

CSC3094: Dissertation

CSC3094 (Major Project and Dissertation in Computer Science) is assessed with the following components:

1. Project Proposal (including Ethics) 20%
2. Presentation 10%
3. Dissertation (Project Report) 65%
4. Poster and Demonstration 5%

This document offers guidance on the submission, content and marking of the CSC3094 Dissertation. A lecture describing the content of the dissertation will be given **at 10:30 on Thursday 21 March 2024** in the USB Lecture Theatre.

Submission

Please upload your dissertation to NESS by **16:00 on Wednesday 8th May 2024**.

You should submit the dissertation as a PDF or MS Word file. If you wish to submit supplementary material such as code, results, etc., please package this along with your dissertation and submit as a Zip archive.

Content

The dissertation is a formal technical report describing your project and its outcomes. It is presented as a document not exceeding 15,000 words (excluding references and appendices). The content of the dissertation depends on the character of your project. However, the following elements should be present in some form:

- **Introduction**
 - Motivation, aims/hypothesis and objectives for the project, elaborating on any changes that have occurred since the proposal was submitted.
 - Outline of the dissertation structure and content.
 - For the higher grades, make sure this is structured in a reasoned way that leads to clear statements of SMART objectives.
- **Background review**
 - A review of relevant background research, technical, and/or commercial material depending on the character of the project. This will typically build on the material presented in the project proposal, but should go into greater depth, reflecting any changes that have occurred since the project proposal was submitted.
 - For the higher grades, show that you have used a diverse range of good quality sources appropriately, and that you have drawn conclusions as to their validity and relevance.
- **What was done, and how**
 - A high-level explanation covering the methods employed in the project, as well as system and software architecture, rather than low-level details except where these are particularly significant.
 - Software engineering aspects (requirements, design, implementation, and testing strategies, etc.) should be discussed as appropriate.
 - You should ensure that ethical considerations in the project have been duly reported.
 - For the higher grades, ensure you show that you have applied appropriate methods and tools correctly within a justified process.

- **Results and Evaluation**
 - A description of the outputs produced in the project, these may include, but are not restricted to, applications, code, models or data.
 - There should be an evaluation of these results, and of the plans and engineering or design approach taken in the project.
 - For the higher grades, ensure that you have described your results thoroughly, and that you evaluated them in a systematic and realistic way, including identifying limitations in your work.
- **Conclusions**
 - A discussion of the extent to which the original aim/hypothesis and objectives were or were not met, explaining and evaluating any deviations from the original aims and objectives.
 - There should be a summary of what has been learned both in terms of the technical outputs themselves and the methods employed.
 - Identify areas of future work extending the results or addressing any identified weaknesses.
 - For the higher grades, show that you base your conclusions on evidence, and that you have addressed opportunities for future work.
- **References** (including any URLs). For the higher grades, make sure that you have followed bibliographic standards consistently.
- **Appendices**: additional material that might be referred to in the main body of the dissertation, e.g., a user manual, questionnaire responses, transcripts of interviews, and where relevant source code. Only include material that might help the reader to verify statements and claims made in the main body of the dissertation.

You should assume that your reader is a competent graduate professional computer scientist who may not already be a specialist in your project's specific field. Make sure that your report is clearly structured and designed with the needs of the reader in mind.

You do not have to follow the above structure exactly. Some of these elements may be covered in more than one chapter, and some may be combined into a single chapter. However, the examiners will be looking for the elements listed above.

Marking Process

The formal rubric for grading is available on the Canvas page. Examiners grade the elements of the dissertation listed above, using the weightings shown here.

The dissertation will be graded by your supervisor and another colleague separately. If their overall assessments are close to one another, the average is taken. If they differ significantly, they will seek to reach an agreed mark. Marks are moderated by theme leads and module leaders. You will receive an overall mark for the dissertation, rather than per-section. A selection of dissertations and their marks will normally be reviewed by the External Examiner. The dissertation mark is combined with the marks for the proposal, presentation, poster and demonstration as shown at the beginning of this document to get the overall mark for CSC3094.

Introduction	5%
Background review	10%
What was done, and how	40%
Results and Evaluation	30%
Conclusions	10%
Form & References	5%