

INFO1111: Computing 1A Professionalism 2021 Semester 1

Self-Learning Assignment

Tool: Jira

Domain: Software Development

Domain of Application: Logistics – Staff
Management and Team Communication

Level 1

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1. Introduction

This following report will be used to outline the process of my Self Learning Project, using Jira, an issue management platform developed by Atlassian. It is described as a:

“flexible issue tracking tool that helps teams plan, manage, and report on their work”
(Cprime, 2021)

In this report I will attempt to outline the process by which I was able to teach myself to use this software. I will discuss the resources used in the process and the method(s) which helped me learn the tool. Furthermore, I will be comparing the different mediums (websites, videos, articles etc.) and their importance to me in my learning process.

I will also be exploring the usefulness of this software in regard to Logistics, specifically Staff Management and Team Communication. I will be outlining the possible situations in which Jira can be beneficial to given teams.

2. Learnings

2.1. Outcomes for the level

In my proposal, I indicated that I believed my biggest weaknesses included a lack of communication skills and ability to multitask. Thus, I set out to teach myself Jira with the intention for it to help me improve these respective skills. As such I suggested:

	Outcome
Level 1 – Basic Application	“I will be able set up a Jira domain. Within this domain, I will be able to add a team member, and add a Git repository (as well as push code through to this repository, such that it can then be managed through my Jira domain). Furthermore, I will be able to use the roadmap and project board to schedule tasks and move them between each stage (to do, in progress and complete) to show how a task can be issued, worked on and reviewed by different members of a team.” (SLP Proposal)

2.2. What I learned

As per section 2.1, I was able to teach myself how to utilise Jira to the level in which I set myself in my Proposal.

Setting up my Jira domain:

This was mostly straightforward thanks to the instructions given by the program itself. I was able to sign in, create a domain, add a new team member and link my git repository all through my own intuition of the program and what I could interpret on my own.

From this position, I was now able to start pushing files to the git repository and learning how to use the other features of Jira.

Setting up the Roadmap:

In Jira, “roadmaps offer quick and easy planning that helps teams better manage their dependencies and track progress on the big picture in real-time” (Atlassian, 2021).

As described above, roadmaps are a tool by which project managers can outline the projects that any given team is to be working on in the foreseeable future.

On the roadmap, a project is referred to as an “Epic”, which can have “Child Issues” which represent the actual tasks required to be undertaken in order to complete the project. The epic is used to describe the overall task while Child Issues are used for specific problems/jobs. Both have a title and a description, can be assigned to certain team members and can be linked to other Epics and Child Issues as well as have files attached. Once the roadmap is set up, the details will be present on the “Board”, which is outlined below

Setting up and using the board:

The “Board” is a separate page to the Roadmap where all the Child Issues are present, along with all their details. While an issue is being fixed or a task is being completed, it can be moved to the “In Progress” section and once completed to the “Done” section. This is done by team members and leaders editing the issue and changing the flag to “In progress” and “Done”.

Unlike the Roadmap, the Board is used to organise team members and their specific allocated tasks. Team leaders can use the board to keep track of their team and organise each member efficiently.

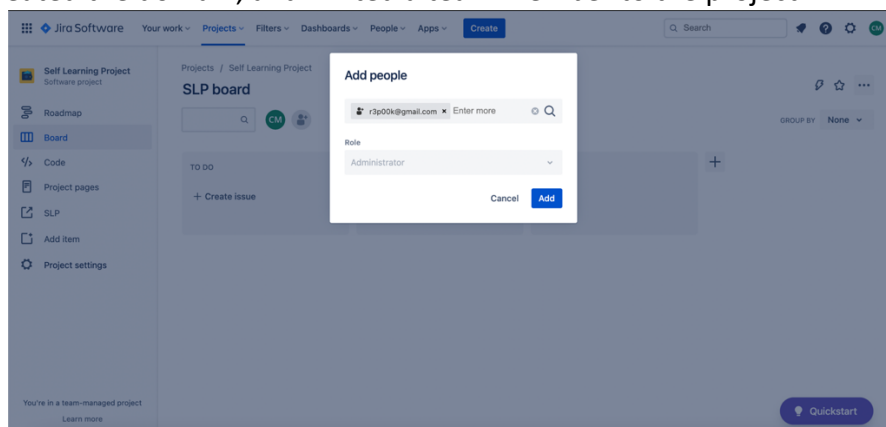
Completing projects:

Once all Child Issues are marked as “Completed” and have been reviewed by the team leader, the roadmap will reflect this state in the progress bar (which will be entirely green). Then, similarly to the Child Issues, the progress of the project can be changed to “Done” by the team leader (this will put a strike through the title, indicating its status as completed).

