Guidelines on Assessment of the Project Report

Overall Assessment

The project module is assessed through the Project Report (85% of the final score), the Extended Project Proposal (10%) and the Interim Progress Report (5%). The module leader will calculate an overall mark (and hence grade) from the marks awarded to each individual student throughout the project.

Students are required to provide a satisfactory justification and defence of the approach taken to their work and any conclusions that they have reached in their final report in the demonstration. If there is reason to comment on the demonstration, please include these comments in your overall assessment.

Assessment of the Report

The project for the Modular MSc is a substantial piece of work at advanced MSc level. It is a 60-credit module which should represent 600 hours of work.

The DMD specifies that:

> "Projects will be assessed against the objectives which are set out in the project plan, including the deliverables and the nature and content of the written thesis"

The report is assessed against the objectives which were set out in the Extended Project Proposal, and restated in the project report. The students have been told:

> "[ ] your project will be assessed against the objectives set out in your Extended Project Proposal and restated in your project report (thesis). This assessment will take account of objectives that are over-ambitious or under-ambitious. Where significant changes to objectives or methodology have been made since the Extended Project Proposal, you must explain and justify this in the report."

Factors which are considered include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Competence in independent work
- Evidence of literature review
- Evidence of originality of investigation or testing of ideas at an appropriate postgraduate level
- Understanding of techniques used and reflection on them
- Worthiness for publication

Note that we are prepared to accept 'practitioner' projects which are essentially based on some suitably complex development work, but such projects should still exhibit postgraduate level skills. For example, we would expect different development methods to be evaluated for suitability, alternative design decisions to be described and the student's choice justified, a rigorous approach to validation and to user evaluation, etc.

The Assessment Forms

There are separate forms for supervisor and second marker. The purpose of the forms is to record the mark or grade, and to provide information on how you reached your decision for auditing purposes. Please use the phrases provided in the School's Generic Grading Criteria (provided on the last page of the forms) to provide a generic assessment, and, where necessary, add some (brief) justification or other comments. After you have read and assessed the report individually, please record your comments and preliminary mark

on the appropriate assessment form. You should then meet with the other assessor to agree a grade or mark. Please use part 2 of the supervisor's form to record the grade that you have agreed.

Please assess the following aspects of the project and the report:

a. Technical Quality of Project Work and Research
This section should be used to provide an assessment of the student's "demonstration of knowledge", "application of technology and demonstration of practical skills", "ideas and concept development", and "analysis, critical evaluation, and/or reflection (with derivation of solution", as apparent in the report. Please comment on:
- The main technical output from the project, as regards correctness, elegance, usability etc. of the final product (theoretical or practical), and the techniques employed
- Whether the student has demonstrated awareness of relevant background work and how the project builds upon or exploits existing techniques or results

b. Quality of Written Work
This section should be used to comment on the organisation of the material, quality of written English, clarity of explanations, spelling, punctuation, relevance of diagrams / tables etc. This section assesses the student's "communication" skills.

c. Comments on Nature of Supervision
Supervisors should also comment on the nature of supervision. Consideration should be given to the amount of help that the supervisor provided on technical issues and report writing. The purpose of this section is to enable supervisors to indicate whether credit is due largely to the supervisor rather than the student (which should be reflected in the mark awarded).

Referral Conditions

A grade between 20 and 49 will allow referral in the project (subject to the approval of the Module Board). If you award a grade between 20 and 49, you (the supervisor and second marker) **must** specify **referral conditions** (i.e. what the student needs to do to pass on referral) on the supervisor's assessment form. This might involve rewriting some or all of the report, amplifying the report's conclusions, doing some further practical work and writing this up, etc. In this case, please try to be as clear and helpful as possible, as only you will have the detailed knowledge needed to do this. A referred project should involve a minimal extra commitment on the supervisor's part, but it is reasonable to expect the supervisor to make clear what a student needs to do in order to retrieve the situation.

If you cannot describe suitable referral conditions, then you should give a grade of 19 or lower.

