**Software Engineering Coursework Report**

**40233308**

**Subject: Napier Bank Message Filtering System**

**Introduction**

The Napier Bank requires a messaging service, namely Napier Bank Messaging (NBM), which will validate, sanitize and categorise incoming messages to the bank in various forms.

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate the Software Engineering process underlying the NBA development, accompanied by critical discussions and evaluations.   
We will do so by using the four fundamental process activities outlined by Sommerville:

* Software Specification
* Software Development
* Software Validation
* Software Evolution

In order to avoid problems related to traditional Software Development, we will adopt an Agile workflow.   
We understand that this type of methodology is characterized by an iterative approach, with self-organizing cross functional teams aiming to deliver quality software by addressing user’s needs.  
More on this topic will be discussed further down in the report, for now we will talk about it in respect to its natural disposition in welcoming new requirements.

**1. Requirements Specification**

Requirements are often subject to change as users rarely have clarity over their needs are.  
Whereas the traditional waterfall model could not efficiently make front to the above problem, the modern agile approach offers a more flexible solution, of which manifestos’ values (among others) customer collaboration, therefore welcoming new requirements even during development.  
In addition, agile methods are quite reluctant to producing a requirement documentation as often this becomes obsolete, marking the success of agile in non critical business systems.   
Keeping in mind that requirements should aim for completeness and consistency, we will have a look at:

* Business Requirements
* User Requirements
* System Requirements

Requirement validation will be done towards the end, verifying the system meets stakeholder’s requirements by applying acceptance testing.

**1.1 Business Requirements**

The purpose of the business requirements is to delineate the reasons the organization is undertaking the project. (Enfocus Solutions, 2012)

The Napier Bank needs a messaging system which will streamline the process of validating, sanitizing and categorising different types of incoming messages. This will eventually lead to a more efficient process, with higher message processing speed and lower errors.  
The system will also automatically output the messages to a file in JSON format for later retrieval; here we understand that the system performance might degrade as the size of the file increases, a better alternative could be implementing a database, but this will be part of the system evolution.

In order to acquire information about the system we must first identify the stakeholders, the people who have an interest in the system; the list of stakeholders can be very long, here we will illustrate the primary roles for the NBA in a real world scenario.

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| **Stakeholder** | **Reason** |
| Users | interact with the NBA inputting the messages |
| Designers | aim to build a perfect messaging system |
| System Analysts | concerned with gathering correct requirements |
| Training and user support staff | their main purpose is to ensure a usable messaging system |
| Business analysts | they perform competition analysis aiming to develop the best messaging app product |
| Project manager | concerned with timing and expenses |

