Project Guidelines for Interim Report

MCS/MIT 3020 – Individual / Group Project

Master of Computer Science / Master of Information Technology

Version 3.1

(Last update 29th April 2011)

Project Interim Report Guidlines

Each student is required to submit an interim report **by the end of the third semester.** The students doing a group project need to submit **one** interim report highlighting each member's contributions separately. The interim report should be submitted to the ***Academic & Publication*** Branch of the UCSC. The report should be between ***10 -15 A4 pages*** long. However slight changes regarding these numbers are accepted.

The interim report aims to ensure that you understand the project objectives, have mastered the relevant literature, have done a good design of your solution and have a realistic time plan.

Along with the interim report you ***should submit*** the duly filled and signed ***Interim Report Submission Form*** separately at the time of submission of your interim report. The contents of the Interim Report are listed below:

Interim Report Structure

The report structure usually depends on the type of project. Thus the structure given below is only a suggestion. In general, all reports should be divided into a series of numbered sections, each with appropriate titles. You may consult your supervisor if there are any issues regarding the structure of the report for your project.

- **Title page**

  This should contain the title of your project, your name, index no, email address, supervisor name and the relevant masters' programme name, and the date.

- **Abstract**

  A good abstract could be written using just a few statements. The abstract for the interim report may include statements on the problem that you are trying to solve, the scope of your project, the design of your solution and the current status of the work.

- **Table of Contents**

  This includes titles and page numbers of all sections and subsections.

  List of Figures

  A list giving the number, title, and the page of each figure used in your report should be provided.

  List of Tables

  A list giving the number, title, and the page of each table used in your report should be provided.

  Pagination

  Chapter 1 begins on page 1. Use roman numerals for all previous pages, e.g., abstract (ii), Table of Contents (iii) etc.

- **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The introduction has several purposes. Clearly one is to set the background for the project by giving the problem at hand the student is working to solve. The objective of project should also be provided with the scope. Finally, the introduction may indicate an overview of the remaining chapters of the report.

- **Chapter 2: Background**

  Depending on the type of the project, this chapter may include one/both of the following:

  An analysis: If the project involves system development, this chapter could include the requirements (functional, non-functional) of the system.

  A literature review: A survey of existing similar systems, related work could be provided in this chapter. A good literature survey should demonstrate your awareness and understanding of the background literature to your topic. It should begin by setting the proposed work in a wide context, and progress to a more detailed account of the most relevant work in the area, taking care to include some up-to-date references. Reviewing the literature can help to identify questions and issues that have not yet been answered, ideally questions that will be addressed through your project. It may also be appropriate to incorporate criticisms of previous work, although you need to take care here that your criticisms do not reflect a lack of understanding.

  Think of the review as writing an essay on the background literature for your project. You should not just provide a list of references followed by a short summary of each of them. Instead the review should be organized and structured in a meaningful way, and the themes and relationships between the references identified. You should expect to redraft the review several times in order to arrive at a text that is clearly written, easy to understand, but that displays an in-depth understanding of the topic.

  In summary, you should consider the following points when writing your literature review:

  - The literature survey should be focused and concise. Only references that are directly relevant to the project work should be reviewed.
  - A literature review is not undertaken for its own sake; it is included in a dissertation or report because it allows you to demonstrate that you have a good understanding of the background to the project.
  - References should not be reviewed simply by listing each one in turn and writing a short paragraph about it. Rather, the themes and relationships between reference sources should be identified; that is, the literature review should be organized in a useful and meaningful way.
  - The literature survey should be up-to-date. There should be some evidence that the student has read recent literature in the relevant field.
  - It is important not just to describe previous work, but to criticize it (and to justify the criticisms). Which ideas identified by the literature review are useful and can be applied to the project? Which ideas are not useful, and why not?

- **Chapter 3: Design of Solution**

  There should be evidence of a methodical approach to the design of the solution. You should discuss alternate solutions (e.g., methods, algorithms, data structures etc.) and the one selected by you should be explained and justified. Coherent and logical arguments are encouraged with respect to the selection. Correct use of any related techniques (use case diagrams, entity relationship diagrams, class diagrams, sequence diagrams, data flow diagrams, decision tables, pseudo codes, etc. if applicable) should also be demonstrated in this chapter.

- **Chapter 4: Progress to Date and Project Plan**

  What have you achieved to date? Describe any results you have and also include a detailed plan of work (if possible using a Gantt chart) for the rest of the project. Issues you should consider here are:

  - Has the project changed direction from the original proposal? If so, why?
  - Have any difficulties arisen? How will they be resolved?
  - Is the time plan realistic?
  - Is the scope of the project reasonable, or is too much being attempted?
  - Has sufficient time been allocated for writing up the dissertation?

- **References**

  References and citations should be included according to the format given in the Appendix.

APPENDIX - Referencing using the IEEE style

IEEE is a numbered style with two components:

In-text references where references are numbered from [1] in the order of appearance in the article and
A reference list, displayed at the end of the article which provides full details of all references cited in-text. The references are ordered as they appear in the in-text references (in order of citation, not in alphabetic order).

1. In-text Referencing:
Using this system, references are numbered in the order in which they are first cited in the text. If the same reference is cited later in the text, the same number is given. For example:

"The theory was first put forward in 2001 [1]"
"Perera [2] has argued that....."
"Recent studies [1], [3], [4], [15] have suggested that..."

2. Reference List
This is provided at the end of the report in a separate chapter titled "References". The details of all the literature that has been referenced in-text in your report should be given here in a consistent format. The format examples for different types of literature commonly used in reports are given below. It is very important to follow the correct use of punctuation marks and italics.

