ITEC812
Special Topic in Information Technology
S2 Evening 2017
Dept of Computing

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Unit convenor
Manolya Kavakli-Thorne
manolya.kavakli@mq.edu.au
Contact via 029850 9572
E6A 372
Tuesdays, 11am-12 noon

Credit points
4

Prerequisites
(Admission to MInfoTech or MEng or MSc) and 16cp from units at 800 level

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
The content and availability of this unit will vary subject to developments in the information and communications technology discipline and the availability of particular (often industrially-based) expertise. Special topic units present novel material of current interest and provide a context within which students may engage with emerging technologies and trends as they arise. As a requirement of this unit students must participate in an ethics workshop and satisfy the related assessment requirements.

Important Academic Dates
Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://students.mq.edu.au/important-dates

Learning Outcomes

1. Plan and self-manage a survey, literature review or a cutting edge project demonstrating advanced project management and independent research skills with occasional input from academic staff assigned to supervise them.
2. Produce a technical document explaining concepts of systems analysis and design, as well as implementation of a novel system - or a detailed critical review and state of the art in a specific domain specifically for individuals who may have no technical understanding of the topic.
3. Present a technical topic to experts and non-experts using appropriate software, tools and techniques available. The topic may be the presentation of the highest level of general development, as of a novel device, procedure, process, technique, or science achieved at a particular time, as a result of the existing methodologies employed.

4. Discuss and debate questions posed, in the given topic area.

5. Discuss and debate ethical issues relevant to the chosen topic, and investigate options for obtaining Human Ethics approval for further research.

General Assessment Information

Milestone and Final Report Format and Structure

Make sure your submission meets the following requirements.

1. Use formatting guidelines described on iLearn.

2. Your report covers an analysis or a development project. The table below suggests typical lengths for each situation, but note that these should be treated as indicative only: Your report needs to be long enough to describe in detail the work that you have done, but not so long that it discourages someone from reading it. Milestone report is expected to be 4 to 6 pages in length. Final reports are expected to be 8 pages in length.

3. The document should have a separate title page, and begin with an abstract or summary of 150-200 words in length that is able to stand alone as a concise and comprehensive description of the research problem, your project's objectives, significance, approach (methodology) and outcomes.

4. The body of the document should consist of a series of numbered sections and subsections; the exact nature and content of these will depend on the specifics of your project, as will the proportion of the available space accorded to each. Typically, you would have an introductory section that outlines the problem you are aiming to solve, and provides a road-map of the remainder of the document; this would then be followed by a background section that describes related work; then a number of sections which describe the work you have carried out, followed by a conclusion section which summarises what has been achieved, and what future work might be pursued.

5. Finally, you should have a consistently formatted reference list or bibliography that contains full details of all materials cited in your paper. Ensure that you follow appropriate conventions here.

Please ensure that your reports are submitted with a file-name that has the following format:

«FamilyName_Givenname»_MilestoneReport.pdf
«FamilyName_Givenname»_FinalReport.pdf

Assessment of Reports

Report marks represent not only the written content of your report, but also the project work that
underlies it. Note that for management projects, the report should be more than a literature review, and should provide some real analytical content. For IS/network/security/web engineering projects, a working demonstration of the constructed software may be a component of the marking. Please take note of the following requirements:

- A listing of your code should be provided as an appendix to your final report. If there is some reason why this is not feasible or practicable, you should discuss this with the unit convener no later than one week before the final report is due.

- You should arrange a time to demonstrate the software you have developed to your supervisor, so that he or she can take account of this when marking your work. This demonstration should preferably happen during the last week of semester, or in extreme cases during the week following the last week in semester, when the reports are being marked.

It is not necessary to demonstrate your software during your final presentation, although you may do so if you wish. The final report will be assessed by your supervisor according to the following rubric:

**Levels of Attainment**

Assessment Attributes: Unsatisfactory (U), Functional (F), Proficient (P), Advanced (A)

**Comprehensiveness of Abstract**

U: Incomplete, in that it does not provide a brief statement of all three of the problem, approach and outcomes; or, all three are expressed, but the description is muddled and generally unclear.  
F: Conveys the problem, the approach, and outcomes, but a little less clearly than might be expected, or at an inappropriate level of detail.  
P: Stands as a surrogate for the full report: a clear summary of the problem, approach and outcomes; but may require some rewording to make it accessible to a nonspecialist.  
A: An excellent summary of the work carried out, clearly stating the problem, the approach taken, and the outcomes, in a manner that is accessible to a technical but non-specialist audience.

