

## Third Year Project Assessment

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## 1 Proportions

Aspect	Proportion (%)
Report	55
Achievements	30
Screencast	15

Students will also take part in a Q&A session with the second marker only. This will give the student the opportunity to expand on their achievements on the project.

## 2 Summary of Assessments

Twelve marking criteria are proposed:

<b>Report</b>	Abstract and Introduction Background and Theory Technical Quality, Methodology and Evaluation Summary and Conclusions Presentation, Structure and Language
<b>Screencast</b>	Demonstrates the Achievements Use of the Medium Audience Structure and Flow
<b>Achievements</b>	Complexity Scale Achievement

### 3 Report

Reports are expected to be between 10,000 and 15,000 words long. Submissions significantly outside these guidelines will be penalised (see the “Presentation, structure and language” criteria).

For a small number of projects the given word limit may not be appropriate, in particular if the report is the only deliverable, or there is significant theoretical content. A student intending to submit a report longer than 15,000 words **must** have permission from their supervisor **prior** to submission to avoid this penalty.

Supervisors should get the students to summarise their work concisely – the above is not a get-out clause for students to avoid doing that work. It should be justified in terms of the nature of the project, rather than ‘my student has done a lot of good work and they should be allowed to go on about it’.

The assessment criteria attempt to accommodate different types of project (research, software development, teaching, etc.). For this reason, not all of the points mentioned will apply to a particular project. This will be taken into account in the marking.

References, appendices and figure/table captions are not included in the word count.

No tool is specified to produce the report (for example, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X or Microsoft Word), but the report’s appearance will be assessed under the “Presentation, structure and language” criteria. If using L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, consider using your university log-on for Overleaf (<https://www.overleaf.com/>). This allows you to give your supervisor access to your document to provide help.

The report should be **submitted in PDF format only**.

**IMPORTANT** Only the report itself is assessed in these criteria. The actual produced artefacts or the substance of a research project are assessed under Achievements.

**Guidance for markers on multi-item assessments** (for example, ‘Abstract and Introduction’): The scores for each item in an assessment can be averaged. For example, you may think that the abstract deserves a mark of 40% and the introduction 60%; consequently, the average of 50% can be given.

### 3.1 Abstract and Introduction (20%)

The abstract is expected to provide a precise and concise summary of the project including key results and/or achievements.

The introduction should set the scene and introduce the subject area of the work. This section should include a description of and motivation for the project. Aims and objectives, and success criteria should be given. A brief description of the evaluation strategy should be included. The structure of the report is normally described.

The introduction will not contain any background research – its purpose is to introduce the project to the reader.

#### Key assessment points:

- Demonstration of understanding the project
- Ability to explain ideas
- Appropriate level of technical detail
- Aims and objectives are stated
- Abstract summarises project and states key outcomes
- Summary of evaluation strategy

#### Failing: 00 – 20 – 39

There is no abstract. The introduction mentions that a project has been carried out, but is not very informative.

#### Poor: 40 – 45 – 49

The abstract indicates a project has been carried out. The introduction explains some of the project's aims.

#### Below Expectations: 50 – 55 – 59

The abstract indicates some achievements of the project and mentions a context. The introduction explains the project and its aims.

#### Expected: 60 – 65 – 69

The abstract gives a good overview of the project's achievements and describes the setting. The introduction explains the aims of the project within a wider context and indicates how the project might be evaluated.

#### Above Expectations: 70 – 75 – 79

The abstract gives a very good overview of the project's main achievements and explains the setting. The introduction sets the scene for the project and its aims and explains these very well and points at an evaluation strategy.

#### Excellent: 80 – 85 – 89

The abstract gives a thorough overview covering most of the project's achievements and explains its setting very well. The introduction explains the setting of the project, supported by suitable literature, derives the aims from there, and explains how an evaluation strategy was chosen and why.

#### Outstanding: 90 – 95 – 100

The abstract gives a precise and comprehensive overview of the project's achievements in its proper context. The introduction gives a comprehensive and precise account of the project's setting firmly based on peer-reviewed literature and derives an evaluation strategy derived from such literature.

### 3.2 Background and Theory (20%)

This should include a detailed description and should demonstrate an understanding of the topic/problems, and an awareness of the solutions to the technical/scientific challenges. Suitable background material and appropriate good quality references should be given that put the work of the project in context. In the main, the references should come from peer-reviewed publications.