2.3. Application of my learning

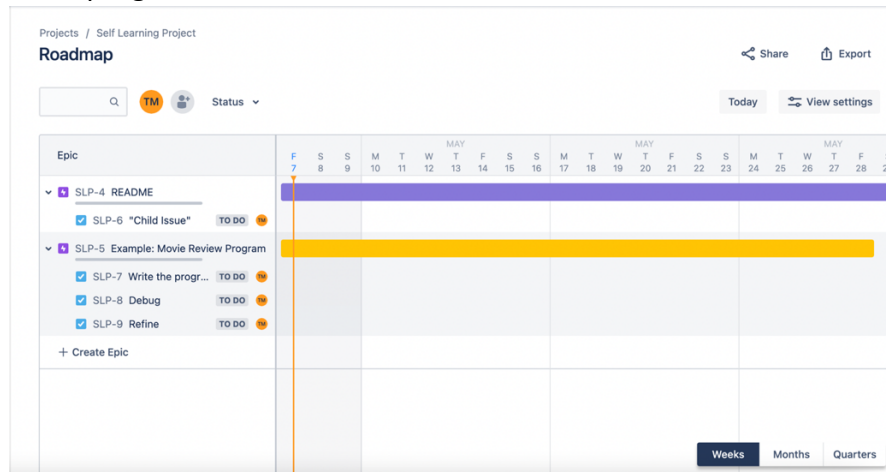
For the purpose of this project, I used a Python program that was supposed to be a mock “movie review” program I had previously wrote. Such that, the program would act as an “issue” that I could centre my learning around.

To start, I created the domain, and invited a team member to the project:

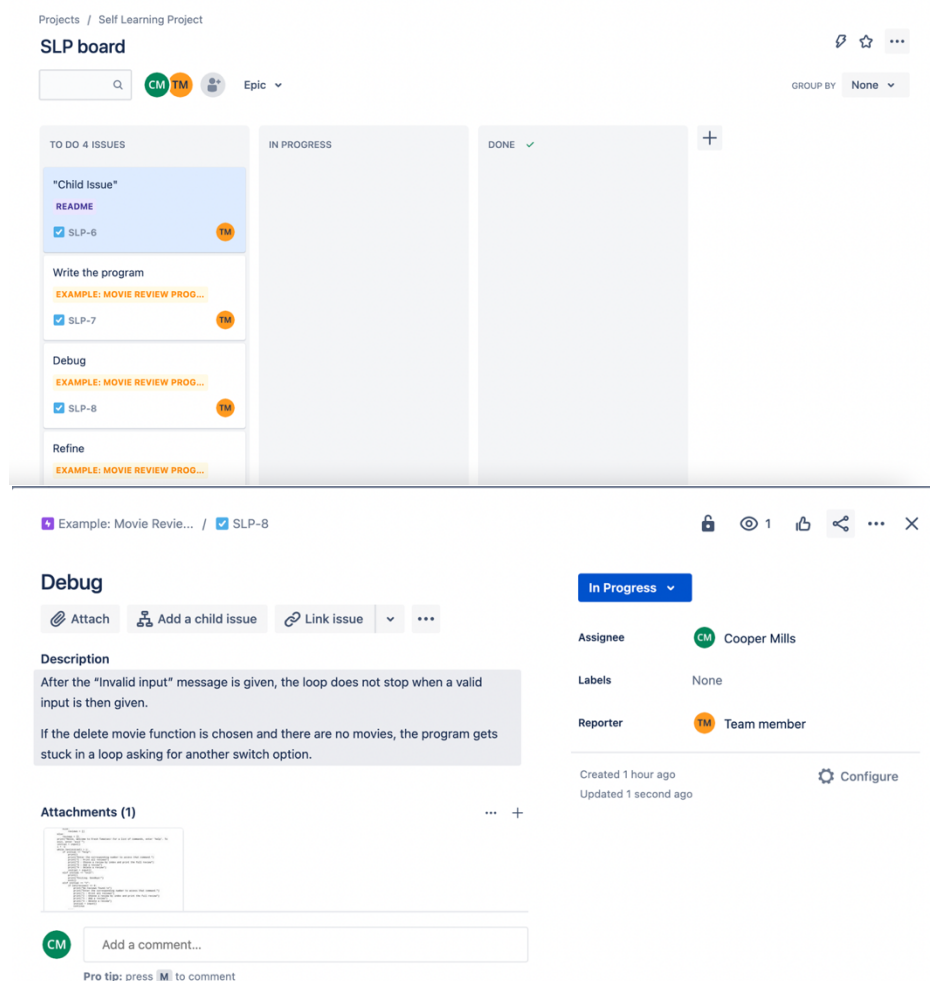


I then created a mock project on the Roadmap with a description of what a team leader would want in this given situation. The project has a title and a description along with three “Child Issues”:

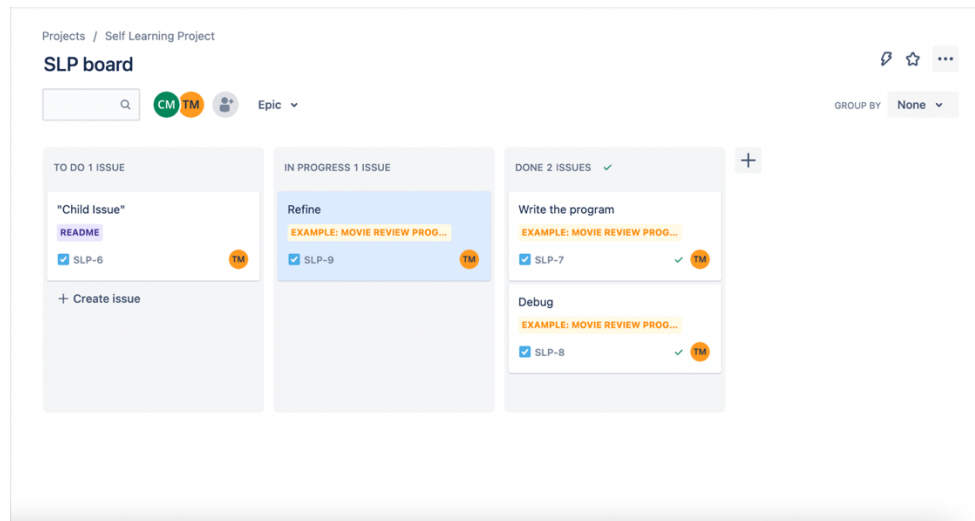
1. Write the program
2. Debug the program
3. Refine the program



Each of these “Child Issues” had their own descriptions (some also had the python program attached to them), and were now visible on the project Board as shown:



The next step was to work on the given issues as a team member in the given project. As such, each program could then be moved between the “To Do”, “In Progress” and “Done” stages:



Once all tasks had been completed and marked as “Done” the progress bar on the roadmap was green and the “team leader” could now mark the project as completed.

Thus, the project was “finished”, as I was able to cover each learning outcome I had set myself for the software.

Through learning these steps and achieving the required outcomes, I believe that the application of Jira in Logistics for Staff Management and Team Communication is extremely beneficial.

For my example of the mock movie review program, a pre-Jira alternative would have been heavily reliant on verbal communication and interactions over video chats and emails/messages. While these processes can be beneficial, it is difficult for team members to have up-to-date information and plans for any given project. Moreover, there is a lot of data to suggest that emailing can actually, in some cases, cause more harm than good:

“On average employees check their email 36 times an hour which amounts to 288 times a day for an eight hour work day. To make matters worse it takes employees around 16 minutes to refocus on their tasks after handling email.”

(Morgan, 2013)

On the contrary, with Jira, any team member in this mock situation would have clear instructions on what projects they are needed for (including a timeframe), and individual tasks they are assigned to (along with clear instructions that can be constantly updated). Whilst also having the ability to raise any issues with managers/team leaders instantly through the software and attached to specific projects issues. Moreover, the ability to attach files to tasks/projects or use an attached git repository makes sharing files a seamless operation.

2.4. Artifact

The artifact that I have provided for level 1 is the link to my Jira domain. As explained above, the Jira Project contains a Roadmap and Project Board.

Use of the Roadmap:

To use the Roadmap, you must select it from the panel on the left of the screen. The roadmap should now appear as in the photos from section 2.3. If you can click on the project to read the description or use the drop-down arrow to show the Child Issues and also select them to view extra details.

