Minor changes to the Design Informatics DPTs
Jon Oberlander 12/1/15 (amended 27/3/15)

Following consultation with Alex Simpson, Bjoern Franke, ITO, and College Office, we propose a set of minor changes to the DPTs for the two degrees:

DI: Design Informatics (MSc) (Full-time) (PTMSCDESIN1F)
ADI: Advanced Design Informatics (MSc) (Full-time) (PTMSCADEIN1F)

This document has three sections: rationale; proposed changes; and the elements of the revised course descriptors which cover one of the proposed changes.

1. Rationale for changes

1. **Experience with concession requests over the past two years.**
   A number of concessions have been granted where students take courses outside Informatics, thereby missing a DPT condition. These have been checked and approved on the grounds that the students’ syllabuses are still consistent with the programme objectives. By altering the DPTs, the need for these concessions will be removed. The proposed degree of flexibility would bring Year 1 of the programme into line with the other Informatics MSc DPTs.

2. **College stipulation for removal of all 0-credit courses.**
   Students on ADI have a compulsory summer placement, currently delivered through a zero-credit course (INFR11096). This course will be discontinued, but the requirement for the placement must remain compulsory, along with its assessment; the zero-credit compulsory course was introduced to help satisfy UKBA regulations. After considering other options, it appears that we can adapt an existing course’s descriptor, which may be the simplest solution.

3. **For any masters course (for any number of credits), the SCQF stipulation is that students are guaranteed to have the required 150 credits of level 11 that is needed for an MSc.**
   However, the current DPT for our 240 point course (ADI) implements the “no more than 30 credits” for each year of study, which then means that we may have to apply for a concession in Y2, even though the student already meets the minimum criteria given their Y1 record, and other Y2 choices. We don’t want to yoke together requirements over Y1 and Y2 of the degree, but we do want to remove the need for unnecessary concession requests in Y2.

4. **One of the Y2 compulsory courses is now being delivered by Social Science instead of Design.**
   Its course code therefore needs altered in the DPT.
2. Implementation

1. In the DPTs for both DI and ADI, in the first box,

*Alter from:*
Overarching rule collection group: A
Select exactly 40 credits from these collections:

Select a minimum of 10 credits and maximum of 40 credits from the following list of courses, as available

*Alter to:*
Overarching rule collection group: A
Select exactly 40 credits from these collections:

Select a minimum of 0 credits and maximum of 40 credits from the following list of courses, as available

2. This requires a change to the ADI DPT, deleting the compulsory INFR11096. Case Studies in Design Informatics 2 INFR11095 is a compulsory Y2, S1 course, and its descriptor can be adjusted to include assessment of the placement. See attached revised descriptor in section 3 of this document.

3. This requires a change to the ADI DPT, for Y2. Given that students will have 90 credits from Y1 at Level 11, and another 100 credits from Y2 at Level 11, there is no reason to stipulate that any of their optional course credits are at Level 11.

*Alter from:*
Select exactly 20 credits from Level 11 courses in Schedules A to Q, T and W, as available

*Alter to:*
Select a minimum of 0 credits and maximum of 20 credits from Level 11 courses in Schedules A to Q, T and W, as available

Select a minimum of 0 credits and maximum of 20 credits from Level 9 and 10 courses in Schedule O, as available

Select a minimum of 0 credits and maximum of 20 credits from Level 10 courses in Schedule A, as available

4. The ADI DPT needs a minor change

*Alter from:*
DESI11024 Product Development

*Alter to:*
SSPS11002 Product Development
3. New sections for course descriptors

Moving execution and assessment of the summer placement into INFR11095 requires specific changes to the description, start date, learning outcomes and assessment information. These have knock-on effects for the description and assessment arrangements for INFR11094, and further minor changes are made to correct typos and incorporate student feedback on the first two years of course delivery.

3.1 Case Studies in Design Informatics 2 INFR11095

Course description

This course extends students' engagement with real examples in the emerging field of Design Informatics. A key component of the course is the detailed evaluation and rationale behind several current research projects that highlight the limitations of the state of the art, or novel use of the latest theories and technologies. The primary learning outcome is the development of specialist reflective and leadership skills that can then be exploited in future industrial application or academic research into Design Informatics.

The senior students following this course as part of a two-year masters complete a compulsory summer placement, and then work with junior students (normally, who are enrolled in CSDI1) in groups of 5-6, under the direction of the senior student, with a member of academic staff as mentor.

The syllabus divides into four phases, with the first phase covering the summer placement period, and the third phase being the longest within semester time.

- In the first part of the course, student placements are project based and the tasks to be carried out are defined in advance, in consultation between a member of the host organisation and an academic member of staff, who act as co-supervisors. The placement has a variable term, with a length of up to three months over the summer between years 1 and 2 of study. Immediately prior to the placement, the student works through a catalogue of types of experience they wish to gain, and identifies those they wish to prioritise. During the placement, they keep a diary recording examples of activities which increase experience in the selected areas, and their progress through the project. Towards the end of the placement, a draft of an accessible personal reflection is compiled, and made available for academic feedback.

