6G5Z0023 Thematic Project

Introduction to Thematic Project

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Objectives

After today's session, you should be able to:

- Describe the context in which this module is set
- Describe the requirements for the assessment
- Describe how your Thematic Project will be assessed
- Complete your Project Preferences Process

Today's lecture:

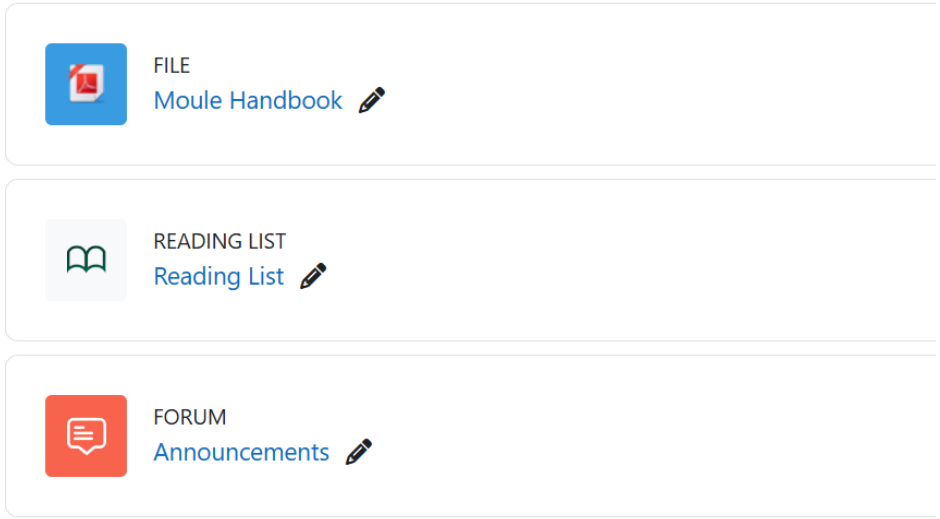
- Introduces you to the topics and assessment of this module
- Prepares you for completing the Project Preferences Process

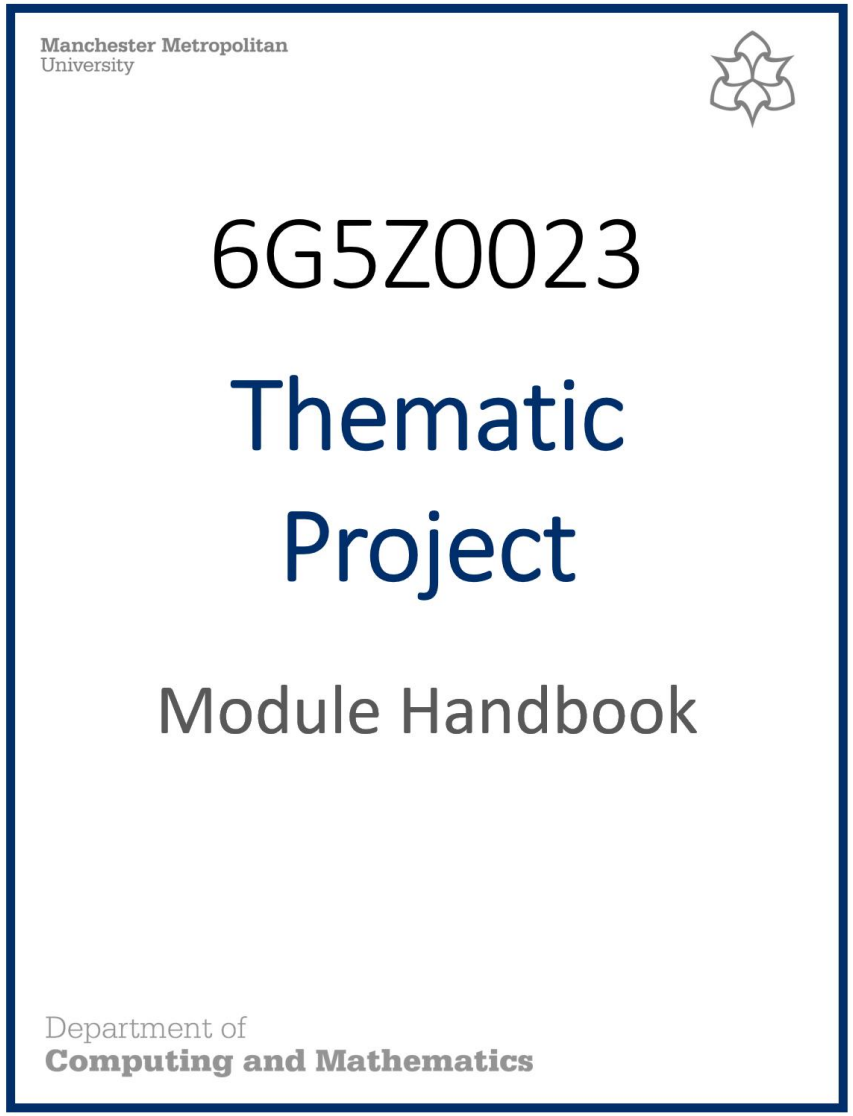
Module Staff

- We have a large team delivering this Module – just like the ICE module.
- Urgent queries about the module should come to me!
- Specific project related questions should go to your Lab Tutor
  - You can find out who this is by checking your timetabled lab session for this module.

