MSc Projects Orientation Programme: Introduction

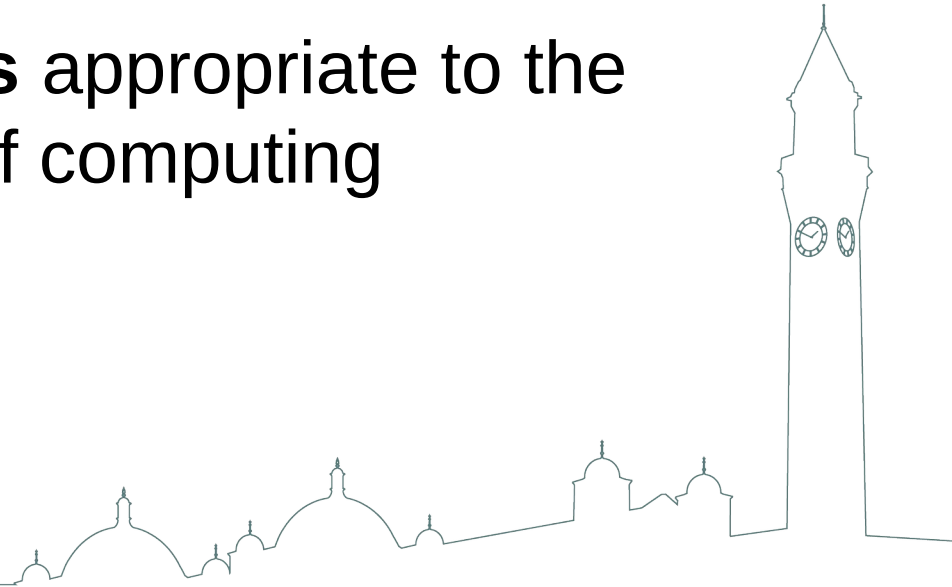# March 4th 2020

Per Kristian Lehre

Aims of MSc Projects (*)

☐ Allow students to carry out a **substantial task** of their own choosing, in an area appropriate to their degree programme

☐ Allow students to demonstrate their **competence as computing professionals**, and to apply what they have learnt in the other components of their degree programme