Postgraduate Generic Grading Criteria

Numeric Grade	Descriptor (class band)	Communication: Presenting work, use of appropriate structures, methods, language, grammar and source materials	Demonstration of Knowledge: Integration of advanced theory into work and/or breadth/depth in applying theory and/or knowledge.	Application of Technology / Demonstration of Practical Skills: Programming, use of applications, applying technology to problems	Ideas/Concept Development: Demonstration of; development of ideas and/or design, and/or concept development, problem solving	Analysis, Critical Evaluation and/or Reflection (with derivation of solution): Demonstration of evaluation, testing and reflection.
80-100	Outstanding (Distinction)	Outstanding presentation and clarity. No significant grammatical / spelling or structural errors. Ideas presented with exceptional clarity. Outstanding standard of referencing in text and highly accurate. Frequently demonstrates originality and creativity in approach.	Outstanding breadth and depth demonstrated. Outstanding integration of literature and/or theory into work. Outstanding exploration and demonstration of topic showing true in-depth knowledge and understanding	Outstanding use of appropriate technology as applied to the problem domain. Frequently stepping beyond expectations using sophisticated solutions. Consistently accurate and outstanding application of skills and techniques demonstrated. Frequently demonstrates originality in the application of technologies.	Solutions are novel & fully reframe task within context. Profound depth of engagement and incisive ideas development. Planning is meticulous; decision making is perceptive. Methodologies are used in an outstanding manner. Frequently demonstrates originality in the development of ideas and approach to concept development.	Outstanding level of analysis, critical evaluation and/or reflection with outstanding application to derived solutions (where required). Highly developed / focused work. Highly original and well informed personal response.
70-79	Excellent (Distinction)	Excellent structure. Fluent writing style with very few errors. Very minor grammatical / spelling or structural errors. Ideas presented with excellent clarity. Excellent standard of referencing in text, and highly accurate. Occasional demonstration of originality and creativity in approach.	Excellent breadth & depth demonstrated. Excellent integration of literature and/or advanced theory into work. Excellent level of advanced knowledge and understanding demonstrated. Covers all relevant points and issues.	Excellent and advanced use of appropriate technology as applied to the problem domain. Excellent and highly accurate application of advanced skills and techniques demonstrated. Minor errors in technique and/or application with little or no impact on deliverables.	Solutions are innovative and partially reframe the task within its context. Considerable depth of engagement and successful ideas development clearly documented. Detailed planning and clear rationale for decisions. Methodologies are used in an excellent manner.	Excellent level of analysis, critical evaluation and/or reflection of issues with excellent application to derived solutions (where required). Well developed and occasionally original personal response
60-69	Very good (Commendation)	Very good clear structure. Articulate, fluent writing style and structure. Very few grammatical errors, spelling mistakes or structural issues. Ideas presented with clarity. Very good standard referencing in text, with very accurate use with minor errors	Very good breadth & depth demonstrated appropriate to topic. Literature and/or theory integrated very well. Very good level of knowledge and understanding demonstrated.	Very good use of appropriate technology as applied to the problem domain. High level and very accurate application of skills and techniques understanding demonstrated. Small errors in technique and/or application with little impact on deliverables	Solutions relate directly to task and may step beyond conventions Strong engagement with subject material and processes, evaluation of alternatives, solutions come from process. Strong use of methodologies to derive solutions	Very good level of, analysis, critical evaluation and/or reflection but not consistently taken to full extent with very good application to derived solutions (where required). Partial personal response tends towards descriptive
50-59	Good/satisfactory (Pass)	Good to satisfactory structure. Writing is mainly clear but some spelling and / or grammatical errors with some structural issues. Ideas presented with some issues in clarity Good standard referencing in text, mainly accurate use with some errors	Good to satisfactory use of literature/theory. Depth appropriate to topic BUT moderate breadth or vice versa. Literature and/or theory integrated into work. Good grasp of the topic and some of its implications. Knowledge and understanding is demonstrated. Minor errors / omissions.	Good to satisfactory use of appropriate technology as applied to the problem domain. Good and reasonably accurate application of skills and techniques demonstrated. Some errors in technique and/or application with minor impact on deliverables	Solutions are appropriate/limted to task, work well within conventions. Good to satisfactory use of subject material and planning processes, range of alternatives put forward and evaluated Experimentation to support implementation within conventions Good use of methodologies to derive solutions	Good to satisfactory level of analysis and/or reflection but critical evaluation could be expanded on further. Good application to derived solutions (where required). Primarily descriptive personal response, sometimes restricted to immediate concerns
40-49	Marginal fail (Fail)	Poor structure. Has many spelling and /or grammatical errors. Poor presentation of ideas. Limited referencing in text, reference use shows inaccuracy and/or many errors	Limited in breadth and depth demonstrated. Literature and/or used/quoted without comment. Limited content / knowledge. Limited or muddled understanding of the topic/question.	Limited use of appropriate technology as applied to the problem domain. Limited application of skills and techniques demonstrated. Many errors in technique and/or application with high impact on deliverables.	Solutions reframe task inappropriately and do not address conventions. Basic use of strategies, few alternatives, limited evaluation with limited experimentation. Limited use of methodologies to derive solutions.	Limited evidence of analysis, critical evaluation and/or reflection. Limited application to derived solutions (where required).Too descriptive in parts. Limited personal response.

20-39	Clear fail (Fail)	Lacking Structure – argument difficult to follow. Poorly written and/or poor spelling and grammar. Few clear ideas presented. Lacking referencing within text with a high level of inaccuracy.	Lacking in breadth and depth. Some literature and/or theory irrelevant to topic area. Lacking knowledge Content irrelevant / inaccurate. Does not address the question and therefore does not meet the learning outcomes.	Very little use of appropriate technology as applied to the problem domain. Very little skill and application of techniques demonstrated. High number of errors with very high impact on deliverables.	Lacking in appropriate solutions with very limited use of strategies, no evaluation and little evidence of ideas development. Little use of methodologies	Lacking in its level of analysis / critical evaluation and/or reflection. Minimal application to derived solutions (where required) Mainly descriptive, lacking in personal response.
0-19	Nothing of merit (Fail)	No discernable structure. Very difficult to follow. Many grammatical errors. Many spelling mistakes. No presentation of ideas. Unsatisfactory referencing within text. Reference list does not match references in text. References list has incorrect citations and/or is not the recommended format. No reference list included.	No / unsatisfactory evidence of literature and/or theory being referred to. Much of the literature and/or theory used irrelevant to topic area No / unsatisfactory level of knowledge demonstrated. Content not appropriate to the topic.	No use of appropriate technology as applied to the problem domain. No skill and application of technique demonstrated. Very high number of errors in deliverable or no deliverable submitted.	No or completely inappropriate solution. No use of strategies, no planning and no experimentation. No application of methodology	Unsatisfactory level of analysis / critical evaluation and or reflection. No application to derived solutions (where required) Wholly descriptive. No personal response.