CSC3095Assessment Guidelines for Students

April 2017

The final year project module CSC3095 is assessed with the following components:

1. Project presentation (Semester 1) 5%
2. Proposal (Semester 1) 5%
3. Dissertation (Semester 2) 80%
4. Poster (Semester 2) 5%
5. Demonstration (Semester 2) 5%

This document provides assessment guidance for the remaining components of the assessment for Semester 2 (Poster, Demonstration and Dissertation).

**1. Poster and Demonstration Session**

Students must demonstrate their project and show their poster to first and second markers at the **Poster and Demonstration session in the Lindisfarne Room on Wednesday 10th May from 1pm – 5pm**. There will be three 1 hour sessions and markers and students will be notified of which session/s they should attend via email.

**2. Poster Marking**

Posters are marked out of 10. 5 for technical content and 5 for presentation. Each mark is on the scale of 5=Excellent, 4=Good, 3=Average, 2=Poor, 1=Dreadful, 0=Absent.

For **technical content**, a mark of 4 or 5 is given to a poster with sufficient relevant detail about the project and how it was undertaken, without an excess of low-level detail.

For **visual impact**, give a mark of 4 or 5 for a poster which is well organised, visually appealing, with clear graphics and text that are appropriate to, and helpful in understanding, the project.

**3. Demonstration Marking**

You must bring your laptop to the demonstration session. For those that do not have laptops, School machines will be provided. Demonstrations should last up to 15 minutes.

Each marker gives a mark out of 10 and enters this into Ness. The overall aim is for you to show that the work is your own and that anything constructed actually works. To achieve a mark of 7 or more, you should demonstrate that there is significant substance behind the results described in the dissertation, should handle questions well and show an understanding of what they have achieved in the project.

A demonstration need not require an actual implemented product. For example, a more experiment-based project could discuss the results of the experiment, with the student showing the questionnaires or design prototypes developed as appropriate.

**4. Dissertation**

The marking scheme used here corresponds with Faculty guidelines on marking criteria and degree class descriptors for undergraduate programmes.

The contents of each dissertation will depend on the project, but the following general structure and contents for a dissertation was suggested in lectures:

* *Introduction: scene setting.* 
  + *state the original aims/hypothesis and objectives for your project, but elaborate on any changes in these that have occurred over the project’s duration*
  + *Outline of the dissertation (what material is where, and why).*
* *Background technical material*
  + *This will be a review of relevant background research, technical, and/or commercial material depending on the particular emphasis of the project.*
* *What you did and why you did it*
  + *high-level explanation rather than low-level implementation details*
  + *software engineering aspects (design, implementation, testing strategies) as appropriate*
* *Results& Evaluation*
  + *what has the project produced as an output*
  + *evaluation of these results*
  + *Overall evaluation of the “information systems” or “computing science” aspects of the project (e.g. plans and engineering approach)*
* *Conclusions*
  + *About the original aims (hypothesis) and objectives - how well were the original objectives met (and why weren’t they all met?)*
  + *both positive and negative*
  + *look back - what has been learnt*
  + *future, proposed follow-on work*
* *References (including URLs)*
* *Appendices: additional material that might be referred to in the main body of the dissertation, for example, a user manual, questionnaire responses,* *transcripts of interviews, and where relevant source code. Only include material that might help the marker verify statements and claims that you make in the main body of the dissertation.*

You do not have to follow this structure literally – some of these sections may cover more than one chapter (e.g. what you did and why you did it), and some may be combined into a single chapter (e.g. results, evaluation and conclusion). Overall, however, we are looking to mark the dissertation on achieving the original objectives including a review of relevant background material relevant to the objectives, generation of results appropriate to the objectives, and evaluation of the results and hence the objectives.

The weights of the sections for the dissertation are as follows:

* **Introduction (5%)**
* **Background review (10%)**
* **What was done, and how (40%)**
* **Results and Evaluation (30%)**
* **Conclusions (10%)**
* **Form / References (5%)**

Note quality of the ‘product’ is now assessed separately as part of the demonstration.

Here are some brief descriptors of what a student needs to do in order to get “Upper Second” or better.

**Background –** this should be a concise analysis of relevant background material. For research oriented projects this should include a discussion of key research publications relevant to the research objectives. For more development oriented projects this will be an overview of competing technologies that are likely to be relevant, and an assessment of the relevant commercial landscape. An “upper second” background second should go beyond a simple enumeration of research and technologies, but synthesise the work considered in a comparison of the alternatives and include an analysis of the relevance of the work to the project objectives**.**

**What you did and why you did it** – should demonstrate that you have put real thought into what you have spent your time on. Analysis, design, and implementation, and evaluation of choices will be common parts of many projects, albeit in different areas such as: a piece of software; an experimental investigation; a review of a business system or process. Different projects might encompass:

* Description of the architecture of the system, and discussion of implementation highlights, ideally supported by appropriate diagrams in UML or some other design notation
* Prototypes – designed to achieve something and properly evaluated
* Projects that are evaluating/reviewing things will show evidence of thought into the design of data collection and analysis
* Projects investigating forms of interactive system (e.g. a WWW site for XYZ) will demonstrate thought into how usability aspects are going to be evaluated (questionnaires, user-feedback, …)

Additional material, such as a user manual, questionnaire response, transcripts of interviews, or “source code” (Java, C++, html, etc.) that you have written should be presented in an appendix. For projects where a user is the target of some software being developed, a user manual should be included in the appendix, and any code included in the appendix should be well engineered and laid-out (i.e. consistently formatted with respect to style).

For projects with a development emphasis, an “upper second” project will also demonstrate that some thought has gone into the testing process, or show an evolution of the system through various prototypes. Testing will be targeted at, firstly, showing that anything “implemented” is actually working properly (this will be verified by the demonstration), and secondly, at generating results that help to evaluate the project’s objectives

**Results and Evaluation** –An “upper second” project will generate results that directly address the project’s objectives, and will present those results in a clear and summarised manner – for example, using charts/graphs rather than vast tables of numbers. If other project output was produced (e.g. completed questionnaires), the quality of this will be assessed here.

Evaluation should demonstrate some maturity in evaluating what has been achieved (e.g. results obtained) against the objectives of the project, and possibly against anything that was available from the background material/references. An “upper second” project will not be marked down because results are “negative” (e.g. not all were generated) rather than “positive” with respect to objectives, so long as good critical discussion on the reasons are presented. Projects that involve building some software will comment on the “software engineering” aspects of the work.

**Conclusions** – will demonstrate some maturity in reflecting upon the project work overall, what has been learnt, what might be done better next time, and what remains to be done. “Upper second” conclusions will return to the project’s aim/hypothesis and discuss that in the light of what the project has achieved or not achieved.

**Form / References** – references and citations should consistently follow one of the standard schemes. The report itself should be a pleasure to read, nicely presented, well structured, very few spelling mistakes or grammar mistakes, proper use of figures, etc.

**Plagiarism:** *Please be careful about citations for your references and ensuring that you do not use large chunks of text directly from the literature. Please refer to the following guide for more information on how to avoid plagiarism:*

[*http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wdc/learning/conduct/plagiarism.htm*](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wdc/learning/conduct/plagiarism.htm)

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