

## Progress Reports Guidelines

### Introduction

The Progress Reports are to show (with indications of proof) a snapshot of where the project is at the time the reports were prepared, and to inform the reader of the changes that have taken place since the Proposal. **The reports consist of one group report (the Group Progress Report), and individual reports from each team member (the Individual Progress Reports).**

At the point the Progress Reports are submitted, the project groups are expected to be well into the implementation of their design.

It is expected that the work will not be to schedule. Sometimes tasks will be shorter than anticipated, but some may have encountered unanticipated delays and problems. It is also expected that some alternatives, both anticipated and not, will have presented themselves and will have required decisions. This work, the development and implementation of the design and particularly the decisions and redirections, should be reflected in the Individual Progress Reports.

Your Supervisor will also be submitting a grade and individual evaluation on your progress in the same timeframe that this report is due. You will be evaluated on progress, team interactions and individual work, including time management skills, problem-solving ability, communication skills and effort.

In the Progress Reports your writing should be concise, and you should use bulleted lists, tables, and figures where possible to keep the documents short, yet informative.

### Document Format

See the general [Document Guideline](#).

The following sections are expected in the Group Progress Report:

- Cover page (group identification, project title, date, etc.)
- Table of Contents
- Project Overview (target 2 pages)
- Group Progress Summary (target 1 page, max. 3 pages)
- References
- Appendix A: Gantt charts (Current + that from Proposal)
- Appendix B: Project Goals and Requirements
- Additional Appendices (max. 15 pages)

The Individual Progress Report will contain the following sections in the order given below.

- Evaluation form and cover page (2 pages)
- Executive Summary (1 page)

- Body, consisting of:
  - Individual Progress and Contributions
  - Information on individual milestones
  - Conclusion / Progress Assessment
- References
- Additional Appendices (max. 15 pages)

### ***Sample Progress Reports***

Click [here](#) for some sample progress report outlines. These examples are drawn from past student reports, and illustrate how the general guidelines can be applied to a variety of design projects. The technical details have been removed in order to highlight the report structure and organization as opposed to the technical content or writing style. NOTE: The format follows a previous style where there was no group document.

## **Specific Section Details: Group Document**

### ***Project Overview***

The intent of this section is to re-introduce the reader to the project. It may be largely crafted from previous work if the project has not changed much from the proposal, although it may contain details of decisions made since the proposal. As it will set the stage for your progress descriptions, you might also want to include information about the main design challenges of your project. It must at least create the stage for the individual reports so the relevance of the individual work is apparent.

It is expected that details pertinent to the individual progress will be in the documents from those individuals.

If it makes sense, combine this section with the group progress summary. This section should NOT be as detailed as in your Proposal, and may use your Proposal as a reference.

### ***Group Progress Summary***

This section summarizes what has been done since the last report. It is written by the group and can be used as a reference in each team member's individual report.

This section contains the following items:

- A summary of the project goal and any changes to the goal or requirements since the design review. A system-level diagram is often helpful. Be brief here since you will also provide an updated copy of the complete project goal and requirements in Appendix B.
- A summary of the group's progress. Highlight a few key accomplishments since the design review. Briefly describe some of the key challenges that were encountered and

some of the key decisions that were made in this time. Is the group on schedule? Make explicit reference to the milestones on the original Gantt chart from the Project Proposal.

- The key responsibilities of each team member since the design review. One or two items for each member is sufficient, and can be general areas instead of tasks.
- A summary of any changes to the group work plan, individual responsibilities, or the project milestones. Again, be brief here since you will provide the details in Appendix A.

### ***Appendix A: Gantt Charts***

Provide an updated version of the Gantt chart plus a copy of the previous version from the Project Proposal. Each Gantt chart should be presented on a separate sheet, they should fit onto 1 page, and must cover the entire project cycle (i.e., from Sept. to April). The updated version should show progress and any changes.

**A note about the WBS:** An updated Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) table can also be included if students feel it necessary (e.g. if major revisions were made to the original work plan). Ensure the task titles and task numbers are consistent for both the WBS and Gantt Chart.

### ***Appendix B: Project Goals and Requirements***

Insert a copy of the 'Project Goal' and 'Project Requirements' sections from the Project Proposal. If there are any changes, briefly justify the changes and provide an updated version of the current Project Goals and Requirements.

### ***Additional Appendices (max. 15 pages)***

Place in the additional appendices all other information does not fit the flow of the document. Some information is bulky and only summaries or snapshots will go in the main part of the document. Some background information may be required to bring the reader up to speed, but will be overly long or unsuitable for the main part of the document (which should still contain a summary of this background). There should be one Appendix for each subject and each Appendix should have a title and letter (e.g. C, D, ...). Remember to provide captions for tables and figures. Each appendix must be referred to by its letter within the body of the Progress Report, and only include material appropriate to that reference.