☐ Facilitate **independent work** on a substantial individual software project, including background research and project management
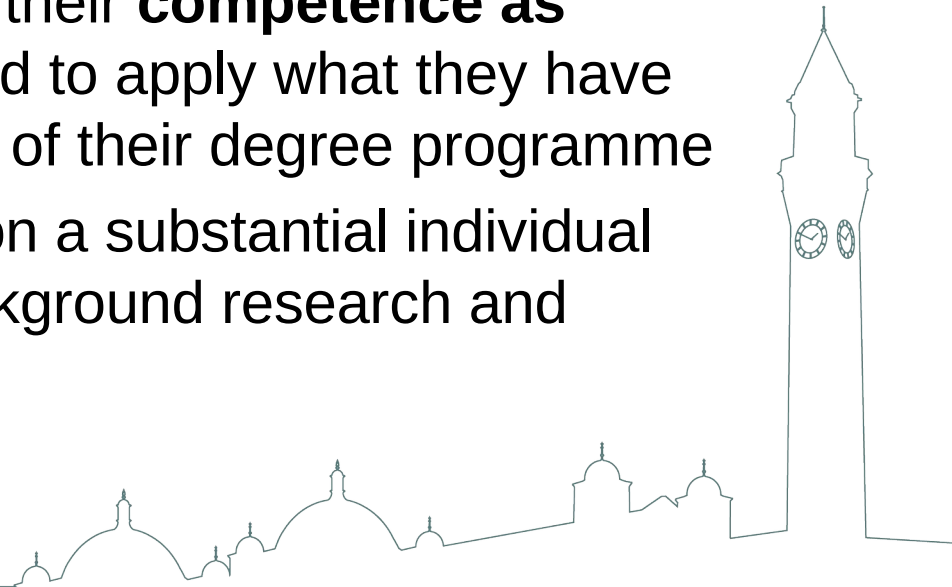