**1.2 User Requirements**

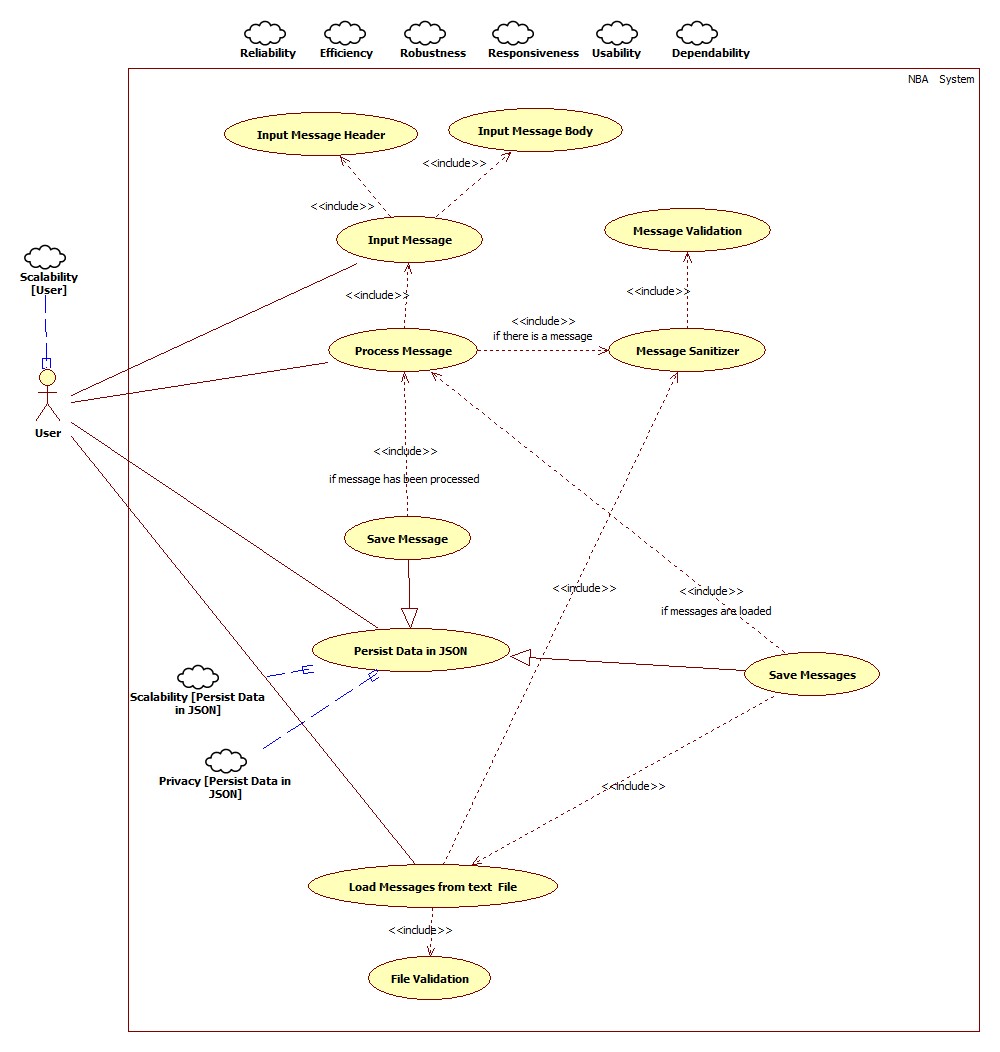
The domain of the problem can be understood by implementing some elicitation techniques, although there are many available out there (questionnaires, prototyping, interviewing, etc..) the only feasible approach is the use of documentation to extrapolate user requirements.User requirements are a high-level view over the functionalities to be provided by the system (both functional and non-functional), derived from a study with the user (performed by the Business Analyst).   
This is a crucial phase in the development process as we have to deal with soft entities who often do not know what they want, providing incomplete and inaccurate information. (Enfocus Solutions, 2012).  
Various methods are available for user requirements extrapolation and definition, here we implement user stories and the popular use case diagram where non-functional requirements are also included.

**1.2.1 User Stories**

User stories are discursive requirements descriptions from the user’s viewpoint used to start a conversation.They derive from the popular agile technique called Extreme Programming and their aim is to increase the interaction between customer and developers.

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| 1 | As a user I want to to input a message into the system so I can process and save it to a file in JSON. |
| 2 | As a user I want the message I input to be validated and processed by the system upon request so I can see it processed. |
| 3 | As a user I want to load messages from a file so I can see them already validated and processed. |
| 4 | As a user I want the system to automatically recognize and categorize any message I might input into the system. |
| 5 | As a user I want to be able to save the processed message to a file. |
| 6 | As a user I want to be able to save the loaded processed messages to a file. |
| 7 | As a user I want to be able to see a trending list. |
| 8 | As a user I want to be able to see a mention list. |
| 9 | As a user I want to be able to see a SIR list. |

**1.2.2 Use Cases Diagram**“Use Cases” is a scenario base technique in UML which describes the interactions within the system. They give us a deeper understanding of the product and of any functional and non-functional requirement.



In the above diagram we can see functional requirements outlined by ellipses, these are services the system should provide and what the system should not do. For instance, the system should load messages from a text file only if this has been validated.  
As regards non functional requirements, they are constraints on the services and functions offered by the system. (ReQtest, 2012) They are outlined by little clouds in the diagram.

**1.3 System Requirements**

Whereas the user requirements are a simplistic way of describing the system functions, the system requirements aim to provide with a detailed description of functional and non-functional specifications to be used by the technical staff in order to develop the system.   
They support the systematic review, evaluation and approval of the system.