**Clarity of Problem Statement**

U: The introduction to the report does not clearly state the problem the project set out to solve.  
F: The introduction does state the problem to be solved, but it takes a little effort to disentangle.  
P: The introduction states the problem clearly, and its significance is clear.  
A: The introduction provides an exceptionally clear and well-motivated problem statement, presented in a way that makes the reader eager to learn about the details of how the problem was solved.

**Review of Related Work**

U: Patchy or badly organised review of related work; unclear exactly why the work cited is relevant to the problem addressed.  
F: The material covered seems comprehensive and relevant, and some attempt has been made at clustering the materials reviewed in a thematic manner.  
P: Thematic organisation of the review, demonstrating a considered extraction of key ideas from sources and how they impact on the problem at hand.  
A: Thoughtful analysis of the material that goes beyond the themes identified explicitly by the sources, concisely drawing out the key points to set the stage for the work that follows; leaves no doubt about what's been done already and what hasn't.
Description of Work Carried Out

U: Hard to work out what was done; the description of the work carried out seems disorganised or incomplete. F: The report indicates what work was carried out in reasonable detail. P: The report indicates clearly indicates the work that was carried out at a level of detail that allows replication of the results, avoiding vague and imprecise abstractions. A: The report clearly describes the work carried out, at an appropriate level of detail for a report of this length, and delivers a sense of maturity in the way in which the work was carried out.

Clarity of Outcomes

U: Unclear what was achieved in the project. F: The report indicates the outcomes of the work, if a little unclearly. P: The report clearly indicates the outcomes of the work carried out. A: The report clearly describes the outcomes of the work, indicates how these relate to the originally stated outcomes, and realistically appraises the scope for future work.

Overall Quality of Writing

U: Very poor; problems with coherent presentation of ideas. F: Understandable, but with some problems in grammar, style and spelling. P: Grammar and style of an acceptable standard; could be safely given to an external party with only minor editing. A: High quality prose; well written; could comfortably be made available via a corporate website.

Appropriate Use of Referencing Conventions

U: The information in the bibliography is incomplete, or there is a lack of consistency in formatting. F: The information in the bibliography is formatted consistently, but with a few missing details. P & A: All references are complete and consistently formatted.

Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Hurdle</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract Analysis</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Week2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract writing</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Week4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milestone report</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Week 5 - Friday 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics assignment</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Week 9 - Friday 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final report</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Week 13- Friday 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Week 13- Friday 3-9pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abstract Analysis

Due: Week2
Weighting: 5%

Students are expected to read a number of abstracts relevant to the chosen topic and analyse
the components of a given abstract as a tutorial.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:
• Plan and self-manage a survey, literature review or a cutting edge project demonstrating advanced project management and independent research skills with occasional input from academic staff assigned to supervise them.

Abstract writing
Due: Week4
Weighting: 5%

Students are expected to write an abstract for the survey paper they will submit as a Milestone report, including 5 components: Research problem, Significance, Goal, Methodology, Findings (or Expected Outcomes).

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:
• Produce a technical document explaining concepts of systems analysis and design, as well as implementation of a novel system - or a detailed critical review and state of the art in a specific domain specifically for individuals who may have no technical understanding of the topic.

Milestone report
Due: Week 5 - Friday 5pm
Weighting: 15%

A draft survey paper is due in week 5 that provides a review of the articles analysed related to the project topic.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:
• Plan and self-manage a survey, literature review or a cutting edge project demonstrating advanced project management and independent research skills with occasional input from academic staff assigned to supervise them.
• Produce a technical document explaining concepts of systems analysis and design, as well as implementation of a novel system - or a detailed critical review and state of the art in a specific domain specifically for individuals who may have no technical understanding of the topic.