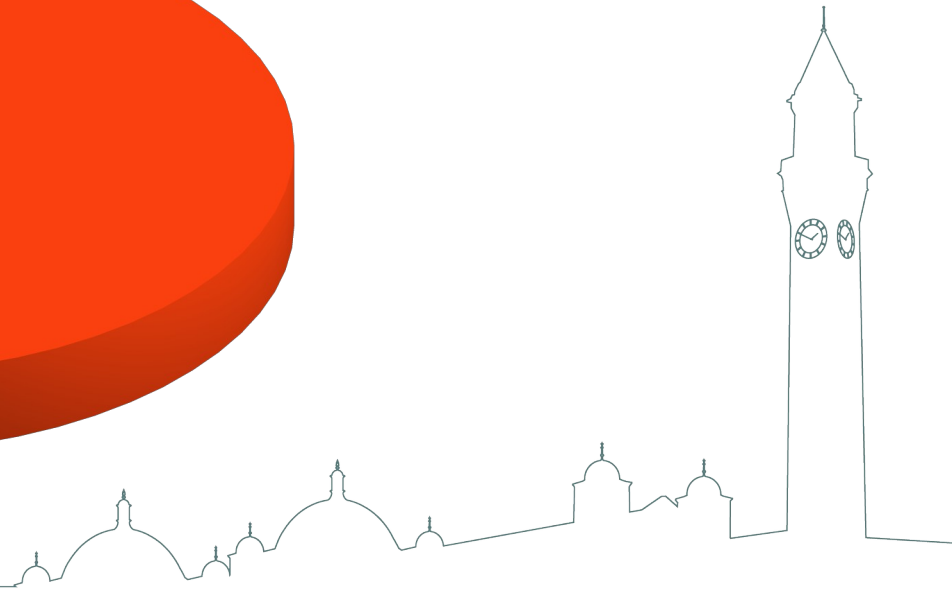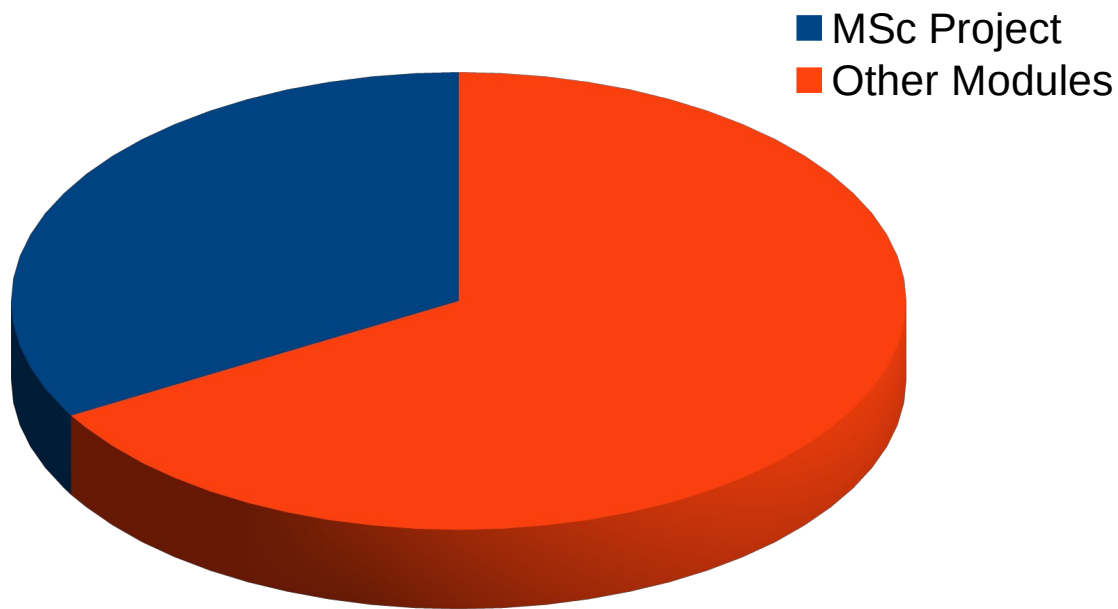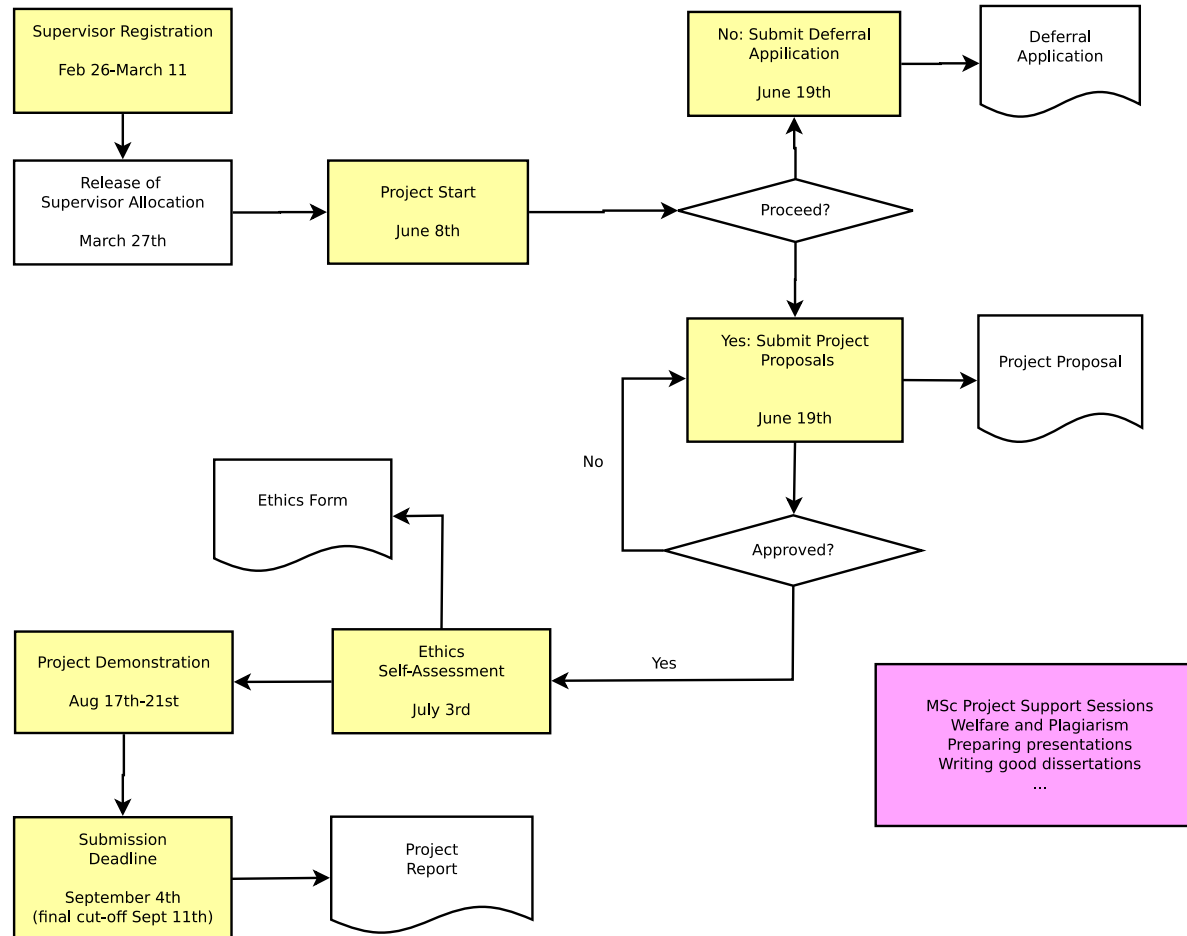
Aims of Advanced MSc Proj

