Project Management System (Draft 2)

The final year project is the cornerstone of any undergraduate degree academic program. Often being a year long process, it is structured as a feedback loop whereby students are expected to iterate over their ‘Dissertation’ – a comprehensive document describing the project’s aims, literature review, methodology and its results – based on their supervisor’s feedback. The quality of this supervisory relationship directly shapes the students’ academic success, and by extension, their employability and satisfaction, which are key metrics for any reputable institution.

However, according to a recent paper on project supervision (Stynes, P. and Pathak, P., 2022), the traditional supervisory process for final year projects is not scalable. While the research focuses mainly on the postgraduate/masters level, its underlying principles – the supervisor’s finite time and attention, and one-on-one mentorship – are directly applicable for undergraduate programs as well. This lack of scalability leads to significant administrative burdens for academics and degrades the quality of the supervisory feedback, particularly within institutions with high enrollment numbers. As a result of these operational inefficiencies, the quality of final year projects may suffer, affecting the institution’s overall academic output and its credibility. This can be an emerging problem within the University of Mauritius’ (UOM) Faculty of Information and Communications Technology (FOICDT) whereby the total enrollment has increased from 916 in 2020 to 1339 in 2022 (University of Mauritius, 2025), representing an increase in 46.2%. This rapid growth places a significant strain on the academic staff, who have to adhere to the manual and inefficient processes.

Supervisors who are already encumbered from managing multiple students, including different versions of each of their work, have seen their workload increase further. Much of it comprises of the menial tasks of managing communications via email, progress tracking, rescheduling meetings due to conflicting schedules and most notably, document management which includes the repetitive task of checking drafts, often consisting of thousands of words, for compliance with feedback. Thus, a greater portion of the workload is dedicated to handling administrative overhead as opposed to their core responsibilities such as teaching,

supervising and research, impacting the quantity and quality of feedback provided. Evidently, these affect the students as well since providing insufficient or vague feedback makes it more difficult to identify and resolve underlying issues, triggering a loss in motivation for both parties. Consequently, the probability that the project meets academic standards reduces significantly.

To address these inefficiencies and subsequently the challenges of scalability on the institutional level, this project proposes a centralized digital platform designed to streamline the supervisory workflow. The expected outcome is for there to be a significant reduction in administrative load for the supervisors, freeing them more time to focus on providing higher quality feedback and conducting more frequent and constructive meetings. The core features of such type of software will consist of a meeting scheduling and notification module to prevent scheduling conflicts and communication delays, a deliverable management module for submission and re-submission of work as different versions, an AI-powered feedback checker that analyses a deliverable against the supervisor’s feedback and a progress logger for providing clear visibility on the evolution of the project for both the students and the supervisors.

The current landscape of digital project management workflows is fragmented; supervisors and students often have to juggle between multiple systems such as email for communications, calendar services for scheduling, cloud platforms for version control and centralized document store, and Learning Management Systems (see Appendix) such as Google Classroom (Google for Education, 2025) and Moodle (Moodle, 2025) for deliverable submissions. While some specialized providers, such as the Creatrix Campus Thesis Management System (Creatrix Campus, 2025), offer to bundle many of these functions, they are not without significant drawbacks. Such platforms often require considerable training and dedicated developers for customization and maintenance of extensions with existing IT infrastructure, which adds to the institutional overhead. Most notably, these solutions still do not address the most critical need of automating the feedback compliance checking process, failing to alleviate the time-consuming and repetitive tasks for the supervisors.

References

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Appendix

Learning Management System (LMS) is a type of software for managing internet education or training courses. (Cambridge University Press, n.d.)