Ethics assignment
Due: Week 9 -Friday 5pm
Weighting: 15%
A report covering the ethical issues related to the project and exploring how to obtain a Human Ethics Committee approval to conduct research on humans working with computers and IT systems.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

• Plan and self-manage a survey, literature review or a cutting edge project demonstrating advanced project management and independent research skills with occasional input from academic staff assigned to supervise them.
• Discuss and debate ethical issues relevant to the chosen topic, and investigate options for obtaining Human Ethics approval for further research.

Final report

Due: **Week 13- Friday 5pm**
Weighting: **50%**

The final report will be due at the end of week 13; drawing results from the literature review and presenting a critical analysis of the methodologies available.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

• Plan and self-manage a survey, literature review or a cutting edge project demonstrating advanced project management and independent research skills with occasional input from academic staff assigned to supervise them.
• Produce a technical document explaining concepts of systems analysis and design, as well as implementation of a novel system - or a detailed critical review and state of the art in a specific domain specifically for individuals who may have no technical understanding of the topic.
• Discuss and debate ethical issues relevant to the chosen topic, and investigate options for obtaining Human Ethics approval for further research.

Presentation

Due: **Week 13- Friday 3-9pm**
Weighting: **10%**

A presentation to the supervisor and other interested personnel in the outcome of the project.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

• Present a technical topic to experts and non-expects using appropriate software, tools
and techniques available. The topic may be the presentation of the highest level of general development, as of a novel device, procedure, process, technique, or science achieved at a particular time, as a result of the existing methodologies employed.

• Discuss and debate questions posed, in the given topic area.

Delivery and Resources

Resources (within reason), as provided by the Department of Computing for the student to undertake their project.

ITEC812 is an independent research unit that requires reading and reporting. There are 5 official lectures in week 1 (Friday 6-9pm), week 3 (Friday 6-9pm), week 5 - Ethics lecture (Friday 6-9pm), week 9 (Friday 6-9pm) and week 13 (Friday 3-9pm) including presentations. Classes and Presentations will be held together with itec810, itec897 and itec898 (internship) classes and timing may change depending on the schedule on the day. The feedback that you receive from your supervisor/unit convenor plays also a crucial role in your learning. Make sure you are completely familiar with the content of the official Unit Outline. You are expected to regularly meet your supervisor by making an appointment, if you have a supervisor. You should attend the lectures at dates and times declared on ilearn. In week 1 we will cover basics about the unit, in week 3 research methodology, in week 5 ethical conduct, and in week 9 report writing. In week 13, you are expected to give a final presentation in a postgraduate workshop. You should submit the reports on ilearn. Note that we will be using iLearn as the central web-based communication point for this unit. If you are enrolled in the unit, it is essential that you check the iLearn site once a day, since important information will always be posted there in the News Forum. You should be able to login to iLearn using your MQ student ID and password; if you experience any problems, contact the Faculty of Science IT Help Desk. The IT help desk website is located at http://web.science.mq.edu.au/it/doc/helpdesk/.

Unit Schedule

Classes are scheduled for Fridays from 6pm to 9pm and held together with itec810, itec898, and itec897 classes. We will generally meet every second week in the first half of the semester in week 1, week 3 and week 5, and week 9 and week 13 in the second half. The first scheduled class is in Week 1, and the current schedule for all weeks is shown below. Note that this schedule is still provisional, and the particular Fridays we use may change at short notice, depending upon circumstances: so you should be prepared for attendance every Friday during semester.

