

Code of Conduct - Group 68

Assignment description:

In your own words, describe what you need to do as a group in this course.

The final practical goal of this course is to collaboratively develop a software application, including engaging in the planning, designing, coding and testing phases of software development. The software application is called “Quizzz” and is a quizzing application to test the knowledge of users on sustainable energy practices. The application will be both single and multiplayer, enabling a competitive nature by letting users engage with and compare to other players. While this final product is the main (practical) outcome of the course, a perhaps more important learning goal will be the collaborative skills we gain from the teamwork challenges we encounter during the process. This (for example) includes how to conduct meetings, giving constructive feedback on others work and conflict resolution.

Target or ambition level:

What grade are you working for?

While different group members have different levels of ambition regarding the targeted final grade, we all agree that an above average final grade would be a good reflection of the learning outcome of the project. In other words, we are all motivated to learn the new technologies we will employ, how to work in a team and the different stages of software development. We will therefore aim for a grade of 8 or higher as an accurate reflection of our commitment to our personal and intellectual development.

Products:

What should you deliver at the end? On which platform do you share which documents (Discourse/Miro/MS Teams)? What standards must the work submitted meet?

The final group deliverables include the following:

- Software - a working application meeting the client requirements. It should be mentioned that the client's requirements are split into 3 categories; must-haves, should-haves and could-haves, in descending order of importance/priority. The client has specifically requested we complete the requirements in the mentioned order, in case the given timeframe is insufficient to finish every feature.
- Reports - Human Computer Interaction (HCI) report detailing the usability of our application

- Documents - Agendas and notes from the team's weekly meetings, in addition to merge requests and issues on GitLab documenting the development and review processes among team members

Internally, we share documents among team members on WhatsApp, Discord and Mattermost, while working on shared documents on Google Docs and Canva. For documents that need submission, we use either Brightspace or our GitLab repository.

All documents must adhere to a high standard of quality, which is why we employ a strict internal review process in which group members review each other's work. This is especially important for documents we submit for external grading, in which case every group member must read through the document and submit changes before handing it in. By requiring a written confirmation from every group member that a certain document is complete before submission, we can more effectively guarantee the quality of our work.

Planning:

How do you ensure that each group finishes everything on time? Did you clarify who will have a final say in the final deliverable and submits it to Brightspace *on behalf of the project group*?

To ensure every group finishes on time, we set clear deadlines and remind each other of upcoming important dates. If a person or group is unable to finish a task on time, we encourage each other to reach out to a team member who might be more suitable for the task or is capable of helping. If deadlines are not met, this is discussed in our weekly meetings and we attempt to understand what went wrong, without necessarily placing blame. Rather, we will try to understand how we can get the task done as efficiently as possible and how the same issue can be avoided for next time. We take such a diplomatic approach the first 2-3 times a group member does not meet their deadlines, but if no improvement is apparent the group will look at other options for constructive steps for improvements. The steps for the group member missing deadlines (referred to as group member X forwards) are as follows:

1. Group member X will be assigned a partner to work with more closely. The partner will be responsible for making sure an appropriate number of issues are assigned to group member X. These issues will initially be of lower importance, so that the group does not become dependent on and potentially slowed down by group member X's work. It is particularly important that the partner checks in the group member X frequently, and in the beginning it is expected that this will happen daily. It is also important to note that the assigned partner will get a slight reduction in workload to compensate for the added workload from having to be responsible for member X.
2. In the following weekly group meetings, group member X is expected to report and summarise their progress on the issues they have been working on. The partner will also provide their perspective, thus giving the group a more complete image of the situation.
3. If no improvement in group member X's efforts is apparent in the following weeks, the issue will be forwarded to the group TA, which will help evaluate group member X's current situation. At this point it is the TA and course administration's decision if group member X should remain in the group or be removed from the course.

The method above should also provide the opportunity for members struggling to keep up to get help in a constructive and supportive way, and step 3 should ideally only be reached when purposeful minimal effort is given.

When delivering documents on Brightspace, Codrin will be responsible and have the final say. He is the designated person to submit all documents on behalf of the group.

Behaviour:

How do you treat each other in the group? How do you handle disagreements within your group? Could your guide or student assistant be involved in reaching consent? What do you do if someone is late during a group meeting?

