

# **L4 project workshop**



# Concrete Purpose

Share ideas about project supervision

Give context to new supervisors

Suggest things that I can include in taught material to all of Level 4

# Abstract Purpose

Improve supervisor happiness and consistency of supervision

Increase project quality: better products, dissertations, more professional students

Reduce student stress levels and increase satisfaction

Consider the role and philosophy of the individual project; “the Glasgow model”

# Overview

0. Introductory info

**1. Timeline discussion:** How to help students plan for and work steadily throughout the year?

2. Thoughts from experienced supervisors

**3. Research discussion:** How can projects help research and vice-versa?

**4. Supervision discussion:** Discussion of different approaches to meetings, what works well, what doesn't.

4. Feedback on improving taught portion

**5. Marking:** how do we mark projects? How can it be done (more) efficiently and fairly?

# Level 4 Honours project

Individual project: each student works on a independent topic.

**Credits:** 40 credits; 400 hours work; 33% of Level 4, **19.8% of Honours grade**

**Interaction:** 30 min. meetings, weekly, x 24: 12 hours per student

**Output:** 40 page dissertation: 1 page per credit

**Marking:** Independently double marked and reconciled based on dissertation

85% dissertation [double marked]

10% professional conduct / 5% presentation [single marked]

# What are students supposed to do?

**Manage** and organise a large independent solo piece of work.

**Choose among technologies**, tools and approaches and apply them effectively.

**Synthesise technical skills** appropriately to address a single challenging problem.

Develop a substantial product which **demonstrates technical achievement** in computer science.

**Appropriately evaluate** the outcome of their work.

**Conduct themselves in a professional manner**, taking responsibility for the progress of the project, recording their time and effectively using their supervisor's input.

**Write a coherent, literate dissertation** that documents the project, justifies decisions made and sets their work in context.

**Present their work orally** to a technical audience, communicating their project precisely and fluently.

# Supervisor's Moodle

... >Level 4 - H General and Projects > Projects > Level 4 Project Supervisors  
(key is 'L4projects')

## Level 4 Project Supervisors



[Dashboard](#) > [My courses](#) > [College of Science and Engineering](#) > [Schools](#) > [Computing Science](#) > [Level 4 - H General and Projects](#) > [Projects](#) > [Level 4 Project Supervisors](#)

 **Turnitin is replacing Urkund** for similarity checking within the University. Refer to the [LEADS Support Pages](#) for more information.

### General

#### Level 4 Projects

Information for project supervisors

Level 4 Coordinator: John Williamson [johnh.williamson@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:johnh.williamson@glasgow.ac.uk)

This page collects general information to support supervisors for Level 4 individual projects.

#### Marking, proposals, allocation

All details on specific projects are held on the SoCS [student project system](#). This is where projects proposals are entered, where allocations are shown and where projects marks are entered.



[Staff Guide](#)

Written guide for supervisors.



[Marking scheme](#)

# Staff guide

Detailed guidance on projects on Moodle

If something is **not** on there, let me know.

You can also see on Moodle:

**Student guide** (that all students *should* have read)

**Marking scheme**

**Timeline + FAQ**

## L4 project staff guidance (2018-2019)

### General

Level 4 individual projects run through both semesters of every Level 4 students' course. Each project is supervised by members of staff in the School. Projects are allocated before students leave Level 3 and are undertaken from Week 1 of Level 4 (usually around the middle of September). Projects are submitted around in the middle of March.

The individual project is worth 40 credits, or 33% of the standard 120 credit Level 4 programme.

Supervisors provide guidance throughout the duration project, via weekly meetings with their students. The final product is assessed via a dissertation, a small presentation component, and an evaluation of student professional conduct.

### Allocation

Staff will need to propose ~7-8 projects they would be willing to supervise (numbers will vary slightly from year to year with class size and staff complement).

Project proposals are entered on the LTC system <https://gaua.dcs.gla.ac.uk/studentprojects>  
See the end of this document for example project proposals.

During the selection period students rank projects. Automatic allocation is performed, based on preferences and staff load-balancing. This assigns projects to supervisors, keeping the number of projects assigned to supervisors as equally balanced as possible. The allocation is **final** and will not be changed after the fact.

# Recent changes

## 2018/2019

- (+) Projects allocated before summer
- (+) 8 hours taught material (4h lectures in September and December)
  - Planning, development process, good meeting practice, writing guide, presentation guide
- (+) Firmer detailed guidelines on professional conduct
- (+) Updated dissertation template

## 2019/2020

- (+) Mandatory lightweight time log for students
- (+) Supervisor-fit questionnaire
- (-) No videos



# Future changes

2020/2021 (without SIT)

**(+) Reader load goes down massively / supervisor load drops**

(+) Allocate projects in April instead of February

(+) Allocate readers before semester starts

*(?) Two meetings with reader instead of supervisor (e.g. wk 7 & wk 18)*

*(?) Some assessed submission in December [but then we need to mark it...]*

*(?) Improvements to marking process (more discriminating grades, more robust reconciliation, without increasing workload)*

*(?) replace presentation*

# **Taught portion (think throughout)**

Since last year, the project coordinator gives lectures on the L4 projects.

4 hours in Week 1 / 4 hours in Week 11

What should I tell students in Week 1?

What would help most?

What weaknesses are systematic?

# Discussion: Helping students plan

Where would you expect project students to be throughout the year? What stops/helps them get there?

(initial dev.)	(end of term)	(Christmas)	(mid S2)	(2 weeks before deadline)
Week 2	Week 10	Week 13	Week 18	Week 22

# Results

Week 2

Week 10

Week 13

Week 18

Week 22

# Thoughts of experienced supervisors

David, Simon and Christos

# **Discussion: How to supervise day-to-day?**

What is your role as supervisor?

What happens in meetings?

What works well? What typically goes wrong?

What approaches/techniques have made supervision easier/better?

# Discussion: Projects to research?

How have you used projects to help your research? (and how has your research helped projects...)

Projects that have gone to publication? Explored new ideas?

What are the risks? When does it not contribute to research?

# **Taught portion: responses**

What should I tell students in Week 1? What would help most?

What weaknesses are systematic?



# Discussion: Marking

How do we tell a good project from a bad project? Or rather “Excellent” from “Very Good” or “Good”. Are there hallmarks of excellence (or non-excellence)?

What makes a good mark sheet?

How should reconciliation work?