# Learning Reflection:

I feel much more qualified to work in industry now than I did at the start of this project.

My greatest problem prior to this project was difficulty communicating in a team environment. This project forced me to do this and by the end of it I was able to not only communicate ideas with others but developed some leadership abilities and took on much of the responsibility for directing our work.

My coding abilities also developed beyond simply learning typical c# syntax as this was a programme with many more working parts than I’d worked on before. Linking them together in the simplest way possible, I saw in a real situation the value of the code principles I’d been taught in previous courses. This was also the first time that I feel I had really built a coding project from scratch. This involved skills that I hadn’t really used before of evaluating what classes were necessary and how they should be connected.

The final area in which I improved was in managing projects. Even though our management was much looser than it might have been we still had a clear plan each week for what we’d be accomplishing. I have also learned about what worked well and poorly for us as a group and I believe I will be able to use this knowledge to make better decisions about how to manage projects in the future.

## My experience at CPIT/ARA:

The programme I undertook here was significantly different to the norm. I came to CPIT thinking of ICT as an area in which I could get a job that I would be content in rather than an area I was passionate about. This led to me not knowing precisely what I wanted to do beyond an interest in programming. In addition I didn’t want to spend three more years of my life in academia so I undertook a Graduate diploma in ICT rather than a full bachelor’s degree. CPIT did not have a stream for this and so pushed me towards the multimedia stream. Towards the later end of my first semester I, after discussion with Michael Lance and a fellow student, moved away from this into taking more programming related courses for the second semester with the intention of taking this course later. I still came into this course without a clear idea of what I wanted to do which gave me some trouble in terms of finding a project.

## Level 200 and 300 courses:

#### IT152-Introduction to Multimedia:

While this was only a level 100 course I feel that I got a lot of value from it so it merited mention. It covered how to have multimedia interact with applications which was essential for handling some of the images and sound files that I came across in this project. This course was also the place where I was most encouraged to consider the target audience of a product, which I feel was an important lesson here. The skills from this course are also among those that can be applied most broadly. One of my workmates demonstrated an ability to find high resolution versions of a given image which was very useful in this project. I am still unsure of how he did this but I presume it is something that could be taught in this course which would be valuable.

#### IT242-Website Development:

The chief benefit of this course was that it included a group project working to produce a product, like this on a much smaller scale. The project provided an opportunity to organize myself in working with other people to a common goal. It was also one of my earlier experiences in designing an application which had some value here. One issue with this course was that I felt we were tested on our ability to write html prior to actually learning it.

#### PR203-Database Management Systems:

Each of our games included a class (or class like object) that was much like a database (Deck in Match With Me, SongController in Sing With Me). While they did not have all of the functionality of a database the ideas in this course still informed my understanding of them (primarily how they viewed everything as an index). The course was much less useful in this project than it would have been in most other projects I might have worked on and it is probably one of the most useful courses I’ve done. I do not think that there is any major way in which this course could be improved.

#### PR294-Server Side Web Programming:

This is the course in which I learnt most about programming values. We discussed class structure and abstraction which was essential when making the product open to modification. I was also forced in this course to learn a new programming language while working which was valuable in allowing me to pick up and use C# for this course. This was also the closest I got to building a coding product from scratch although it was an order of magnitude less complicated than this. I do not think that there is any major way in which this course could be improved.

#### IS301-Management of ICT:

In theory this course covered the more project management oriented parts in my education; in practice I think it was of minimal use to me. This was partially due to a low knowledge absorption rate due to my terrible experience with the course but I feel that the course itself was focused at a more senior level than was useful for me. I don’t feel like it improved my ability to manage the workload of myself as an individual or of a small group. In addition the sort of risks that came to the fore in this project (such as lost workdays due to unwellness) were generally things we were discouraged from thinking of as risks in IS301. This course would have been of more use to me if it had focused on smaller scale management.

#### IT388-Mobile Technology:

This course mainly helped me with design aspects of the project, such as planning a storyboard or flowchart. It generally buffered the lessons I learned in 242 rather than teaching me anything new. I feel that this course was too theoretical, acting more as an academic study on the way people use technology more than anything else; this has a place but I don’t think that it should be one of the few level 300 options in a practical programme. The course did include a practical component but that was intended for non-coders and so it was too simple to expand my ability to build a product from scratch, which is what it should have potentially done.

# Final Reflection:

## Course Management:

While my management of this course has been loose I believe that I have maintained communication to relevant parties through weekly meetings and reports (see appendix) and remained aware and in control of the tasks remaining for our project. I feel that this work deserves a mark of 7/10.

## The Project:

We completed the project on time to what I consider to be a good standard. The code has been crafted to make it as smooth as possible to add functionality later, as is appropriate for a prototype. As mentioned previously one piece of functionality was not completed but this can be worked around. I feel that this work deserves a mark in the range of 33-43/50.

## Content of Level 200 & 300 Courses:

Due to the unusual structure of my qualification many of my courses did not have content directly relevant to this project. I examined the less obvious skills I learned in these courses and how they were valuable for the project. I also evaluated the courses, harshly at times, and proposed areas in which I think they could be improved. I feel that this work deserves at least a mark of 4/5.

## Quality Assurance Programme:

We regularly performed functional tests to a set template (see appendix) on our product to ensure all aspects were working correctly and included debug logs to help pinpoint the cause of any errors. I explained in this document that a more thorough testing protocol would not have been cost effective due to the small size of the applications we created. I feel that this work deserves a mark of 3/5.

## Risk Management Programme:

I adopted a very loose risk management programme for this course. While it was sufficient in this scale I don’t believe it demonstrates thorough knowledge of risk management. I feel that this work deserves a mark of 2/5.

## Methodology Essay:

I discussed how we used only certain aspects of the scrum methodology and xp cards and considered whether the aspects that we left out would be beneficial in the context of our project. I finally discussed the changes I would make to our methodology were I to be involved in a similar project again, I feel this work deserves a mark of 4/5.