Department of Computer Science

Project Waypoints Leaflet

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Chapter 4

Waypoints

Previously a number of submissions that you need to achieve during the project were mentioned. This chapter provides further details on each of these submissions apart from the Project Dissertation, which is given a substantial chapter of its own. Further details on each of these submissions will be provided within dedicated lectures as a part of the CM30082 unit, and you should therefore ensure that you attend these lecture sessions to get all the required tutorial support.

4.1   Project Proposal

Once allocated to your project you will be required to produce a detailed project requirements specification and project plan for submission by the second week of the term. This Project Proposal is the point where you identify clearly what the project requirements are and how you are going to achieve those requirements. This must be agreed by your project supervisor and will be assessed by the Project Co-ordinator. The Project co-ordinator will evaluate all project proposals to ensure that projects satisfy the requirements for a final year project.

It is important to note that the difficulty of the project is a key factor. For example, a project that develops a number of dynamic web pages is unlikely to be considered of sufficient difficulty even if complex requirements analysis or design techniques are selected. However, a project that develops a website application that is the result of academic investigation into a new application area, new product domain, or to demonstrate the application of a new framework, paradigm or theory, would be appropriate. In other words, developing a new version of an existing product without innovation is insufficient to achieve maximum marks of more than 50 to 55% . . . this is not an exercise in demonstrating programming proficiency.

It is equally important not to go to the opposite extreme and select a project that requires so

much effort that you are unable to complete it without taking time from your other studies. *The volume of the work undertaken is not normally an indicator of the quality of the work done.* The Project Co-ordinator will give advice in regard to the difficulty and level of the project proposals to ensure that the projects proposed provides sufficient scope to allow a student to satisfy the learning outcomes of the project units.

The deadline for submitting the proposal is: Monday 29 October 2012.

4.2 Literature Survey

You will be expected to conduct all the required background reading and to gain all the additional skills you require for the project during the first term. There is no set time before which you may not start work on the main body of your project, but you will be asked to write-up the background research as a formal Literature Survey by the end of the first term. This contributes to the training in project report writing. The Project Supervisor and the Project Coordinator will assess these submissions to provide feedback on your writing abilities and guidance for the writing of the final project report. The Literature Survey requires more guidance, and although you can start to read over the area of your project during the summer, you should wait until the lectures at the start of Semester 1 before you start to write your Literature Survey.

After consideration of the feedback on the Literature Survey, the Unit Lecturer CM30082 (who also acts as the Project Coordinator) will consider whether sufficient effort has been put in to make the success of the project likely. Where insufficient effort is evidenced, the Project Coordinator may advise the Programme board of Examiners for Semester 1 that a student has not satisfied the requirements of CM30082 and should therefore not be considered for progression to the second semester.

You are permitted to further improve the Literature Survey before it is included in the final project dissertation. The early submission enables you to get the bulk of this workload out of the way, provides a firm foundation for the work of the project as a whole, and provides an opportunity to assess how well you are progressing with your project.

The deadline for submitting the literature survey is: Monday 10 December 2012.

4.3 Progress Check

Most of the successful projects are those in which the student works hard throughout the year, and is able to start on the main work of the project well before the Christmas vacation. This will allow you to make use of some of the vacation time for further project development

before returning to start semester 2. The Progress Check is a form, the completion of which acts as a checkpoint at the start of Semester 2 where you must present your work to date to your Project Supervisor so that you can receive feedback on your progress, and must review your project plan to ensure that you have planned out the completion of your project within the remaining time. You must complete the form, present it to your supervisor for comment and signature, and then hand the form in for the Project Coordinator's scrutiny. Students who have not made satisfactory progress, or whose plans are not sufficient to give confidence that the project can be completed in time, will be required to give an explanation to the Project Coordinator and provide adequate plans to successfully complete the project.

