



MSc/MEng/MMath Degree Examinations 2017–2018

DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

Software Testing (SOTE)

Open Assessment

Issued: **14 March 2018**

Submission due: 12.00 (MIDDAY) **18 April 2018**

All students should submit their answers to the electronic submission system of the Department of Computer Science by MIDDAY on the submission date above. An assessment that has been submitted after this deadline will be marked initially as if it had been handed in on time, but the Board of Examiners will apply a lateness penalty.

The feedback and marks date is guided by departmental policy but, in exceptional cases, there may be a delay. In these cases, all students expecting feedback will be emailed by the module owner with a revised feedback date. The date that students can expect to see their feedback is published on the module descriptor:

<http://www.cs.york.ac.uk/modules/SOTE.html>

Your attention is drawn to the Guidelines on Mutual Assistance and Collaboration in the Departmental Statement on Assessment:

<http://www.cs.york.ac.uk/student/assessment/policies/#AcademicMisconduct>

Any queries on this assessment should be addressed to Dr Rob Alexander

Email: rob.alexander@york.ac.uk. Answers that apply to all students will be posted on the VLE site.

No queries will be answered more than 3 weeks after hand-out (**11 April 2018**).

Rubric:

Carry out the whole task as described in the following pages. *Your report must not exceed 10 sides of A4*, with a minimum 11pt font, minimum 120% line spacing (what Word calls “Multiple 1.08”), and minimum 2cm margins on all sides. This does not include any covering page, table of contents or reference list. **Excess pages will not be marked.**

Your examination number must be written on the front of your submission and each answer page. You should not be otherwise identified anywhere on your submission.

Testing a small part of simulation engine

The assessment consists of testing part of MASON, a multi-agent simulation library coded in Java. MASON Version 19 is available at

<http://cs.gmu.edu/~eclab/projects/mason/>, or via the GitHub repository at <https://github.com/eclab/mason/>.

Assume that the software is to be used by a private biological research institute, which will use the software for developing many different simulations of biological phenomena. The users will mostly be research scientists who have received basic training in Java programming.

Assume that you are part of the institutes software support team, and have been asked to assess the quality of the MASON software. The institute would like to know if they can really trust the system to be dependable, before they commit themselves to using it extensively. They therefore want you to provide a thorough assessment of its freedom from defects.

You can assume that MASON should function as described in its online manual. However, when deciding what to test and what the correct behaviour should be, you should also consider likely user assumptions, the behaviour of similar libraries, and the uses implied by MASON's supplied demo programs. See lessons 31-35 in the Kaner et al book¹ for some advice on deriving requirements as part of the testing process.

Scope of testing

As MASON is quite a large system, you only need to test a subset of it. You should test the following packages:

- sim.engine
- sim.field
- sim.field.grid

You do not need to test the following packages:

- sim.app.*
- sim.display
- sim.display3d
- sim.field.continuous
- sim.field.network

¹ Kaner, Bach and Pettichord, *Lessons Learned in Software Testing: A Context Driven Approach*. John Wiley & Sons, 2002.

- `sim.portrayal.*`
- `sim.portrayal3d.*`
- `sim.util.*`

`sim.util` is a special case – as it is a utility package, you will use it indirectly from the packages you do test. However, you do not need to consider this package directly, nor do you need to consider whether your tests test it well (e.g. what level of coverage of its code you achieve).

Even with the subsetting I have noted above, you will still find that you have too much to test thoroughly in the time allotted (or write up inside the page limit). You should prioritise what you test, and justify that in your test plan.

Testing Report

Your assessment submission is a report consisting of the following sections.

Section A — Test Plan [25 marks]

A test plan. It should detail the method(s) used to build the test cases and the software tools to use to achieve these.

1. Clearly define what constitutes “the software under test”, and list the features that you will test and you will not test.
2. Explain how you have determined the expected behaviour of the software (in the absence of an exhaustive and explicit requirements specification).
3. Explain the overall strategy you used for creating test cases, and for selecting the specific test cases that you present in section B.
4. Define acceptability criteria for the software – what (testable) properties does it need to have in order for it to be of acceptable quality for its intended purpose?