On each occasion that we meet, around half of the class time will be in the form of a lecture and discussion session on material that is relevant to an upcoming assessable activity; the other half of the class will be occupied by class members giving short presentations on progress on their projects.
## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://www.mq.edu.au/policies). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

| WEEK 1 | Class Logistics; Assessment and Expectations;  
Introduction to Independent Research and Writing Up Abstracts |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| WEEK 2 | NO CLASS THIS WEEK! Analyse Abstracts  
Submit Tutorial on Abstract Analysis |
| WEEK 3 | Research Methodology and Writing an abstract  
Presentation of Project Descriptions by itec810 students |
| WEEK 4 | NO CLASS THIS WEEK! Write an Abstract  
Submit Tutorial on Abstract Writing |
| WEEK 5 | Ethics Lecture  
Presentation of Project proposals by itec810 students  
Milestone Report Submission |
| WEEK 6 | NO CLASS THIS WEEK |
| WEEK 7 | NO CLASS THIS WEEK |
| **MID-SEMESTER BREAK** | |
| WEEK 8 | NO CLASS THIS WEEK! |
| WEEK 9 | Report Writing;  
Report Outline Presentations by itec810 students |
| WEEK 10 | NO CLASS THIS WEEK! |
| WEEK 11 | NO CLASS THIS WEEK! |
| WEEK 12 | NO CLASS THIS WEEK! |
| WEEK 13 | Postgraduate Workshop  
Final Project Presentations  
Final Project Report &  
Final Project Presentation |

There is no official exam in this unit, but you must submit a final report. If you apply for Disruption to Study for your final report, you must make yourself available in December. If you are not available at that time, there is no guarantee an additional examination time will be offered. Specific examination dates and times will be determined at a later date.

There are no hurdles in this unit.
Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html


In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of Policy Central.

**Student Code of Conduct**

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

**Results**

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

**Student Support**

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

**Learning Skills**

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module for Students
- Ask a Learning Adviser

**Student Enquiry Service**

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

**Equity Support**

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.
Graduate Capabilities

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Plan and self-manage a survey, literature review or a cutting edge project demonstrating advanced project management and independent research skills with occasional input from academic staff assigned to supervise them.
- Produce a technical document explaining concepts of systems analysis and design, as well as implementation of a novel system - or a detailed critical review and state of the art in a specific domain specifically for individuals who may have no technical understanding of the topic.
- Present a technical topic to experts and non-expects using appropriate software, tools and techniques available. The topic may be the presentation of the highest level of general development, as of a novel device, procedure, process, technique, or science achieved at a particular time, as a result of the existing methodologies employed.
- Discuss and debate questions posed, in the given topic area.

Assessment tasks

- Milestone report
- Final report
- Presentation

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.
This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Plan and self-manage a survey, literature review or a cutting edge project demonstrating advanced project management and independent research skills with occasional input from academic staff assigned to supervise them.
- Produce a technical document explaining concepts of systems analysis and design, as well as implementation of a novel system - or a detailed critical review and state of the art in a specific domain specifically for individuals who may have no technical understanding of the topic.
- Discuss and debate questions posed, in the given topic area.

**Assessment tasks**

- Abstract Analysis
- Abstract writing
- Milestone report
- Final report
- Presentation

**PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability**

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Plan and self-manage a survey, literature review or a cutting edge project demonstrating advanced project management and independent research skills with occasional input from academic staff assigned to supervise them.
- Produce a technical document explaining concepts of systems analysis and design, as well as implementation of a novel system - or a detailed critical review and state of the art in a specific domain specifically for individuals who may have no technical understanding of the topic.

**Assessment tasks**

- Abstract writing
- Milestone report
- Final report
PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Plan and self-manage a survey, literature review or a cutting edge project demonstrating advanced project management and independent research skills with occasional input from academic staff assigned to supervise them.
- Produce a technical document explaining concepts of systems analysis and design, as well as implementation of a novel system - or a detailed critical review and state of the art in a specific domain specifically for individuals who may have no technical understanding of the topic.
- Present a technical topic to experts and non-expects using appropriate software, tools and techniques available. The topic may be the presentation of the highest level of general development, as of a novel device, procedure, process, technique, or science achieved at a particular time, as a result of the existing methodologies employed.
- Discuss and debate questions posed, in the given topic area.