## ***Specific Section Details: Individual Document***

### ***Individual Progress and Contributions / Information on Individual Milestones***

This is the main part of the individual progress report where you highlight your personal contributions to the overall project. Keep your writing concise, and focus on what was actually accomplished. If your progress is below your expectations, avoid the temptation to pad this section or to digress back into professing the intrinsic virtues of your project. Instead, write about what needs to be done to get your project back on track.

You may want to have general descriptive text followed by treatment of the individual milestones.

Typically, the emphasis is on the work you've done since the design review. However, since this is the only individual report in the course, you may also highlight your contributions made prior to this. If you are limited by the report length, summarize your earlier contributions in this section and place all the detailed documentation of your earlier work in the appendix.

Typical information to include:

- Overview information that helps the reader appreciate the significance of your tasks to the overall project.
- A summary table of your individual tasks or milestones for this reporting period. Report only on your work; if you have significant contributions in a task assigned to another team member, try to subdivide the original task into distinct portions which each of you can separately claim responsibility for (e.g. split 'Design of X' into 'Design of X' and 'Testing of X'). The table should have the following headings:

Task #	Task Title	Category	Status	Old completion date	New completion date

- The 'Task #' and 'Task title' should be taken directly from the updated Gantt chart in Appendix A. Alternatively, they can refer to the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) table if the WBS is also included.
  - 'Category': Choose from 'Old', 'New', or 'Modified'. Indicate 'New' if this task did not appear in the original Gantt chart from the Project Proposal. Indicate 'Modified' if the task was included in the original Gantt chart, but has since changed in nature or should be renamed. For tasks listed as 'Modified', also indicate under 'Task title' the *previous* title used.
  - 'Status': Choose from 'Completed', 'Delayed', 'In progress', or 'Cancelled'. A delayed milestone is one that should have been completed by now, whereas a milestone that is 'In progress' is not yet completed but on schedule.
  - 'Old completion date': For 'old' tasks, specify the original expected completion date. Leave blank for new tasks.
  - 'New completion date': For completed tasks, record the date of completion. If the task is 'in progress' or 'delayed' put down the expected completion date.
- Provide a brief report for each individual task listed in the above table. For tasks that have been cancelled entirely, a brief justification is required. The format for reporting tasks and an example of a complete and incomplete task can be found [here](#). A blank template can be found [here](#). (left click to open the word file. Or right click your mouse and click on "Open weblink in browser")

Some comments when reporting on tasks:

- You must provide sufficient and adequate documentation in order to substantiate your claims of completing or progressing on a task. Each task should be verifiable, and have some tangible result or milestone associated with it. Examples include:

- a circuit schematic
- a completed test plan document
- key decisions from a research study (rather than simply saying that you studied something)
- experimental or simulation results
- For software, source code listings and class descriptions are a start but do little to show the work involved or that software actually works. Provide actual samples of the outputs of your program where possible, particularly those resulting from module tests. Also for larger programs provide documentation such as a functional specification, pseudo-code, state diagram, or flow chart.

Summarize the key significance or results from the documentation you've provided and attach the actual detailed documentation into the appendix where this is practical. For longer items, such as program listings, only include excerpts.

- **Actions vs. Decisions:** make a clear distinction between Actions and Decisions.

**Actions** focus on the activity that went behind the decisions. What alternatives did you explore? How did you compare the alternatives? How did you overcome any challenges?

**Decisions** result from the actions. Which of the competing solutions did you choose? Did you decide to change a milestone? Add further testing? Do further investigation? For each decision, provide a sentence or two to justify it.

**A note on changing tasks and milestones:** Some groups do not develop an adequate work plan as part of their Project Proposal and thus find themselves in a dilemma when they submit their progress report because the milestones no longer make sense. Under these circumstances, the students may choose to make substantial changes to the Work Plan and Gantt chart. This is acceptable, but students must provide *adequate* justification: it is not acceptable to change a project because you haven't worked hard enough and now want to make it easier. Some examples of common problems and the questions you should ask yourself can be found [here](#).

### **Conclusion / Progress Assessment**

Conclude the document by briefly summarizing the current status of your individual work and of the overall project and give the reader a sense of whether or not the project is on track and the expected final outcome of the project. Provide a balanced assessment that is positive, yet honest.

### **Additional Appendices (max. 15 pages)**

See Group Progress Report section for details.