Module Handbook

- Your one-stop shop for information
- Available on Moodle
- Everyone, please read!





Module Aims

- Help you to understand what it means to be a professional in a field of your choosing – what do you want to do when you graduate?
- Bring together information and ideas from different topics
- Apply what you have learnt from first year, and what you have learnt so far in second year
- Find new interests related to your course, develop your old interests further
- Become **confident**, unique individuals with skills and interests that help you apply for placements and graduate jobs
- Builds on the skills you started developing in Team Project, but this module works very differently

Learning Outcomes

- On successful completion of this module, students will be able to…

Interpret a brief to produce a plan for a project using an established project management methodology.

Execute a plan to produce a minimum viable product, meeting the requirements of a brief.

Reflect on the process of undertaking a group project to identify strengths and weaknesses of a chosen project management methodology, and collaborative teamworking approaches.

Lectures and Labs

- Semester two module lasting 11 weeks
- 1x one-hour lecture or drop-in session, 1x one-hour lab per week
- Quite a few different labs – check your timetable
  - Your attendance is only registered at **your** timetabled session
- Attendance is **vital**
  - We're doing teamwork, don't let your team down!
  - It's your opportunity to touch base with your personal tutor for advice, guidance and progress updates
  - Speak to a tutor if you are having problems
- Lectures and labs may be interactive – **don't be scared**!

Tentative Lecture/Drop-in Schedule

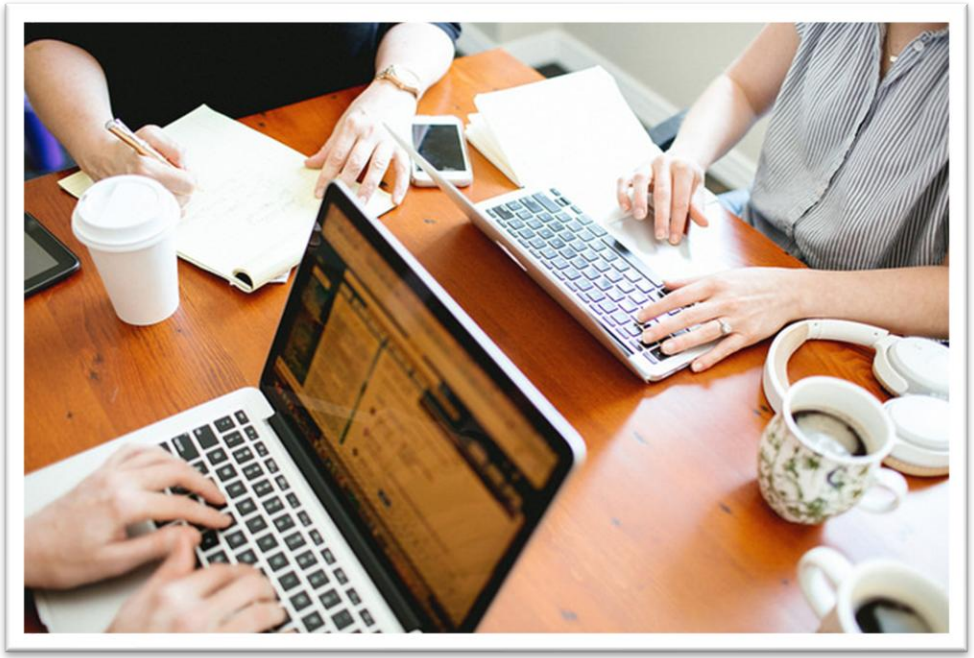
Week	Week Beginning	Theme
1	27 January 2025	Introduction to Thematic Project
2	03 February 2025	Team Working
3	10 February 2025	Reflective Writing
4	17 February 2025	The Reflection Template & Employer Visit
5	24 February 2025	Careers Talk – Assessment Q&A
6	03 March 2025	Drop-in for Questions (Teams)
7	10 March 2025	Drop-in for Questions (Teams)
8	17 March 2025	Drop-in for Questions (Teams)
9	24 March 2025	Drop-in for Questions (Teams)
10	31 March 2025	Drop-in for Questions (Teams)
11	07 April 2025	Drop-in for Questions (Teams)

Assessment

- 100% coursework, one broad piece of work:
  - 1CWK100 – The Thematic Project (100% of the module)
- **This is a significant undertaking**, and it's a really exciting adventure!
- Let's take a quick tour of the module's assessment
  - This is just a **summary** – please make sure you read the **full specification**!
- Very different energy to last year's Team Project so make sure you're familiar with the differences

Introducing: The Thematic Project

- **The next step on your journey into the professional world. This assessment is designed to feel like a 'real world' project as much as possible – you'll work in groups, which you have to apply for, to create an interesting product which you need to showcase and demonstrate.**



"People at Business Meeting" by Mark Evans is licensed under CC BY 2.0

You will need to master and demonstrate:

