Even though I have used the Arduino before I have learned a lot and discovered new uses for the device on the first week of this module. The use of Arduino in developing “quick prototypes” for communicating our ideas was definitely new to me. I found the process of quick prototyping fun and interesting as it enabled me to venture and try different ideas with the least amount of time required.

By creating minimum viable products, I was able to visualise my ideas and demonstrate how it may work. This helped me communicate my idea in a clear way to my colleagues and consult for their feedback and suggestions. It also helped me develop the idea further and come up with more features I may add or improve upon if I wish to proceed with a given idea.

Through quick prototyping, I was able to immediately discard ideas which I initially thought was good but turns out to be impractical in real life. One such idea was the development of an alarm clock which rings based on the light level outside (i.e. it rings when the sun is out).

I found that this idea may be impractical as the light level varies depending on the weather, season of the year or artificial objects which may reflect/produce light and affect the alarm clock. Without conducting the quick prototype method, I would have not found this and will go ahead with the idea. Investing valuable time and resources which would be wasted as I come to this conclusion at a later stage of the design process.

The best idea that I have came up with is a device called “MyBox” and the “Gesture Controlled Alarm Clock”.

I came up with “MyBox” after our group brainstormed with the problems students might face when in a student accommodation and sharing facilities. Someone pointed out that they don’t like it when some of their flatmate go through their stuff without asking for permission. The device that I came up with solves this problem by sounding an alarm when someone moves the “My Box” device from its original location. The idea is that the “bad guy” will be turned away by the alarm if they use the item without asking for permission and the alarm is raised.

The “Gesture Controlled Alarm Clock” is my favourite idea. This device is a normal alarm clock with a special feature: you don’t need physical contact to turn off the alarm. When the alarm clock rings its sound, the user only needs to wave his or her hand at the alarm clock and it will silent itself automatically.

I find this idea the best (so far) because it is creative, unique and playful at the same time. I believe that this device fits our modern world’s requirement, where the most minimum effort for control is highly valued and appreciated.

If given the opportunity to develop some of my ideas further, I would choose the “Gesture Controlled Alarm Clock” over the other ideas that I came up with. I believe that it’s futuristic, practical and have the possibility to develop into a great product.