
Coursework commentary

2017–2018

CO3348 Interaction design

Coursework assignment 2

General remarks

This coursework assignment required students to apply a range of design methods for a high-fidelity music streaming service. The specification included identification of users, including representative personas and task scenarios, design mock-up sketches (e.g. storyboards, wireframes) with justifications and finally a critique of the work.

Comments on specific questions

The most common weakness was that mock-ups tended to be “fixes” for Spotify or whatever the students’ favoured streaming service was, rather than seeking to provide an interface that was specific to the scenario of high-fidelity streaming. The next most common weakness was a poor definition of the personas, in many cases showing incorrect stereotyping of people with the demographics. This seemed to reflect designs for people known to the students (e.g. Granny), rather than looking at reputable sources that would describe a population of older people in different cultural contexts. Interpretation of materials was at times poor. For example, progressive hearing loss with age does not mean that all people over 45 are deaf, or that only young people can appreciate high-fidelity music reproduction. There was a pervasive lack of reflective critique.

Submissions that were either too short or off topic were also marked down.

Other general faults again included use of informal style, poor structuring (i.e. poor use of sections and subsections) and poor grammar/spelling. Some submissions were penalised for poor practice on citation and referencing.

Many submissions which received average marks were the result of students providing designs, but not providing strong or objective reasons (i.e. justifications) for their design choices.

Good answers included realistic and useful personas, original design scenarios informed by objective critique of existing services (see coursework assignment 1), together with derived insights and mock-ups including wireframes, storyboards, screen flows with varied fidelity (low and high). High marks were given where mock-ups adhered to design principles (e.g. consistency) and were explained as part of the design justification, and user interface considerations included layout and UI elements (e.g. icons, fonts, and so on).

Outstanding submissions were informed by a sound understanding of how low-fidelity streaming differs from high-fidelity streaming, and of wider reading. Many also included diagrams of the user flow (rather than just wireframes), a well-defined data structure and explicit comparison with the interactive questionnaire in the journal paper.