5 The class diagram

Learning outcomes

Key words you will find in the glossary:

- aggregation
- application domain
- association
- attribute
- class
- collaboration
- data dictionary
- domain model

- inheritance
- multiplicity
- noun analysis
- object
- operation
- package
- problem domain
- use case realization

Introduction

The class diagram is central to object-oriented analysis and design, it defines both the software architecture, i.e. the overall structure of the system, and the structure of every object in the system. We use it to model classes and the relationships between classes, and also to model higher-level structures comprising collections of classes grouped into packages. The class diagram appears through successive iterations at every stage in the development process. It is