

COS 730 - ASSIGNMENT 1

Contract Instruction Application Software Requirements Specification

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Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	User Characteristics	5
2.1	Professional	5
2.2	Admin	5
3	Functional Requirements	7
3.1	R1 - Contract Instruction Operations	7
3.2	R2 - Reporting Suite	7
3.3	R3 - User Administration	7
4	Use Cases	8
4.1	U1 - Contract Instruction Process	8
4.2	U2 - Reporting System	9
4.3	U3 - Admin User Management	10
5	Non-Functional Requirements	12
5.1	QR1 - Availability	12
5.2	QR2 - Performance	12
5.3	QR3 - Scalability	12
5.4	QR4 - Maintainability	13
5.5	QR5 - Security	13
6	Traceability Matrix	15
7	Domain Model	16
8	Architectural Design	18
8.1	Architectural Patterns	18
8.2	Architectural Styles	21
8.2.1	Availability	21
8.2.2	Performance	21
8.2.3	Scalability	21
8.2.4	Maintainability	21
8.2.5	Security	21
8.3	Architectural Constraints	22
8.3.1	Policy	22
8.3.2	Equipment	22
8.3.3	People	22

8.3.4	Market	22
8.4	Actor-System Interaction Models	23
8.4.1	Actor-System Interaction Model 1	23
8.4.2	Actor-System Interaction Model 2	23
8.5	Deployment Model	24
8.6	Technical Requirements (Technology)	26

1 Introduction

CONTRACT INSTRUCTION

A written instruction issued by or under the authority of the principal agent to the contractor, which may include drawings and other construction information.

[Com14]

A Contract Instruction (henceforth CI) has an impact on the various resources of a construction project, be it time, materials or monetary. Due to the importance of the CI in the role of construction, it is vital that construction professionals keep track of and adhere to its contents.

Currently, the process of issuing, editing and interacting with CIs is still done with pen and paper on site, typed up and finalized at the creator's place of work and then distributed using email chains between all involved parties. This means that all relevant information is provided in plain text and must therefore be organised into their relevant categories by each person involved. There is no error checking or notification system to ensure that CIs are being created accurately and alerting users as soon as one is created.

There is a significant space for innovation and a bespoke application that can improve the process from the creation on site all the way through to the distribution of the final document.

In order to solve the aforementioned problems, the Contract Instruction Application has been designed to make the issuing, tracking and closing of CIs as simple and effective as possible. It allows users to send, receive and interact with CIs in real-time and on-the-go, be it in a corporate setting or on an active building site. The project must be accessible on both mobile devices and desktop to cater for all users, be they more office-bound or on-site professionals.

Users can issue a new instruction, specify which areas of the project will be affected, and create custom lists of contacts with which the instruction will be shared. Depending on user privileges, the receiver will be able to

interact with the CI accordingly and all relevant parties will be updated in the event of any changes.

The system includes a full reporting suite which will include reports on the project as a whole, as well as user-defined filtered reports on CIs that meet the specified criteria. The reports can be sent out via email to any user(s) specified by the creator of the CI.

2 User Characteristics

2.1 Professional

A Professional in the context of this system refers to a user who will make use of the CI functionalities such as creating, issuing, editing, viewing and accepting CIs. The following assumptions will be made about these users to ensure that the software is designed in a way that suites their needs and expectations:

- *Education level:* this type of user can range from an architect or engineer (who require a formal tertiary education) to any sort of contractor (where no formal tertiary education is required). Therefore the minimum education requirement is that of any individual who can read/type.
- *Experience:* this user has experience in construction environments and is familiar with the necessary jargon/processes required to operate the application.
- *Expertise:* the user will be aware of what a CI is and how the CI process works.
- *Technical Skills:* the user is able to operate electronic devices, specifically a mobile device (i.e. smartphone/tablet). Optional experience with a desktop personal computer for those users that require that version of the application.

2.2 Admin

In addition to all of the functionality offered to Professional users, Administrative users will have the ability to add new users, assign roles to users, allocate and revoke privileges, and monitor the system as a whole. The following assumptions will be made about these users to ensure that the software is designed in a way that suites their needs and expectations:

- *Education level:* this type of user requires no formal education to operate the application and so the minimum education requirement is that of any individual who can read/type.
- *Experience:* this user has experience in construction environments and is familiar with the necessary jargon/processes required to operate

the application. This user also understands the various roles of the Professional users and how they relate to one another.

- *Expertise*: the user will be aware of what a CI is and how the CI process works.
- *Technical Skills*: the user is able to use electronic devices, specifically a mobile device (i.e. smartphone/tablet). Optional experience with a desktop personal computer for those users that require that version of the application.