- Project Planning
- Problem Solving
- Team Working & Communication

Thematic Project: What you need to do

- You will need to complete several stages on the project:

Element	What	When		Weighting
Project Preferences	A short submission indicating which project you would like to work on, and why you are well-suited to that project (evidenced by a CV)	**Friday 31st January by 9pm**	Individual	--
Demonstration	You must demonstrate the process and outcome of your project, in a video recording submitted at the end of the module.	**Friday 2nd May by 9pm**	Group	25%
Reflection	You are required to reflect upon your own, individual contribution to your group's project, in a brief written reflection. This element is the final submission for the Thematic Project.	**Friday 9th May by 9pm**	Individual	75%

Thematic Project: Project Allocation

- We’re going to talk about this in more detail shortly
- In summary:
  - There’s a short form to complete on Moodle
    - And you need to attach a CV
- The project list for your course is already available on Moodle
- You need to submit preferences by: **9pm, 31st January 2025**
- We will announce your allocated project/team week beginning **3rd February**
- **If you do not complete the project preferences process, you will be allocated to a team randomly**

Thematic Project: Demonstration (25%)

- The demonstration is worth 25% of your final mark for your Thematic Project
- Your demonstration is a pre-recorded video that your team produces
- A ‘screen recording with talking’ style video is absolutely fine
  - Note that we’re marking you on content, not video editing!
- Your demonstration should be **no longer than fifteen (15) minutes**
- Demonstrations can be prepared and presented by one member of your team, or several different members of your team – do what works for your team
- You need to illustrate:
  - The process you have followed to complete your project, e.g. requirements gathering, design, testing, etc.
  - What you have produced in your project by demonstrating your product, and briefly outlining who contributed what

Thematic Project: Demonstration (25%)

- Allocate time for developing and delivering your demonstration into your project plans
- Discuss your plans for your demonstration with your personal tutor early, especially if you're looking for advice on what to include
- You must upload your completed demonstration video for your team to Moodle by **9pm 2nd May 2024**
  - Only **one** person on the team needs to upload the demonstration

Thematic Project: Demonstration (25%)

Manchester Metropolitan University

Grade Band	Find, evaluate, synthesise and use information from a variety of sources to conduct a professional project	Demonstrate a high degree of professionalism e.g. initiative, creativity, motivation, professional practice and self-management.
86%-100%	An innovative project is thoroughly designed and carried out, with a working minimum viable product demonstrated and presented and comprehensive discussion illustrating a detailed project lifecycle uploaded to Moodle.	Both the project and product are insightfully evaluated and discussed in the presentation with respect to the characteristics of a professional in the students' field.
70%-85%	An original project is designed and carried out, with a working minimum viable product demonstrated and presented and complete discussion illustrating a project lifecycle uploaded to Moodle.	Both the project and product are meticulously evaluated and discussed in the presentation with respect to the characteristics of a professional in the students' field.
60%-69%	A project is thoroughly designed and carried out, with something approaching a working minimum viable product demonstrated and complete discussion illustrating a project lifecycle uploaded to Moodle.	Both the project and product are rigorously evaluated and discussed in the presentation with respect to the characteristics of a professional in the students' field.
50%-59%	A project is carefully designed and carried out. Although the team may have fallen significantly short in their original aims and objectives, there is a product demonstrated and an attempt at discussion illustrating a project lifecycle uploaded to Moodle.	Both the project and product are thoroughly evaluated and discussed in the presentation with respect to the characteristics of a professional in the students' field.
40%-49%	A project is designed and carried out. Although the team may have fallen significantly short in their original aims and objectives, the team have managed to demonstrate a product and have discussion that loosely resembles the project lifecycle to Moodle.	Both the project and product are evaluated and discussed in the presentation with respect to the characteristics of a professional in the students' field.
35%-39%	There is a partial attempt to design and carry out a project, but the team have failed to demonstrate anything meaningful in terms of a project via their demonstration. The team have presented discussion of what went wrong, and how they could salvage the project given more time.	There is evidence of partial identification of strengths and weaknesses of team performance in relation to the characteristics of a professional in the students' field in the presentation. Either the project or product are evaluated.
20%-34%	There is a partial attempt to design and carry out a project, but the team have failed to deliver anything meaningful in terms of a project via their demonstration. The team have presented discussion of what went wrong, but do not have concrete suggestions for how the project might be salvaged.	There is evidence of a limited attempt to identify strengths and weaknesses of team performance in relation to the characteristics of a professional in the students' field in the presentation. Either the project or product are evaluated.
0%-19%	Little or no attempt to design attempt to design and carry out a project, no demonstration or discussion was delivered, and the team have not presented any discussion of what went wrong during the project, or how the project might be salvaged.	There is little or no evidence of an attempt to identify strengths and weaknesses of team performance in relation to the characteristics of a professional in the students' field in the presentation. Neither the project nor the product are evaluated.