- [ ] Allow the student to deepen their knowledge of an area of computing through individual, supervised study
- [ ] Develop **research skills** appropriate to the student's chosen area of computing

MSc Projects worth 60 cr

MSc Project
Other Modules

Timeline

Supervisor Registration

Feb 26-March 11

Release of
Supervisor Allocation

March 27th

Project Start

June 8th

Proceed?

No: Submit Deferral Appilication

June 19th

Deferral
Application

Yes: Submit Project Proposals

June 19th

Project Proposal

No

Approved?

Ethics Form

Yes

**Ethics
Self-Assessment**

July 3rd

Project Demonstration

Aug 17th-21st

**Submission
Deadline**

September 4th
(final cut-off Sept 11th)

Project
Report

MSc Project Support Sessions
Welfare and Plagiarism
Preparing presentations
Writing good dissertations
...

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Choosing a Supervisor (1/2)

- ☐ Attend project presentation
  - – Wed Feb 26th (recorded on Canvas)
- ☐ Read about supervisors on Canvas
  - – https://canvas.bham.ac.uk/courses/41302/pages/supervisor-project-topics?module_item_id=1423896
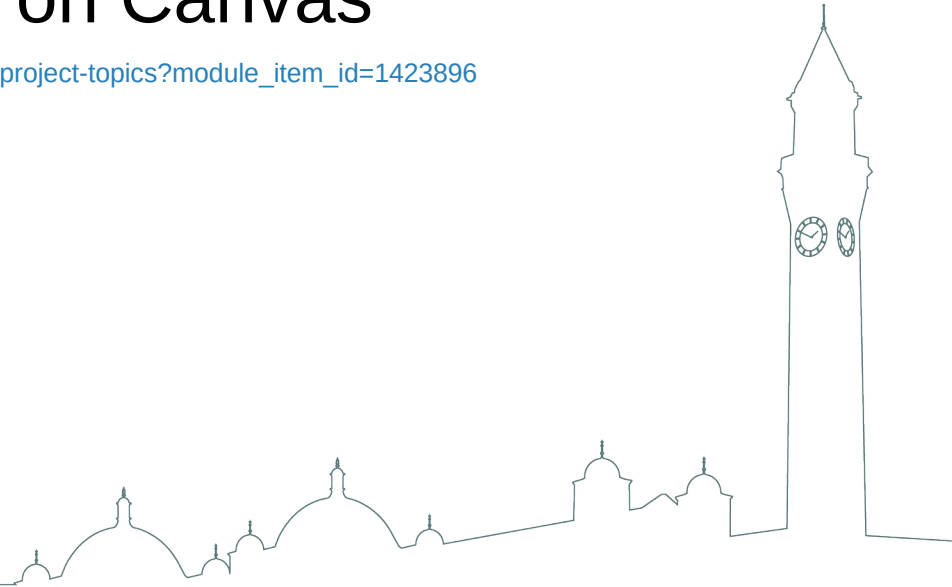
Choosing a Supervisor (2/2)

- ☐ Indicate supervisor preferences and project topics via Canvas quiz by March 11th
- ☐ Students and supervisors will be matched using Gale and Shapley (1962) algorithm
- ☐ If allocation by supervision preference is impossible, we will allocate via project topic preferences
- ☐ Students who do not indicate preferences will be allocated a supervisor by the project coordinator
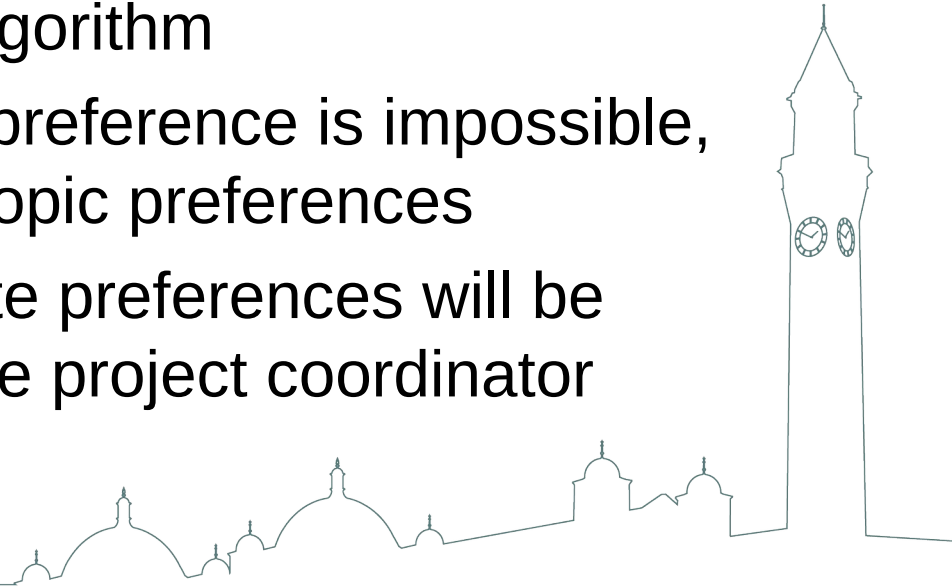
External Supervision