3 Functional Requirements

3.1 R1 - Contract Instruction Operations

- *R1.1* - System must be able to create a user-defined contract instruction.
- *R1.2* - System must be able to perform various operations on the contract instruction, such as editing and deletion.
- *R1.3* - System must allow for specific contacts to be selected and requests for those users to accept/reject the CI to be sent out.
- *R1.4* - Optional notifications allow users to be notified once changes have been made to the projects with which they are involved.
- *R1.5* - Users must be able to view all CIs that they have been included in.

3.2 R2 - Reporting Suite

- *R2.1* - Reports must be generated in PDF format.
- *R2.2* - Reports must be created to summarize specific characteristics of the collection of CIs.
- *R2.3* - Reports should be split into two broad categories.
 - *R2.3.1* - Reports can be categorized as those that summarize a specific CI.
 - *R2.3.2* - Reports can be categorized as those that summarise the entire project as a whole (all or a specified group of CIs).

3.3 R3 - User Administration

- *R3.1* - The system must allow for Admin users to create new Contractor users.
- *R3.2* - The system must allow Admin users to assign Contractors to specific projects.
- *R3.3* - The system must allow Admin users to specify/alter a Contractor's role/privileges within a project.

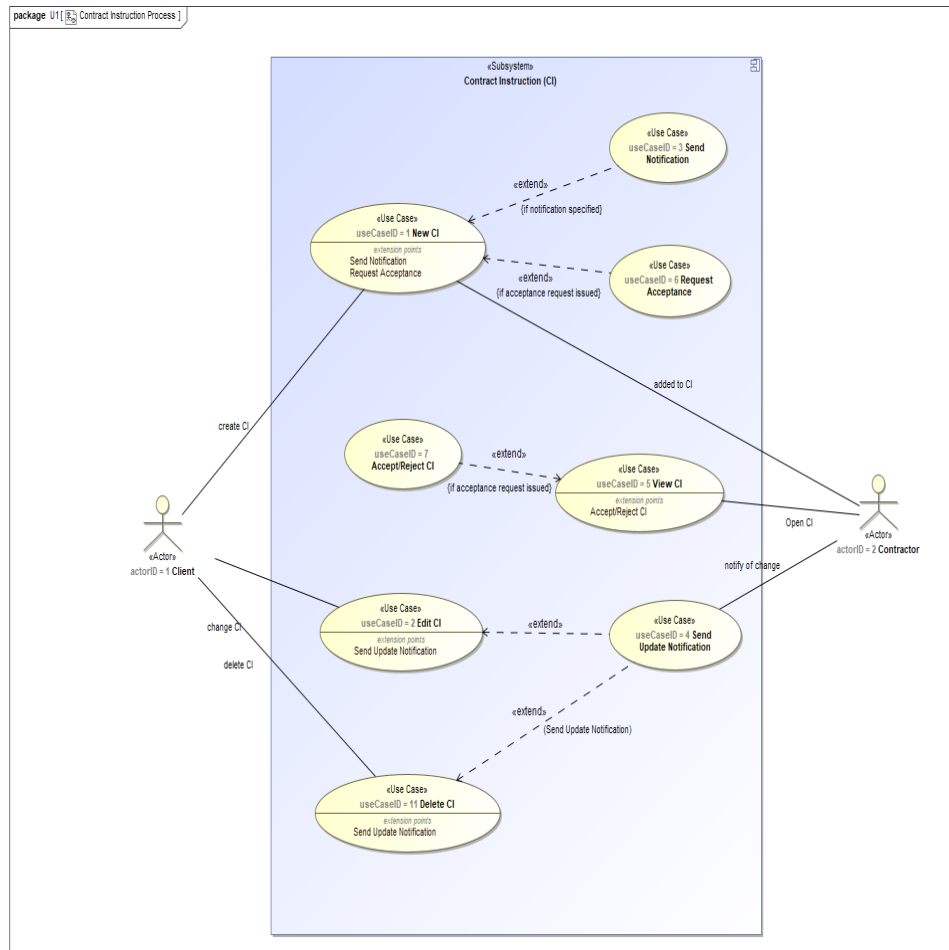
- R3.4 - The Admin user must be able to specify a list of Contractors that will automatically be included in a CI's communications (Distribution List).
- R3.5 - The system must allow Admin users to delete Contractors from the system or edit their role within specific projects.
- R3.6 - The Admin user must NOT be able to edit a Contractors user's profile information beyond their role within a project.

