Comp 47480 Learning Journal – Assignment 1

1. Reflection and Account on Team

First, we split our team into the   customer and the developer groups. Myself and Jia were the customers and Carl and Neha were the developers in the first iteration. Myself and Jia began to specify our user stories. Whilst we defined the user stories the developers   took each card and estimated how long it would take to implement. In hindsight I feel that some of the user stories we defined could have been   improved upon. The implementation of the user stories we left down to the developer which I think is a requirement of the process. However, for some features   and user stories it may be advantageous to seek clarification on the location of the features within the fridge. I realised this after we defined that the fridge should have a light that comes on when the door opens. The developer implemented the light at the bottom of the fridge, but it may have been better to be located closer to eye level. Overall in the first phase all the stories that the customers asked for were implemented. In the next iteration we switched roles. In this iteration the customers decided to update small features for instance   having a second door for the freezer area and a second light so there would be one in the fridge and one in the freezer.   Again, on this iteration it was noted that the design   that the customers had compared to the developer differed slightly. In that the developers   implemented an internal freezer door, but the customer wanted an external freezer door. This highlights how important proper specification is on the part of the customer but also the onus is on the developer to think about the specification and all the issues, lack of clarity and different ideas each party can have on the design concept. Overall both the customers and developers were happy with the overall product made, the stories presented and the deadlines for the project were met. However, the most important aspects of the planning game   are simplicity clarity and communication and as a group we could have designed a better product had   communication been more open and   more questions asked. It is also worth noting   that this product was a simple design in that everyone knows what a fridge is and what it does however when you apply this to software development the product will not always be clear and more input from the customer would be needed to guide the development   of the product.

2. Reflection on my Learning on the Planning Game

The planning game is a technique that can be used in the extreme programming model and is a significant element in mapping out the design of the product. It allows customers and developers to interact and communicate with each other in a way that is advantageous to the development process by allowing customers to provide an outline of the features they require and developers to estimate how long each part of the process will take. It accepts the fact that the design process is not finite, and features and functionalities are subject to

change. Subsequently, the idea is that the customer can prioritise functionalities and the developer can then correspond with the customers on how long each aspect will take and whether each is possible given the order the customer wants to have the design completed. In this way this process is iterative, and the design can start as a skeleton and very basic concept after each repetition of the cycle the progress and specification of the functionalities and features can be enhanced. This process iterates through many stage   many times until the required product has been achieved.

The planning game plays an essential role in   the creation of common goals by communicating ideas. It essential breaks the process into two main stages, the design stage and the iterative stage. As I observed the planning game, it became clearer that the design phase was the part of the planning game that was based from a collaborative point of view, to understand what the essential requirements of the project are, to ensure that you as a developer have an understanding   the requests of the customer. This can be achieved by listening to the customers' requests and being informative and communicative about what is achievable in the timeframe of the iteration which usually lasts 2-3 weeks. An important element in this process is to ensure the customer specifies all the user stories. The developer only estimates the timeframe of each user story or reject user stories that are overly complex so the customer can split the story into smaller more manageable stories or ask for clarification on some aspects of the story. It is vital that the user stories consist of 1 clear sentence to eliminate confusion and complexity. During this   the stories are prioritising by the customer and the developer and the customer commits to the design until the next meeting.

The iterative stage is the process that just involves the developer. This is the stage where the developer goes away for the build phase of the project and implements the stories that the customer has specified. They don't diverge from the customers design they implement the design as given to them. This may involve assigning tasks to persons in a team of programmers. When the build is achieved it is released and the next iteration occurs where aspects can be redesigned, new stories can be added   and stories that aren't reaching the mark can be deleted.

This planning process is really all about cycles of development and communication and a willingness to keep the design flexible so   changes in requirements can be embraced   by adapting the design at the end of every cycle. Due to it being a part of the extreme programming model in which testing is seen as imperative to a project so it is one of the first things done errors can also be addresses   in a timelier manner. The downfall for me in this model is how many iterations must be completed before the finished product is   produced. It seems like that the customer could redefine and create more user stories   to implement in the project indefinitely.