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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Subject: recommendation letter for Ilyass Taouil

It is my pleasure to write this letter for Ilyass Taouil, who was a student in the Machine Learning class I instruct at the University of Leeds, and did his final project with me. I have known Ilyass for a little over one semester, but I have had the opportunity to interact with him beyond the class. He was one of the top students in the module, and immediately stood out for his passion and deep understanding of the subject.

I supervise a student robot team, where we apply AI and Machine Learning to mobile robots (mostly a PAL Robotics TIAGo) in the realm of service robotics. Ilyass approached me asking to join the team, being happy to work on the robot in his spare time. I think that this speaks to his motivation and curiosity, which I have also seen in action for his final-year project.

He designed, implemented and evaluated a human-aware navigation module for the robot. He experimented with several computer vision and machine learning techniques to identify people in both images and 3D point clouds, in order to estimate their position with respect to the robot, and incorporate that information into the navigation module. The project was highly successful, and won a joint first place for the best final project of the whole faculty of Engineering.

Ilyass is highly intelligent, and extremely technically capable. Week after week he has been making consistent progress on his work, overcoming autonomously every encountered difficulty. He has quickly learned to program for the Robot Operating System (ROS), and is well versed in several programming languages. He easily studied and applied research from navigation, computer vision and machine learning. He is creative and capable of critical thinking.

He has worked with his colleagues in the robot team, showing he can effectively work in team. He has also become one of the leaders of the group, and other students have gone to him from help, recognising him as their mentor.

His written and oral communication skills are excellent and I never had any problem communicating with him.

From a personal point of view, he is a very enjoyable person, with whom it easy to spend both working and leisure time. It was always a pleasure to have him around.

I think that Ilyass has demonstrated his passion for research and ability to think critically, and has emerged among his peers at Leeds. He was an invaluable member of our lab, and I was sorry to see him go. On the other hand, I am glad that he has decided to further his education with post-graduate studies, and I most strongly recommend him for your program. I would be very happy to have him as one of my post-graduate students, and I think this is one of the most significant assertions I can make.

Yours sincerely,

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