Human Factors for Interactive G Web-Based Systems- Assessment 1 – User Research

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Course: COMP2030- Human Factors for Interactive C Web Based Systems

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Assignment Title: Flinders University Skill Share User Research

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Deliverables

Project Proposal

Website Concept

The Flinders University Skills Share (FUSS) platform is a web application accessible to students designed to empower and encourage the exchange of skills and services in a user-friendly way. Its purpose is to drive students towards a central hub accessible via a web application where students can both offer and request academic or non-academic services, exchanging credits throughout the process. This application could address key problems which many students face such as acquiring affordable assistance in certain realms of their life, as well as serving as a building block to develop new relations and collaborations. Through the creation of a dedicated platform, FUSS not only addresses these challenges but also fosters a like-minded community built on the principles of reciprocity and collaboration encouraging students to share their skills and grow together in spite of any financial barriers they may be facing.

It is important to note that student participation within this system is entirely free of charge; students can earn credits via providing services, which can then be used to request services from other students on the platform.

Target Audience Profile

The primary target audience for FUSS is students who attend Flinders University, both undergraduate and postgraduate. Students at Flinders University could be seeking accessible, practical, and affordable ways to exchange support with their peers, therefore it is essential to provide this service to this beneficiary demographic.

In 2021, international undergraduates at Flinders University recorded a labor force participation rate of 92.8%, the highest in Australia (Flinders University 2023). This clearly indicates that the vast majority of international students rely on employment to supplement their income and offset the substantial and ever-growing cost of them studying abroad. When considering the financial stress of particularly international students but broadly undergraduate students as well, FUSS could act as a vital gateway, enabling students to access peer support and services on campus without additional financial burden.

The choice to target undergraduate and postgraduate students at Flinders University not only stems from their challenges, but also the unique strengths of this demographic. University students often bring energy, flexibility, and a willingness to engage in collaborative communities. They are immersed in a diverse academic environment, which means they can offer peer-to-peer support across a wide range of disciplines—from tutoring in specific subjects, coding assistance, and essay proofreading, to creative services like graphic design or video editing. Beyond academic capabilities, students also bring practical abilities such as language exchange, cultural and spiritual awareness , and other all-encompassing activities. By focusing on this demographic, FUSS taps into an energetic, knowledgeable, and socially connected group that can maximize the value of skill-sharing within the campus context.”

Scope Statement

The scope of the FUSS platform includes core features such as secure registration and login, along with profile management where students can input their discipline, year of completion, expertise, and an optional profile picture along with their name. To locate appropriate matches, students will be able to search and filter by discipline, credits, availability, and expertise. FUSS Credits will be automatically transferred across accounts upon service confirmation, and balances and transaction history will be shown for transparency. The system will have a basic internal messaging system for coordinating requests and peer evaluations with ratings and feedback to foster accountability and trust. A PHP and MySQL backend will offer safe authentication, credit tracking, request storage, and review management, while administrator tools will enable user management, content moderation, and credit adjustments as needed, guaranteeing a strong but user-focused basis.

User Research Report

Research Methods

In order to gain an understanding of the target audience of FUSS, a combination of lightweight user research methods was applied. These included informal discussions and observations with fellow students who provided insight into the types of academic and non-academic support they seek, as well as the barriers or challenges they face within accessing that help.

Secondary research was also conducted in order to explore trends in peer-to-peer skill exchange platforms, with a focus on how students value learning from each other.

Finally, surveys and co-design workshops were used to gain insights into their expectations, challenges, and motivations when offering or seeking support. All observations and conclusion were kept confidential to ensure the challenges or shortcomings of students were not exposed to the public. This combination of research methods both formal and informal ensured that the research captured both structured, reliable data, as well as candid, authentic insights into the students' learning and service-exchange experience both on and off campus.

User Personas

Amira, a 21-year-old second-year Bachelor of Arts student at Flinders University, She lives off campus, works part time in hospitality, and often finds it difficult to manage coursework and hospitality work along with her personal responsibilities.