Any theory (or other detail) that is presented should be relevant, should demonstrate an understanding of the topic, and the material provided here (and in any descriptions of the design) should allow the work to be reproduced by a peer. Any background that is given should be relevant to the project and not be just ‘padding’.

#### Key assessment points:

- Awareness of the subject area
- Understanding of the subject area
- Definitions and concepts are described
- Use of peer-reviewed references

#### **Failing:** 00 – 20 – 39

The background of the project is barely mentioned.

#### **Poor:** 40 – 45 – 49

There is very little indicating the project’s setting. A weak understanding of the subject area is apparent.

#### **Below Expectations:** 50 – 55 – 59

An attempt is made to describe the setting of the project in some detail. A limited understanding of the subject area is demonstrated.

#### **Expected:** 60 – 65 – 69

There is a description of the setting of the project based on the literature without major omissions. The content and relevance of the included literature is mostly understood.

#### **Above Expectations:** 70 – 75 – 79

The setting of the project is described based on the scientific literature in a balanced and comprehensive way. The content and relevance of the included literature is understood.

#### **Excellent:** 80 – 85 – 89

The setting of the project is described, based in the majority on peer-reviewed literature with an appropriate level of detail covering all relevant developments. The content and relevance of the included literature is very well understood.

#### **Outstanding:** 90 – 95 – 100

There is a precise and exhaustive description of the project’s setting firmly based on peer-reviewed literature. An excellent understanding of the content and relevance of the included literature is demonstrated.

### 3.3 Technical Quality, Methodology and Evaluation (20%)

This assesses the **description** of the main output from the project (for example, software, research, hardware, teaching concepts).

Where appropriate, the student has used standard accepted methods of describing designs (e.g. architecture diagrams, UML, database schemas, algorithms, mathematics, etc.). Alternatively, an attempt has been made to formalise the description.

This part should cover steps taken to evaluate, test or compare the work to the state of the art. Does the student demonstrate a level of understanding of the theory, design and technical aspects of the project? Key decisions should be highlighted and justified.

An evaluation of the work should be included. This includes correctness, usability, fitness for purpose, ranking with similar work, and so on. It may include manual and automated testing, user surveys, and some sort of performance metric, for example. Has the student demonstrated a suitable level of critical analysis and evaluation?

As many different types of project can be performed, not all of the criteria here will apply to every project. The markers will take into account what is relevant for a particular project type. In particular, a report will not be marked down for a missing criteria that is not appropriate for the project type.

#### Key assessment points:

- Understanding of the material
- Technical quality
- Requirements analysis
- Use of design methodologies as appropriate
- Testing as appropriate
- Suitable evaluation of the work
- Critical analysis

#### Failing: 00 – 20 – 39

There is very little content, and what there is indicates a lack of effort or lack of understanding.

#### Poor: 40 – 45 – 49

An effort has been made to describe the technical aspects of the project. However, it may not be very complete, thorough or clear.

#### Below Expectations: 50 – 55 – 59

The technical aspects of the project have been described using diagrams and so on, where appropriate. However the detail of the testing and evaluation is limited. The student has clearly described the design of the project but checking its correctness and comparing to other work was a bit of an afterthought.

#### Expected: 60 – 65 – 69

The technical aspects have been described well and a good understanding is demonstrated. Testing and evaluation is well thought-through and described. Additionally, there are few 'missing' tests. There may be some questionable design and testing decisions, but overall, the report could be used to reproduce the work.

#### Above Expectations: 70 – 75 – 79

The technical aspects have been described very well and a very good understanding is demonstrated. A level of formality has been applied (via accepted design principles, for example) allowing for a concise but thorough description.

Testing and evaluation is very well thought-through and described. The report could be used to reproduce the work.

#### Excellent: 80 – 85 – 89

In addition to the previous band:

The designs are very well considered, clear, and easy to understand. The output has been evaluated to a very high level (testing, questionnaires, comparison with similar work). The student demonstrates a very thorough understanding of the technical details of their work and has been able to explain this very clearly so that the reader can also understand it.

#### Outstanding: 90 – 95 – 100

In addition to the previous band:

There is very little to fault. The writing demonstrates an extremely thorough understanding of the project work and the field in which it sits. Explanations of the technical details, work of the project and evaluation are exceptional.