The progress report is to be submitted by: Monday 11 February 2013

4.4   Poster

The poster is your chance to show the work you have done to the other students, staff within the Department, and the second marker. You will use the material you have already completed to produce an A2 poster that clearly and concisely presents the rationale for the project, the key background work it is building on, the work you have done, your results so far, and concluding reflections on the work. The poster contributes for a small percentage to your assessment of CM30082. Note that even a small contribution can have a key impact if you are on a classification borderline.

The poster is presented in a poster session just before the Easter vacation. This provides a key target for you to work towards so that you have completed a good amount of the project work prior to the Easter vacation, giving you the Easter vacation and the week after to concentrate on the dissertation. The poster session is a two hour slot. The first hour is for putting up your own poster and time for you to see the work of others and to question one another. This provides you with additional feedback to help you gauge your achievements so far against your peers. In the second hour your supervisors and second markers will meet with you and discuss your poster and your project work. This gives the second marker a chance to find out a bit about the project, and your supervisor a chance to consider your poster prior to marking.

The posters are collected, and marked by your supervisor and second . The Project Coordinator will moderate these marks to ensure suitable feedback is provided.

4.5   Dissertation

Most students under-estimate the time required to write-up the project dissertation. This is a crucial mistake, because the mark awarded for your final year project is based entirely on

the dissertation. It is sensible to start work on the dissertation as early as possible and to produce sections of the dissertation as you complete parts of the project. This allows your Project Supervisor plenty of time to comment on the writing, content and style so that you can produce a document that reads well, emphasises the most important points, and meets the requirements of the project.

The deadline for the dissertation submission is: Friday 3 May 2013

4.6   Professional Issues

The individual project is a key opportunity for the application of knowledge about professional issues. The way in which you conduct your project will present clearly your ability to conduct your work in a professional and responsible manner. You will have to demonstrate that you have considered and taken into account issues such as confidentiality, equality of access, research and/or experimental ethics, as well as professionalism in development methods and quality of delivered products. Additional teaching is provided to summarise and apply previously taught material on professional and legal issues, as well as introduce areas previously not covered, such as research ethics, IPR and copyright. In your project proposal and the marking of the dissertation the right consideration of these issues is taken into account. If your project involves human subjects, you will have to complete the ethics questionnaire which can be at `http://www.cs.bath.ac.uk/studentinfo/research-ethics/project-work-ethics.html` and discuss the implications with your supervisor. A copy of the completed questionnaire has to be given to the project coordinator and has to be included in your dissertation.

The project also provides a major input to the development of your key skills. You will need to use good project planning and time management techniques throughout, you will learn and develop your skills in literature analysis and critique, you will develop and receive considerable tuition in writing and communication skills in many forms – one to one meetings, posters, reports and lengthy technical and academic documentation. You will learn new research and experimental skills that are not limited to academic work but can be applied in a wide range of circumstances. You will learn technical skills, new methods and approaches. It will be helpful for you to audit your Key Skills using the University Key Skills website prior to the project, so that you are aware of areas in which you need to develop, as well as your areas of strength that you can work from. The website can be found at:

http://www.bath.ac.uk/keyskills/

Perhaps the greatest opportunity, however, is the opportunity you will have to work closely with an academic in an area of their interest. There is much that can be learnt from such

a relationship, but gaining the benefit from such a relationship is very much down to the initiative of the student. Make the most of this opportunity . . . it is an opportunity to develop interests in areas you will not otherwise cover in the course, learn skills that are hard to gain by any other means, and foster a passion for innovation and discovery.

Chapter 6

Important Dates

The following dates are provisional. The final dates can be found on the coursework specifi-cations and the Moodle page for the unit CM30082: `http://moodle.bath.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=357`.

Assignment	Deadline	Time	Place
Project Proposal	Monday 29 October 2012	4pm	Moodle
Literature review	Monday 10 December 2012	4pm	Moodle
Progress Report	Monday 11 February 2013	4pm	Office
Poster	TBC, the week before the Easter break	TBC	TBC
Dissertation	Friday 3 May 2013	4pm	Office