Within our group we treat each other with mutual respect. This means we listen to everyone's opinions, thoughts and ideas when discussing new or already existing issues. This also means being open to constructive criticism and feedback from your team members. Being rude and offensive will not be tolerated. Additionally, we value being on time to meetings, and will enforce the so-called "cake rule" - a punishment for team members arriving late to meetings where they need to bring a cake or cookies for everyone to the next meeting.

When disagreements arise in the group, we attempt to take a methodical approach to solving the issue. We first seek to attempt to break the issue down to locate the core/root problem, so that it can be dealt with more effectively. Then all involved parties can voice their opinion, solution or general thoughts on the matter. In such a way, every involved person that is relevant for the issue becomes involved in a democratic manner. Once personal opinions have been voiced, we try to discuss and challenge each other in a productive manner, until a compromise can be found. If no viable compromise is possible, there will be a majority vote to determine what course of action we choose to pursue. This majority should be respected, and all team members must align with the new direction.

Ideally we would not involve our TA mentor in discussions or disagreements, however it can be useful if our group is not able to reach a consensus on our own. In such a case, the TA will be consulted at the next meeting to get a third party neutral opinion.

Communication:

In what ways do you communicate with each other as a group and among yourselves? (in the studio/MS Teams/Miro/Discourse)

In terms of digital communication platforms, we prefer to use discord for casual questions and discussions among ourselves, where we use both the chatting and calling features. For more urgent issues, we use WhatsApp, as more people are readily available on that platform. For questions for our TA mentor about more formal matters, we use Mattermost.

Commitment:

How do you determine the quality of each group's work, so that each group delivers the same quality? How do you measure the commitment of the chairs and minute takers?

The quality of each group member's work is determined during the process of merging a request in GitLab. Every request featuring changes to the codebase requires the approval of at least 2 other team members besides the one who submitted the merge request. Optionally, specific team members who are more specialised in a particular area of programming can be asked to review the request. This system helps ensure that only changes that others consider to be of the same quality as ones that they would implement can pass through and be merged into the project. In addition, only changes that pass the pipeline without raising any errors may be merged. If, for any reason, a change that raises a yellow error from the pipeline must be merged, the merge requests following the change will be dedicated to fixing the error before adding new features.

The commitment of the chairs will be measured by the quality and effectiveness of meetings. This includes providing a high quality agenda in a suitable amount of time before the meeting. A high quality' agenda is defined as containing concise and relevant points of discussion with a logical ordering to ensure a good flow during the meeting. Agenda points should contain issues that apply to the whole group, not only a few people. The points should also be related to the current state of the project, and only include relevant and helpful points. In summary, the agenda together with the chair has an overarching purpose of providing an organised insight into the current state of the project and a detailed outlook on future tasks and work. The commitment of the chair will be judged based on these criteria.

The minute taker's commitment will be measured after their notes have been uploaded post-meeting, and evaluated based on the quality, readability and detail of their meeting notes. This means the notes are expected to be nicely formatted such that the most important points can easily be identified while reading. The notes should provide an accurate summary of the meeting talking points, and overall correspond to the main agenda points. Details of conversation are important, but the notes should not include irrelevant details. Relevance in this context is defined as how helpful the information will be to save and access for future reference. The commitment of the minute taker will be judged based on these criteria.

Meetings:

How often will you meet as a group? What preparation is needed for the meetings?

We generally meet twice a week: once for the mandatory meeting with the group TA, on Tuesday, and once only among group members, on Thursday. For the Thursday meeting, we have decided to meet online through Discord, with both camera and microphone enabled (a conscious choice to increase participation and accountability during meetings). However, if we decide that one or more upcoming tasks are particularly difficult or need to be done together, such as one of the Teamwork Assignments, or the HCI Review, we will meet on campus, to be able to communicate better. The exact time for these meetings is only fixed for the Tuesday meeting, at 16:45. For the Thursday

meeting, we choose a meeting time that works with every member of the team, usually 10:30 or 16:00.

We expect everyone to have a general understanding on what needs to be done that week prior to the meetings. This is something we discuss every meeting by setting goals for the coming week. These points can also be found in the meeting notes, as the minute taker is expected to document the discussion. For the Tuesday meeting especially, the chair and the secretary need to be aware of what topic should be discussed in the meeting, so that the agenda can be distributed an appropriate amount of time before the meeting and all group members can be aligned on the meeting plan. This leads to more efficient and productive meetings, and topical points in the agenda result in the notes that relay what was discussed more precisely.