Thematic Project: Demonstration (25%)

- Importantly, you should note from the mark scheme:
  - The top end of the mark scheme is a **minimum viable product** (MVP)
  - 50-59% can be awarded to teams who fail to meet their original goals
    - But who still have deliverables
  - Teams who sadly don't manage to deliver should identify **what went wrong** and **how would they approach this project differently next time** to salvage marks
- Note that we are also assessing your ability to **evaluate** and **discuss**
  - You don't need to tell everyone your project is amazing
  - It's better to be realistic about what you have achieved!

Thematic Project: The Reflection (75%)

- The reflection is worth 75% of your final mark for the Professional Project
  - It is entirely individually marked – your team cannot influence this mark
- You should collect evidence for your reflection throughout the module
  - This might be by keeping a blog/work log, Trello, taking photos/videos
- You will need to complete a template
- This will lead you to a self-evaluated mark for your contributions
  - **This mark will then be agreed or adjusted by your tutor**
  - They might move your mark up, or down, based on your evidence
  - They will also take into account how accurate your reflection is
- This is submitted via Moodle by **9pm, 9th May 2025**

Thematic Project: The Reflection (75%)

- This is the most important aspect of the project, and you should be thinking about it from the start to the finish
- Gather and archive evidence of your contribution as you go along
- Answer questions like:
  - If your team worked well together, what do you think contributed to its success? If your team didn't, what do you think were the problems?
- The objective here is **not** to declare yourself the best ever at everything
  - But to **reflect truthfully** on your experiences
  - Identify your strengths and weaknesses
  - Develop an action plan moving forward (into your placement/final year)

Thematic Project: The Reflection (75%)

Grade Band	Manage your professional development reflecting on progress and taking appropriate action	Develop working relationships using teamwork and leadership skills, recognising and respecting different perspectives
86%-100%	Professional aspirations and action plans are thorough and creatively articulated.	Evidence is shown of ability to exercise leadership skills in a team, making a significant contribution, as either leader or member, which goes beyond the activities defined and to reflect critically on strengths and weaknesses of team performance.
70%-85%	Professional aspirations and action plans are thorough and confidently articulated.	Evidence is shown of ability to exercise leadership skills in a team as either leader or member as needed to complete a project and to reflect on strengths and weaknesses of performance.
60%-69%	Professional aspirations and action plans are sensible and confidently articulated.	Evidence is shown of ability to exercise leadership skills in a team as needed to complete a project and identify strengths and weaknesses of performance.
50%-59%	Professional aspirations and action plans are clearly articulated.	Evidence is shown of ability to work effectively in a team as either leader or member as needed to complete a project and identify strengths and weaknesses of performance.
40%-49%	Professional aspirations and action plans are articulated.	Evidence is shown of ability to work in a team as either leader or member as needed to complete projects and identify strengths and weaknesses of performance.
35%-39%	A limited range of, or inappropriate, opportunities for own professional development are identified.	Evidence is shown of a partial contribution to a team to complete a project.
20%-34%	Limited or flawed professional aspirations and action plans are articulated.	Evidence is shown of an Inadequate or limited contribution to a team to complete a defined project.
0%-19%	Unfeasible or no professional aspirations and action plans are articulated.	Little or no evidence of contribution to a team to complete a defined project.

Thematic Project: The Reflection (75%)

- The more you've contributed to your team, the easier you will find the project reflection
  - And the higher mark you will find you have earned
- If someone in your team is not pulling their weight…
  - … you can use the extra work you've had to do to gain marks here!
  - Similarly, they will lose marks here for not contributing enough
- The important thing to remember is:
  - **You will need evidence** – please be collecting it as you go!

Examples of Evidence

- You and your team will need to document your progress as you work through the project
- Sample evidence list on Moodle for you to use
  - Not everything will fit every project
  - You can decide if something else is more appropriate
  - Timeline is fluid and not set in stone

Week	Standard Expected Outputs	Example Evidentiary Outputs
1	Project Preferences submitted	Updated CV, Collated Portfolio
2	Team meeting minutes	Your initial group project plan with individualised responsibilities and roles (this is likely to be reviewed several times throughout the project)
3	Team meeting minutes	1. A comprehensive list of functional and non-functional requirements for your system/MVP 2. Evidence of user requirements analysis (e.g., PACT/Heuristic Analysis) 3. Evidence of system requirements analysis (e.g., Structured Flowcharts)
4	Team meeting minutes	1. Finalised requirements docs. 2. Evidence of user design and development (e.g., Use Cases, User Stories) 3. Evidence of system design and development (e.g., Structured Flowcharts, ERD's, UML Diagrams)
5	Team meeting minutes	1. Completed Design docs. 2. A clearer plan for Agile product development of your solution using the tools you have decided to employ (e.g., Trello, Jira, Excel) 3. Code snapshots. 4. Early prototype screenshots
6	Team meeting minutes	1. Code snapshots. 2. Early prototype screenshots 3. Reviewed version of project plan?
7	Team meeting minutes	1. Code snapshots. 2. Early prototype screenshots 3. Reviewed version of project plan?
8	Team meeting minutes	1. Test Plan 2. User acceptance Tests 3. User guides
9	Team meeting minutes	1. Evaluation of MVP
10	Team meeting minutes	Finalised Team Video
11	Finalised Assessment Work	Finalised Individual Reflection

