Trello – Basic Features

Trello is a simple tool to manage the flow of work in a project. FIT2001 Assignment teams will use Trello to manage all of their Assignment activities. Trello uses a card/pin-board or post-it-note/whiteboard metaphor in which cards that represent items of work are moved through various stages – from conception to completion.

These are some of the features available in Trello:

BOARDS

A team's board comprises a number of lists. Each list can hold one or more cards, which are dragged left-to-right as work progresses.

Some typical lists are:

- **Backlog:** For tasks that are not assigned to be completed in the current iteration (but it is important to document anyway, so that you don't forget about them for future iterations). Backlog items may range from one-line placeholders to completely understood pieces of work and are typically either:
  - User stories: Each iteration may only have a few user stories to be completed, so it is expected that each user story card will be associated with many other cards that are required in order to completely implement the user story. Each user story should include a set of acceptance criteria in the cards description.
  - Changes /Issues / Bugs: Things that were identified during testing, or requests from your client or mentors to change / improve your system.
  - Project tasks: Tasks that need to be completed, that are separate from your actual system.
  - Ideas: Thoughts about the project that don't fit anywhere else but need to be captured.
- **To Do:** Cards that have not started yet but are scheduled to be completed this iteration.
- **Doing:** Cards that have begun. These should all have one (and typically only one) member assigned to them. Equally, each member should not really have multiple tasks in the doing column assigned to them.
- **Done:** Cards that have been completed in this iteration.
- **Archive:** Cards which have been completed in previous iterations.

This style of organisation allows both your team, along with any mentors, to quickly identify how your iteration is progressing. For example:

- If you are halfway through the iteration, you'd expect half the tasks to be in the "To Do" list, and half in the "Done" list. If there are too many in the "To Do" list then you are not on track to complete all planned tasks.
- If there are more cards in the "Doing" list than there are team members, then it is unclear who is currently working on any given task.
- If there are too many people assigned to a task, then the task is probably too big and should probably be broken down further.

At the end of an iteration, you should have a planning meeting with your team, whereby you move cards from the previous iteration from "Done" and then "Archive". Then, you should all decide together on which tasks should be included in the next iteration. If there are tasks missing from the planned iteration, then you should create cards for them in this planning meeting. Throughout the project, cards/tasks may be added to the backlog lanes. A card can only be in one lane at a time.

CARDS

Each task in the "To Do" list should have enough detail in the description that anyone can start working on the task, and more importantly, can tell when the task is complete, without having to ask for any clarification. They should all include estimations of how long they are expected to take (identified during the planning meeting). These estimations can be written in the card description.

As a rule of thumb, each card should take approximately 2 hours to complete. If you find yourself creating cards that take substantially longer, then they should be broken down into smaller tasks to better allow your team and mentors to understand the progress of the card, and to make it clearer who is responsible for completing each part of the task. If they take a lot less than 2 hours, then perhaps consider adding it as part of a "Checklist" item in another card. It is expected that you will get better at estimating the amount of work required to complete a task as you progress through the project

Some features of cards:

- A card has a title and can have a description, as well as a due date.
- You may assign arbitrary labels to a card in order to help with filtering and searching for cards. Some examples of labels include User story, Database, Design, User testing
- A card can have a comment history that allows you to record a narrative history of the work item.
- A card can have attachments. These are useful for attaching:
    - Client emails when proposing changes in response to client feedback.
    - Mockups for proposed frontend work.
    - A card is assigned to a team member.