

## Detailed Project Proposal (OPEN CHOICE PROJECTS)

### The purposes of setting this task

This task is intended to help you with the practical part of your project by getting you to

- clarify what you want to do, and why you want to do it;
- decide upon a set of objectives, against which your achievements can be measured;
- determine what you will need to learn;
- clarify what tasks you will need to perform, in what order and by when;
- identify the hardware, software and other resources you will require for your project, and to take steps to ensure that the required resources are available;
- identify any ethical or safety issues which you will have to deal with, and resolve any problems which arise;
- identify which (if any) Specialist Award you wish your project to contribute towards.

### What you have to do

The project proposal is an **individual** piece of work.

#### Task A: Research and Plan Your Project

You have already started work on this. The tutorial programme for the first three weeks is intended to give you the opportunity to present your ideas to a tutor and to other students taking the module, to explain your motivation, and to receive feedback which will help you further clarify what you are doing for your individual project. We would expect you to spend much of this time researching and planning your project. However, we would *also* expect you to have started on the practical work for your project by the end of this period.

#### Task B: Prepare a Written Project Proposal

You are required to produce a Detailed Project Proposal in writing. In it you are expected to describe a body of work which could realistically be undertaken by a student such as yourself, and which would meet the requirements for the module 3COM0056 “Computer Science Specialist Project”.

If you have done a good job of researching and planning your project it should only take you **between 4 and 6 hours** to write your Detailed Project Proposal.

Further information about the structure and content of the Detailed Project Proposal are on pages 2, 3 and 4 of this document.

#### NOTE:

If you wish to be considered for one of the awards “BSc (Hons) Information Systems”, “BSc (Hons) Intelligent Systems”, “BSc (Hons) Computers and Networks” or “BSc (Hons) Software Engineering” the project you undertake may need to satisfy certain subject-specific requirements, as set out in the Definitive Scheme Document for the Computer Science Modular Degree. There will be a space on the cover sheet you submit with your Detailed Project Proposal where you indicate whether or not this is the case.

## **Requirements**

- a) Your proposal should contain the sections described in detail on pp 3 & 4.

We do not expect you to write the same amount for all sections. Indeed, you may find that there is little that needs to be said about your project under some headings. If this is the case, say so. There is no point *inventing* stuff to go in these sections just to keep us happy: it is unlikely to improve your proposal, and in some cases it will even make the proposal worse.

- b) The proposal should be word processed and in the following format:

12 point Times or Times New Roman font (except for mathematical formulae, where you may use whichever font is most appropriate).

Single spaced text, with 6 points of extra space after each paragraph (like this document).

Margins: 30mm left; 20mm right; 20mm top and bottom.

No more than **five** pages in length, excluding the cover page, with pages numbered in one continuous sequence.

Stapled in the top left corner, with the supplied front cover completed in your own handwriting.

## **Assessment**

This piece of work is worth **1% of the total marks for the module.**

Submission deadline: **12.00 hrs Monday 11 October 2004**

### **Work should be handed in at Engineering and Information Sciences Reception**

- If you submit your proposal by 11th October we will allocate you an Individual Tutor by Friday 15th October, so that you can attend your first individual tutorial meeting in Week 5 (beginning 18<sup>th</sup> October). If you hand your proposal in by the 11th we will do our best to team you up with a tutor whose interests and/or expertise are a good match for your project.
- **Students who submit after 11th October will receive no marks** for the Detailed Project Proposal, although we will still try to find them a tutor.

### **What we will be looking for**

Proposals will be given either 1 mark or 0 marks. You will get 1 mark if your proposal contains the required information and 0 marks if it does not.

In addition, your Individual Tutor may give you some feedback on

- a) the quality of your work in the individual sections of the proposal:

how well you have fulfilled the requirements of the brief, in terms of the appropriateness, the quality, the level of detail, and how easy it is to understand the information you have presented;

- b) the coherence of your proposal:

how well your proposal “hangs together” as a whole, including the suitability of the proposal, the consistency of presentation and the quality of cross-referencing;

- c) the overall standard of your written English:

technical quality - report structure, grammar, spelling, etcetera;

Style - appropriateness, readability, consistency.