Thematic Project: Support

- Bonding as a team is really important
  - We recommend doing something ‘social’ once your teams are formed
- Your module tutor will have weekly updates with you and your team
  - Be honest, have reasonable expectations
- Your module tutor is **not** for technical support and problems, but will help you:
  - Move forward as a team
  - Manage your project
  - Work through the problem-solving process
  - Find solutions when it feels like there aren’t any
- Although extremely rare - please report breaches of the Student Code of Conduct to your module tutor as soon as possible

Project Briefs

- Project briefs are available now
  - They are available as PDFs on Moodle in the Thematic Project area in the Project Preferences block
- Briefs have been chosen and prepared for all Computing courses
  - Computer Science
  - Software Engineering
  - Cyber Security
  - Computer Games Development
  - AI and Data Science
  - Applied Computing
- There are lots of exciting projects listed
- There’s some overlap between similar courses
- The key theme is **something useful/interesting for the real world**

Project Briefs

- Each brief has the following components:
  - **Project Description**
    - A little bit of background, and an outline of what the project is about
  - **Expected Deliverables**
    - A rough idea of what you should aim to produce by the end of the module
- Each brief has been carefully designed so that you can choose the scope of your project
  - A key part of your team's first week will be identifying what counts as a **minimum viable product**, and thinking about what the core essentials are
  - Each of the projects has lots of room for extension and extra features if you'd like to take it further
  - You could complete each of these projects as an MVP as one or two people, but with more contributors can think about how to add additional features and functionality

Project Teams

- Teams will be *roughly* 4-6 students, taken from within your timetabled lab grouping
  - This means you will be working with others from your course
- Once teams are announced, **no** changes between teams are permitted
- Your module tutor is your first line of discussion if you want to discuss anything about your team and the way you are working
- Your team is solely responsible for choosing what tools you want to use and how you want to work
  - We'll make recommendations, but as second years, it's your responsibility to decide what will and won't work for your teams

The Project Preferences Process: Step One

- Your first task is to read **all** the projects available to your course
- Don’t dismiss a project out of hand, but do think about:
  - What might I use to solve this problem?
  - Is this something I’m interested in?
  - Does it align to my interests?
  - What skills can I develop while working on this project?
  - Is it an area I might consider working in in the future?

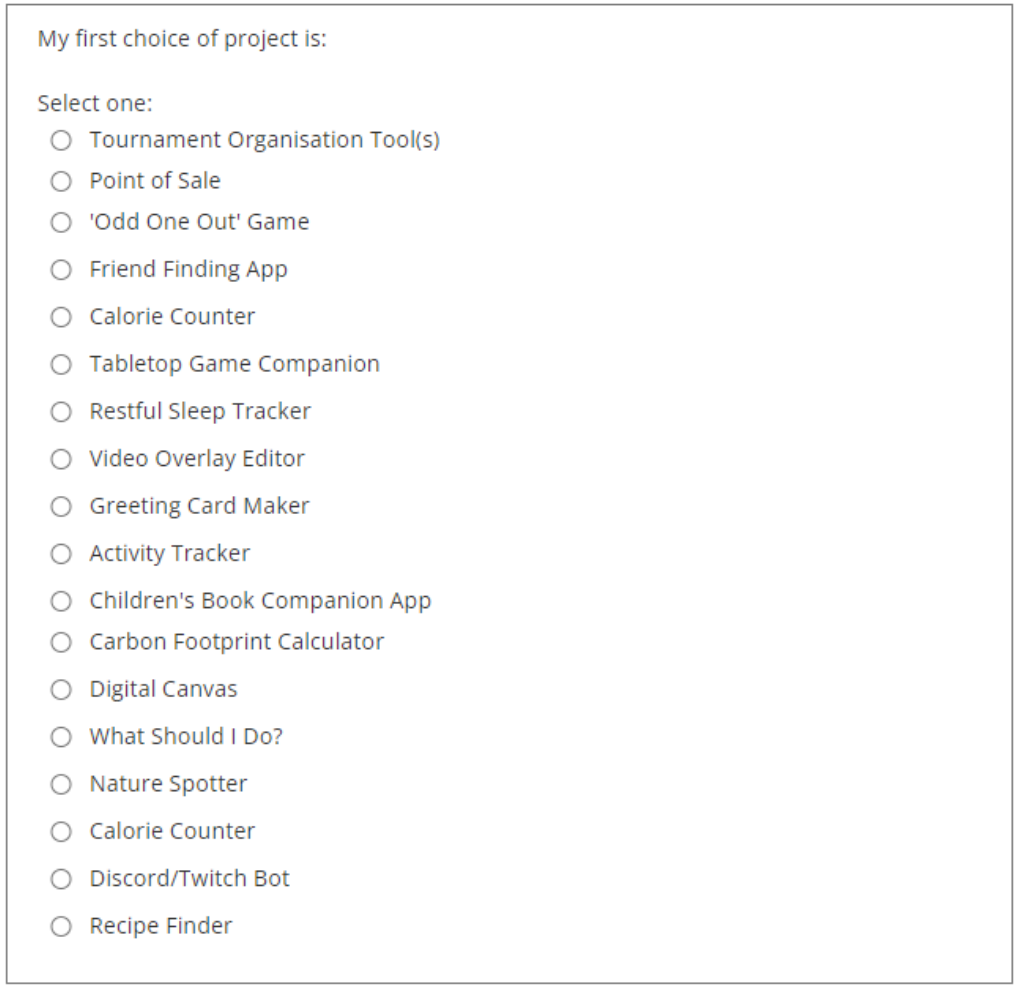
The Project Preferences Process: Step Two

