Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: *When showing the cardinality and participation constraints, is it allowed to use different notations?*

A1: No. We do understand that different notations are adopted in other materials, softwares and web services. But we expect students to be consistent with our course material and this will also help our team with a consistent grading scheme.

Q2: *For the submission description, what does "in 2 A4 pages" mean? Do we need to split the diagram into 2 pages?*

A2: This means you should finish the diagram with at most 2 pages (1 page is definitely fine).

Q3: *For assignment 1, the scenario states that "It is compulsory for each performer to perform exactly one show performance "at a time", what do you mean by "at a time", does it mean "given a performer, the database only keeps track of the exactly one show performance he/she is currently associate with" or the database will actually also keep track of all the show performance he/she performed in the past?*

A3: In this scenario, the database only stores the exactly one show performance the performer is "currently" associated to. No need to consider the history.

Q4: *Do we have to double line the foreign keys in assignment 2? It's a bit tedious to insert double underlines in documents.*

A4: You can use different colors to represent two kinds of keys.

Q5: *In the assignment 2 description, we should denote primary key with underline and foreign key with double underline. how to show both at the same time?*

A5: You can use different colors to represent two kinds of keys. But, for those who have already submitted the answer, there is no need to change your previous representation.

Q6: *In assignment 2, there are 2 relationships between show performance and director. For the foreign key constraint, I need to set both director staff ID as delete on cascade. Do I need to state it twice as it occurs twice in the schema? Or is there a way to prefix them to show they are different Director roles?*

A6: You can simply rename the two attributes, say Directed_by_Director_ID and In_Charge_Director_ID respectively.

Q7: *How do we do Derived Attributes from ERD into DB schemes?*

A7: In ERD into DB schemes, no need to translate the derived attributes as they can be queried easily using SQL commands.
Example 1: If age is a derived attribute, a scheme like emplyee(emp_id, birthdate, salary) is enough to know the age of employees.
SELECT GETDATE()-birthdate as age FROM emplyee ORDER BY emp_id
Example 2: If the average salary is a derived attribute, a scheme like emplyee(emp_id, birthdate, salary) is also enough to know the average salary.
SELECT AVG(salary) as avg_salary FROM emplyee WHERE ..... GROUP BY emp_id

Q8: *In Assignment 3, while constructing table, how to handle the case where "ON UPDATE CASCADE" returns an error "missing right parenthesis"?*

A8: There should be no "ON UPDATE CASCADE" since the primary key in reference should not be updated.

Q9: *In Assignment 4, TODO 1, the question description in PDF doesn't match that of the .exe demo.*

A9: For TODO 1, you can either get courses of spring2020 only (consistent with the question description in PDF), or return courses of all semesters (consistent with the exe output). Both would get marks.

Q10: *In Assignment 4, TODO 8, the question description in PDF doesn't match that of the .exe demo.*

A10: For TODO 8, you can either get TAs of courses of current prof only (consistent with the question description in PDF), or return TAs of courses of all profs (consistent with the exe output). Both would get marks.