-graduate and undergraduate programs



## Background

Over 32,000 young construction executives and students from over 300 employers have been trained in company and financial management through the MERIT experience. Since 1988 MERIT has been used as the Institution of Civil Engineers International Construction Business Game and has serviced an important training need as is evidenced by extensive support and sponsorship from industry.



Use in teaching at Loughborough University pre-dates the ICE game and MERIT, over the years, has also been used in several other University teaching programmes.



Through simulation MERIT creates a realistic, challenging and stimulating training environment which is greatly enjoyed by the participants. The MERIT experience expands the horizons of students and encourages further study. Supported by its own staff, MERIT is continually updated maintaining it as a modern and evolving training vehicle.



The simulation is designed to demonstrate the interdependence of the various managerial decisions and the interlocking nature of the variables that determine the success or failure of a



## MERIT

- Is based on the simulation of managing a construction company.
- Demonstrates the value of teamwork and shows how managerial and technical decisions made today unfold into tomorrow's operational and financial results.
- Is an excellent introduction to company, business and financial management in a construction context.

Participants operate in groups of up to six, acting as a board of directors and managers, to manage their own construction company.

## Operation of student games

MERIT is operated in three phases:

- Phase 1 - Teams trial the software in order to work out a strategy
- Phase 2 - Each team is competing against the simulation.
- Phase 3 - Each team competes against the simulation and each other for work and for key staff.

The most popular format for use in student programs and as used at Loughborough, is a 4+4 sequence. This allows the student teams to experience decision making by competing against the simulation for each of 4 MERIT periods. Decisions included overhead allocation, estimating, bidding, staffing and financial decisions for four periods where they will gain a clear understanding of the effect of their decisions. This is followed by 4 further periods where they take the same decisions but in a more competitive environment, competing both for contracts and key staff.

We are able to offer flexible sequences of operation and patterns of play other than 4+4. Simply discuss your

## Arrangements

We suggest that you indicate your requirements in terms of team numbers and timings. Arrangements will be made to:

1. Register your teams on the MERIT system.
2. Provide the students with the MERIT Tutorial.
3. Operate MERIT during the trialling phase before the game begins and over the eight periods. There is an on-line query system through which students can have their queries answered by the MERIT Team. The trial sessions train the students before they start the game.

## Other documentation available

1. A report describing the use of MERIT in teaching at Loughborough.
2. The framework for coursework that is used at Loughborough. Other Universities may wish to use their own framework or devise their own.

The framework requires the submission of:

- a 'strategy' for the team the students are managing,
- a 'report' on the outcome relating to their performance against their strategy and
- normally a final presentation.

## Support

1. The main online support is the MERIT Tutorial and the online query system
2. For UK Universities it is possible to arrange, depending on timing and availability either Professor Ron McCaffer, Professor Tony Thorpe or Dr Francis Edum-Fotwe to introduce MERIT to your students.
3. For International Universities outside the UK we could come to a similar arrangement to talk to your students over SKYPE or similar.

## Cost

This depends on the number of teams and support required. An indicative cost will be provided quickly on any initial enquiry.

## Staff

The Loughborough staff in the MERIT team are



**Professor Ron McCaffer**  
(Ronald@mccaffer.com)  
Emeritus Professor and  
originator of MERIT



**Professor Tony Thorpe**  
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Professor of Construction IT and  
MERIT developer



**Dr Francis Edum-Fotwe**  
(f.t.edum-fotwe@lboro.ac.uk)  
MERIT tutor for undergraduate  
and post graduates.



**Jonathan Higgins**  
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Retained to support MERIT  
operation and development

## Enquiries

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