

MADA Graduate Research Team – New System Overview

Project Description

MADA Graduate Research is a subsidiary organisation of Monash University tasked with managing the progress of student's PhD studies. They aim to provide support to students to facilitate the successful completion of their PhDs. There are currently 78 students enrolled in the program. Charli, the current head of the team, has approached our development team with concerns regarding MADA's existing paper-based system for scheduling PhD progress review meetings, called "milestones", with students.

A milestone meeting consists of one student, up to two supervisors and three review panellists. Students will submit their current draft of their PhD prior to the meeting for review by the panel members who will then provide feedback on students' progress during the meeting. If the panel is satisfied with the students' progress they may continue to the next stage of their studies, otherwise the student must revise their research and schedule a new meeting. A student will attend a minimum of three milestone meetings, one for each stage of their research including a confirmation, mid candidature, and final review.

Charli's current system includes a mix of excel spreadsheets and paper forms to organise meetings with email as the primary means of communication between attendees. The existing process is disorganised and time consuming for staff. During the busiest times of year milestone meetings are often delayed or forgotten. Staff and candidates do not receive notifications and meeting invitations in a timely manner. Students' documentation is often lost within the large number of other emails received by staff.

Charli would like our team to develop a single centralised digital system to organise the scheduling of meetings, reminder notifications for attendees and student documentation.

Expected System Capabilities (Functional Requirements)

No.	Requirement
1.0	Manage PhD Student Information
1.1	Store data concerning PhD students in system, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student ID • First Name • Family Name • Student Email • Mailing Address
1.2	Store data concerning PhD supervisors and Panellists, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff ID • First Name • Family Name • Staff Email • Office phone number • Office room number • Milestones completed (total across multiple students this calendar year) • Expertise code(s) (up to 5)
1.3	Store data concerning PhD progress, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD topic • Expertise code (only one) • PhD start date • PhD end date • Milestone Dates (up to 3) • PhD status (ongoing or terminated)
2.0	Organise Meeting
2.1	Organise potential meeting dates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email reminder to students 8 weeks prior to milestone date • Accepts at least three suggested meeting times • If no time suggested 6 weeks prior, send weekly email reminders to student AND supervisors • If no time suggested 4 weeks prior, send email alert to admins
2.2	Allow Supervisors to confirm availability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email reminder to supervisor when student suggests meeting time • Supervisor confirms or rejects time using system • If no confirmation is given, reminder repeats weekly • If still no confirmation 4 weeks prior, send email to alert admins
3.0	Select Panel Members
3.1	Allow Supervisors to recommend review panellists (up to 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility req. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be expert in same field (expertise code) as student • Must have done <12 milestone meetings in last 12 months • May choose not to recommend any panellists
3.2	Allow Admin to select panel members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can view recommendations made by supervisors • May choose to confirm some or all of supervisor's recommendations • Submits preferred selection of three panellists
3.3	Invite Panel members to the meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email meeting invitation to chosen panellists

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel member candidates confirm availability for each 3 days • If no response after 3 days, send daily reminders • Once all panellists respond, alert system admin
4.0	Finalise Panel Members
4.1	Remove panel members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send alert to admin for panel members who cannot participate • Allow admin to remove panel candidates • All 3 panel members must be available same time and date
4.2	Add new panel members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admin staff to choose invite replacement panel members for those who are unavailable • Repeat step 3.3 for each • Meeting cannot be finalised until all 3 panel members have RSVP
5.0	Finalise Meeting
5.1	Select location, start admin tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once all 3 panel members respond in affirmative for attendance, send admin alert to find meeting location and organise amenities • Includes checklist for tasks including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech support • Catering • Stationary • Send second reminder if admin forgets
5.2	Send final meeting invitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once date, time and location of meeting are arranged, send personalised emails to attendees • Emails include the following details <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role during meeting • Tasks to do before meeting (with tick box system) • Reminder sent if they fail to complete tasks
6.0	Conduct Meeting
6.1	Before the meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow students to submit documentation for review • Must send at least one week before for panel to read before meeting
6.2	After the meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow panel members to record meeting outcome and comments • Feedback is entered at end of meeting • Result is either satisfactory or unsatisfactory
6.3	Manage unsatisfactory progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If student fails to meet milestone requirements, allow panel members to schedule a follow meeting with next 8 weeks • Send email to student immediately afterwards with milestone result
7.0	Cancel Meeting
7.1	Allow meeting attendees to cancel meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If any attendee cannot participate for whatever reason, the meeting must be rescheduled to a later date • However, students can only cancel for reasons not related to their PhD as meeting aims to address such issues.