- You will need to shortlist the projects you're interested in
- We're asking you to whittle your list down to your **top three** choices
  - You will need to rank these in preference order too!
- Maybe one project jumps out at you, and your next two are tied
  - Don't worry too much
- Maybe none of the projects jump out at you
  - Talk to your friends, and your module tutor
  - There's bound to be one that works for you, it might just not be obvious

The Project Preferences Process: Step Three

- You can now begin completing the Project Preferences Form
- Found on Moodle, in the Project Preferences block
- Takes the form of a Moodle quiz – **you can only submit once**!
  - Please be careful when completing the form
- Most importantly:
  - **Don’t choose the same project more than once**
  - This doesn’t increase the chance you will get that project; it just means there isn’t a back-up if you can’t be allocated your top choice!

The Project Preferences Form: Questions 1-3


My first choice of project is:

Select one:

- Tournament Organisation Tool(s)
- Point of Sale
- 'Odd One Out' Game
- Friend Finding App
- Calorie Counter
- Tabletop Game Companion
- Restful Sleep Tracker
- Video Overlay Editor
- Greeting Card Maker
- Activity Tracker
- Children's Book Companion App
- Carbon Footprint Calculator
- Digital Canvas
- What Should I Do?
- Nature Spotter
- Calorie Counter
- Discord/Twitch Bot
- Recipe Finder

Tell us which three projects you're most interested in

Rank them by preference:

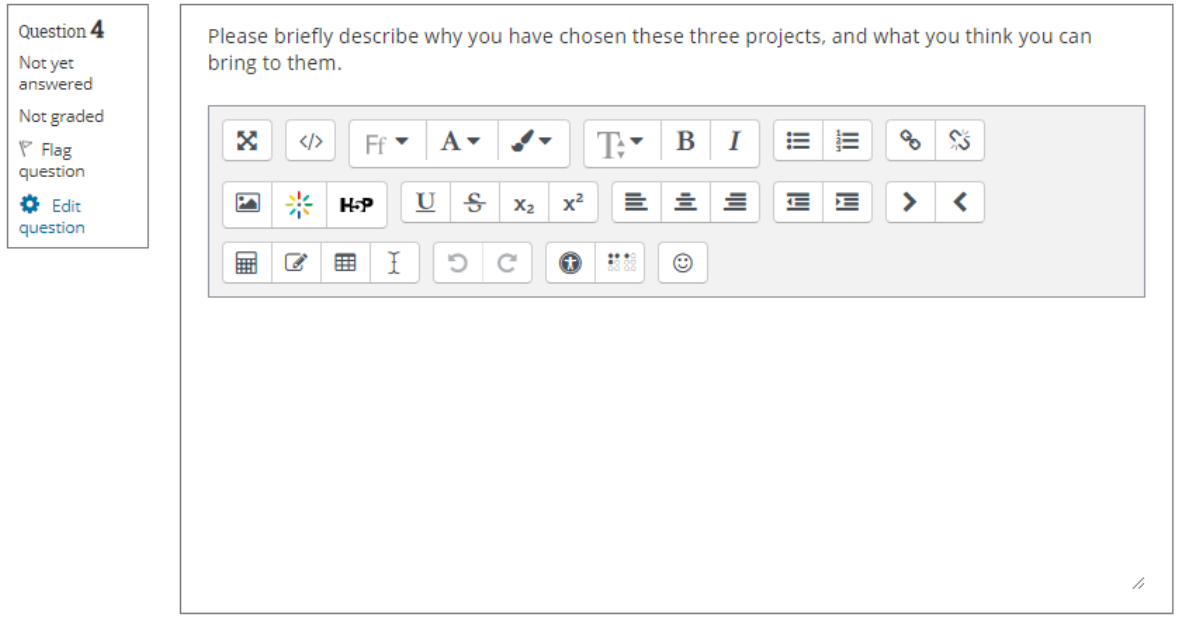
'First Choice' is your most preferred

We can't guarantee everyone will get a project in their top three, but we promise we'll try our best

