

SBS5498 Final Year Project 2 (Applied Research Project)

<http://ibse.hk/SBS5498/>

Important Information for Students

Introduction

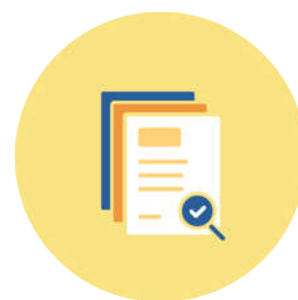
Students should carry out an individual Applied Research Project in their final year study. Each project is supervised by an academic staff, and assessed via written reports and presentations. The assessment will be conducted jointly by the supervisor (first examiner) and a moderator (second examiner). If needed, the FYP Coordinators will also provide advice and/or assistance.

Project Selection

At the start of the project, there are two important tasks you must accomplish (though not necessarily in this order):

- Find a project supervisor
- Select a project topic

Selecting a suitable project topic can seem quite daunting at first. To assist you in selecting a topic, there is a set of project information. This contains a list of research areas and a number of project suggestions made by supervisors. These are only suggestions of suitable topics and there is no requirement that you must select one of them. In fact, students are strongly encouraged to formulate your own ideas for a project. The suggestions are provided as a guide to give you ideas and help you understand the scale of the project you should be attempting.



You should use the project information to view the list of potential supervisors, request a particular project that they have suggested, or to suggest your own project to a supervisor of your choice. Ideally, you should have selected your supervisor and project topic by the end of Semester One. If you haven't managed to do so by this point then you should contact us to seek for help on finding a supervisor and developing a project idea.

Your Supervisor

Your supervisor is an academic staff to whom you can turn for strategic advice and guidance. The expectation is that your supervisor will meet with you every other week to discuss project progress. Initially, they will assess whether your project ideas are suitable, and can help you improve them where needed. Another crucial role that supervisors fulfil is to read and comment on draft versions of the reports you intend to submit. Given that your supervisor also examines these reports, it is in your interests to take advantage of this.

Normally, your supervisor will lecture in the area you have selected for your project. However, because there is a limit on how many projects each member of faculty is expected to supervise, there is no guarantee that you will get the supervisor of your choice. Do not be disheartened if this happens. All supervisors are capable of offering you good strategic advice on your project, no matter what the topic.



The way in which supervisions are organised will vary depending on your supervisor. Supervisors are instructed to allow for meetings of approximately 30 minutes a fortnight for each student. Discussions may also be organised by email. Email is the primary means for supervisors to contact supervisees so it is important that you check your email regularly.

Project and Time Management

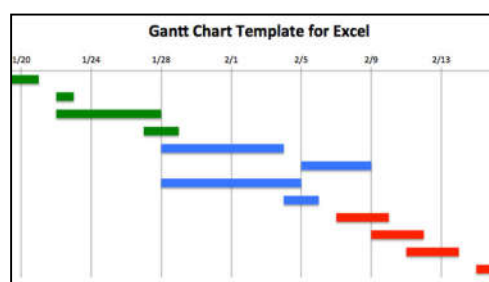
It is not possible to produce a successful project based solely on a period of intense activity immediately before the final deadline, as you may be tempted (ill-advisedly) to do for other modules. You should work consistently and effectively throughout the duration of the project. It is often worthwhile writing drafts of the final report while carrying out the work. It is easier to write up the research analysis just after you have finished it than to write about it months later.



To keep within the deadlines you will have to make regular progress and remember where your time has gone. To help you to do this you should record your project-related activity in a log. The log is a weekly record of work you have engaged in to meet your objectives. You should start the log right at the beginning of the project, and include records of meetings with your supervisor. You should meet with your supervisor regularly taking your log along to review progress.

Project Timescale

You should submit a number of written documents throughout the project. The deadlines for these and timings of other project activities are shown on the course website. The typical phases of your project development process include:



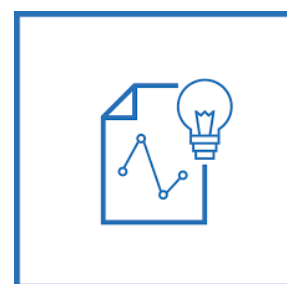
- Browse the list of research areas and suggested projects and consider possible project topics
- Contact the potential supervisor and discuss the research topic(s)
- Accepted by supervisor and confirm the research topic
- Literature research and study
- Prepare and submit Project Proposal
- Identify research problem(s) & develop research methods
- Prepare and submit Interim Report
- Research investigation and analysis
- Report writing
- Prepare for Oral Presentation
- Submit Final Report

Assessments and Reports

You will be formally assessed at the critical stages of the project. Below are detailed descriptions of each of the documents and assessments:

(a) Project Proposal

At the start of your project you are expected to do literature search and read any relevant background references and to prepare a short project proposal (approximately two A4 sheets) describing the objectives of your project and how you plan to meet those objectives. The proposal should provide the following information:



- Your name and student number
- Your supervisor's name
- Working title: The working title should be a good indication of what your project is about. The working title will be used in choosing examiners for your project. You can change the title for your final report. If you change the topic, you should change the working title to reflect this and inform the project coordinator of the change. You should only change the topic by agreement with your supervisor.
- Aims and objectives: Aims describe purpose and intention and include a description of your motivations for undertaking this particular topic. Objectives relate to the expected outcomes of the

project. You should break these down into 'primary objectives' which you guarantee to achieve and 'extensions' which will only be implemented if time allows. The primary objectives should be clearly specified, but the extensions may be vaguer. Do not be afraid to specify more extensions than you will be able to implement.