Despite her struggles, Amira remains motivated to do well academically, though she often finds it difficult to make time to proofread her essay. She would greatly value support in this area. Amira is also confident in her language skills and is proficient in Arabic. She enjoys offering conversation practice to others in her family. Therefore, teaching this skill could be her way to give back to the student community. Amira is also skilled in technology, knowing how to navigate websites on her smartphone as well as laptop.

When assessing Amira's needs and capabilities, FUSS offers the perfect opportunity for her to receive the academic support she needs without overburdening her with financial costs. She is also able to teach and share her own abilities in a way that is meaningful and rewarding.

Competitor Analysis

Studiosity is an online learning support platform that connects students with professional tutors, (Studiosity 2025). These professional tutors offer real-time assistance 24/7 and are often integrated into university systems (Studiosity 2025). The main strengths of the platform lie in its accessibility and integrity, as students are assured of receiving high-quality, professional feedback whenever needed.

However, when considering Studiosity as a platform, it also has significant drawbacks.

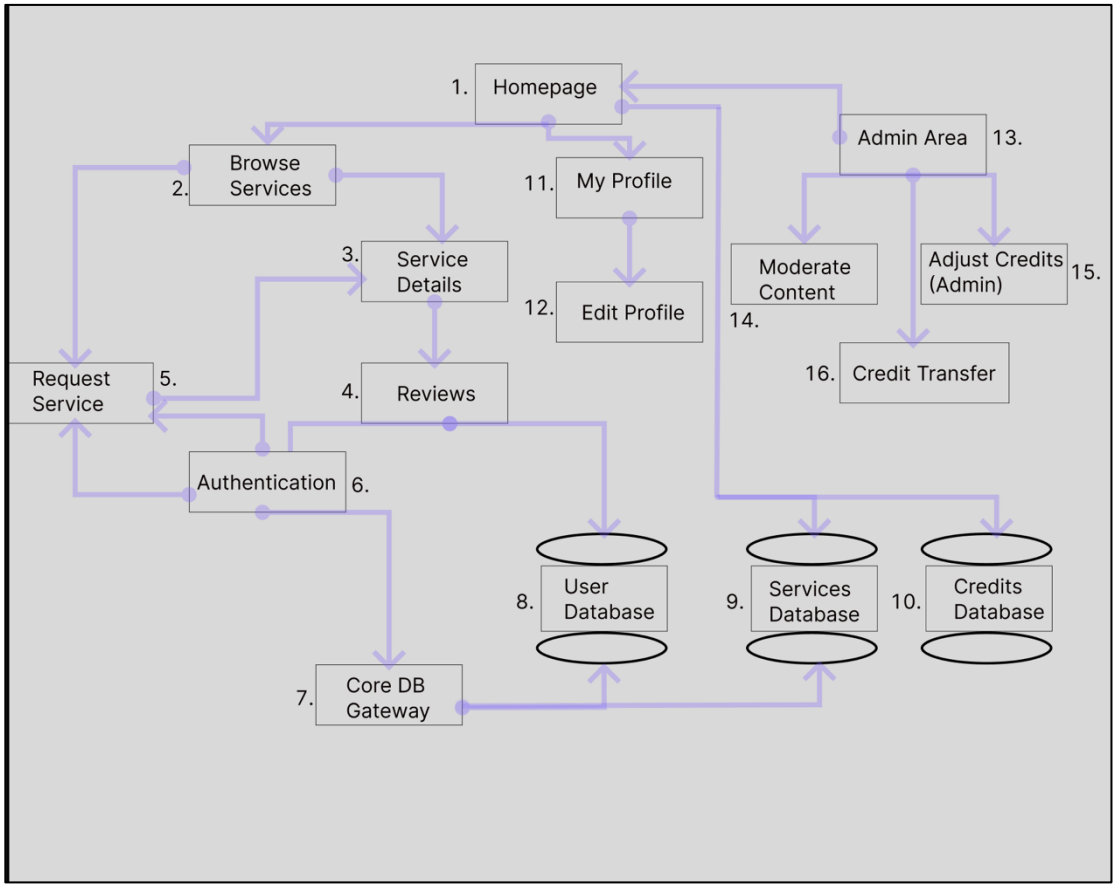
For students whose universities do not provide a license with Studiosity, access to the service costs approximately $30 per submission, which could be considered very costly. Even when a students' university does hold a license, they are only allowed up to 3-5 submissions, after which they must begin paying out of pocket. As a result, the cost of using this platform can be considered relatively high compared to free peer-to-peer exchange models.

