COMP390 / 393 / 394 / 395
Honours Year Project
Introduction & Coursework

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Project Website & E-Project System

- Everything you need to know is available on the project website
  - www.csc.liv.ac.uk/~comp39x/2019-20/
  - Detailed overview of what the project is all about
  - Timetable of activities and countdown to deadlines
- Project details and coursework submission via the E-Project System
  - sam.csc.liv.ac.uk/COMP39X/
  - You must login with your MWS (central university) details
- Your supervisor should always be your first point of contact
  - They can explain how the coursework relates to your particular project
  - Please be aware that supervisors are very busy at this time of year
- E-Project System support is via Dave Shield (d.t.shield@liverpool.ac.uk)
- General technical support is via the Helpdesk in the Holt building (2nd floor)

Independent Learning

- The honours year project gives you an opportunity to develop initiative and control of your learning
- You are responsible for...
  - Finding out what you need to know and developing ideas
  - Planning the project
  - Following your plan to make sufficient progress
  - Delivering coursework on time
  - Meeting the project criteria of the BCS
  - Ensuring you work within our ethical guidelines (including ethical use of data)
- Your supervisor is not responsible for chasing you
  - Contact them to arrange meetings
  - Don't expect them to know everything or do the project for you!
  - You should have already had your first meeting (or arranged it for this week)

Project Weighting

- Think about your project in the wider context of your overall degree
  - The third year contributes 70% of the degree classification (40% for MEng)
  - So your project is worth 17.5% of your overall degree (10% for MEng)
- Students tend to view the project as more important than it really is
  - Put enormous effort into it
  - Other module marks suffer as a result
  - Bear in mind the degree algorithm is based on your average mark in each year
- Third year modules have been designed to accommodate your workload
  - First semester modules are mostly coursework heavy
  - Second semester modules are mostly assessed by exams
- The project mark is no more important than any other module marks
  - Managing your time and developing a large piece of software is invaluable experience
  - Employers sometimes like to see what you've done on the project

Lecture Timetable

- There are two lectures that cover the project assessment
  - S1/Wk2 – Detailed Proposal (this lecture)
  - S2/Wk9 – Software Demo and Project Dissertation
- The Careers Service is also offering lectures tailored for Computer Science
  - S1/Wk5 – Bridging the Skills Gap
  - S1/Wk8 – Pitching Your Project to an Employer
  - S2/Wk6 – Articulating Your Skills

- Don't forget the Ignite Your Future event in the second semester
  - Extra-curricular employability event lasting all week during February/March
  - Opportunity to network with employers

Module Assessment

- There are three summative assessments for this module
  - S1/Wk6 – Detailed Proposal (Specification & Design) – 20%
  - S2/Wk10 – Software Demo – 15%
  - S2/Wk12 – Project Dissertation – 65%
- And one formative assessment
  - S2/Wk3 – Progress Report
  - An opportunity to ensure you are on track and following your project plan
- See the Calendar & Deadlines menu on the project website
- Assessments marked independently by your supervisor and second marker
  - If their marks are within 10 percentage points of each other, average is taken
  - If they are wider apart, they will discuss and try to reach an agreement
  - If they cannot agree, a third marker will independently mark your work

Coursework: Detailed Proposal (First Part)

- Full details are available on the project website (Assessment menu)
- The first part of the document is the specification and should include...
  - Project Description
  - Aims & Objectives
  - Key Literature & Background Reading
  - Development Process & Method
  - Data Sources
  - Testing & Evaluation
  - Ethical Considerations
  - BCS Project Criteria
  - Software & Hardware Resources
  - Project Plan
  - Risks & Contingency Plans

Ethical Guidelines

- The university is committed to ensuring rigour and integrity in its research
  - Undergraduate projects in Computer Science are not classified as research
  - But you should still follow the ethical guidelines shown on the project website
- Almost all projects will involve using, generating or collecting data
  - Data must be anonymised so it can't be used to identify individuals
  - You should make sure you have permission to use the data
- You'll also want to use human participants in beta testing and evaluation
  - Don't expose them to sensitive topics
  - Only use people who can give informed consent (so that means no children)
  - Explain that involvement is voluntary and they can drop out at any time
  - Make it clear that your evaluation is part of a University of Liverpool project
  - Store data securely and ensure it is anonymised (and deleted after graduation)
- Cover these points in the Data Sources and Ethical Considerations sections

BCS Project Criteria

- As part of your degree accreditation your project needs to demonstrate...
  - An ability to apply practical and analytical skills gained during the degree programme
  - Innovation and/or creativity
  - Synthesis of information, ideas and practices to provide a quality solution together with an evaluation of that solution
  - That your project meets a real need in a wider context
  - An ability to self-manage a significant piece of work
  - Critical self-evaluation of the process
- Show how your project meets these points in the BCS Project Criteria section
- The BCS (The Chartered Institute for IT) also has a Code of Conduct
  - www.bcs.org/membership/become-a-member/bcs-code-of-conduct/
  - You should always conduct your project in a professional manner
  - You should acknowledge the code of conduct in your coursework

Coursework: Detailed Proposal (Second Part)

- Full details are available on the project website (Assessment menu)
- The second part of the document should show the design of your software
  - Anticipated components of the system and how they will be organised
  - Data structures and algorithms to be used by the system
  - User interface design (screen mockups or sketches)
- The exact format of this section will depend on the project
  - It should include diagrams (which are included in the word count)
  - Use whatever design notation makes sense for your project
  - Show enough detail to convey that you have a clear design for the system
- The specification should be around five pages, and the design should be at least another five pages, but will probably be more
- Use the Harvard notation for references and citations within the text

Assessment Form

- The coursework is marked online via the E-Project System
- The specification will be graded on the following criteria
  - Each section as outlined in the instructions (and the earlier slide)
  - Your overall understanding of the project
- The design will be graded on the following criteria
  - Structure
  - Design Techniques
  - Coverage & Level of Detail
  - Feasibility
  - Originality
- The report itself will be graded on its fluency, succinctness and coherence
- You can find a PDF version of the mark scheme on the project website

Next Steps

- Everything you need to know is on the project website

www.csc.liv.ac.uk/~comp39x/2019-20/

- Make sure you've met your supervisor by the end of this week
  - Discuss the project topic in some detail
  - Start to plan the outline of your Detailed Proposal
- Arrange regular meetings throughout the project period
- Start the background reading and research for your topic
- Work on your Detailed Proposal and submit by 31st October (week 6)
- Begin your implementation according to your plan
- Manage your own time effectively