Non-functional requirements can be classified in:

* Product requirements: concerned with aspects such as security, efficiency (performance and space), dependability and usability.
* Organizational requirements: including environmental, operational and development requirements.
* External requirements: dealing with ethical, regulatory and legislative aspects.

Below each system requirement has functional requirements (F) and non-functional requirements (NF). Some NF requirements have a \* near them, this indicates that the requirement is not required for this particular coursework, although it is very likely to be integrated in a real life scenario.

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| 1-The NBA shall accept an input message, validate and categorize it. |
| **F.1** The messages can be in three main forms: SMS (S), Tweet (T) and Email (E). In addition, email can be of two types: Standard Email Message (SEM) and Serious Incident Report (SIR).  **F.2** Each message presents itself in the form of a header and a body, hence the header and body must be entered into two separates text fields.  **F.3** The header of the message has a unique ID representing a unique message entity, it starts with a letter according to the message type (S: SMS, T: tweet, E: email), followed by 9 numeric characters.  **F.4** The body of the message is comprised of different sections according to the message type.  **F.5** SMS’s body has a sender section in the form of an international number, followed by a text section which mustn’t exceed 140 characters.  **F.6** Tweet’s body has a sender section in the form of a tweet ID starting with @ and followed by a maximum of 15 characters; it follows a text section which mustn’t exceed 140 characters.  **F.7** Email’s body has a sender field in the form of an email address, followed by a subject field no longer than 20 characters. If the email is a standard type then a text section no longer than 1028 characters will follow, otherwise if it is a significant incident report the subject will be in the form “SIR dd/mm/yy” followed by a sort code section in the form “nn-nn-nn” , a section on the nature of the incident report and a text section no longer than 1028 characters. The nature of the incident must belong to one of the followings: Thefts, Staff Attack, ATM theft, Raid, Customer Attack, Staff Abuse, Bomb Threat, Terrorism, Suspicious Incident, Intelligence, Cash Loss.  **NF.1** \* Scalability: The system shall handle multiple input sessions where users input messages at once, hence response time must not degrade.  **NF.2** Reliability: The input session must be error free.  **NF.3** Usability: The format of the input message shall not be too complex for the user.  **NF.4** Speed: validation and categorization mustn’t take any longer of a second of computation. |

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| 2-After the user has input a message, the system (after validation and categorization) shall process the message and display it. |
| **F.1** Both SMS and Tweets might contain abbreviations, these (after processing) must be followed by two brackets as “<>” inside which the abbreviation text fill be expanded.  **F.2** Email messages might contain URLs, these must be removed, added to a list and replaced by “<URL Quarantined>”.  **F.3** Sort Code and Nature of Incident will be written to a SIR list for any of the Significant Incident Report Emails.  **F.4** For tweet messages, hashtags will be added to a hashtag list that will count the number of uses of each hashtag to produce a trending list; mentions in the body (embedded twitter ids) will be added to a mention list.  **F.5** Error messages shall inform he user of the nature of any failure.  **NF.1** \* Scalability: The system shall handle multiple sessions where users process messages at once, hence response time must not degrade.  **NF.2** Speed: the message process time should be lower than a second.  **NF.3** Ease of use: the processed message should be easy to understand. |

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| 3-After the user has selected a file with messages to load, the system shall load, process and display the messages. |
| **F.1** The file should be validated to ensure the entities are in the correct format.  **F.2** Validation, categorisation and processing shall be executed as specified in requirement 1 and 2.  **F.2** Error messages shall inform he user of the nature of any failure.  **NF.1** Speed: loading the messages shall take a reasonable amount of time.  **NF.2** Ease of use: the processed message shall be easy to understand.  **NF.3** \* Scalability: The system shall handle multiple input sessions where users load from files at once, hence response time must not degrade. |