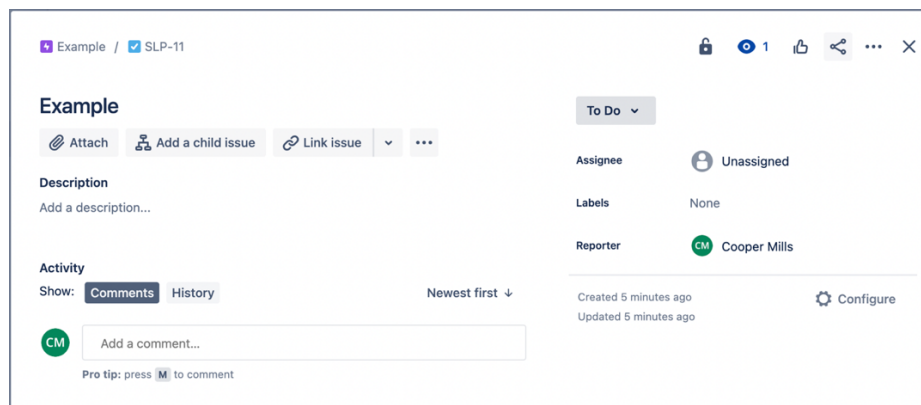
Use of the Board:

Just as for the Roadmap, to view the Board you must select it from the panel on the left. Again, you should see a page similar to the figures in 2.3. You are free to select each different Child Issue to view its description and look at the linked code.

When editing projects/Child Issues:

When a project has been selected, it will show up on the right-hand side of the screen. The four buttons (from left to right) below the title are for adding attachments, adding a Child Issue, linking an issue (Show that something overlaps etc.) and adding an app. Under the title "Description" you are able to see and edit the projects description. Then just below that there is an option to view the Child Issues specific to that Project, as well as add new ones. Finally at the bottom there is the option to add assignee(s), set dates for the project and change the reporter.

As for Child Issues:



As per the figure above, you can use the buttons below the title, and the description just the same as with the projects. As well as this, there is a space in the bottom right for any team member to add a comment to the task. Finally, on the right-hand side there is the button to change the status of the task, and buttons for the team manager to change the assignee(s) and reporter for the task.

3. Resources

Upon completing my artifact and reflecting on the resources I used for this project I was able to identify that the entirety of my sources were articles and websites.

Before I began working on my artifact, I referred to an article from Dave Nevogt (see reference 3) to help me understand what exactly Jira was. I could then use this broader understanding of the program and its application to help me learn the use of this tool with more ease.

As stated above in section 2.2, I was able to start some of the project without the use of any references. This was because the basic setup for Jira was very straightforward.

From there, I moved on to using the Jira tutorial provided by the parent company Atlassian (see reference 4). This was a comprehensive tutorial for Jira and all its functions (Boards, Roadmaps, apps etc.). As this was a big part of the artifact, I relied heavily on this tutorial for a large part of my project and learning process. The tutorial contained 5 guides, going from "Getting Started with Jira" to "Jira Roadmaps" (See reference 2). I focussed on these two guides in particular:

"Getting started" helped me make sure that my domain had been created properly and that I had made no mistakes after attempting to create it based on intuition alone.

"Jira Roadmaps" Went into great detail on how to use and manipulate the Roadmaps, giving me greater knowledge about their use and implementation.

4. Process

From section 2.1, it is clear that my outcomes for Level 1 were primarily revolved around the set up, and use, of a Jira Domain. In order to effectively achieve these goals, I set out to identify the learning curve and get an idea of where best to start (I used reference 3 to get an understanding of the application of Jira in a team).

Once I had a good idea of the learning curve of Jira, I was able to set out a timeline for the process. Then following the timeline I was able to teach myself the use of Jira:

- Firstly I created a domain and add a team member and a git repository (as stated before this was rather straightforward)
- I then, used my previous knowledge of git to push a Python file into the repository for my "team" to work on
- This lead me to then learn how to set up a Roadmap, with an "Epic"/Project and "Child Issues"/Tasks which I could add detail to
- Once the Roadmap was complete, I then set about learning the use of the Project Board, which allowed for greater manipulation of the "Child Issues"
- Once the project was set up, I could start "working" on the tasks from the point of view of different team members, finally teaching myself how to change statuses of tasks and attach files/link issues etc.

I found in this case that applying an example (i.e. the mock movie review) to my learning helped me understand the processes and tools of Jira better and made the learning a lot more efficient.

5. References

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<https://www.cprime.com/what-is-jira/>
2. Atlassian. (2021). Roadmaps in Jira Software. Retrieved May 7, 2021, from Atlassian website: <https://www.atlassian.com/software/jira/guides/roadmaps/basic-roadmaps>
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