Code of Conduct – Group 64

Behdad Etezadi, Tijn Friederich, Maks Kuźnia, Vuk Pejić, Lotte Trijbels, Yanran Zhao

ABSTRACT

This Code of Conduct establishes the principles and expectations for professional student conduct and ethical behavior for all group members of **Team 64**. By following this Code, we foster a respectful work environment that aligns with our core values and project objectives.

This code of conduct has been carefully crafted, drawing upon various international references and codices to ensure alignment with already established standards. While adhering to the requested format outlined in the assignment, we have incorporated insights from diverse sources to create a framework that upholds principles of qualities such as professionalism, ethics, and respect. Through this approach, we hope to establish clear guidelines that promote integrity, collaboration, and accountability within our group.

1 SHARED TEAM VALUES

- **Collaboration**: We place a strong emphasis on collaboration by creating an environment where teamwork and mutual support are encouraged and everyone's opinions are considered.
- **Integrity**: Our team values integrity by always being honest and ethical, even when faced with challenging decisions or situations.
- **Accountability**: We believe in accountability by taking responsibility for our actions, owning up to our mistakes, and actively learning from them to continually improve our performance.
- **Innovation**: Our commitment to innovation means constantly seeking new and improved ways to improve our project, embracing creativity and adaptability to stay ahead and learn new concepts.
- **Respect**: We treat everyone with kindness and dignity, acknowledging the worth of everyone within our team, regardless of their role or background.
- **Excellence**: Our team strives for excellence in our work, never settling for mediocrity and always aiming to deliver the highest quality outcomes.

2 ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION

Throughout the course, our team will collectively work towards developing a client application by dividing the project into smaller, reachable goals every week. This will allow us to experience what it is like to work in a **real-world software development team**. Here's an overview of what we will be doing:

(1) Development of a Finance Management Application: Our primary objective is to develop an innovative application using Spring and JavaFX, dedicated to managing and tracking shared expenses. This involves designing and implementing both the back-end infrastructure and the user-friendly front-end interface with various features.

(2) Usage of Version Control with Git: Version control will be implemented using Git, allowing for easy collaboration, efficient code management, and consistent tracking of project progress and changes.

(3) Developing a Code of Conduct: To encourage a positive working environment, we will create a code of conduct that outlines the principles and standards of behavior expected of all team members.

(4) Conducting Regular Meetings: We will arrange and carry out regular professional meetings to facilitate project discussions, handle difficulties, and ensure that team members are on the same page with project goals and objectives. To properly adhere to a professional meeting layout, we also practice the roles of Chair and Note-taker during our meetings.

(5) Giving and Asking for Feedback: In order to promote a culture of constant improvement, self-reflection and support among team members, we will actively participate in giving and receiving feedback from each other.

(6) Performing Code Reviews: Regular code reviews will be carried out to evaluate the readability, efficiency, and quality of the code, encouraging exchange of ideas and identifying areas for optimization within the code base.

(7) Preparation and Delivery of the Presentation: We will put together and present a presentation that highlights the features, outcomes, and importance of our project to peers and evaluators.

(8) Usability Testing: Usability testing sessions will be conducted to gather insights from users and identify areas for improvement in the user interface and overall user experience.

By doing this, we hope to not only develop a high-quality software product, but also develop vital teamwork, communication, and collaboration skills that are required for success in the field of software development.

3 TARGET/AMBITION LEVEL

We uphold a profound commitment to excellence, as outlined in our code of conduct. Thus, we relentlessly pursue high grades and all of our team members have remarkably high ambitions. While our ultimate aspiration may be a perfect 10 out of 10, we acknowledge the importance of realism and the fact that our teams experience in this subject is limited. Thus, by considering the rubrics and the outline of the project we understand that achieving a score of **8 out of 10** is still a notable -yet achievable- accomplishment and a source of pride. Hence, our team will regard any mark higher than **8** as a notable achievement and a success.

4 PLANNING

Making sure tasks are completed on time by our team is an important part of how we work. We do this by setting weekly goals during the meetings and dividing this greater goal into smaller

tasks which we then divide amongst the group members. These tasks will be posted as GitLab issues and together make up our milestone of the week. For every task, we make an estimation of the amount of time that should be spent on the task, ensuring that everyone has a similar workload. This enables us to divide tasks more efficiently in the future.

Since tasks are divided based on workload, members should be able to finish everything by the end of the week. When a member runs into a problem they can ask for help from other members, or message the TA so that the task can be completed. If the problem cannot be resolved before the end set deadline, this will be added to the agenda as a discussion point for the next meeting. If a task is left unfinished due to a lack of effort or communication we will follow the procedure described in section 9: DEALING WITH CONFLICTS. Every finished task will be reviewed by members in the group that did not work on the specific task. Their feedback allows for a quality control and ensures that code is universally understood. This too makes future planning more easily done.

When all tasks are finished and an assignment needs to be handed in, every team member needs to review it and approve it before it can be handed in. Once that is achieved, the chair has the responsibility of submitting the assignment on behalf of the team.