Section B — Test Case Specifications [30 marks]

Test case specifications for 8 fully specified test cases. The test cases must be complementary: they must each make different assumptions and test different specific features of the library.

1. At minimum, each test case should describe the stimulus applied to the software (which might be a sequence of API calls, a sequence of user actions that are taken, or something else) and the expected i.e. correct behaviour.
 - NB for some tests it may be appropriate to define constraints (e.g. “no files will be changed”) instead of/as well as positive

statements of behaviour (e.g. “the user will be returned to the main menu screen”).

- Where the reason why the expected/correct behaviour is indeed expected and correct is not obvious to a capable programmer with some domain knowledge, explain briefly why it is so.
2. Each test case should also state the *purpose* of the test within the test set. A good way to do this may be to state the question that the test case asks about the software. If we cannot understand what the purpose of a given test case is, we cannot give you much credit for it.
 3. “One test case” should test one thing – one feature, one unusual input, or one user task. For example, if you have a function that takes an integer as an input, testing it with Min/Max/+1/0/-1 should be five test cases.

One can note that those are, however, five *very low-level* (unit test) test cases, which are unlikely to give you the most testing power in a fixed number of tests, and hence unlikely to give you maximum marks.

4. You should aim to provide a diverse range of test cases, and also to provide your best test cases (including any that find interesting bugs). There is an inevitable tension between these two objectives, which you will have to decide how to resolve.
5. For full marks in this section, tests should be conducted at a range of testing levels, including unit, integration and system level. *Hint*: explicitly label each of your tests with what level it’s working at.
6. You may include short fragments of code within your test case specifications, but not larger ones. In particular, do not include whole JUnit tests. In essence, you need to provide enough information for a smart programmer to recreate your test code given some effort. E.g. if a test case involves a specific sequences of method calls, that sequence of method calls needs to be clear from the test case description.

Section C — Test Results [15 marks]

The test results for each of the tests that were specified in item (B).

Here, you should document the results that occurred when the test cases are run. You should provide explicit indication of whether each test passed or failed, and in the latter case state what happened instead.

Section D — Test Summary Report [30 marks]

A test summary report that will contain at least:

1. a summary of the testing that you performed

2. a summary of the results you observed, including a classification of the faults found (by an appropriate classification scheme of your choosing)
3. an overall evaluation of the thoroughness and quality of the testing you have performed
 - a. This should be in terms of what might be possible given substantial resources, not in terms of what is possible in a project with this time allocation and maximum report length.
 - b. Describe the branch coverage *and* condition coverage, or the mutation score according to a reasonable mutation testing approach, that your tests achieved of the Java code (not of any other artefact). Briefly explain how you did it; make sure you state what tools you used and (where applicable) what mutation operators you used.
4. an overall evaluation of the software tested (in terms of its freedom from faults)

Throughout, the summary report should only refer to the test cases that were specified in (B), not any other testing you may have performed.

Some General Advice

- You won't receive marks for testing that the marker merely *thinks* you probably did — marks will only be awarded for tests that are described explicitly and precisely.
- Yes, it is a little unrealistic that you are only allowed 10 pages and 8 tests, and that your possible coverage and comprehensiveness are limited by that. However, in the real world there are always resource limits — the ones you have here are merely artificial ones.
- Do not repeat anything that does not vary. For example, do not repeat the same boilerplate text in every test case description — if something is true for all test cases, say this once at the start of the section.
- Similarly, use blanket statements to make points that are true of multiple (but not all) tests case (e.g. "Test cases 1–5 assume that...")
- Appendices containing full JUnit code or detailed test output etc are not required and will not be read.
- In general, do not waste space on spurious information. Think about what the notional target reader needs to know in order to use your document, and include only that. At best, other information will waste some of the limited pages available to you.

- If you reference an external document (such as the documentation or website for the software you are testing), be sure to cite it appropriately, just as in any other submitted work.