**Make sure you keep a copy of your proposal to show to your Individual Tutor.**

## What you should hand in

### I The Cover Sheet

We will expect the front cover of your project proposal to be an official cover sheet, filled in and signed by yourself. The cover sheet is at the end of this document.

- **Project title**

The title you choose should give a clear indication of what you *intend* the project to be about. This will be a *working title* only: you will be allowed to change it during the course of the project should it prove to be inappropriate.

- **Ethics Approval**

You must indicate whether you think your project will need ethics approval – see below.

A project needs ethics approval if it involves work of any kind with human subjects. This includes asking people to fill in questionnaires or to take part in a survey, or to evaluate your system and/or conducting interviews to elicit system requirements. However, so long as you don't intend to collect and/or manipulate personal data, gaining ethics approval is little more than a formality. When you fill in the cover sheet **you are not applying for Ethics Approval**. Make sure you discuss this with your Individual Tutor.

- **Safety Considerations**

For most students taking this module, safety will not be an issue. However, you are required to let us know whether your project is likely to put the safety of yourself or another person at risk.

### II Contents of the Proposal

Your proposal should contain the following sections:

1. **Overall Aims**

In this section you should say what you are setting out to do, giving enough background information so that a reader who is unfamiliar with the topic area in which you are working can understand the rest of your project proposal. Note that *aims* are statements of intent, rather than concrete goals. They therefore tend to be less specific than objectives.

2. **Motivation**

In this section you should explain, *in general terms*

- why you wish to do this project and what you think is interesting about it;
- the relationship between your proposed project, your academic studies, and any other work you have done in the same subject area;
- in what ways the project will enhance your knowledge.

3. **Objectives**

In this section you should identify the specific things you are trying to achieve by doing the project. You might like to try to identify *core* and *advanced* objectives.

*Core* objectives are those that you *expect* to achieve: if you do not achieve most of them in full, and all of them in part, your project will not have been a success. Try to set yourself some core objectives that can be achieved by the time your interim report is due, some that can be achieved by the start of the New Year, some that can be achieved by March, etcetera.

## Assignment Specification:

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*Advanced* objectives are those that you'd *like* to achieve, but which are dependent on how well you achieve your core objectives. Your project can still be a success even if you don't achieve them. You'll probably have a "shopping list" of advanced objectives, from which you intend to choose once you have made significant progress with your project.

Each objective should be:

<i>Simple</i>	Each objective should be a single statement of <b>one</b> straightforward goal you intend to achieve.
<i>Meaningful</i>	It should be easy for someone who is not familiar with your project to understand what you are trying to achieve. Objectives should be stated clearly, in plain English, using technical terms only where absolutely necessary: they should <u>not</u> be explained in terms of jargon.
<i>Achievable</i>	It should be clear that each objective <i>could</i> be achieved by a reasonably good student operating under similar constraints to yourself, given the resources at your disposal and the time you have available.
<i>Relevant</i>	It should be clear how the achievement of each objective will contribute to <i>the completion of your project</i> : we are not concerned with your personal goals.
<i>Testable</i>	It should be possible to work out the extent to which each objective has been met, or at least to show that it either has or has not been met.

Some project proposals will need to include more objectives than others. When we examine this section we will be looking at the *appropriateness* of the set of objectives as a whole.

### 4. **Provisional plan**

In this section you should describe *in outline* the programme of work you intend to carry out. Try to identify the *major* tasks you think you will have to perform in order to complete your project, and the *milestones* you expect to pass on the way to completing your project.

### 5. **Learning needs analysis**

In this section you should identify *as best you can*

- what you think you will need to learn about the subject area, and what technical skills you will need to acquire, before you can *start* work on the practical element of your project;
- what you think you will need to learn, and what skills you will need to acquire, in order to *finish* the project as a whole.