5 BEHAVIOUR

In our team, we value a culture where everyone is treated equally and with respect. We see each team member as unique and important, and we welcome the different viewpoints and cultural backgrounds everyone brings to the table. While we expect everyone to act professionally, we also celebrate what makes each of us different.

We address disagreements by following a specific approach outlined in detail in Section 9: DEALING WITH CONFLICTS. The first step is for the disagreeing parties to talk out their differences directly. This allows each individual to present their viewpoint in a respectful manner. If this does not lead to an agreement, we introduce a "cooling-off" period of at least 4 hours. This gives everyone involved the chance to take a step back, and reflect on the discussion. The cooling-off period is also useful for de-escalation of any emotional tensions. If the disagreement persist, we move to a democratic voting process, adhering to our predefined voting system as explained in section 8: DECISION-MAKING. This ensures that the final decision aligns with the team's consensus. In cases where an agreement cannot be reached even after voting, we escalate the issue to a neutral party. In our case, our Teaching Assistant (TA) would provide us with their unbiased evaluation in order to solve the disagreement in a fair manner.

Regarding tardiness, arriving more than five minutes late without prior notification is treated with the same seriousness as any other breach of our code of conduct rules. For details on the consequences of such tardiness, please see Section 10: CONSEQUENCES.

6 COMMUNICATION

Our team is using various communication channels to ensure smooth collaboration and sharing information. Official announcements and important matters are done through **Mattermost** groups to reach all members of the team including the teaching assistant (TA). For ease of convenience and availability, **WhatsApp** groups are used for daily communication and general updates. Regular checks on these groups provide a means for quick exchanges.

Aside from the weekly mandatory meetings, we also use face-to-face meetings outside digital platforms which are arranged depending on personal preferences or locations in order to discuss project-specific details or work together on particular tasks. These meetings will be after the mandatory meeting and on Thursdays. Meanwhile, when only a few members want to have private conversations among themselves which may not be necessary to involve everybody in the group, we resort to WhatsApp private chats. There is our **Discord** server through which an online meeting can be organized as soon as possible whenever there is an emergency that calls for immediate attention. In Discord, you can set up multiple voice channels in one server. This makes it easy for different groups in your team, each with their own tasks, to communicate smoothly.

In the rare event that we are unable to reach a team member through our primary communication channels, such as Mattermost, WhatsApp, or in-person meetings, we resort to **Email** as a reliable means of contact. Additionally, following our behavioral code, we promptly inform our teaching assistant (TA) about the situation, ensuring that they are aware of any communication difficulties within the team. This ensures that important information is conveyed efficiently and that any potential issues with team members' accessibility are addressed promptly.

In addition the notes of all official meetings will be logged and be provided for the Ta and the team to review.

As a whole, our communication strategy encompasses both virtual and physical contacts suited to the kind of data being shared or discussed and its urgency thus fostering effective teamwork and productivity.

7 COMMITMENT

To maximize the quality of group work and the effectiveness of chairs/minute takers, our team encourages a collaborative approach. Firstly, we establish criteria for evaluating group work, focusing on many factors like contribution and adherence to previously set deadlines. By setting some minimum standards for teamwork, based on the minimum acceptable result specified in the course rubric, we ensure that everyone abides by the rules.

For chairs, we prioritize punctuality, ensuring that our meetings start on time, creating an environment where everyone's voice can be heard, and aiming for productive discussions. In our opinion, a good chair leads the meeting with efficiency, ensures all agenda items are addressed, and guides the team to achieving their weekly code contributions.

Regarding our minute takers, we recognize the importance of agenda edits, detailed meeting notes, and clear descriptions of discussions and decisions. A proficient minute taker will capture key points, weekly action items, and any unresolved issues accurately and objectively. The quality of minute taking is shown by how well the minutes reflect the meeting's objectives and facilitate future actions. We expect anyone who may have missed a meeting can catch up through skimming the meeting notes.

In addition to setting clear expectations for chairs and minute takers, we prioritize developing an atmosphere where constructive

feedback is welcomed. Our goal is to establish an environment where every team member feels comfortable providing feedback in a friendly manner, whether during meetings (remote or in-person) or through our communication channels. We consistently encourage feedback in all forms regarding the weekly minute-taker and chair. This ensures that opportunities for improvement are constantly identified and addressed for the future.

In assessing the effectiveness of both chairs and minute takers, we prioritize **results**. By focusing on the outcomes achieved in meetings and the clarity and usefulness of minutes, we ensure that our assessment remains outcome-oriented.

8 DECISION-MAKING

Our decision-making process utilizes a **customized voting system**, as outlined in previous sections. We employ a nuanced approach to consider all options. Initially, we aim to narrow down alternatives by identifying and eliminating less popular choices until we have a manageable number of options, typically 2 or 3. Throughout the whole process, we prioritize active listening to the individual who proposed each idea and the individuals that are directly affected by it, valuing their input and perspective. After inspection of the matter and discussion we aim to come to a **unanimous decision** but in more controversial cases where one of the team members has a different opinion we respect the opinion of the majority and accept a **5 to 1** voting result. More divided voting results, such as 4 to 2 and 3 to 3, are resolved by extensive discussion and repeating the poll to gain the acceptable result (unanimous decision or 5 to 1 majority).