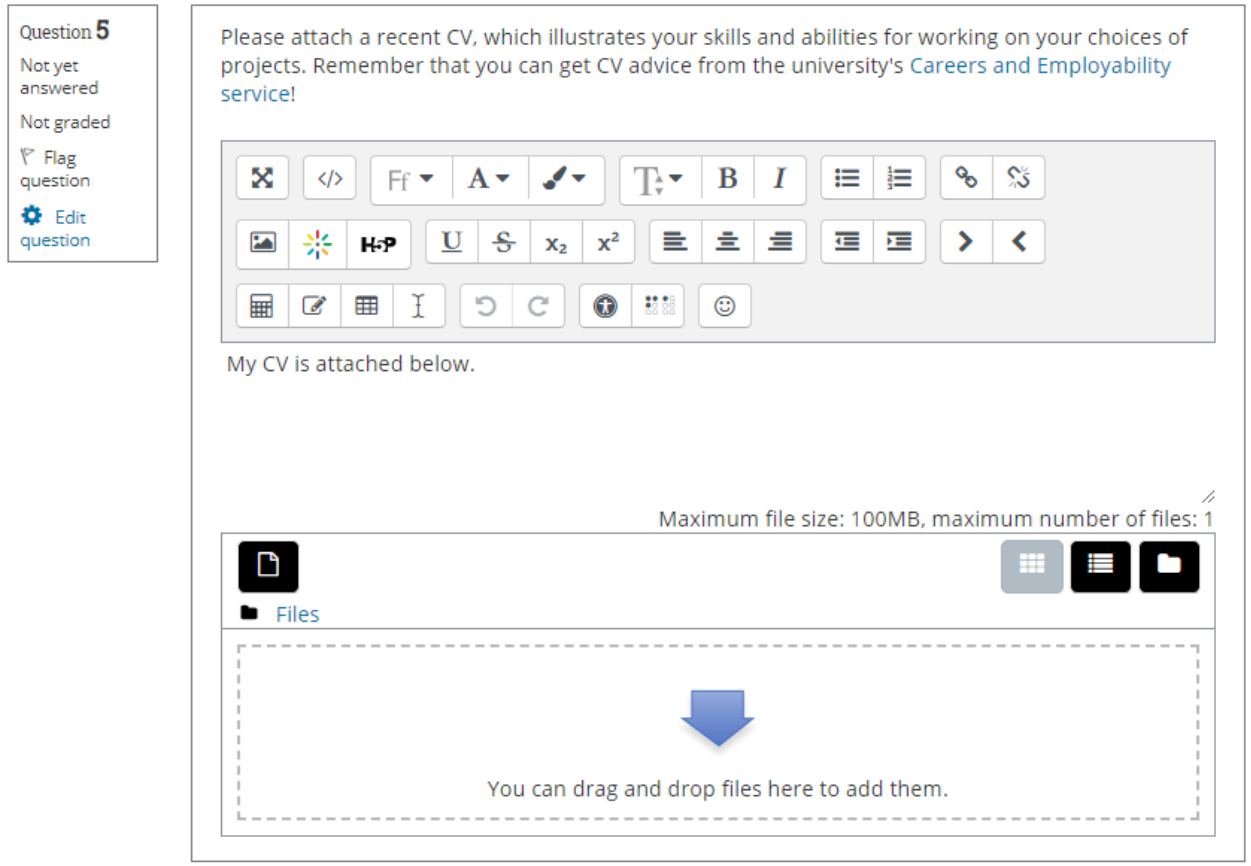
Don't choose the same project more than once!

The Project Preferences Form: Question 4

- Tell us a little bit about what appeals to you about these projects, and what you hope to bring to the table
  - Do they align with your career aspirations?
  - Have you got some relevant experience that might be useful?
- You don't have to write *War and Peace*, but adding some information here will help us match students to briefs and teams



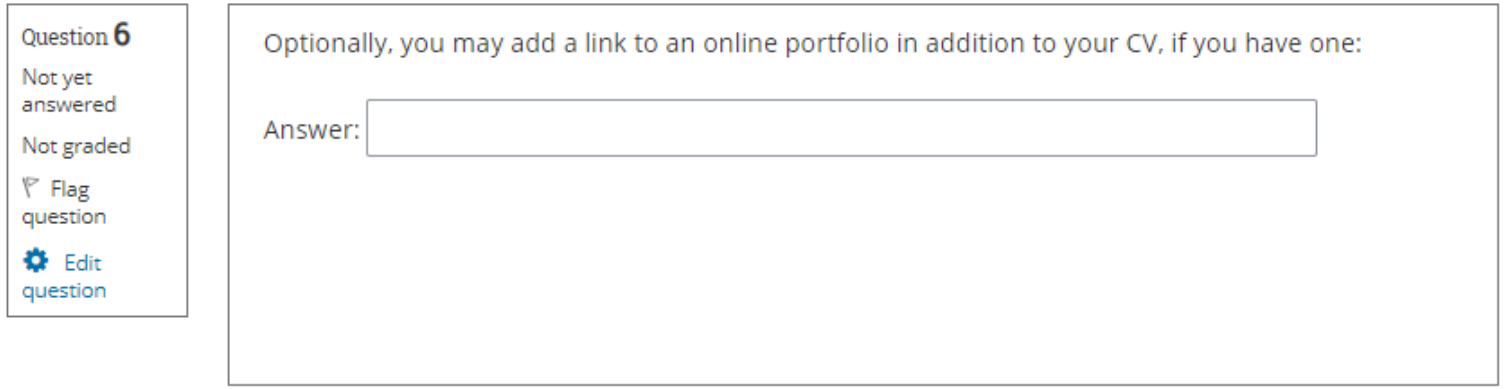
The Project Preferences Form: Question 5



- Attach a recent CV to complete Question 5
- You may wish to tailor this to your specific choice of projects
- We'll be spending time on what makes a good CV this week
- Use Careers and Employability to help

The Project Preferences Form: Question 6

- Optionally, you may include a link to a portfolio, if you have one
  - This may be a website of your own creation
  - A GitHub repository
  - An itch.io profile page
  - A Behance profile
  - Or any other suitable form of portfolio
- Including a portfolio is **optional but** does not replace the CV!