The lack of a peer community is another disadvantage of Studiosity. Although it offers trustworthy academic support, it doesn't encourage students to collaborate, reciprocate, or share their skills. By encouraging a student-driven network where members can offer and receive support, FUSS, on the other hand, strengthens ties within the campus community.

Ultimately, FUSS could be seen as a better option that this service as it is a free peer-to-peer service allowing for community engagement.

Information Architecture

Sitemap

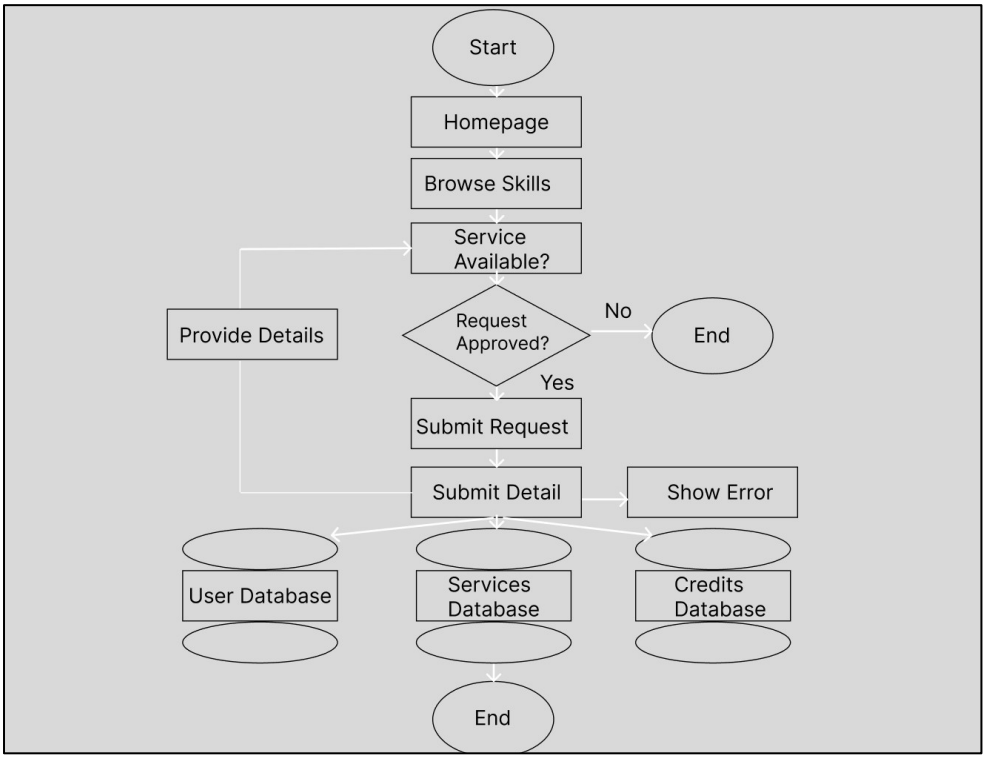


https://www.figma.com/design/AeFzR9Tyrnwqf51F9HMBMe/Report-Sitemap?t=86MkxNdtHm6lICCn-0

Diagram Explanation (Sitemap)

This sitemap effectively shows how the FUSS platform is organized. Beginning at the homepage and extending into key divisions like Browse Services, My Profile, and the Admin Area, a logical flow can be identified. This structure maintains transparency and administrative supervision and authentication ensuring it is a stable platform for students to utilize.