Moreover, we always welcome and consider the opinion of our teaching assistant (TA), recognizing their valuable input and expertise. This approach ensures that decisions are made democratically while also taking into account diverse perspectives.

9 DEALING WITH CONFLICTS

When we deal with conflicts within our team, we use a specific and structured approach to resolve conflicts efficiently while maintaining positive relationships. Here's a breakdown of our standard conflict resolution approach:

(1) **Engage in direct discussion:** The first step is for the parties involved in the conflict to engage in a direct discussion. This ensures that every person's perspective and view is shared and considered by all parties involved. We believe that most disagreements stem from misunderstandings or lack of communication, and a conversation often leads to mutual understanding and resolution.

(2) **Cooling-off period:** In the case where a direct discussion has not led to an agreement, we introduce a cooling-off period. The duration of this period is flexible, with a minimum of four hours, to make sure any tension is deescalated. This time is not just for deescalation but gives the chance for each member to reflect on the other's viewpoint. We hope this will lead to a more constructive subsequent conversation.

(3) **Democratic voting process:** If the parties are still not able to come to an agreement, we employ a democratic voting process as outlined in section 8: DECISION-MAKING. This

ensures that every team member has a voice, and that the majority's opinion guides our path forward.

(4) **Escalation to a neutral third party:** In rare cases where the conflict continues even after voting, we escalate the issue to a neutral third party. This role is filled by our Teaching Assistant (TA), who can provide an unbiased evaluation of the conflict. The TA's input is not about taking sides but offering a new point of view and suggesting alternative solutions or compromises that had not yet been considered.

While the actions that should be taken in each step of the above protocol might differ in every situation, our team will stay true to this approach. We believe that by following these steps, we effectively address conflicts within our team while strengthening trust, cohesion, and mutual respect among members.

10 CONSEQUENCES

In this course, we've established a code of conduct that all team members agree upon. This includes being punctual and respectful. We consider being late more than five minutes without notice as unacceptable. However, if someone gives a heads-up about their delay, we'll take that into account. Additionally, we expect everyone to communicate respectfully, avoiding rudeness and unpleasantness. These guidelines help maintain a positive and productive atmosphere for everyone involved. As determined by the consensus of the entire team, the consequences for a participant failing to uphold above agreements are as follows:

- First Instance: The participant will receive an informal verbal warning by the current meeting's chair, and be reminded of the agreed-upon commitments. As mentioned before the team will initially , collectively, address any underlying reasons for the breach and work towards a resolution in a professional and friendly manner.
- Second Instance: If the participant fails to uphold an agreement again, they'll have to buy snacks, like chips, as a consequence. It's a simple way to remind everyone about their responsibilities and the importance of keeping our promises. We'll still work together to figure out what went wrong and how to fix it, but it's just a little reminder to stay focused.
- Further Action: If the breach of agreements severely impacts team cohesion, productivity, or trust (such as not showing up for a meeting at all without notice), the team reserves the right to escalate the matter to the teaching assistant (TA) and consequentially, if needed, to higher authorities for further intervention or disciplinary action.

It's crucial to note that these consequences are established with the intention of fostering accountability, maintaining a respectful and productive team environment, and upholding the integrity of our agreements. Moreover, the participant in question will be afforded the opportunity to provide input and address any concerns throughout this process.

11 OUTSIDE COLLABORATION

In addition to mandatory TA meetings that take place on Tuesdays, our team members are ready to dedicate extra time to ensure we deliver a shippable product by the end of the quarter. While we

acknowledge the importance of flexibility and efficiency in our meetings, the provision of two additional sessions affords dedicated time for addressing pressing matters and ensuring thorough alignment on key project details.

Following the meeting with our TA on Tuesdays, our team will extend the allocated slot to include an extra hour for project management purposes that do not require the TA's immediate assistance. On Thursdays, our team will hold an online session at 11 AM on Discord to discuss weekly requirements and designate the chair and note-taker for the forthcoming week.

However, we also want to add that there is no limit on the number of additional meetings we can schedule. We remain open to convening as many sessions as needed to effectively address challenges and capitalize on key opportunities. The meeting date and time would have to be agreed upon by each individual member at least two days beforehand.

Physical meetings will take place on campus in Flux Hall B. However, we are open to alternative locations if agreed upon by the majority of team members. Additionally, we are open to holding virtual meetings through platforms like Discord to optimize our team members' time usage and reduce travel time.

The agenda of each meeting will be tailored to the specific goals (and milestones set on GitLab), with all team members being given the opportunity to express their concerns or approvals.

In summary, while we outlined two extra weekly meetings, we are not opposed to increasing the number (in case it yields better results).