☐ Projects can be supervised by someone working either in a different school in the university, or in an external organisation

☐ Need supervisor within the School of Computer Science

☐ Need approval from the project coordinator before start of the project

☐ The final report must be publicly available, i.e. not subject to any non-disclosure agreement (NDA)
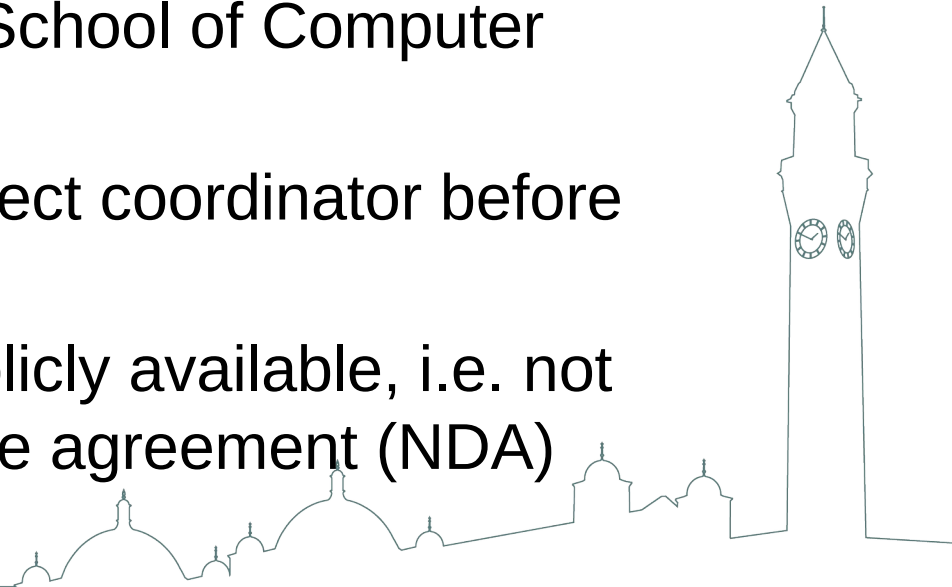
Requirements MSc CS (conversion)

- Pre-requisites: Students need to pass 06-26956 MSc Software Workshop

- Students who fail Software Workshop need to resit that module, and defer the start of the project until the Autumn semester

- Resit of Software Workshop only available by permission of director of studies.

Requirements
MSc Advanced CS

☐ Project topics must be approved by the programme director

☐ At the start of the project, students can choose between

1) 06-02637 Project – Advanced MSc

   – Need to pass Research Skills (06991) and Mini-Project (07954)

   – Students who fail any of these modules can do Project (CompSci - MSc)

2) 06-18159 Project (CompSci - MSc)

   – No formal corequisites
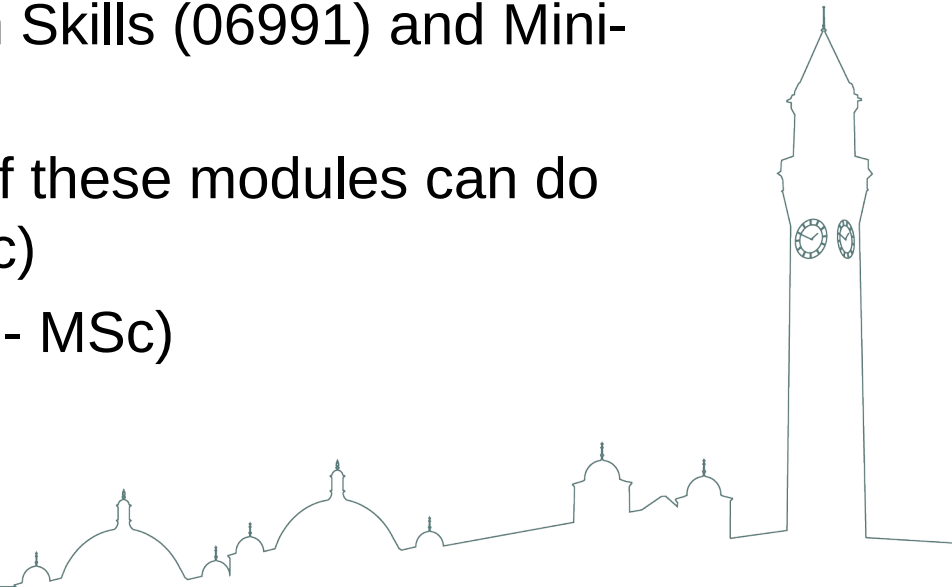
Working on the project