4 Use Cases

4.1 U1 - Contract Instruction Process

- The Client creates a CI which will include any relevant professionals (i.e. Contractors).
- The Client has the option of adding a notification which will inform all Contractors that the new CI has been created.
- If the Client requires the approval of any other Contractors, an approval request can be created.
- All users included in the CI will be able to view the CI, additionally, all users included in the acceptance request will be able to accept or deny the request when viewing the CI.
- When viewing the CI, the Client has the additional option of editing the CI, which will notify all of the Contractors when a change is made.
- Lastly, the Client is able to delete the CI, which will also notify the Contractors.

Please see use case diagram #1 on the next page...



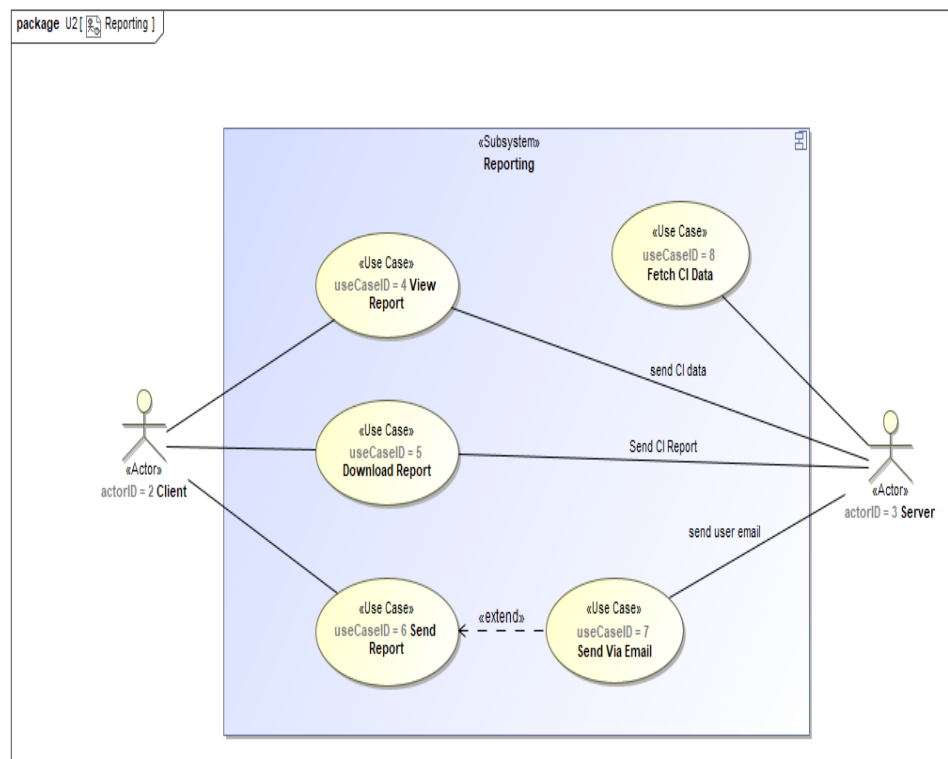
4.2 U2 - Reporting System

- The Client can view any CIs created by themselves. The report will include a summary of the specific CI, information about who is included in the CI, the specific roles and responsibilities of each CI member and information about which of those members have/have not yet accepted the CI.
- Any reports that the Client has access to can be downloaded from the server.
- The Client can send any accessible reports to any of the included

members, the contact information of which will be provided by the server.

- All information provided to the Reporting system will be fetch from a database on the server.

Please see use case diagram #2...