**Assessment tasks**

- Milestone report
- Ethics assignment
- Final report
- Presentation

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcome**

- Discuss and debate ethical issues relevant to the chosen topic, and investigate options for obtaining Human Ethics approval for further research.
Assessment task

- Ethics assignment

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Plan and self-manage a survey, literature review or a cutting edge project demonstrating advanced project management and independent research skills with occasional input from academic staff assigned to supervise them.
- Present a technical topic to experts and non-expects using appropriate software, tools and techniques available. The topic may be the presentation of the highest level of general development, as of a novel device, procedure, process, technique, or science achieved at a particular time, as a result of the existing methodologies employed.
- Discuss and debate questions posed, in the given topic area.
- Discuss and debate ethical issues relevant to the chosen topic, and investigate options for obtaining Human Ethics approval for further research.

Assessment tasks

- Milestone report
- Final report
- Presentation

Changes from Previous Offering

Reports are relatively shorter compared to the previous offerings of this unit. Students may not necessarily have a supervisor assigned. In case of no specific supervisor, they should rely on the feedback provided by the unit convenor as their only supervisor. There are two tutorials added and percentage of the milestone report has been changed.

Standards

We will use standards based assessment to reflect the level of performance students achieve in this unit. Five standard levels for the assessment tasks during the semester (excluding the final exam) are: unsatisfactory (F), developing (P), functional (CR), proficient (D) and advanced (HD). These standard levels summarize different levels of achievement in relation to learning outcomes and are defined below.
### Final Grades

At the end of the semester, you will receive a final grade that reflects your overall achievement in the unit. The different possible final grades are defined in general terms below.

- **Fail (F):** does not provide evidence of attainment of all learning outcomes. There is missing or partial or superficial or faulty understanding and application of the
fundamental concepts in the field of study; and incomplete, confusing or lacking communication of ideas in ways that give little attention to the conventions of the discipline. That is, overall work is unsatisfactory or still developing according to the standards defined above.

- **Pass (P)**: provides sufficient evidence of the achievement of learning outcomes. There is demonstration of understanding and application of fundamental concepts of the field of study; and communication of information and ideas adequately in terms of the conventions of the discipline. The learning attainment is considered satisfactory or adequate or competent or capable or functional in relation to the specified outcomes.

- **Credit (Cr)**: provides evidence of learning that goes beyond replication of content knowledge or skills relevant to the learning outcomes. There is demonstration of substantial understanding of fundamental concepts in the field of study and the ability to apply these concepts in a variety of contexts; plus communication of ideas fluently and clearly in terms of the conventions of the discipline. The overall learning attainment is proficient.

- **Distinction (D)**: provides evidence of integration and evaluation of critical ideas, principles and theories, distinctive insight and ability in applying relevant skills and concepts in relation to learning outcomes. There is demonstration of frequent originality in defining and analysing issues or problems and providing solutions; and the use of means of communication appropriate to the discipline and the audience. The overall learning attainment is advanced.

- **High Distinction (HD)**: provides consistent evidence of deep and critical understanding in relation to the learning outcomes. There is substantial originality and insight in identifying, generating and communicating competing arguments, perspectives or problem solving approaches; critical evaluation of problems, their solutions and their implications; creativity in application. The overall learning attainment is outstanding.

Your final grade depends on your performance in each part of the assessment. For each task, you receive a mark that reflects your standard of performance regarding each learning outcome assessed by this task. Then the different component marks are added up (with appropriate weightings applied) to determine your total mark out of 100. Your grade then depends on this total mark and your overall standards of performance. Concretely, **in order to pass the unit**, you must obtain a total mark above 50% to demonstrate satisfactory understanding of development or analysis methods in IT applications, have a basic understanding of the lecture material, successfully implement or conduct an IT project and demonstrate satisfactory level of achievement in the final report. In order to obtain a grade higher than a Pass, you have to fulfill additional conditions. See below the grade standards made specific for this unit:

**High Distinction (A total mark of 85+)**: Outstanding quality IT projects with the addition of
originality and/or creativity achieved by an outstanding understanding of concepts. Students are expected to go beyond the limits of lecture material.

**Distinction (A total mark of 75+):** Superior quality IT projects achieved by superior understanding of concepts. Students are expected to master the lecture material. They are expected to successfully achieve all the goals defined in the IT project.

**Credit (A total mark of 65+):** Good understanding of concepts and good quality IT projects. Students are expected to have good understanding of the lecture material. They are expected to successfully achieve most of the goals listed in IT project.