☐ You need to make arrangements for supervision with your supervisor at the start of the project

☐ Keep in mind that members of staff can be very busy, e.g. for conference travel or annual leave during the summer

☐ You are expected to see your supervisor in person every week, normally in a group supervision meeting

☐ Keep your supervisor up to date on the status

– Weekly log of your activities on Canvas

– Regular commits of your source code to the git server

Attendance

- ☐ You must be physically present at the university (in Birmingham) when doing the project

- ☐ Remote supervision, e.g. via Skype, is not allowed

Academic Skills Centre

https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/libraryservices/library/skills/asc/appointments.aspx

- ☐ Service offered by the University Library, 1st floor of the main library

- ☐ Workshops and 1:1 sessions
  - – Writing skills
  - – Referencing
  - – Literature searching
  - – Time management
  - – Presentation skills

Project Proposals

- Submission deadline June 19th

- Progress to next stage of project requires an approved project proposal.

  - Detailed requirements later (e.g., clear and reasonable objectives, time plan etc.)

- Not marked

Project Demonstration

☐ Week starting Aug 17th

☐ Demonstration of project results to other staff member than supervisor

- Demonstration of software developed

- Presentation of other results

☐ Marked based on level of achievement and quality of presentation

Project Submission

- Deadline September 4th
  - Late submission incurs penalties
  - Final cut-off date September 11th
- Submission format
  - Electronically via Canvas

PG Degree Requirements

□ have gained at least 80 credits at Level M in modules taken as part of the taught component of the programme, and

□ **have gained credit in dissertation components with a total credit value of 60 credits** at level M taken during the course of the programme and

□ have gained a weighted mean mark of at least 50 in the taught component of the programme, and have achieved a mark of 40 or more in all taught modules

PG Degree with Merit

☐ Pass all modules taken as part of the programme

☐ Achieve a weighted mean mark of at least 55 in the taught components

☐ Achieve a **weighted mean mark of at least 55 in the dissertation component** at level M

☐ Achieve a weighted mean mark of at least 60 calculated across all modules

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PG Degree with Distinction

☐ Pass all modules taken as part of the programme

☐ Achieve a weighted mean mark of at least 65 in the taught components

☐ Achieve a **weighted mean mark of at least 65 in the dissertation component** at level M

☐ Achieve a weighted mean mark of at least 70 calculated across all modules

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Expectations and Marking

☐ Pass mark:

at least 50

50-59% Satisfactory	• Project not particularly ambitious, or not entirely completed • Adequate project write-up, lacking clarity or detail in places, or containing irrelevant material • Little evidence of extra curricular reading or original thought • Mostly demonstrates understanding, but with occasional mistakes of judgment	Work displays ability to analyse, interpret and organise information to produce coherent accounts or solve well-defined problems of some scope. Most aspects of a suitable methodology evident and used correctly, some omissions occur but without negative impact on the result of the work. Report shows satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the essentials of the subject, with an ability to integrate information into a clear, well-structured account, but lacking in breadth or depth, or with some significant aspects omitted. Arguments/answers must be clear, although they may not be well-developed or reflect a wider appreciation of the subject. Some errors and omissions are likely to be present.
40-49% Weak	• Actual achievements not very substantial • Write up is somewhat incoherent, rushed, contains important omissions, or irrelevant material • Very little evidence of much extra-curricular reading or original thought • Some serious flaws in understanding	Work demonstrates an ability to solve limited, well-defined problems of a familiar type. Most aspects of a suitable methodology evident, but minor flaws in its use or omissions with some negative impact on the result of the work. Report shows general knowledge and understanding of the subject but very limited in depth or breadth. Arguments/answers are likely to be somewhat lacking in structure. There are likely to be errors and omissions and the evidence provided to support arguments will be very limited.