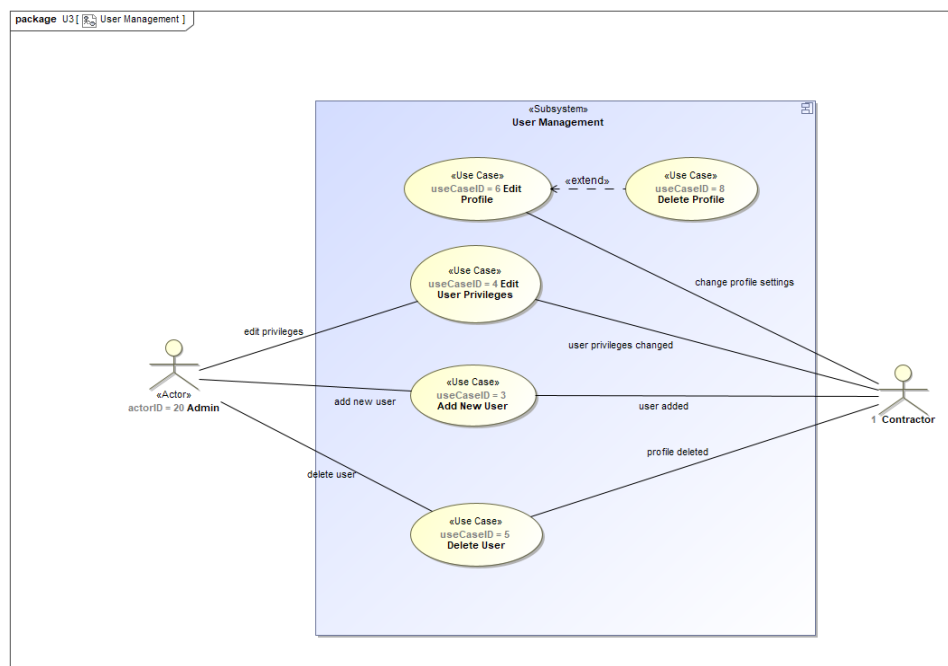


4.3 U3 - Admin User Management

- The admin can create a profile for the Contractor.
- After the Contractor's account has been created, they can access their profile to edit any personal information settings or can delete their account. Apart from the privileges of each non-admin user, an Admin cannot edit any of a user's profile information.

- The Admin can edit each users' privileges within the project in order to ensure that the correct people are performing certain actions within the project. Users will be able to see the extent of their access/editing privileges within their profile but cannot edit their own privileges.
- An admin can delete a Contractor's profile.

Please see use case diagram #3...



5 Non-Functional Requirements

5.1 QR1 - Availability

- *QR1.1* - The system has to have high availability to handle user operations in real-time due to the urgent nature of the processes and procedures involved.
- *QR1.2* - The system should be available at least 99 percent of the time (approximately 23h45m a day), apart from where network errors are involved.
- *QR1.3* - The system should be able to operate without an active Internet connection as most active construction sites do not always have Internet access freely available. This can be achieved by saving data locally and uploading it when an active Internet connection is detected.

5.2 QR2 - Performance

- *QR2.1* - The system must perform its operations in a manner that is swift, efficient and accurate to ensure that any changes made are done so as instantaneously as possible, with minimum strain on the system and with no concern regarding authenticity and integrity.
- *QR2.2* - In order to appear instantaneous, system reaction times must ideally be less than 0.1 seconds, with a maximum response time of under 1 second. This does not include network response times.
- *QR2.3* - Network response times must be no longer than 10 seconds, but ideally less than 5 seconds.

5.3 QR3 - Scalability

- *QR3.1* - The system should be able to scale in order to accommodate additional/growing user operations, especially during peak work hours. Off-peak hour reduction of resources would be an advantageous feature for the system.
- *QR3.2* - The system will be deployed on an automatic scaling infrastructure in order to allow for efficient and easy scaling, as well as state recovery should the application crash. More resources can be allocated to the system dynamically as needed.

- QR3.3 - When the system has less than 1,000 users online concurrently, the resources allocated to the system should decrease. Similarly, when more than 1,000 but less than 10,000 users are online concurrently, more resources should be made available for the system to keep up with the demand. This should scale all the way up to as far as The tiers will be decided according to the policies of the technologies described in [8.6](#).
- QR3.4 - With all automatic scaling in place, the system would need to be able to handle at least 100,000 users per second on average. This number allows enough resources for the system to operate nominally but limits resources enough to waste them unnecessarily.

5.4 QR4 - Maintainability

- QR4.1 - The system structure will be modular to adhere to the concept of low coupling and high cohesion. This would help its maintainability because when updating a specific module within the system, the changes remain localized instead of promulgating changes everywhere throughout the system. Once the changes have been made and tested, they can be seamlessly integrated into the live system.
- QR4.2 - A coding standards document will be included to ensure that all parties follow the same coding procedures and protocols. This will make the system easier to understand and increase the ability for multiple parties to operate on the project in conjunction with one another.
- QR4.3 - An update of latest fixes/additions must be made available on the application's [source control platform](#) in order for teams working on the project to have access to the content of the project as well as any important updates.

5.5 QR5 - Security

- QR5.1 - Secure login will be required for all users. This will be done by means of a third-party security application which will be discussed in [8.6](#).
- QR5.2 - A secure login system will be implemented and private user information would have to be secured i.e information that would be used for authentication purposes like email addresses.

- *QR5.3* - Information regarding the projects and the information associated with them will also need to be secured to prevent any potential breach of Intellectual Property or Trade Secret laws being broken.
- *QR5.4* - Login must allow for, on average, at least 100,000 users to login to the system concurrently without compromising any personal data/login credentials.
- *QR5.5* - The login process must be completed within 3 seconds for any user.