### 3.4 Summary and Conclusions (20%)

This section includes the conclusions and a summary of achievements, reflection, identification of improvements, and further work. The conclusions presented must be based on the work done in the project. The suggested further work should be substantial, not simply ‘more of the same’.

#### Key assessment points:

- Summary of the work
- Discussion of achievements
- Critical reflection
- Ideas for further work
- Alignment with abstract and introduction

#### **Failing:** 00 – 20 – 39

Little attempt has been made to summarise the work and/or draw conclusions.

#### **Poor:** 40 – 45 – 49

The section is likely to be brief and not provide the reader with a clear idea as to what has been done or achieved. Any suggestions for future work will be limited in scope.

#### **Below Expectations:** 50 – 55 – 59

Some effort has been made to draw the work of the project together but it is rather superficial. There is not much in the way of critical reflection. Ideas for further work are not very ambitious.

#### **Expected:** 60 – 65 – 69

The work has been well summarised. There is a critical analysis of the work and a number of improvements that can be made have been given. A couple of ideas for further work are detailed which have some ambition but are not too far removed from the scope of the work.

#### **Above Expectations:** 70 – 75 – 79

The work has been very well summarised. There is a critical analysis of the work in a thorough and honest way. The ability to see weaknesses is apparent and good solutions to problems are given. Several ideas for future work are detailed which are ambitious, relevant and well thought out.

#### **Excellent:** 80 – 85 – 89

In addition to the previous band:

A good knowledge of the field has allowed for several ideas for future work which can realistically take the project further.

#### **Outstanding:** 90 – 95 – 100

The summary and conclusions are excellent in precision and coverage. It is clear that the student has mastered the material and has given a definitive set of conclusions and a well thought-through plan for future work to reach definitive conclusions.

### 3.5 Presentation, Structure and Language (20%)

This assesses the organisation and structure of the report. Is the report laid out in a logical style with appropriate chapters, sections and subsections? Are the references complete and properly formatted? Are figures, tables and equations properly numbered and appropriate for the work? Is the report attractive (good mathematics, images of suitable resolution or scalable graphics, figures of a reasonable size)? Does the report demonstrate a proper use of the English language, how comprehensible is the prose, how clear are explanations, are there any spelling and punctuation errors, is the report professionally presented?

The report should be between 10,000 – 15,000 words in length. This does not include the abstract, references and appendices.

#### Key assessment points:

- Structure
- Layout and flow
- Formatting of citations and references
- Numbering of chapters, sections, figures, etc.
- Suitable figures and tables
- Grammar, spelling, punctuation
- Report length: 10,000 – 15,000 words, unless supervisor allows exemption

#### Failing: 00 – 20 – 39

The length guidelines have been ignored (outside of the range 8,500 – 16,500). The structure is not logical and/or does not flow well. The writing is poor with numerous mistakes on most pages.

#### Poor: 40 – 45 – 49

Any deviation from the length guidelines is minor (within the range 8,500 – 16,500). All of the expected elements are present, but the writing shows deficiencies on a larger scale than the occasional typo or badly worded sentence. Very little attention has been paid to formatting and attractiveness of the document.

#### Below Expectations: 50 – 55 – 59

Any deviation from the length guidelines is very minor. Structure is adequate with all of the expected elements present. The writing is basically sound but errors are noticeable. Formatting of citations and references are inconsistent, unattractive or make reading difficult. An effort has been made to provide information in the form of figures and tables.

#### Expected: 60 – 65 – 69

The length is within the guidelines. The structure and presentation of the report is good. The chapters (sections) are appropriate for the work. The references are mostly correctly formatted. The writing might not be perfect but overall is entirely readable. Technical terms and abbreviations will be mostly defined. The writing is supplemented by an appropriate amount of figures and tables, and they are easily interpreted, with reasonable captions. Figures and tables are mostly referred to in the text.

#### Above Expectations: 70 – 75 – 79

In addition to the previous band:

The writing is perfectly readable with at most a few minor errors. The structure and presentation of the report is very logical and clear. The references are almost always correctly formatted. A good effort has been made to complement the text with correct mathematics typesetting, good quality images and figures, figures of a suitable size, and so on. Technical terms and abbreviations are always defined. Figures and tables are always referred to in the text.