### 6. **Resource requirements**

In this section you should identify what equipment and other resources you think you are likely to need, and state what effect it will have on your project if they are not available. You should include hardware, software, services, people and data.

Try to classify each of the items you identify as one of: *essential* (you could not complete the project without it), *important* (difficult to manage without it), or *useful* (worth having but not absolutely necessary). Please note that the University may not be able to supply you with all of the resources you say you require.

### 7. **Areas of uncertainty**

There will be some aspects of your proposal about which you can be more certain than others. In this section you should identify those parts of the project proposal about which you are most uncertain, and those that you feel are most likely to change during the course of the project.

## 3COM0056 Computer Science Specialist Project

### OPEN CHOICE PROJECT

Fill in all sections of this cover sheet. Attach a copy to the front of your proposal. Keep a spare copy of your proposal, with cover sheet, to take to your first Individual Tutorial.

#### SUBMISSION DETAILS

Deadline: **12.00hrs, Mon 11 Oct 2004**

Location: **Engineering and Information Sciences Reception**

GET YOUR WORK DATE-STAMPED WHEN YOU HAND IT IN

**1 NAME:** .....

**2 Student ID Number:** .....

**3 Cohort:** CS4 / CS4DE / CSP5 / CSP6 .....

**4 Project Title:** .....

.....

.....

**5 Group Tutor:** .....

#### 6 Degree Title

Please indicate which of the following awards you are studying for, and whether or not you intend to use your project as one of your contributing courses:

Award Title	Tick one	Project to contribute to award?
BSc / BSc Honours Computer Science		(not applicable)
BSc / BSc Honours Information Systems		Yes / No
BSc / BSc Honours Intelligent Systems		Yes / No
BSc / BSc Honours Computing and Networks		Yes / No
BSc / BSc Honours Software Engineering		Yes / No

**7 EIS Reception Stamp:** .....

## 8 Ethics Approval

A project may need ethics approval if it involves work of any kind with human subjects, as noted above in section I. **NOTE:** If you go ahead with a project that needs ethics approval and you do not get it, we may be required by University regulations to fail it.

**Do you intend to do any of the following for your project? ..... Yes / No**

- Interview people
- Conduct a survey
- Ask people to fill in a questionnaire or a feedback form
- Ask anyone to evaluate a piece of work, or a product
  - > If the subjects involved are all students registered on the 3COM0056 module, or project tutors for the module, or members of staff in the Computer Science Department, you will not normally need to get ethics approval – but you should check with your tutor before conducting the evaluation.
  - > If you just intend to ask a friend, relative or tutor to give an opinion on your report, and you do not intend to include their comments in your final submission, you will not need ethics approval.
- Conduct experiments which have human subjects
- Observe or record the behaviour of anyone other than yourself
- Collect or use any of the following kinds of information:
  - i. Factual information about individuals
  - ii. Information about individuals' opinions
  - iii. Information about individuals' performance of a task

(NOTE: If you just intend to use data that have already been collected and published by someone else, you may answer “No”)
- Any other kind of work which involves human subjects

If you propose to carry out **any** of the above activities, you **may** need to seek ethics approval for your work. You will need to fill in an Ethics Approval form **for each piece of work you carry out that involves human subjects**, and you will need to provide detailed information about what you intend to do. Your form will go to the Engineering and Information Sciences Faculty Ethics Committee, which will decide whether or not to grant ethics approval. Your Individual Tutor will help you with the form. There is no deadline for seeking ethics approval, except that each application should be made at least **two weeks before** you intend to carry out the work to which it refers.

## 9 Safety Considerations

Do you intend to conduct any experiment, or other work, which may place you, or another individual, at risk of illness, injury or death? ..... Yes / No

If your answer is “Yes”, please consult your individual tutor about the suitability of the work you propose to undertake.