6 Traceability Matrix

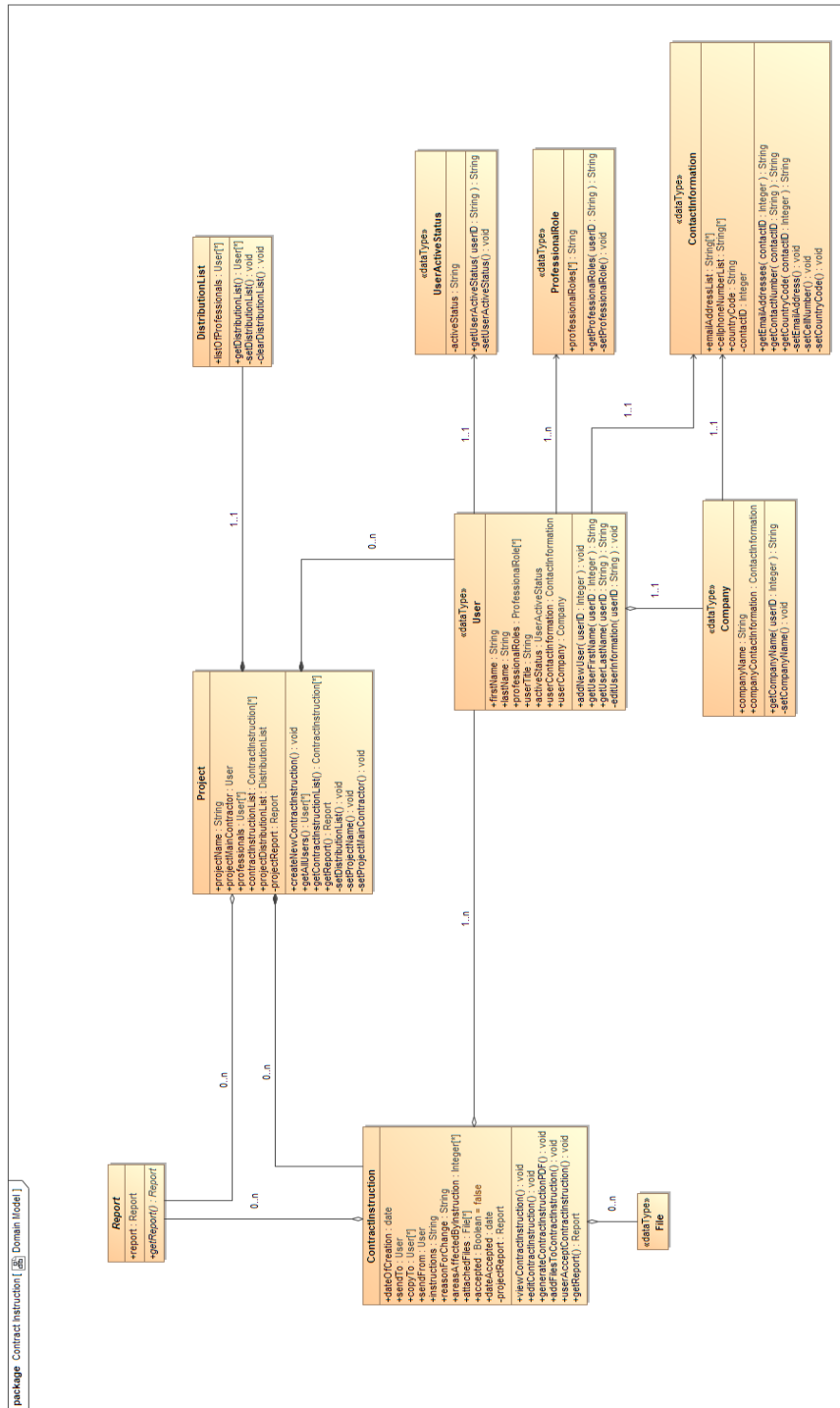
	Contract Instruction Process	Reporting System	Admin User Management
R1.1	X		
R1.2	X		
R1.3	X		
R1.4	X		
R1.5	X		
R2.1		X	
R2.2		X	
R2.3		X	
R2.3.1		X	
R2.3.2		X	
R3.1			X
R3.2			X
R3.3			X
R3.4			X
R3.5			X
R3.6			X
QR1.1	X		
QR1.2	X	X	X
QR1.3	X		
QR2.1	X	X	X
QR2.2	X	X	X
QR2.3	X	X	X
QR3.1	X	X	X
QR3.2	X	X	X
QR3.3	X	X	X
QR3.4	X	X	X
QR4.1	X	X	X
QR4.2	X	X	X
QR4.3	X	X	X
QR5.1			X
QR5.2			X
QR5.3	X	X	X
QR5.4			X
QR5.5			X