#### Excellent: 80 – 85 – 89

In addition to the previous band:

The writing is very readable with only a few sentences causing a re-read due to the use of language. The references are always correctly formatted. A professional 'eye' is demonstrated with regards to mathematics typesetting, figures and tables. There are not many occasions when the layout and formatting causes annoyance to the reader.

#### Outstanding: 90 – 95 – 100

There is very little to fault. A broad vocabulary and a thorough understanding of the English language is evident. Beautifully presented.



## 4 Screenshot

The screenshot is the student's opportunity to *sell* their work in an interesting and entertaining way. The student might imagine that they own a small company and are producing an online sales video to promote their work/product. It might consist of a recorded Powerpoint-type presentation with a voice-over, but a high-quality advertising-type production will gain the higher marks in 'Use of the medium'. However, the viewer (marker, third-year student) is one that is interested in the technical aspects and achievements of the project. The screenshot might also include a brief demonstration of any produced artefacts (but it should be made clear whether or not demonstrations are of the student's own work). The total length of the screenshot should be in the 7 – 9 minute range.

Part of the reason for doing a screenshot is because lots of companies now use social media for promoting their products and services. Being creative and entertaining in your presentations will show yourself in the best light, be this for selling your company's products or for selling yourself to a potential employer.

The screenshot should have a logical flow and consist of a beginning, a middle and end. It is used to give someone a quick introduction to your project and what you have achieved. The markers will probably watch the screenshot before reading your report, so it should help them to get an understanding of what your project is about.

## 4.1 Demonstrates the Achievements (25%)

The achievements of the project should be described. This may include a brief demonstration of any artefact or the results of any research.

### Key assessment points:

- Gives context for the project
- Demonstration of achievements
- Clarity of explanation
- Supporting theory

#### **Failing:** 00 – 20 – 39

No context for the project is given. It is difficult to tell what has been achieved. No theory is discussed.

#### **Poor:** 40 – 45 – 49

Some context is given. It is clear that a project has been carried out that does something. A little background theory is mentioned.

#### **Below Expectations:** 50 – 55 – 59

The topic area of the project is clear and one may see some of what has been done. Theory is touched on that has relevance to the project.

#### **Expected:** 60 – 65 – 69

A context is provided for the project and the main achievements are described. Some relevant background theory and how it relates to the project is discussed.

#### **Above Expectations:** 70 – 75 – 79

The main achievements of the project are well set within a context. The underlying theory is described and is clearly explained.

#### **Excellent:** 80 – 85 – 89

A comprehensive account of the project's achievement within a wider context is given which interweaves well with some of the underlying theory. Explanation is clear.

#### **Outstanding:** 90 – 95 – 100

The scene for the project is set and a precise and concise account of the achievements is well supported by some of the underlying theory. Explanation is very clear.

## 4.2 Use of the Medium (25%)

This assesses how well the medium of a video has been used. The screencast may be a set of slides with a voice-over, a TED-type talk (interspersed with slides), an advertising-type production with multiple scenes, etc. A clear, interesting video with some originality and creativity can be produced within a reasonable time.

From the student's point of view, a balance should be made between the time spent producing the screencast and the number of marks available.

### Key assessment points:

- Use of visuals
- Audio quality and sound level
- Editing as appropriate (e.g. removal of long pauses)
- Creativity
- Originality
- Professionalism

#### **Failing:** 00 – 20 – 39

There is a video but very little effort has been put in. Sound is at a such a low level that makes listening almost impossible.

#### **Poor:** 40 – 45 – 49

There is a video with visuals and audio. The student has put little effort into designing the content and appearance of the video. Editing is likely to be non-existent.

#### **Below Expectations:** 50 – 55 – 59

The visuals help the viewer understand the narrative and the audio delivers said narrative. Some effort has been put into keeping the viewer interested.

#### **Expected:** 60 – 65 – 69

There is a video with suitable visuals and audio at a consistent level that is always clear. The description is relevant to the visuals. The content is interesting and perhaps entertaining. Unnecessary pauses have been cut from the recording. Audio levels are good and few verbal mistakes occur. Slides with a voice-over are acceptable at this level as long as a good effort has been put into the creation of the slides.

