



# Project Specification

- The specification should be clearly written on approximately 2 sides of A4. In your project specification you should:
  - Detail and describe your project idea **stating why you think it's specifically suitable for a mobile device**
  - Describe your content and design ideas
  - Produce a simple diagram of the site/application
  - State the technology platforms you intend to use
  - Produce a workflow schedule
  - Describe your intended usability testing methods
- This is a document that illustrates to the tutor that your project is on track and provides a basis for feedback.

## Individual Mobile Project (50%)

- Project Specification to be produced as part of the portfolio you're already working on
- Project (30%): e.g. an Internet site specifically designed for mobile phones, or a mobile application of some description such as a J2ME game.
- Demonstration Interview (20%): demonstrate project and report back on **user testing** and evaluation

## Concepts from previous student projects:

- A mobile based appointments system for lecturers and tutees
- Student Housing service – search and see pictures of properties and rate based on criteria
- Sports services (e.g. a Basketball league application detailing teams, players, league details and scores)
- Online turn-based role-playing game
- J2ME games – from Pacman to 'Mobigonchi' (a kind of 'Tamigochi' for the mobile)
- Flashlite movie trailers and reviews service
- Bluetooth social networking application, written in J2ME
- These are just a few ideas – the successful projects focussed not just on technical aspects but on usability, visual design and concept aspects as well, taking an integrated approach to design.

Must Do	Should Do	Could Do
Several functioning pages and operations for Mobile Web	Innovative thinking in terms of what constitutes a 'mobile application'	Use of video or audio
Successful linking and numerous navigation options between these items	Very well thought out layout and navigation	Taking your site to a level beyond those areas discussed in class (e.g. plugging the site into other programming skills)
Considerate formatting of text and images	Use of Cascading Style Sheets, Templates or advanced layout techniques	Database applications
Consideration of user interface	Excellent, workable, application idea	Larger scale sites with serious application possibilities
User-testing and iterative improvements based on feedback from user-testing		

# Social impact: mobile devices

- **Creativity** (take a photo, decoration, ring-tones, SMS haikus and *social* creativity)
- **Mobility** (communicate on-the-go, media consumption and production on-the-go, extension of the human, GPS etc...)
- **Performance** (girl alone in a bar, surrounded by people you don't know, a DJ. The projected presence of someone who is absent and lacks contextual awareness about the receiver. 'A Nation of Ghosts? Choreography of Mobile Communication in Public Spaces' (James E. Katz).

## Marking Scheme (Application 1 - 30%)

- **Usability**
- **Content and visual design**
- **Sophistication and innovation (of code and ideas)**
- **Usability** includes how easily the user can ‘move around’ an application. For a game this would include ‘playability’, for a banking application this would mean ease of use. Usability is particularly important for mobiles because the interface is often much more limited than a PC.
- **Content and visual design** covers how attractive the application is (within the limited context of the mobile screen) and the appropriateness/usefulness of the content for a mobile device and a mobile user. Not all applications need to be visually stunning, but they do need to communicate effectively and contain useful resources for a user.
- **Sophistication and innovation** is how *far* you’ve taken your mobile learning and demonstrated this in the project. You can gain marks here for a sophisticated approach to the project in terms of coding – or of taking a conceptually innovative approach with the project.

## Presentation Interview 1 (20%):

- **Summary description of how you made the project** **10%**
- **Evaluation of working project, including user testing** **10%**
- You will be given 25 minutes to demonstrate the project to the tutors and discuss the evaluation feedback from users that you have produced. Your time will be strictly limited. You will be given a scheduled time for your presentations. If you attend late, you will receive a zero mark.
- You should discuss briefly the process of constructing your project. But most importantly, you should **evaluate** your project in terms of the marking criteria set in the section above.
- **In evaluating your project an emphasis should be placed on user testing**, which in this context means getting a small focus-group together to use your site, recording

## Usability Testing your applications

- A qualitative approach
- Focus group / observation
- Quantitative methods don't seem practical for small-scale projects, but a well designed questionnaire to focus on a specific area *may* be appropriate
- The important thing is intelligent analysis of the information you gather



## Do A FOCUS GROUP

- Small group of people
- Observe IN CONTEXT if possible
- Record results
  
- Feel free to do more formal testing also (e.g. Questionnaires – but the effectiveness of these is limited by your methodology)



## Observation advice

- It would be nice if your application could be tested on a mobile phone (if not possible attempt to use several emulators)
- When users are testing your application you should not initially prompt them on certain usage matters.
- For example if you point out that you can navigate by scrolling down the page, you have influenced unduly their interaction with the application – therefore ‘contaminating the sample’. They might have worked it out, they might not have – either way their reactions to the application should tell you something about it – rather than you telling them about it!
- Question the user about their experience – see what they liked and disliked.

## Testing hints

- Usability of the emulator vs. the usability of the phone (Don't input letters by default for a number screen and remember it's a phone!)
- Technical friends to test on can sometimes be a problem – e.g. they draw your attention to an issue in the database, this is useful for technical testing, but not for USER testing. Non technical users are the most useful for Usability testing.

## Thoughts on cultures of phone use...



• Swiss army phone?

• Culture/Interface – often features are ‘removed’ for a western audience

• How do we explain the popular take-up of ‘bad’ interfaces?

## General Feedback on Projects from last year

- Some strong on technical complexity
- Others rather simple and rushed
- Generally poor usability design
- The simple things ignored
- Many scored highly on Technical Sophistication
- English grammar not checked (a great hindrance to usability)

## Continued...

- Stronger projects had been tested on a variety of SDKs and Devices
- Focussed on usability as well as technology
- Advice: Re-think ‘the user in context’



## Presentations

- User feedback and evaluation tended to be the weakest areas
- Usability weaknesses not picked up on
- Tended to focus on general (e.g. 'should have more colour' – and blaming technology instead of implementation)
- Tendency to describe project rather than its production

## Example projects from previous years

- [Mobilitystudies.com/masters](http://Mobilitystudies.com/masters) (if you scroll down to the bottom, some previous projects have been uploaded for you to experiment with).
- **PLAGIARISM** – watch out.