Books:
Elements of the citation:
Author(s) First name or initials. Surname, or name of organisation, *Title of book followed by fullstop if no edition statement, or comma if there is an edition statement*, ed., Edition (except the first). Place of publication City: Publisher, Year of Publication.
In addition, to the above citation details, provide page numbers if you have quoted specific facts or materials e.g. pp. 28-30.

Examples:
C. W. Lander, *Power Electronics*, 3rd. ed., London: McGraw-Hill, 1993.
B. Hancock, *Advanced Ethernet/802.3 Network Management and Performance*. Boston: Digital Press, 1994, pp. 5-8.

Sections / chapters of books:
Elements of the citation:
Author(s) First name or initials. Surname, "Title of the chapter," in *Title of the book*, ed., Edition (except the first) vol., volume if available, Ed. editor if available, Place of publication: Publisher, Year of Publication, pp. Chapter/s or First and Last pages of the article.

Example:
G. K. Knopf and A. S. Bassi, "Biological-based optical sensors and transducers," in *Opto-mechatronic Systems Handbook: Techniques and Applications*, Hyungsuck Cho, Ed. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2003, pp. 195-210.

Papers from conferences:
Elements of the citation:
Author(s) First name or initials. Surname, "Title of paper," in *Title of the Conference*, Editor/s firstname last name if available, Ed. Place of publication: Publisher if available, Date of publication, pp. first and last pages of the paper.

Example:
A. H. Cookson and B. O. Pedersen, "Thermal measurements in a 1200kV compressed gas insulated transmission line," in *Seventh IEEE Power Engineering Society Transmission and Distribution Conference and Exposition*, 1979, pp. 163-167.

Journal articles:
Elements of the citation:
Author(s) First name or initials. Surname, "Title of article," *Title of journal*, vol. volume, (issue number), pp. first and last pages of the article, Date of issue month if available year.

Example:
K. P. Dabke and K. M. Thomas, "Expert system guidance for library users," *Library Hi Tech*, vol. 10, (1-2), pp. 53-60, 1992.

Theses or dissertations:
Elements of the citation:
Author(s) First name or initials. Surname, "Title of thesis," Type of thesis PhD dissertation or doctoral dissertation or master's thesis, Department, University, Place, State, Country, Year of Publication.

Example:
S. Birch, "Dolphin-human interaction effects: frequency mediated psychophysiological responses in biological systems," doctoral dissertation, Dept. Electrical and Computer Systems Engineering, Monash University, Victoria, Australia, 1997.

Electronic book:
Elements of the citation:
Author(s) First name or initials. Surname. (date of publication year, month day). *Title*. (ed. edition except the first) [Type of medium]. *volume number if needed. (issue number if needed)*. Available: site/path/file

Examples:
A. K. Salkintzis. (2004). *Mobile Internet: enabling technologies and services*. [Online]. Available: http://www.engnetbase.com/books/1253/1631_fm.pdf
V. Guruswami. (2004). *List decoding of error-correcting codes: winning thesis of the 2002 ACM doctoral dissertation competition*. (2nd ed.) [Online]. 3282. Available: http://portal.acm.org/3540240519.pdf

Online journal article:

Elements of the citation:
Author(s) First name or initials. Surname. (year, month). Title of article. Title of Journal. *[Type of medium].* volume number (issue number)*, pp. pages. Available: site/path/file*

Note: the dates where months are included the following abbreviations can apply: Write May, June, and July in full. Abbreviate the other months: Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec. Use a slash for bimonthly issues (Aug./Sept. 2000) and a hyphen or en dash for a quarterly (July-Sept. 2000)

Examples:
J. S. Fulda. (2000, Mar.). The Internet as an engine of scholarship. ACM SIGCAS Computers and Society. *[Online].* 30 (1)*, pp. 17-27. Available: http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/572217.572222*
J. Farrell. (2007, May). In Wikipedia we trust? Cosmos Online *[Online]. Available: http://www.cosmosmagazine.com/node/1339*

Electronic conference paper:
Elements of the citation:
Author(s) First name or initials. Surname. (year, month). Title. Presented at Conference title. [Type of Medium]. Available: site/path/file

Example:
X. Yang. (2003, Aug.). NIRA: a new Internet routing architecture. Presented at ACM SIGCOMM FDNA 2003 Workshop. [Online]. Available: http://www.isi.edu/newarch/DOCUMENTS/yang.nira.pdf

Website:
Elements of the citation:
Author. (year, month). Title. [Type of Medium]. Available: site/path/file

Example:
(2007, Mar.). Dr Jean Armstrong: Brief Biography [Online]. Available: http://www.ecse.monash.edu.au/staff/jeana/aboutarmstrong.html

3. A Sample References List

References must be listed in the order in which they were cited (numerical order) **not** in alphabetical order.

[1] C. W. Lander, *Power Electronics*, 3rd. ed., London: McGraw-Hill, 1993.

[2] B. Hancock, *Advanced Ethernet/802.3 Network Management and Performance*. Boston: Digital Press, 1994, pp. 5-8.

[3] G. K. Knopf and A. S. Bassi, "Biological-based optical sensors and transducers," in *Opto-mechatronic Systems Handbook: Techniques and Applications*, Hyungsuck Cho, Ed. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2003, pp. 195-210.

[4] A. H. Cookson and B. O. Pedersen, "Thermal measurements in a 1200kV compressed gas insulated transmission line," in *Seventh IEEE Power Engineering Society Transmission and Distribution Conference and Exposition*, 1979, pp. 163-167.

Interim Report Submission Form

1. Project Details:

Name of candidate:

Registration no: Index no:

Supervisor Name:

Project title:

....
Signature of candidate Date

---

2. Supervisor Comments: (To be filled by the supervisor **after** the submission of the Interim Report)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

....
Signature of supervisor Date