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| 4-The NBA should have a UI for the user to interact with. |
| **F.1** The UI shall have two input fields for message header and message body.  **F.2** The UI shall offer a mechanism for processing and displaying a message.  **F.3** The UI shall offer a mechanism for saving a message.  **F.4** The UI shall offer a mechanism for loading messages from a text file.  **F.5** The UI shall display the messages loaded from a text file already processed.  **F.6** The UI shall offer a mechanism of saving messages loaded from a text file.  **F.7** The UI shall display error messages to the user in a user-friendly manner.  **F.8** The UI shall display the three lists: trending, mentions and SIR.  **F.8** The UI shall display success messages to the user in a user-friendly manner.  **NF.1** Responsiveness: The UI mustn’t take too long to respond to any of the user input, half a second is accepted for click-action response.  **NF.2** Speed: the screen refresh time between different actions should not take longer than half a second.  **NF.4** Usability: the UI shall be easy to use, and training time shall not exceed 1 hour.  **NF.5** Reliability: the UI shall be as much error free as possible.  **NF.6** Robustness: if any of the UI components fail to function, it must restart promptly. |

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| 5-The system shall be able to save one or more messages to a file in JSON format. |
| **F.1** No more than one message with the same header id must be saved to the file.  **F.2** Success or error messages shall be output to the user to inform him/her of the system status.  **NF.1** Scalability: The system should accept more than one message; \* it shall also cope with many sessions at a time.  **NF.2** Responsiveness: the system shall save messages quickly, no more than a second is allowed for each message.  **NF.3** Privacy: the system shall store personal data according to the latest GDPR regulations.  **NF.4** Size: the system shall cope with a high volume of data.  **NF.5** Reliability and Robustness: failures should not occur, and in case of failure during persistence the system shall restart promptly. |

The system should also be robust, meaning there should be a very low percentage of failures; in the event of a system failure, the NBA should restart promptly.   
In a real-life scenario users should also authenticate themselves into the system using an encrypted password; authorization will then allow specific user roles to perform various operations such as deleting or modifying records. Finally, dependability allows the system to deliver at all time its services.

**2. Version Control**

Version control is a system that records changes to a file or set of files over time so that specific versions can be later recalled (Pro Git, 2014), as a side effect this facilitates the development particularly in team environments.  
Many VCS have been proposed historically, although today the most used is the Distributed VCS which combines the benefits of Local and Centralised approaches.   
The entire history of files is stored not only on the central server but on every local machine allowing users to synchronize local changes with the repository on the Central Repository Server.

The development of the NBA is to adopt the widely adopted Git, developed by Linus Torvald in 2005 to solve many problems present in the CSV. The distributed architecture avoids development bottlenecks, promoting branching and efficiently handling a large number of users working on the same project.

As previously mentioned, the development for the NBA adopts an Agile approach, following the SCRUM methodology which promotes collaboration amongst team members. This is a process skeleton running in work cycles called sprints, with the duration of two to four weeks. In a real scenario, the NBA team would be composed by about 7 people, amongst which there are the Scrum Master, who maintains the process, and the Product owner who represent the stakeholder.   
The requirements for the NBA are pushed to the Product Backlog, a list ordered by requirement importance, looked after by the Product Owner. From here the development team selects a number of Product Backlog Items for the sprint Backlog, after which the sprint starts. Each day the team meets to communicate what has been accomplished, what are the next intentions and if there are any difficulties in the work.  
Once a sprint has been completed, a shippable increment of the software is signed off by the Product Owner, effectuating a Sprint Retrospective to improve on the work done.  
For the NBA three sprints have been designed each of them taking care of the following aspects:

1) Message Validator and File Parser

2) Message Processor and Serializer

3) Merging Components into User Interface

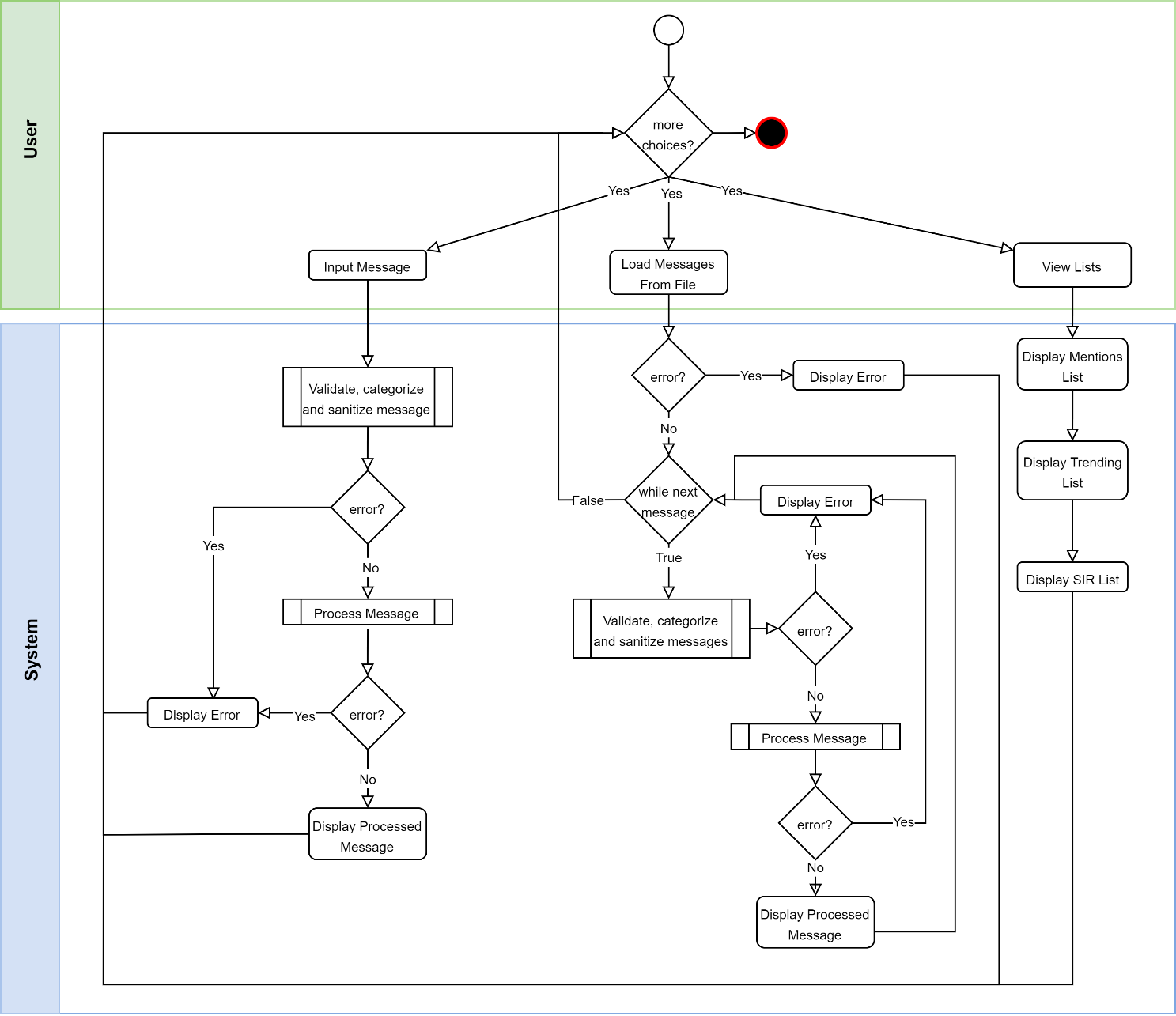
During each sprint the developers work with a main branch, merging through an Optimistic Locking approach which resolves code conflicts and encourages team collaboration. Each sprint is represented by a branch with additional features, merging back into the main one at the end of the sprint and releasing the code under a specific version name.  
If any bug is discovered after release, a team member can make the fixes whilst the other developers keep working on the next sprint.

**3. Design and Implementation**

The increasing complexity of software accompanied by the recent technological progress has led to problems with software development.   
“Real quality improvements are only possible if the increase in program complexity is overcompensated”. (Avarage value, Balzert ’96)  
The answer to these problems is Model Driven Software Engineering, thanks to which software is delivered on time, the requirements are accurate, and the software can evolve automatically after release. MDSE abstracts the real-world problem into the model, placing the latter as the central artefact of software development, allowing for better software portability, interoperability and increasing productivity, efficiency and reusability.  
Although there are available industry standards as the MDA proposed by the OMG (generating three modelling levels as CIM, PIM and PSM), for simplicity we will define only a state diagram and a class diagram adopting the UML as the design language.   
Automatic code generation has been used for the base classes obtaining part of the production code, further development included adding a MVVM on top of it.