http://www.cs.bham.ac.uk/internal/staff/handbook/ProjectMarkingGuidelines.pdf

Expectations and Marking

70-79% Excellent	• Substantial deliverables • Very well written report with logical structure • Demonstration of critical thought, understanding and extra-curricular reading • Some minor faults in execution or understanding	Work demonstrates ability to analyse, interpret and organise information to produce coherent accounts or solve complex problems. All aspects of a suitable methodology evident and used correctly. Report shows comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the subject together with the ability to put the work into context and to critically evaluate selected aspects of the work. Arguments should be clear, competently structured, and accurate.
60-69% Good	• Achievement not substantial enough to warrant top mark, but execution basically good • Clear project-write up with logical structure • Evidence of understanding, and at least some evidence of extra-reading and critical thought • May contain some ambiguities or faults	Work demonstrates ability to analyse, interpret and organise information to produce coherent accounts or solve moderately complex problems. Use of a suitable methodology evident and used correctly, with minor omissions. Report shows good knowledge and understanding of the subject, with no major gaps or omissions, but minor gaps or omissions may occur. Arguments should be clear, competently structured, and largely accurate.

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http://www.cs.bham.ac.uk/internal/staff/handbook/ProjectMarkingGuidelines.pdf

Welfare issues

☐ Any health and welfare issues need to be handled early to minimise their impact on your project work

☐ Please do not hesitate to contact either

– Mia Wright (CS Welfare Tutor) cswelfare@contacts.bham.ac.uk

– Personal tutor

☐ Welfare session in June

Deferred Projects

☐ Projects are deferred for different reasons
 – student welfare issues
 – failed pre-requisites
☐ Deferred projects start in September 2020
☐ Project submission in January 2021

Canvas

☐ All announcements from the project coordinator will be made via Canvas

 – https://canvas.bham.ac.uk/courses/41302

☐ If you have any question of a non-confidential nature, please use the Q/A forum on Canvas

☐ All other enquiries should be sent via email to

 – msc-proj-coord@cs.bham.ac.uk
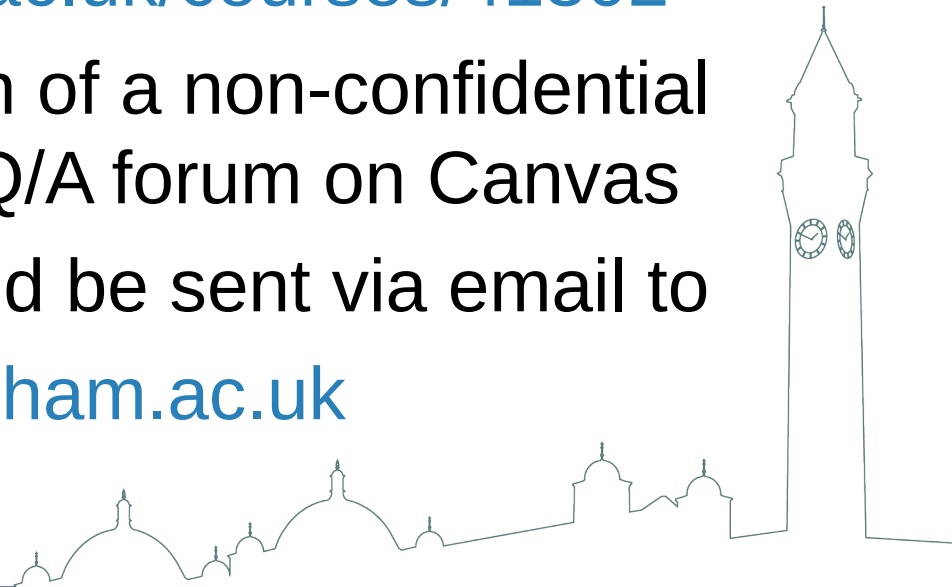
Next steps

- Indicate supervisor preferences by **March 11th** via Canvas Quiz

Questions?