Decision-making:

How do you make decisions? By majority vote or by consensus?

We have decided to primarily base our decision making process on consensus, as we believe this leads to the best possible outcome for the group. When issues arise where different group members have different perspectives and opinions, we allow all participants to voice their ideas for the group.

After the initial sharing of ideas, we try to discuss and constructively challenge each other, recognizing each idea's strengths and weaknesses. If this discussion takes place during the weekly tuesday meetings, it is the chair's responsibility to facilitate the discussion so that everyone is heard. Otherwise, it is the responsibility of all group members to not suppress/overshadow each other's voices.

The expectation is that a compromise can be found in this way, with a solution that benefits the whole group. However, if this outcome cannot be achieved (e.g. an issue is being discussed where compromises are not possible), we resort to a majority vote between the most popular solutions. The majority decision must be respected, and the entire group must align with the new direction. In the case that the majority vote leads to a tie, the group TA can be consulted and asked for input to decide which solution is better.

Dealing with conflicts:

How do you handle conflicts within the group?

We believe conflicts are best dealt with when they are brought up as early as possible, especially when somebody on the team has an issue with somebody else. If conflicts like this do not get resolved quickly, these issues can turn into grudges and counterproductivity.

We use the following steps to solve conflicts in our group:

1. Whenever someone has an issue they should bring it up immediately, so that it can openly be discussed in the group.

2. After an issue is brought up, all parties involved are allowed to voice their perspective and opinion to the group. This description should include several key points, as follows:
 - a. Who the issue involves.
 - b. A description of the issue, including when it happened and specifically what happened. This includes detailed specific/concrete examples of the incident.
 - c. A summary of the best solutions for the issue.
3. The involved parties (and potentially the rest of the group) then discuss strengths and weaknesses of each other's solutions, and attempt to identify areas where compromises could be made that would benefit as many people as possible.
4. If no consensus for a solution has been reached, a majority vote will take place, as outlined in the section "Decision-making" above.

We strongly believe that our group will be able to handle most conflicts internally amongst ourselves, but in case that becomes impossible we will reach out to our group TA for consultation.

Guidance:

What do you expect from the teacher's and/or student assistant's guidance? What do you want feedback on, on the content or on the collaboration?

While in principle we strive to be independent and not rely on guidance and help from our TA mentor, we recognize the value of external third party help for specific issues. These issues can for example include clarification of assignment requirements or deadlines, in addition to disagreements among ourselves that would benefit from a neutral perspective (see section "Dealing with conflicts" above).

Moreover, we greatly appreciate feedback especially on our written assignments, as this is especially an area where the graders expectations can be confusing and conflicting. In terms of the group's product/codebase, feedback on our progression for general issues such as test coverage, usage of design principles and documentation is helpful as well.

General feedback on our team's collaboration is also welcome, as there is always room for improvement in this regard and often easier to notice positive and negative trends from a neutral third party perspective.

Consequences:

What are the consequences if a participant in the group does not keep the agreements?

When a group member does not keep the agreements and fails to meet the group's expectations, other group members should initially give a verbal warning describing what (lack of) actions needs to stop. This first step is intended to help the group member realise they are not meeting expectations, and allow for them to be accountable by taking initiative on their own to correct the behaviour. They are expected to commit to a higher workload if they have fallen behind the group's expected pace.

However, if it becomes apparent that this initiative did not work in the following 2-3 days, the issue should be treated as an inter-member conflict and the steps outlined under the section “Dealing with conflicts” above should be followed. Once resolved (and they have not been removed from the team), the member that did not keep the agreements is again expected to take on a greater workload to compensate for lost time and effort.

Success factors:

What makes your team a dream team?

We are a dream team because of our mutual respect, dedication and willingness to collaborate. We strive to create a productive and supportive environment where every group member can progress at their own optimal pace. In order to achieve this we made some ground rules that we all follow, like for example punctuality when joining meetings or specific punishments, when your contributions are on the low side. With this we ensure that the working environment is always supportive and engaged in the project at hand.