**Activity Diagram**

The activity diagram should be a very high-level abstraction of the system, including system requirements and business objectives, independent from how these are implemented.  
The actions have been divided between user and system for more clarity.



**Architecture**

* **Class diagram**

Validator  
Contains the Business Rules for validating messages.  
Accepts lower case and upper case for header messages transforming to upper case facilitating insertion.

**4. Testing**

Testing is a process which aims to discover errors in software in order to improve performance, user experience and increase revenue.  
The NBA testing will adopt the Defect Testing procedure by designing test cases, preparing test data, running the program with the test data and finally comparing the results to the test cases.

Before running a dynamic testing, software inspections should be run, analysing the system in a static fashion; inspections for the NBA consider requirement specification, software architecture, UML design models and the program.

Software Inspection not only allows to discover errors, but ensures compliance with standards, portability and maintainability.

Dynamic testing can happen at various levels and in a real scenario they should be all implemented:

* Unit Testing: this is the type of testing adopted for this coursework; it verifies individual modules.
* Integration Testing: verifies the design and aims to find errors in interfaces between modules.
* System Testing: verifies requirements; often regression testing is also performed if changes have been made to the system in order to ensure requirements are still met.
* Acceptance Testing: a sort of additional system testing which validates business needs.

The NBA adopts a Test Driven Development approach (introduced by Extreme Programming) where tests are written before functionalities are implemented, and we are not allowed to move on to the next increment until the code passes its tests. Testing documentation shall be produced adopting the V-model, where testing and development happen in parallel; the benefits of TDD also extend to code coverage, simplified debugging and regression testing.

As regards test tools, unit testing should be automated without requiring manual intervention, developers shall extend the text classes provided by the unit testing frameworks in order to create specific taste cases.

Test cases have been derived using boundary values and equivalence partinioning in order to cover a wide range of input possibilities, these are available in the table at the end of this section.

Ideally testing should be done by an external party, although for the NBA this is not possible, so a white box unit testing has been performed as we understand the structure and logic of the system. On the contrary black box testing could be applied at the integration stage in order to discover defects; here a bottom-up approach could be proposed as test cases are easier to design. Here testing works upwards and a Test Harness coordinates input and output.   
A more modern alternative could e using thread testing, which is object-oriented, hence quite suitable for the NBA which has a number of processes interacting with one another under the MVVM architecture.

Interface testing, quite important for object-oriented systems as the NBA, has been done manually to ensure all the components efficiently communicate with one another.

Stress testing has also been performed on the application as regards loading messages and persisting them to a text file in JSON; as predicted in the requirement risks, as the file content increases the system performance decreases. A solution will be proposed in the evolution section where an optimized database could be used.

Finally the system testing is to be performed with the customer to ensure the requirements have been met. This can be run either through acceptance testing, installation testing, alpha or beta testing.

To conclude, testing should be applied at the end of each sprint to ensure the software requirements are met.

**5. Evolution**

**Notes**

As regarding system stress testing, we can see that the system performance is degrading when trying to write to a JSON file.   
This is because the system is deserializing the JSON file each time we try to add a message to check against duplicates entries; the performance degrades as the number of messages increases.

Using a database as part of a possible evolution strategy could dramatically improve the program performance as such systems are optimized for such tasks, often implementing a lookup table with constant access time.

Error handling:

The system aims to be user friendly informing the user of the nature of the error when performing a wrong action.

Improvements to do now:

* Make sure each time we try to save a message we immediately throw the error without waiting for the whole file to be preprocessed; same as for saved messages and lists
* You have a bug in lists, sometimes it adds things it should not add there. Fix it. I think it’s when I split the text piece; if it doesn’t have any @ or # it somehow adds it. And it happens only on the first word of the text.

**References**

Enfocus Solutions (2012) *Business, User, and System Requirements* Available at: https //enfocussolutions.com/business-user-and-system-requirements/#:~:text=User%20requirements%2C%20often%20referred%20to,must%20be%20able%20to%20perform.&text=System%20requirements%20are%20the%20building%20blocks%20developers%20use%20to%20build%20the%20system.

ReQtest (2012) *Why is the difference between functional and Non-functional requirements important?*Available at: https://reqtest.com/requirements-blog/functional-vs-non-functional-requirements/