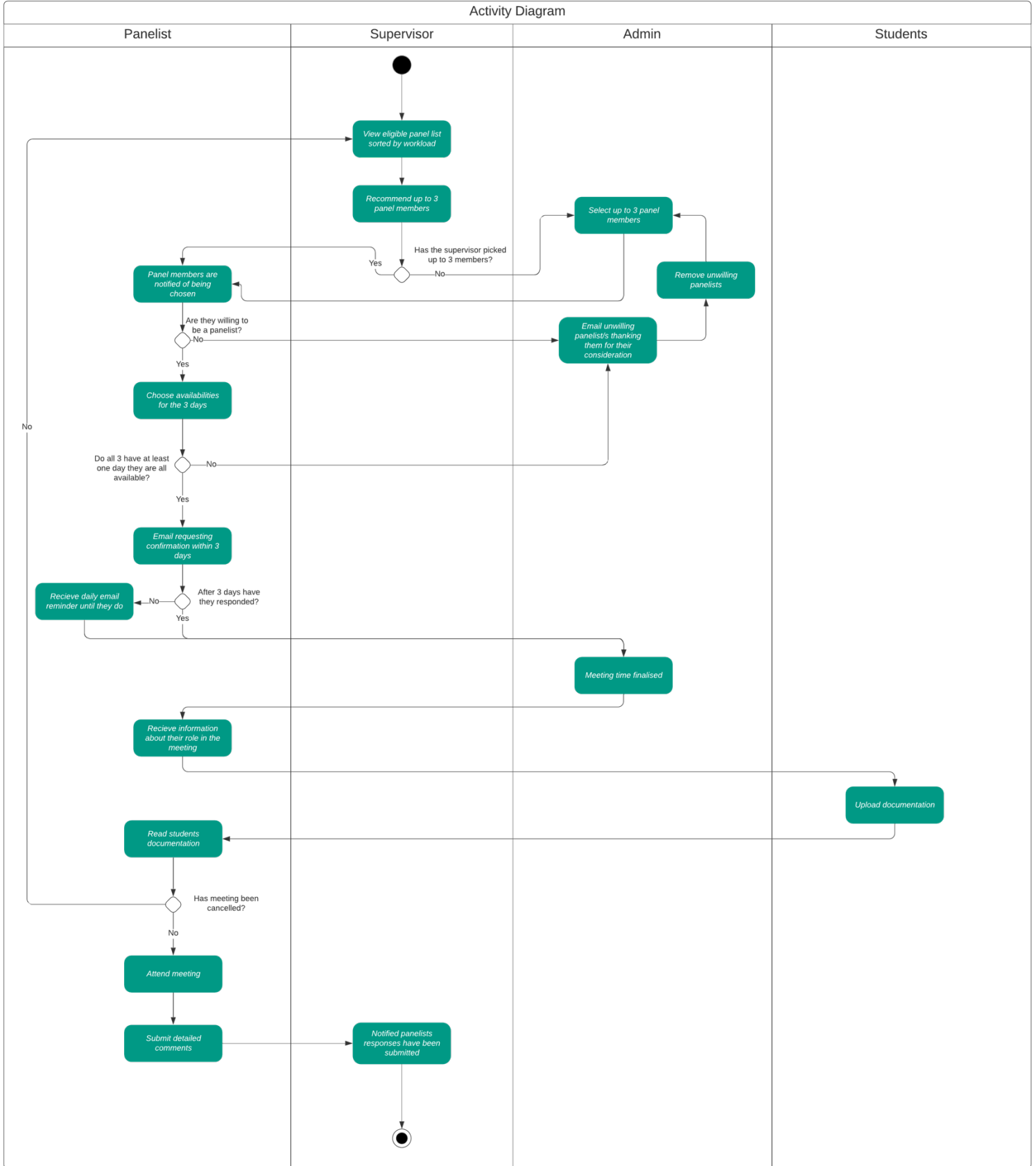
Assumptions

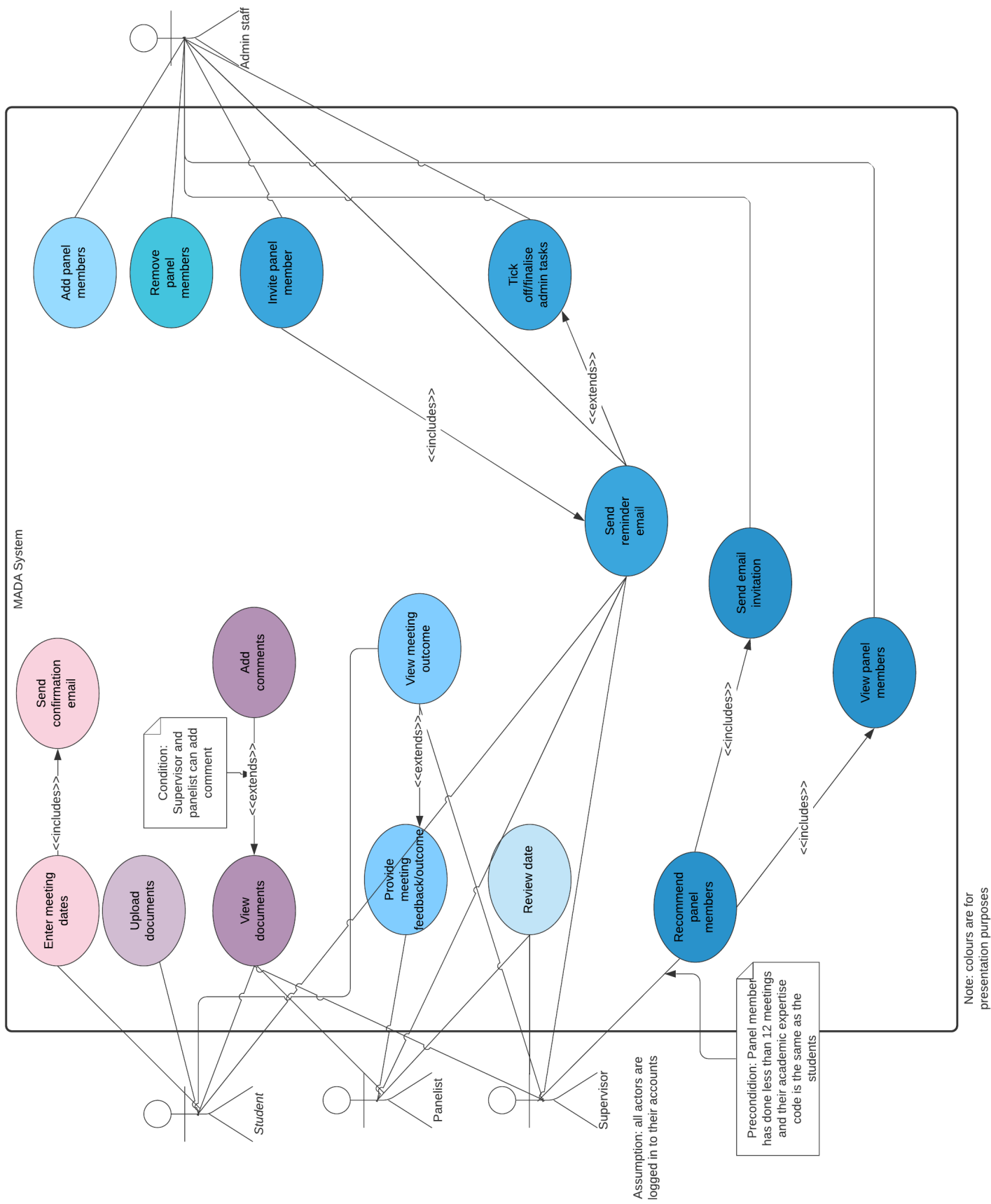
- The new system will source the majority of student and staff details from the existing Monash Callista system and Monash eSolutions
- The reporting and analysis portion of this project will be implemented after the initial release as Charli wants the main content to working as soon as possible
- Monash eSolutions will provide Monash Okta and access control for each user group to help us restrict their access to the system to only features necessary for their meeting role

Business Benefits

Once completed, the new digital system will replace MADA Graduate Research's existing paper-based system with a single centralised platform, eliminating the confusion and time wastage caused previous from using multiple different software. Students, Supervisors and Panel Members will be able to negotiate meetings times, confirm attendance and view relevant documents in a consistent and more accessible format. Meeting email reminders will be automated ensuring that attendees receive notice in a timely manner and reducing workload of admin staff. Updated system will alleviate stress caused during peak periods through improved efficiency.

Activity Diagram





Domain Class Diagram