7 Domain Model

The domain model below is used to describe the main components of the system. Please note:

- A user can be assigned to multiple CIs.
- A CI can have multiple users.
- A CI can contain multiple files but can also not contain any.
- A CI can only belong to one project.
- A project can have multiple CIs.
- A project can have multiple users.
- A user can be assigned to multiple projects but can only be assigned to an individual project once.
- A file can only belong to one CI.
- A user can only belong to one company.
- A company can have multiple users.
- A project can only have one distribution list.
- A distribution list can only be assigned to one project, but can be assigned to multiple CIs.
- A project report can only belong to one project, but multiple reports can be generated for that project.
- A CI report can only belong to one project, but multiple reports can be generated for that project.

Please see diagram below.



8 Architectural Design

In order to fully accomplish the task of determining and defining the architectural design of the CI Application, we must look at the various subsections of the design process.

These subsections (discussed below) are important in providing the best opportunity for the system to be designed correctly and effectively from the start and reduce the risk of having to redesign or retire the software in the near future.

The CI Application's design has been carefully considered to create a system that can thrive in the uniquely challenging environment in which it will be used.

8.1 Architectural Patterns

A number of architectural patterns will be implemented in the design of the CI application.

This will increase the system's cohesion whilst reducing coupling. The use of industry standard and widely adopted patterns also improves the system's maintainability for developers.

The CI application is primarily an interactive system. Therefore, the system will be designed using a **3-tier architectural style** at a high level. This will be comprised of a Presentation, Application and Data tier. Each tier performs a specific function:

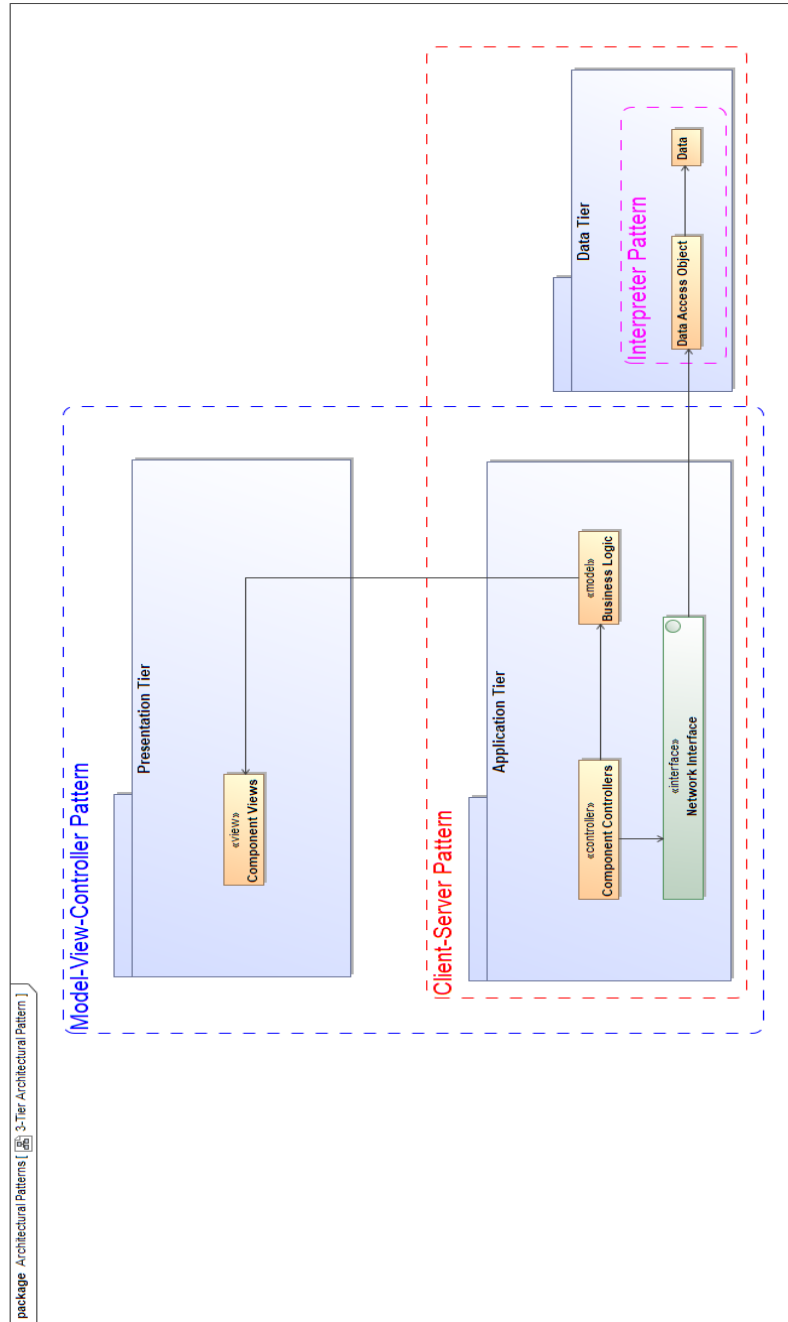
- Presentation tier: everything the user sees/hears/interacts with can be encapsulated in this tier
- Application tier: the functionality behind the Presentation tier is found in this tier
- Data tier: any stored information is retrieved from this tier by the Application tier