#### **Above Expectations:** 70 – 75 – 79

The visuals have been well chosen to suit the narrative and significantly strengthen the account; the audio is in addition well-delivered. Creativity has been demonstrated by providing something more than slides with a voice-over. Perhaps a mood is created with subtle background music (if the student intends to publish their recording, royalty-free or public-domain music should be used).

#### **Excellent:** 80 – 85 – 89

In addition, the visuals look professional and the chosen wording reaches a professional standard. A high-level of creativity and originality is shown and the recording is equivalent to a good-quality video on video-sharing website.

#### **Outstanding:** 90 – 95 – 100

In addition, the screencast combines the audio and visuals into a seamless whole. The production is entertaining and close in quality to what might be produced professionally.

### 4.3 Audience (25%)

The audience for the screencast is a typical third-year student. The technical details should be aimed at a third-year who has not studied the particular field at third-year level. For this reason, jargon and abbreviations may have to be explained. However, the content should not be over-simplified.

#### Key assessment points:

- Awareness of audience
- Appropriate level of technical detail

#### **Failing:** 00 – 20 – 39

The screencast takes no notice of its audience. It is pitched at a person much below, or much above, the typical final-year computer science undergraduate.

#### **Poor:** 40 – 45 – 49

An attempt has been made to address an audience.

#### **Below Expectations:** 50 – 55 – 59

The screencast is mostly understandable by the target audience.

#### **Expected:** 60 – 65 – 69

The screencast is suitable for the target audience. It does not shy away from some technical material and makes some attempt to simplify the material for those with no knowledge of the field.

#### **Above Expectations:** 70 – 75 – 79

In addition, more relevant technical material is provided and explained at a suitable level for the audience but could be done more concisely.

#### **Excellent:** 80 – 85 – 89

In addition, the overall narrative connects with material the target audience already knows.

#### **Outstanding:** 90 – 95 – 100

In addition, the narrative is utterly compelling for the target audience.

#### 4.4 Structure and Flow (25%)

The screencast should be well structured. There will be a beginning, a middle, and an end (brief introduction, the main content, and a brief conclusion). It should flow well with each discussion point following on from previous points. The text content on the screen should complement the voice-over – the reader cannot read more than is possible in the duration of a slide, for example. There are exceptions to this: the slide may contain a table of results, but the student is just highlighting particular values.

##### Key assessment points:

- Structure
- Overall narrative
- Clarity of speech, appropriate pace
- Entertainment

##### **Failing:** 00 – 20 – 39

The length guidelines have been ignored (outside the range 6 – 10 minutes). There is no obvious structure to the presentation.

##### **Poor:** 40 – 45 – 49

Deviation from the length guidelines is minor (outside the range 6.5 – 9.5 minutes). There is some structure – it has a beginning, a middle and an end, but less structure within these parts.

##### **Below Expectations:** 50 – 55 – 59

Deviation from the length guidelines is minor (outside the range 6.5 – 9.5 minutes). There is an overall narrative but the flow is sometimes a bit haphazard. Pace may be too fast or too slow.

##### **Expected:** 60 – 65 – 69

The length is within the guidelines (7 – 9 minutes). There is a clear structure with introduction and conclusions. The viewer is taken clearly through the narrative. Pace is good.

##### **Above Expectations:** 70 – 75 – 79

The length is within the guidelines (7 – 9 minutes). The structure and flow is chosen to support the overall narrative very well. The viewer can easily follow the narrative and is kept interested.

##### **Excellent:** 80 – 85 – 89

In addition, the structure and flow is ideally paced to deliver a lot of information in a very clear way. The viewer is kept interested and entertained.

##### **Outstanding:** 90 – 95 – 100

In addition, the viewer is sad to have reached the end of the screencast.

## 5 Achievements

The Achievement mark is based on the intellectual effort that has been put into the project work itself (**not** the report and the screencast). For instance, a student may have put great effort into their work and produced something that is complex and/or novel, but they may not necessarily be able to express themselves effectively in the report and screencast.

## 5.1 Complexity (33%)

This assesses the difficulty of the work. For example, does the work basically consist of simple web pages or does it involve the development of original algorithms to solve a difficult problem?

The score given in the Complexity assessment is independent of the Scale assessment – the work might get a low Complexity score for the development of simple html pages, but if many such web pages are created to build a large website, then the Scale score can be higher.

