MHCI Lab – Kickstarting the Group Coursework

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1. Pre-requisites

You should have read the assessed exercise materials on Moodle, and understand the goals of AE1 in particular, and the proposed steps to take.

2. Prior to Lab - Before group allocation

Whilst the group assignment process is on-going, we recommend you individually concentrate on understanding the requirements of the assessed exercises, and doing your own initial reading on project areas that interest you, such that when you form a group you have some initial ideas / provocations to discuss. In particular, you can find related work via the ACM digital library and IEEE Xplore. Key relevant conferences include: ACM CHI, ACM MobileHCI, ACM VRST, ACM IMWUT, ACM UIST, IEEE VR – these conferences happen every year and are excellent resources when learning about the latest advances.

3. In The Lab as a Group

3.1. Logistics

We'd recommend you first sort out the logistics of how your group will communicate and collaborate. Consider:

- Nominating a coordinator for your team – they will be responsible for making the AE submissions
- Creating a named group chat on Teams with your group
- Establishing the strengths and weaknesses of group members, and their interests in MHCI topics
- Establishing whether the group will be working in-person, remotely, or blended
- Establishing how you will share resources, artifacts, and editing of AEs
    - You can use the files tab of a shared Teams chat for example, or leverage knowledge from other courses (e.g. PSD) and use Gitlab or other suitable tools

Remember also to take notes / document everything you do as a group. These materials will help you when it comes to completing the assessed exercises.

3.2.   Ideation and Understanding the Requirements

Your priority now is to kick off **Step 1: Understanding the requirements**.

Go round your group and discuss your individual ideas and preferences about the project requirements.

Consider questions like:

- What type of activity are you going to focus on?
- Who are your intended users?
- What might their motivations be for using an app or interactive experience like this?
- What could you do to encourage or support them in this form of activity?
- What interaction challenges arise from this form of activity?
- How can you incorporate one or more of the device types?
- How can you incorporate non-visual interactions?
- What are the unique selling points of your ideas?

At this stage, you may wish to think about what existing solutions look like. What smartphone apps already exist for health and exercise? How do they support or encourage participation? Are they aimed at enthusiastic athletes or complete beginners? Look at existing solutions and think about how users interact with them. Think about their experience when using these existing solutions. What do you think is good and bad about these? What features do existing apps have that help users? Can you identify potential improvements?

The aim of this lab (and the exercise more broadly) is to break away from traditional apps and come up with something exciting and innovative, incorporating state-of-the-art mobile interactions using cutting-edge or anticipated future mobile devices.

By the end of this step, you should have a better understanding of your users, an awareness of existing solutions and their core interactions, and a set of possible features for your project. If your team has a clear idea in mind here, you can move on to **Step 2: concept generation** (see the AE overview document for more details).

It is important that you make some progress in this initial lab, as the next lab will see you individually begin to storyboard concepts based on your ideas here.

Remember as well that this process is *iterative* – what you define now will likely be quite different to where the project ends up, so don't worry too much if you are uncertain about your initial requirements/concept.