- Relevance: Write a short paragraph to explain how this project relates to your degree course, or contribute to the industry and/or the society.
- Project overall planning: Indicate briefly your proposed time schedule for the research project and outline the important activities and/or milestones.
- Resources required: It is your responsibility to make sure that the resources you need are available. Do not expect the department to buy things you need. (If you are going to use something not normally supported by the department you will need to obtain approval from your supervisor.). Consult your supervisor to confirm the resources needed for your project.
- Detailed bibliography of background reading, in proper referencing style and format.
- List of other students doing related projects (if applicable).

(b) Interim Report

By the middle of Semester 2, you are required to submit an interim report on your project. This report is formally assessed and should be submitted online via the Moodle. Interim reports are usually 3000-5000 words in length. The word count would depend on a number of factors including the number of diagrams, amount of detailed design work required, etc, so please check with your supervisor what would be appropriate in your case. The report is effectively an expansion of the project proposal and should include:

- Introduction: This specifies the objectives of the project and the intended project outcomes that are achievable in terms of time available and your experience. It should introduce the problem area (remember your reader may not know anything about the particular problem you have chosen) and give an overview of the rest of the report. If your project involves human participants, personal data or other significant risks then you will need to apply for ethical review. Please discuss with your project supervisor if you have any questions about research ethics.
- Research problem analysis: Your aim is to investigate a research problem and develop useful information for understanding and/or resolving it. This section will describe the nature of the research problem(s), a summary of the literature study findings, and the proposed research methodologies for analysis of the research problems and related issues.
- Project plan: This consists of a breakdown of the work to be done into phases, tasks and other activities with estimates of time to complete the work. It will specify interdependencies of tasks, critical work elements and schedule. You should indicate the work you have done so far and that you intend to do in the remaining time. One of the tasks should be writing the draft report.

The interim report can be regarded as the first version of the first chapters of your final report. The sections of the interim report will appear (most likely in an updated form) in the final report.

(c) Draft Report

This document is a working version of the final report. It should be sent to your supervisor near the end of Semester Two. You should allow your supervisor sufficient time to read it and suggest improvements before you need to submit the final report. In your own interests, the draft report should be as complete as possible so that your supervisor can give you useful feedback. Your supervisor will be the examiner on other projects, and will tell you what they are looking for from the projects they examine. If your report does not conform to their expectations you will be able to rectify it in time.

This draft report is not formally assessed and should be sent directly to your supervisor.

(d) Final Report

Final reports should be submitted using A4 paper and comb or soft binding. Double sided printing is encouraged, but not compulsory. You must submit two identical copies of your report to the Faculty Office. Additionally, you must also submit an electronic version of this report via the Moodle site.

The final report should contain the following sections in the order indicated:

- A cover sheet: This should contain your name, your degree course and department, your student number, the title of the project, the name of your project supervisor and the calendar year of submission.
- A signed statement of originality together with an overview of any intellectual property rights agreements that you have made. The statement of originality should be worded as follows. 'This report is submitted as part requirement for the degree of ... at THEi. It is the product of my own labour except where indicated in the text. The report may be freely copied and distributed provided the source is acknowledged.'
- Acknowledgements: This might include your supervisor(s), other students if part of a related project and any other person or organisation that has assisted in any way in the conduct of the project and its documentation.
- Abstract: A one page resumé of your report. It is a summary that identifies the purpose, problem, methods, results, and conclusion of your work.
- Table of contents (with page numbers and in a proper format).
- Introduction: This should give the motivation for the project. The aims of the project should at least be stated in the first paragraph, but preferably in the first sentence. The first chapter should also explain the structure of the report.
- Body of report: This should include specification and analysis of the research problem(s) you have tackled. It should also include a description of how you designed, built and evaluated your solution or outcomes. The exact form of this will vary from project to project but it will usually occupy several chapters and will often include sections on literature study, problem definition, research methods, result analysis, and discussions.
- Conclusion: This should include an assessment of the success of the project. (Have you achieved your objectives? If not, why not?) It should also contain suggestions or recommendations for future research and/or follow-up actions.
- References: These must be given correctly. Full references with page numbers are required. The references should be cited in the body of your report where appropriate.
- Appendices: You may include any technical material which you estimate as too detailed for the main body of the report. You should make sure that any technical material is appropriately annotated and consistently presented.

Oral Presentation

In addition to writing the report, you will be assessed on your ability to present your project. The project presentation takes the form of: (1) a poster which you show at a poster event; and (2) a short oral presentation of your project. Details of the poster event will be provided in Semester Two. The oral presentation will be scheduled to the end of Semester Two. Your oral presentation should last 15 minutes and you should give an overview of your project and describe what you achieved. Your task is to convince your listeners that your project work is interesting and of high quality.

Useful Resources

Dissertations and major projects (University of Reading) <https://libguides.reading.ac.uk/dissertations/>

- Planning your dissertation
- Researching your dissertation
- Managing your data
- Writing up your dissertation

Report writing (University of Reading) <https://libguides.reading.ac.uk/reports/>

- Features of good reports
- Structuring your report
- Writing up your report

Resources page of SBS5498 <http://ibse.hk/SBS5498/resources.htm>