This will ensure that the system follows a design principle that allows it to be highly available for the user (as defined in [5.1](#)).

The system will be sub-categorized into the following patterns for the various levels of granularity:

- Presentation tier: Model-View-Controller pattern
 - User interacts with View
 - Controller handles user View input
 - Model performs application's core functionality
- Application tier: Client-Server pattern
 - Used to send and receive information to and from the database
 - Each user needs access to the database from their device
 - User interaction with application handled on device
 - User requests sent to database
 - Database returns requested information
- Data tier: Interpreter pattern
 - Implemented for the purpose of querying the database
 - Rules for evaluating expressions of the database query language

Please see below diagram for more details



8.2 Architectural Styles

8.2.1 Availability

- The system will store information online so that it is synchronized across all users.
- The system will have offline capabilities that will allow it to have limited functionality while the user is without an active Internet connection. This will use local JSON storage to hold the pending data in a queue and will then upload the file when Internet becomes available.

8.2.2 Performance

- The user will be able to simultaneously upload data in the background and perform tasks in the foreground.
- Server synchronization will only take place when prompted by the user. This will reduce processing strain on the system by eliminating constant polling.

8.2.3 Scalability

- The system will monitor the number of users to determine the resource requirements for the current active user count.
- More resources will be allocated when more users are online and vice versa.

8.2.4 Maintainability

- Documentation will be in the form of: Software Requirements Specification, Coding Standards Document and a User Manual.

8.2.5 Security

- User authentication will be present to ensure that information is correctly being distributed to the relevant users.
- Authorization will set permissions for different user types to allow various levels of access and interaction with the system.

- The system will have a built in logging suite to track all user interactions. This will be behind the interface and so the user experience will not change at all to accommodate this functionality.

8.3 Architectural Constraints

8.3.1 Policy

- The system will be subject to strict coding standards and regulations.
- The system will need to be developed and maintained according to the schedule of the team/individual involved in the project.

8.3.2 Equipment

- The system will be designed in line within the limits of the development team/individual.
- Server design/interaction and other time or financially dependent design considerations will be handled as much as possible by third party companies and cloud services.

8.3.3 People

- The person/people working on this system must be able to communicate and work in unison.
- The system must be developed by developers who are familiar with the technologies and processes with which it was designed.

8.3.4 Market

- The system must be able to cater for the size of the market for which it is intended.
- Whether the intended market sees an increase or a decrease in revenue or popularity, the system must react accordingly so as to function effectively operate within the ever changing boundaries of that market.
- The system must be flexible to adapt to the needs of the market for which it has been built. If users require new functionality or features,

the system must have the capability to be changed to meet those needs.

8.4 Actor-System Interaction Models

8.4.1 Actor-System Interaction Model 1

This Actor-System interaction model focuses on the CI subsystem which is responsible for handling the creation of new Contract Instructions. The actor, in this scenario, is a generic Contractor.

<i>Precondition: this use case assumes that the Contractor User has logged into the system and is shown the Contractor main page.</i>	
Actor: Contractor User	System: CI
	0. System displays application main page
1. TUCBW contractor user clicks the "New Contract Instruction" Button	2. System displays the Create New Contract Instruction Page
3. Contractor enters contract instruction details and clicks the "Submit" button	4. System validates the information submitted by the user and displays a popup confirmation message if no errors are found. If errors are found, throw "Error, please review the document for more details" and return user to the previous page.
5. TUCEW the contractor clicks the "Okay" button	6. System returns the user to the main page
<i>Postcondition: the new contract instruction is immediately searchable for and edited</i>	

8.4.2 Actor-System Interaction Model 2

The actor, in this scenario, is a generic Contractor who is going through the process of editing an existing Contract Instruction.

