

SCHOOL OF COMPUTING
ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR CSC3094 PROJECT PROPOSALS

Examiners are expected to use the whole of the marking scale and to interpret these criteria in the context of the challenges posed by the specific project undertaken. It is important to ensure that feedback justifies the final mark awarded based on these descriptors. Clear explanations should be given for any deviations.

The proposal is graded on the following aspects:

1. **Context:**

- **Introduction:** A structured argument identifying the problem being addressed in the project. It should lead from a discussion of the technical, business, or social context to identification of the challenges being addressed and hence to the project aim.
- **Key Background Sources:** a (normally tabular) summary of key sources, identifying their relationship to the project. It should demonstrate understanding of *validity* and *relevance* of each source. For highest grades it will demonstrate awareness of the source's position in relation to the relevant body of knowledge or literature.

2. **Aim (or Hypothesis) & Objectives:** Should distinguish between an overall aim which identifies the advance to be accomplished and the objectives which should be SMART steps on the way to achieving that aim.

3. **Planning:** Highest grades show understanding of the need for milestones and contingency. The following should be present:

- **Diagrammatic work plan:** a diagram (e.g., Gantt chart, timeline) that shows appropriate (not over-the-top) planning.
- **Brief explanation of the work plan:** Rationale for the design of the workplan (e.g., reasons for an iterative development).
- **Risks:** briefly identifying significant risks and potential management/mitigation strategies. This is a demonstration that risks have been discussed, not an exhaustive or formal risk register.

4. **Ethics:** Confirmation of ethical approval and any ethical considerations the project raises. **Note this is assessed as PASS/FAIL.** A Pass requires that there is:

- A credible description of any ethical issues arising in the project (including an explanation indicating why no concerns arise, if applicable), AND
- EITHER confirmation that the project satisfies the Ethics Checklist for all elements (1-8)
- OR if any of the Ethics Checklist items are not satisfied, evidence that the student has sought University Ethics Committee approval for the affected aspects of the project.

5. **Form & References.** Marks are given for the clarity of structure and good quality, comprehensible technical writing. References should give bibliographic details of all sources that were used so far (which must include at least all sources used in the Background section), cited using a standard scheme.

Aspect	Mark range							
	Missing	Fail (0-29)	Border fail (30-39)	Third (40-49)	Lower 2 nd (50-59)	Upper 2 nd (60-69)	First (70-79)	Outstanding (80-100)
Context	No context.	Very little material. Lacks a coherent motivation or evidence of searching the CS knowledge base.	Shows some consideration of motivation and/or the knowledge base. Identifies some sources of which most are of limited relevance or poor quality.	Shows some consideration of motivation, but lacks structure, or has significant errors/omissions. Uses some relevant sources. Each source is summarized. Little evidence of assessing validity or relevance of each source.	Shows some consideration of motivation, following a logical structure but with some errors or omissions. Uses entirely relevant sources, accurately summarized. Some assessment of validity or relevance of each source.	Shows sound logical consideration of problem and rationale for project. Uses entirely relevant sources offering good coverage of the background. All key background sources summarized with consideration of validity and relevance.	Clear, sound motivation covers problem and rationale, referencing relevant external sources. Key background sources are all significant, relevant and offer good coverage, showing independent search of the knowledge base. All sources summarized accurately with respect to validity and relevance.	Clear, sound motivation covers problem and rationale, referencing relevant external sources, leading to the project aim. Key background sources are all significant, relevant and offer good coverage, showing independent search of the knowledge base. All sources summarized accurately with respect to validity and relevance. Shows sound critical appreciation and synthesis (positioning sources in relation to the literature).
Aim & Objectives	No statement of aim or objectives	Does not distinguish aim from objectives; aim may not support the motivation; objectives may not support the aim.	Distinguishes an aim from objectives, but aim may not be relevant to motivation, or objectives may not support the aim.	Distinguishes aim from objectives properly. Some objectives support achievement of the aim.	Appropriate, proportionate aim. Generally reasonable, achievable, and measurable objectives that support achievement of the aim.	Clear, concise, appropriate, proportionate aim. All objectives are reasonable and achievable and measurable.	Clear, concise, appropriate, proportionate aim and objectives. Objectives are necessary and sufficient to achieve the aim, and SMART where appropriate.	Professional standard. Clear, concise, appropriate, proportionate, and ambitious aim and objectives. Objectives are necessary, sufficient, and SMART where appropriate.

Aspect	Mark range							
	Missing	Fail (0-29)	Border fail (30-39)	Third (40-49)	Lower 2 nd (50-59)	Upper 2 nd (60-69)	First (70-79)	Outstanding (80-100)
Planning	No work plan discussion.	Work plan not understandable or is disconnected from project aim or objectives.	Work plan has a valid structure but relevance of tasks to the aim/objectives may be unclear.	Valid work plan structure with tasks relevant to the project. Tasks are explained. Identifies some risks.	Realistic, viable structure showing tasks linked to objectives. Explains tasks and structure accurately. Identifies credible risks and responses.	Realistic, viable structure showing tasks linked to objectives. Evidence of durations and dependencies. Identifies credible significant risks and responses.	Realistic, viable structure showing tasks linked to objectives. Evidence of durations and dependencies. Identifies credible significant risks and responses, and appropriate use of milestones and contingency.	Professional standard. Realistic, viable structure showing tasks linked to objectives, justified by clear explanation. Record of resources needed, durations and dependencies. Identifies credible significant risks and responses. Shows appropriate use of milestones and contingency.
Form & Refs	Little or no coherent structure. Explanatory text or figures are missing or poor quality. Refs absent.	Some structure present. Explanatory text, figures or refs missing or poor quality.	Some structure and appropriate content present. Language defects may limit understanding. Some refs listed and properly cited, but data is inadequate.	Adequate structure. Language or citation defects are significant but report can largely be understood. Some refs are cited with full bibliographic data.	Mainly well-presented but some spelling or grammar defects, or inadequate use of non-text forms (figures, etc.). Appropriate number of references but some may lack sufficient data to be traceable.	Well-presented and structured, few spelling or grammar mistakes, proper use of figures, etc. Appropriate number of refs. Follows a standard scheme. All sources appropriate and traceable.	Well-presented and structured, with very few spelling or grammar defects. Good use of figures, etc. and a clear, concise technical writing style. Follows a standard scheme. Multiple appropriate references used, all properly cited and traceable.	Publication standard. Well presented, clear structure, very few spelling or grammar defects. Creative use of figures etc., technical writing style at professional standard. Comprehensively referenced to a standard scheme, all sources appropriate and traceable.
	Fail				Pass			
Ethics	Full ethics checklist is not included or is incomplete, or there is no credible statement identifying ethical considerations arising in the project or explaining why there are none.				Full ethics checklist has been included with all items (1-8) answered positively or negatively, and there is a credible statement identifying ethical issues arising in the project or explaining why there are none.			