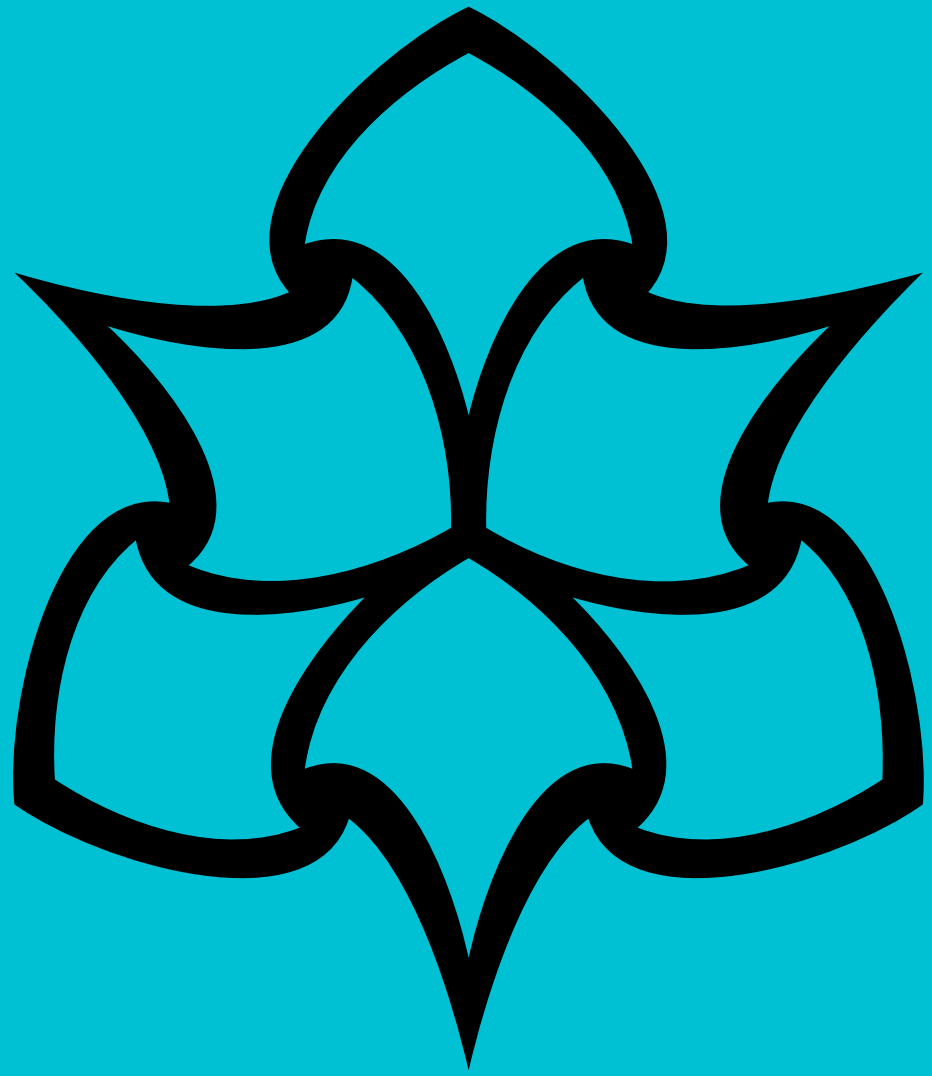


Project Preferences – Decision Making

- Project Preferences Forms must be submitted by the **Friday 31st January by 9pm**
- Your tutors will then sit down with all your submissions, and match students to teams and projects
- We will be matching together students with different backgrounds and skillsets, which we think are complementary
- You will hopefully have a really great team, as long as you've completed the process and completed it honestly
- If you haven't completed the process, you'll be matched to a project and team randomly ☹ Don't let this happen to you!

Project Preferences – The End Point

- We'll be revealing your allocated projects, and teams, in the week beginning **3rd February 2025** – most likely on the Tuesday/Wednesday
- The module team will try our very best to ensure that all teams have a brief they will find exciting, and a team where everyone can contribute
- All teams will consist of students from the same timetabled group
- It's important to note: **All projects are equally awesome!**

Summary

- In this session, we introduced the module and the module's assessment
- Briefs are available now, so it's time to dive into them and start getting excited!
- We also looked more closely at the various elements of the Thematic Project
- Please ensure you've read the assessment specification, and bring any questions to your module tutor