### Key assessment points:

- Difficulty level of work
- Use of existing ideas
- Originality

#### **Failing:** 00 – 20 – 39

The project only relies on material from the Computing A-level, or similar.

#### **Poor:** 40 – 45 – 49

The project relies only on material taught in the first two years of the degree programme.

#### **Below Expectations:** 50 – 55 – 59

The project builds on material similar to what is taught in a third year unit.

#### **Expected:** 60 – 65 – 69

The project brings together ideas from several areas, or delves fairly deeply into one technical area.

#### **Above Expectations:** 70 – 75 – 79

The project solves a significant problem or combines ideas from several areas in an interesting way. The project makes some use of material from the scientific literature.

#### **Excellent:** 80 – 85 – 89

Additionally the project builds on material from the scientific literature.

#### **Outstanding:** 90 – 95 – 100

Additionally, the project solves a long-standing hard problem or combines ideas from several areas in an original way.

## 5.2 Scale (33%)

The Scale criteria assesses the amount of work that has gone into the project work itself. Could a good student have done this work in few weeks, or has an obviously large amount of time and effort gone into the project (in reading, thinking, experimenting, designing, developing, testing, and so on)?

The score given in the Complexity assessment is independent of the Scale assessment – the work might get a low Complexity score for the development of simple html pages, but if many such web pages are created to build a large website, then the Scale score can be higher.

### Key assessment points:

- Amount of work
- Difficulties overcome
- Acquiring of knowledge
- Breadth of coverage (e.g. in experiments, development or testing)

#### **Failing:** 00 – 20 – 39

The amount work performed was minimal.

#### **Poor:** 40 – 45 – 49

It can be seen that something has been produced, but the time expended was minimal. For example, software may have been created that could have come from modified snippets of code on the internet.

#### **Below Expectations:** 50 – 55 – 59

The output of the project took a reasonable amount of time to produce, but there is not much evidence that effort was put into overcoming any difficulties or trying out different methods.

#### **Expected:** 60 – 65 – 69

The project took a good amount of time to achieve (including any learning, research, implementation and/or analysis and creativity). It can be seen that there various difficulties have been analysed and overcome.

#### **Above Expectations:** 70 – 75 – 79

A considerable effort has been put into the project. Difficult problems have been overcome and the solutions have been demonstrated in some way so that they can be repeated.

#### **Excellent:** 80 – 85 – 89

In addition, there has been some original thought. The ideas behind the project are not just a repeat of some existing work – there has been a good effort to analyse and build upon other works. The outputs clearly show the amount of work involved and they are complete and polished.

#### **Outstanding:** 90 – 95 – 100

In addition, there is evidence that ownership has been taken of the problems. More reading has been performed in and around the topic so that a full understanding has been developed of where the work sits. It is obvious that something much greater could be delivered given more time.



### 5.3 Achievement (34%)

The report will have described the aims of the project and discussed if, and how well, the aims were met. The stated aims should be ones that would take time and effort to achieve.

This criteria assesses how well the aims were met. It combines how difficult the stated aims were and how much has been achieved trying to meet those aims. Simple aims that were easily met receive a relatively low score. Difficult aims that were not met, but a lot was achieved trying to meet them, may score relatively highly. Very difficult aims that were met will score even higher.

If some of the aims stated at the start of the project were not addressed, it may be tempting to completely ignore those aims in the report and screencast. This is valid, although it should be noted that it may mean that the remaining aims are not substantial enough.

#### Key assessment points:

- Achievements
- Difficulty of achievements

#### **Failing:** 00 – 20 – 39

The project fails to meet most of the original aims.

#### **Poor:** 40 – 45 – 49

The project delivers some of the set aims.

#### **Below Expectations:** 50 – 55 – 59

The project meets most of the set aims, or there is a compulsive reason why it did not.

#### **Expected:** 60 – 65 – 69

For all the the set aims the project either met them or there is a well-documented compulsive reason why it did not.

#### **Above Expectations:** 70 – 75 – 79

In addition, the given objectives were challenging.

#### **Excellent:** 80 – 85 – 89

In addition, the presented solution is convincing and based on suitable principles from the literature.

#### **Outstanding:** 90 – 95 – 100

In addition, as far as developed, the provided solution is hard to improve upon.