<i>Precondition: this use case assumes that the Contractor User has logged into the system and is shown the Contractor main page.</i>	
Actor: Contractor User	System: CI
	0. System displays application main page
1. TUCBW contractor user clicks the "View Contract Instructions" Button	2. System displays the All Contract Instructions Page
3. Contractor clicks on contract instruction	4. System displays the Edit Contract Instruction Page
5. User edits contract instruction details	6. System validates the information submitted by the user and displays a popup confirmation message if no errors are found. If errors are found, throw "Error, please review the document for more details" and return user to the previous page.
7. TUCEW the contractor clicks the "Okay" button	8. System returns the user to the main page
<i>Postcondition: the contract instruction is immediately edited and displayed.</i>	

8.5 Deployment Model

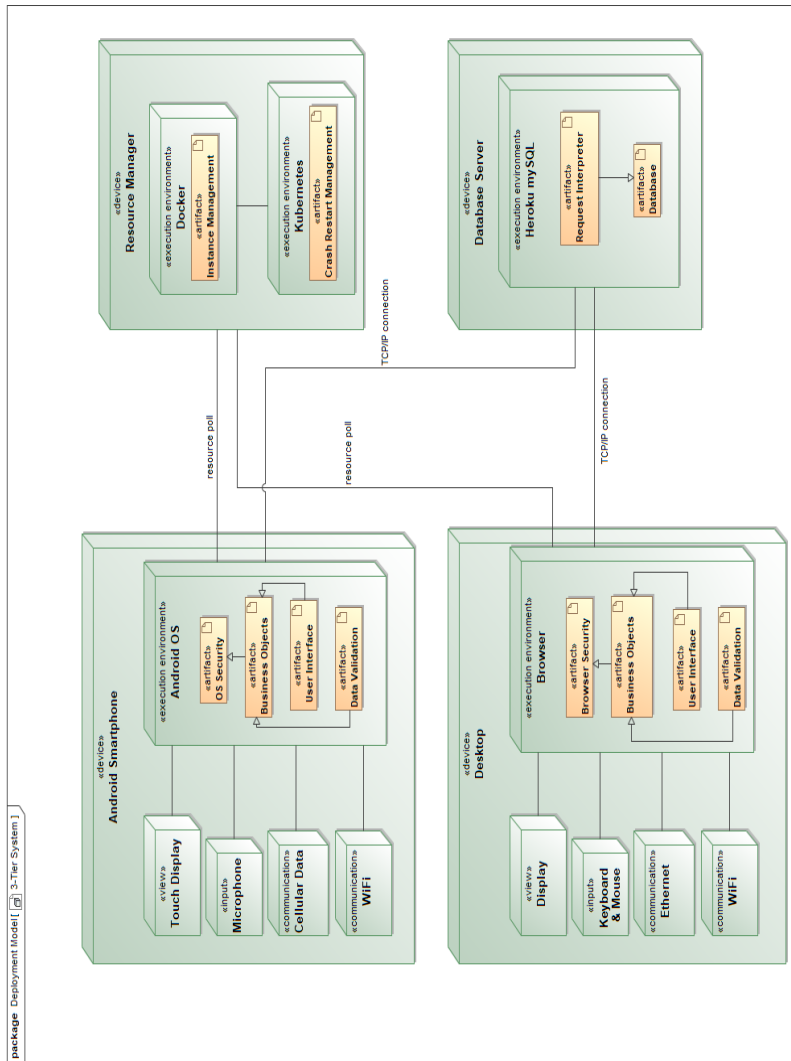
The system will be designed using a 3-tier architecture pattern which means that each subsystem must be capable of being self-sufficient and not reliant on any other subsystem. To achieve this, the system has been designed with low coupling and high cohesion in mind.

Two user interfaces (Presentation tier) are supported (Android and web browser compatible version) which both communicate with the database independently of one another. All database queries are performed using TCP/IP protocol. This protocol is preferable to UDP as the information needs to be secure and accurate for all users on the system.

The database (Data tier) makes use of an Interpreter pattern to make queries to the MySQL database that is supported by Heroku (the cloud based hosting service).

Finally, the Application tier is responsible for communicating with the re-

source manager to request more or less resources according to the current system load.



8.6 Technical Requirements (Technology)

- Presentation Layer
 - The user interface will be handled by an MVC pattern which will be provided in the form of an Android application as well as a web browser compatible version that will be designed and built using HTML and CSS.
- Application Layer
 - The Android version will be built natively in Android Studio using the Java programming language, XML and various Android application libraries which will handle all business logic.
 - The web browser version will run Python as a business logic facilitator.
 - The system will interact with Docker and Kubernetes to control resource management.
- Data Layer
 - This layer will use an online database hosting service called Heroku which uses the mySQL query language.