Team Projects – COB290
Part I

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Task

Part I is the first part of the year-long project. It requires each group to first understand the problem situation and requirements, based on the letter from the client company's Director of IT and on the answers to questions you ask of the client's representatives. Your group must produce a *static* website (i.e., a prototype design) to replace the manual system currently used by the company to demonstrate their solution to the clients. This intranet website should be designed to be used by (1) the help desk operators, and (2) the client's technical specialists. This will be a *prototype* system – it will *not* be a fully working system. It will have the look and feel of the eventual system but very limited functionality (e.g. login page with hard coded name and password). You will not be given the database tools you require for a working system until Part II. Prototyping is an important technique for showing your customer and other people what you understand about the problem and what you propose to do. There will be a lecture on prototyping techniques in the first few weeks of the semester. You will also need to produce three reports to support your proposed solution.

N.B. *As this is a simulation of a real project, be prepared for the client to expand on or modify their requirements as the project progresses.*

Deliverables

To "hand-in" your software, by the same deadline as the reports (3pm on Monday of week 7, semester 1) you must submit a message to your senior manager (Mr. Bossman) on the Learn forum with the URL for your website, together with any necessary username/password to access the website. The subject line for your message should be "Team XX – Helpdesk Prototype System URL" (where XX is your Team number).

During the Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday of week 7 each group will be expected to give a demonstration (up to 20 minutes), explaining their proposed solution and showing their clients the prototype website. You will receive a message a week or so beforehand giving the available timetable slots and you will be asked to book your preferred slot. The demonstration will be viewed by two staff members who will be acting in the role of your clients.

The following reports are required (A, B, and C from the group as a whole, D from each individual):

(A) Listings of client's requirements. This is your team's understanding of client's requirements upon reading the specification letter from the client and the answers to questions you ask of the client's representatives.

(B) (Max 6 sides of A4, with min 11 point text) A design report explaining the design principles that you are using for the website, indicating why you believe that they will make life easier for the users involved. Include a bibliography of the references (books, papers, websites) you have consulted in coming to your decisions. If there is any requirement or part of a requirement that you have not had time to show in your prototype, you should ensure that your suggested implementation of a facility to meet this requirement is fully described in this report. You are encouraged to include diagrams/images/screen shots, as appropriate and within reason, to aid your explanation. However, these diagrams/images/screen shots and the bibliography list will count against the 6-sides limit.

(C) Assess the way the group carried out the task and what contribution each member of the group made to each aspect of the work – this will also include the contribution made to the organisation, coordination and communication of the team. You will need to log on to Web-PA (instructions are on Learn for how to do this) where you will be asked to allocate a score for each member of your team based on their contribution to different aspects of the Part I deliverables.

Reports A-B must be submitted on Learn by 2pm on Monday of week 7 in semester 1. The electronic versions of these reports must be delivered via Learn by the same time. Web-PA should be used for deliverable C (instructions are on the module Learn page) – this should be completed by 11:59pm on Friday of week 7 in semester 1.

N.B. *The reports A and B will be separated and marked by different members of staff. Make sure each report has its own coversheet and clearly shows the team number.*

Assessment

The split of marks awarded to the group will be:

- Website demonstration 60%
- Report A 20%
- Report B 20%

Report C will not be directly assessed as part of the group mark, but will be used to enable individual marks to be awarded. The individual marks will be based on, but will not necessarily exactly follow, the Web-PA scores for each member's contribution to the project.

10% of your individual marks will also be adjusted in accordance to your attendance of guest lectures. Essentially attending guest lectures will be seen as engaging with clients. Hence, if you miss all guest lectures you will get 90% of your final individual marks.

N.B. *One serious problem in the past has been a failure of teams to follow instructions – this will lead to loss of marks, unless the group has first negotiated a change in the requirements. More information about the problem and what we are expecting (including information about web sites, servers, browsers and creating this web site will be given in the lectures). If a group negotiates a change to their specification they will be expected to document this and to get written confirmation from us that it has been accepted.*

Communication

This is a piece of coursework – you should *NOT* try to talk to any real helpdesk staff at the university or elsewhere. The staff team are the clients and will play the part of the various client roles, the senior management of your own company or some of your own company's technical advisors. Groups can contact the course team via one of five separate Learn forums to ask questions of:

- The *client* operator, Alice.
- Representatives of the *client* technical specialists, Bert (hardware specialist) and Clara (software).
- Representatives of the *client* users, Dilip and Emma.
- The manager of your own company, Mr. Bossman.
- The technical advisors of your own company, Terry Tech and Data Dave.

Alternatively groups can see some members of the staff team at the end of the lecture periods if there is time, but be prepared to say what role the staff should be acting to answer your questions.

There are three *important* rules for asking questions:

1. Always use the correct forum given above to ask a question – never ask questions by email to any of the staff team.
2. Always put your team number in the subject line: Eg. "Team 21 – Question about delivery dates".
3. Always give possible alternative answers to any question you pose. This is general good practice as it gives the receiver a better idea of your understanding and will enable them to give more helpful answers.

Make sure you ask your question on the right forum in the right format or you won't get a good answer!

Plagiarism

Any copying is plagiarism unless the source is specifically referenced.