- In the second part of the course, in the new academic year, the core case study is presented; this varies from year to year, but is normally derived from an active or recent informatics research project where a product or service is an important deliverable. Presentations are normally given by members of the relevant project team. While following this course, the senior students take into account academic
feedback to revise their draft reflective reports, and provide short presentations about them. Each individual’s final placement report describes their project, synthesises their reflections, and identifies which skills and strategies they need to develop further. This form of assessment recognises that placement projects with external hosts may not succeed as planned, for reasons beyond the student’s control. A reflective analysis provides the means for all students to submit a report whose assessment is not tied to the success or failure of the placement projects themselves. This final placement documentation is assessed by academic staff.

- In the third part of the course, groups of students work together on new case studies. The case studies varies from year to year, but are normally derived from an active or recent design informatics project where a product or service is an important deliverable. Each group works to identify important features of their project, and analyses design decisions to identify possible extensions or improvements, and to identify possible new applications of the core techniques. As part of this, senior students offer tutoring and mentoring to the junior student groups, regarding their case studies. The justification for the selection and scoping of their own group’s new project, and the delivery of a presentation about it, constitute the main documentation assessed by academic staff.

- In the final part of the course, each senior student individually reflects on what they have learned so far, and on how well their tutoring and mentoring has functioned, specifying which aspects of their activity were successful, and which less so. Their report additionally scopes a new conceptual or experimental case study, and outlines a proposal for using it in future course delivery. These elements constitute the main documentation assessed by academic staff.

The core aims of this course mean that the examples used on an annual basis have to be re-assessed for current relevancy. However, the primary focus is on projects relating to groups of humans interacting with, and via, networks of objects.

Course delivery Information
Course start

Sem 1

Learning objectives

A student who has successfully completed this course should be able to:
1 - Demonstrate that they can contribute to the activities of a small group, usually in the commercial sector
2 - Critically evaluate personal experience in addressing problems and suggesting potential solutions, and present conclusions using multimodal tools
3 - Introduce selected problems as potential new case studies
4 - Lead discussion in analysing problems and scoping solutions
5 - Mentor colleagues who extend, through engineering and/or design methods, specific features or applications identified in one real example
Additional information (assessment)

Assessed Assignments 100

- 30% of assessment is for the individual’s reflective report and multimodal documentation of their summer placement.
- 40% is for the team’s proposal for a new case study.
- 30% is for the individual’s written critical evaluation of the successes and failures of their leadership, and for their proposal for new case study content for future delivery on the course.

Additional information (Special arrangements)

Placements involve students spending from 1-3 months onsite with a host company or organisation. Since the Design Informatics Community of Interest is the source of host companies, many of these are local to Central Scotland, but any interested UK-based company in our Community can be considered as a host. Host companies may pay the student a salary or stipend at their own discretion, but must agree to cover travel/accommodation/subsistence costs for students as required, depending on their location. In the case of non home/EU students, any discretionary salary arrangements must be compatible with regulations of the UK Borders Agency.
3.2 Case Studies in Design Informatics 1 INFR11094

Course description

This course introduces students to real examples in the emerging field of Design Informatics. A key component of the course is the detailed evaluation of and rationale behind multiple current research projects that highlight the limitations of the state of the art, or novel use of the latest theories and technologies. The primary learning outcome is the development of specialist critical evaluation skills that can then be applied to future industrial application or academic research into Design Informatics.

Students work in groups of 5-6, under the direction of a senior student (normally, one who is enrolled in CSDI2), with a member of academic staff as mentor.

The syllabus divides into three phases, with the middle phase being the longest.

- In the first part of the course, the class is split into small groups. A first, core case study is introduced via lectures. The case study varies from year to year, but is normally derived from an active or recent informatics research project where a product or service is an important deliverable. Presentations are normally given by members of the relevant project team. Groups then work to identify important features of the project, and analyse design decisions to identify possible extensions or improvements, and to identify possible new applications of the core techniques. Documentation is assessed by academic staff.

- In the second part of the course, each group works on its own, new case study. The case study varies from year to year, but is normally be derived from an active or recent design informatics project where a product or service is an important deliverable. With input and mentoring from senior students, each group works to identify important features of their project, and analyse design decisions to identify possible extensions or improvements, and to identify possible new applications of the core techniques. The justification for the selection and scoping of their own group’s new project, and the delivery of a presentation about it, constitute the main documentation assessed by academic staff.

- In the final part of the course, each group conducts a short experimental study inspired by their own – or another – group’s case study from the second part of the course. They also reflect on what they have learned so far, and on how well their groups have functioned, specifying which aspects of activity were successful, and which less so. Each group writes a term paper presenting their experimental findings, synthesising their reflections and identifying which skills and strategies they need to develop further. This documentation is assessed by academic staff.
The core aims of this course mean that the examples used on an annual basis have to be re-assessed for current relevancy. However, the primary focus is on projects relating to groups of humans interacting with, and via, networks of objects.

*Additional information (assessment)*

Assessed Assignments  100

- 30% of assessment is for the team's multimodal documentation of their response to the core case study.
- 40% is for the team's multimodal documentation of a new case study.
- 30% is for the team's written term paper (3000 words) describing an appropriate, original experimental study based on an earlier case study.

You should expect to spend approximately 70 hours on the coursework for this course.