

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

MEng,BSc, 2005–2006

COMPUTER SYSTEMS AND SOFTWARE ENGINEERING
Part A/B

COMPUTER SCIENCE WRITING
Open Examination

Issued at:

2 November 2005
(Autumn/4/Wed)

Submission due:

25 January 2006
(Spring/3/Wed)

Your attention is drawn to the Guidelines on Mutual Assistance and Collaboration
in the Student's Handbook.

All queries on this assessment should be addressed to

Dr F. A. C. Polack (fiona@cs.york.ac.uk) by email.

No questions will be answered after Monday 16 January 2006.

Answers will appear only on the website,

<http://www-course.cs.york.ac.uk/csw/assessment/QandAs.html> .

Your examination number must be written on the front of your submission.

You must not identify yourself in any other way.

1 The Assessment

Chose a topic from the **topics** listed on the accompanying website

<http://www-course.cs.york.ac.uk/csw/assessment/topics.pdf>

These are general areas of work, and include some sample reading — please read the introduction to the topics before deciding your topic.

Think about your chosen topic, and decide on an **aspect** of it, to be the focus for your literature review. (The aspect may be quite narrow; the accompanying website gives further guidance.) You will need to perform literature searches on the chosen topic and aspect and follow up a range of references before you prepare your submission.

Produce a **literature review**, and submit it in the format given in section 2, overleaf. The submission must conform to the length regulations given in section 3.

The *topic* of the review must be selected from the list, and must be used as the title of the assessment submission. The *aspect* of the topic chosen for review must be clearly stated as a subheading to the submission. The terminology is explained in section 4, below.

Further information is available on the accompanying website

<http://www-course.cs.york.ac.uk/csw/assessment/furtherInfo.pdf>

You should read this before proceeding.

Deviation from the requirements stated in the document and in the further information will be heavily penalised. In addition, you should follow style, content and bibliographic guidelines given in the CSW lecture notes, including those for spell-checking and proof-reading.

2 Format for the Submission

The contents of the review must include the following numbered sections.

1. A brief **introduction** to the particular area of computer science represented by the selected topic, using one or more core texts, lecture notes or other general sources [10 marks].
 - This section must conclude with a brief introduction to chosen topic and the chosen literature.
2. A **review** of the chosen aspect of the topic, using *at most* four specific sources (papers, articles, books etc) [20 marks].
3. A **conclusion**, re-iterating the key findings of the review, and making a proposition related to the chosen topic and aspect [10 marks].
 - At the end of the conclusion, there must be a statement of the word count, formulated by completing the following sentence: *Report comprises [number] words as counted with [facility], excluding the bibliography.*
 - You may use any suitable Linux or Microsoft word-count facility, but must state exactly what you used (eg. *linux wc -l on raw latex source* etc.)
4. The single-page **bibliography** must list references to all the sources used in the assessment, and must be sufficient to definitively identify each source [5 marks].
 - You must provide an annotation on each entry in the bibliography, indicating whether it is used as a general source (in the introduction), or as a specific source (in the review), or both.
 - If necessary, include a separate list of sources that you consulted for the assessment, but did not use in the submission.
 - Use a consistent bibliographic style, which conforms to the citation requirements given in the CSW lectures.

Some or all of the remaining 5 marks will be awarded for the quality of presentation and argument.

3 Length of the Submission

The submission must total no more than 5 A4 pages, plus a single A4 page of bibliography. The maximum word limit for the five pages, including all titles,

headers etc (but **excluding** the one-page bibliography) must total no more than 2250 words¹.

Failure to observe the page limit, the word limit, or both limits will result in automatic mark deductions.

- For over-run of strictly less than one page or no more than 450 words, there will be a deduction of 10% of the achieved mark.
- For each subsequent full or part page overrun, or for each subsequent word excess of up to 450 words, 20% of the achieved mark will be deducted.
- Note that if the page and word limits are both exceeded, the over-run will be penalised twice.

There is no lower length limit on the submissions, and no penalty for achieving the goals of the assessment in fewer pages or words.

4 Terminology

In this and the accompanying assessment documents,

- *area of computer science* refers to a generic area such as functional programming, databases, real-time systems etc;
- *topic* refers to the research topics, that is, the subheadings of the list of topics on the webpage, which are numbered 1.1. to 1.25.;
- *aspect* refers to a sub-part of the topic, selected for review in the main section of the assessment.

Every care has been taken to use precise terms in this assessment. Failure to observe the stated requirements will be penalised.



¹Latex users, please note that J. Jacob's project style includes significant amounts of white space, and may not be appropriate for this assessment: plain latex article style is more compact.