Modular Degree in Computer Science
Final Year Project

Lecture 3:
How to Structure a Detailed Project Proposal
What you need to do

- work out what problem you want to solve
- set your project objectives
- work out what you need to learn
- identify the tasks you will need to undertake
- draw up an action plan
- identify the resources you will need
- work out whether you need ethics approval
What the Proposal is for

1. A means of clarifying your ideas
2. A record of what you set out to do

NOTE: Your final submission will not be assessed against the goals you set yourself in your proposal
What is in the Proposal

- Information about you
- A working title for your project
- Answers to questions to help you and your tutor determine whether or not you will need ethics approval
- Overall Aim(s)
  - What, in general terms, you are setting out to do
  - The target you have set yourself
    » It isn’t a disaster if you don’t hit the bull’s eye
    » It may not even be a disaster if you miss the target altogether!
Objectives

• The principal things you intend to achieve
  » specific, achievable goals
  » may be expressed in terms of the major tasks you intend to carry out
  » BUT NOT a list of system requirements
  » not a binding contract!

• Should be SMART (Simple, Meaningful, Achievable, Relevant, Testable)

• May be useful to have a shopping list of challenging objectives, as a step towards your final list.
Provisional Plan

- An outline of when you plan to meet your objectives
  » little detail expected – just an indication that you have thought about the amount of work there is to do, when it will need to be done, and in what order tasks should be attempted
Resource Requirements

• What equipment / software / data / services will you need to use during the course of your project?

• Are these resources essential, important, or just useful things to have?

• Where / how do you think you will get them?

• What will you do if they are not available?
Also talked about, but not part of the DPP

Motivation

- The reasoning behind your choice of project
  » Why you want to do this project
  » How your proposed project fits in with the rest of your study programme
    » In what ways you think doing this project will enhance your knowledge

Learning Needs Analysis

- What will you need to learn?
  » academic background knowledge
  » technical information
  » skills

Areas of Uncertainty

- What aspects of your project do you not yet know enough about to make proper plans?
- What might change?
- What could go wrong?
- How will you cope?