User Flow Diagram

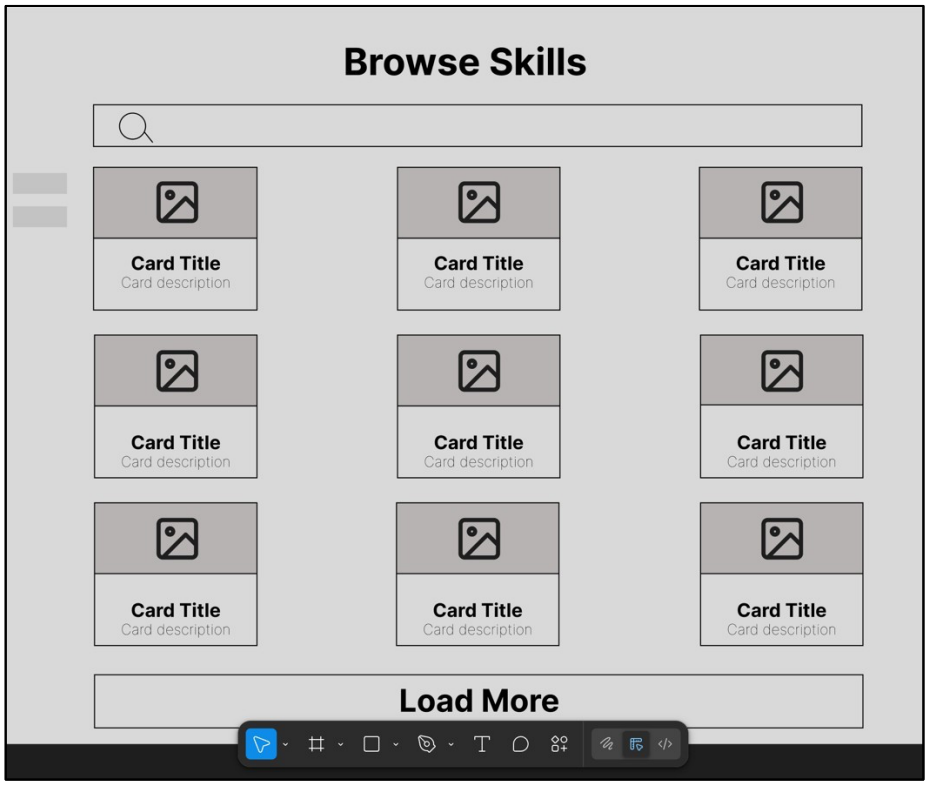


https://www.figma.com/design/1ZpGkufeYrwyWwij47CnfZ/User-Flow?t=86MkxNdtHm6lICCn-0

Diagram Explanation (User Flow)

This user flow diagram seamlessly illustrates the key journey of a student requesting a service via the FUSS platform. Beginning from the homepage, the student navigates to the browse skills page, is able to select a specific service, and submits a request through a structured form.

Low Fidelity Wireframe



https://www.figma.com/design/ll4rYKmDZ8HD5PfVwIaMMP/Wireframe?t=86MkxNdtHm6lICCn-0

Diagram Explanation (Low Fidelity Wireframe)

This low-fidelity wireframe illustrates what would be seen within the browse skills page. It is based upon a simple layout, a search bar allowing students to filter through services. This works hand in hand with the skill card titles and descriptions allowing the students to quickly select which service they would like to choose. While minimal in detail, this wireframe establishes the foundation for future refinement into a high-fidelity design.

Complex Storyboard

https://www.figma.com/design/hePv0wt1dHmYiTidTlcVIg/Complex-Storyboard?t=86MkxNdtHm6lICCn-0

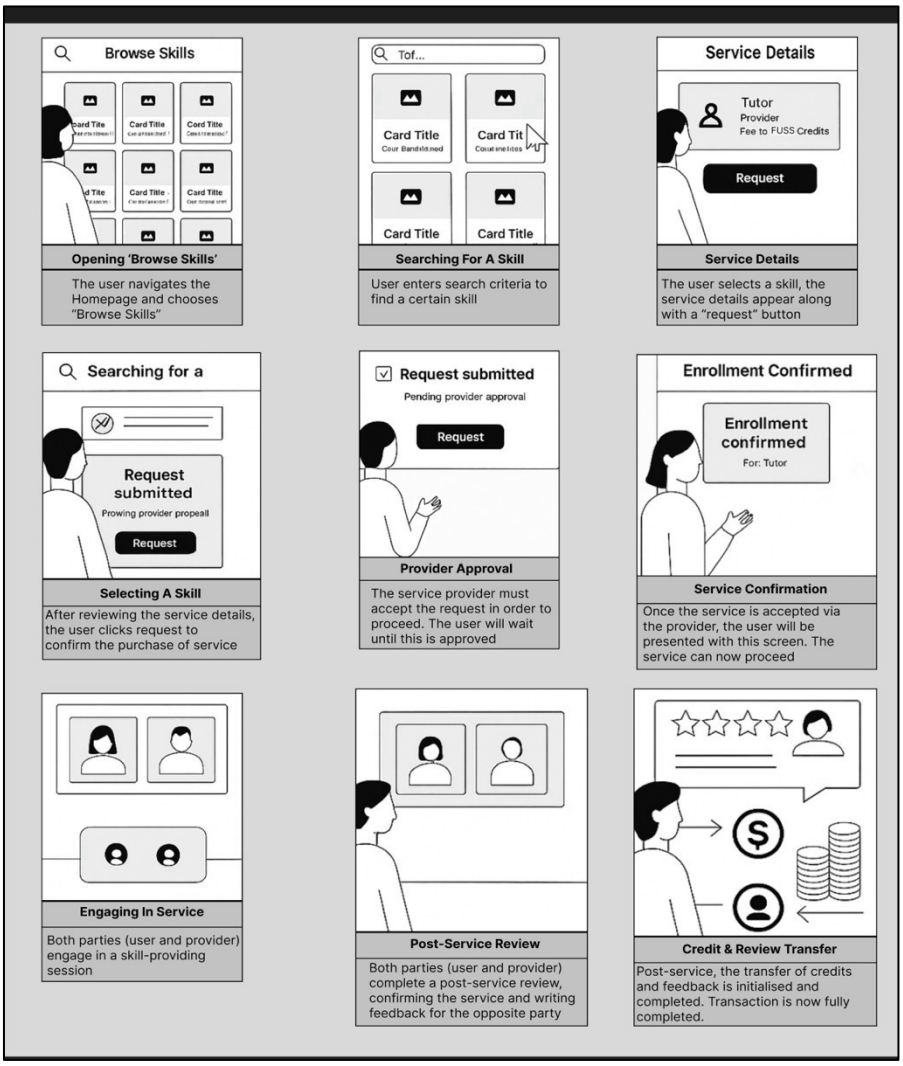


Diagram Explanation (Complex Storyboard)

This complex storyboard maps the full journey of a student requesting a service via FUSS. It includes the very beginning which shows the student browsing what skills or service(s) they need. It then maps them viewing details, requesting a service, receiving a service, and then the full credit transfer. This sequence highlights both user actions and system responses, providing a clear narrative of how students interact with the platform.

Appendix (AI Declaration, Complex Storyboard)

It is important to note that certain illustrative images within the complex storyboard were developed with the use of AI technologies. These were developed to visually represent user interaction and systems processes in a clear and distinct manner. The use of AI technologies were only limited to supporting the design process and do not replace my original work or thought process when considering conceptualization, implementation, and explanation.

Prompts Used

I utilized ChatGPT's OpenAI image generation tool to create simple, black and white storyboard which aligned with my storyboard captions I included within the prompt. Below is an example of the prompt I used to simulate this generation.

"Develop me different storyboard images when I input the 9 titles of the storyboard: Opening Browse Skills, Searching for a Skill, Service Details, Selecting a Skill, Provider Approval, Service Confirmation, Engaging in Service, Post-Service Review, Credit & Review Transfer."

The images were then exported into Figma.

Reference List

Flinders University 2023, Flinders career-focused degrees support graduate job success, Flinders News, 13 February, viewed 25 August 2025, https://news.flinders.edu.au/blog/2023/02/13/flinders-career-focused-degrees-support-graduate-job-success/.

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OpenAI 2025, ChatGPT (March 2025 version), OpenAI, viewed 13 August 2025, https://chat.openai.com/.