

# Feedback on the Process Reports

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## 1 Introduction

This document is intended to provide general feedback across all the process reports that were submitted by SDP groups in 2017. As this was a new report for the group, there were no examples of previous reports for you to learn from, and this was taken into consideration when the marking was done. Each report has been marked and individual feedback has been supplied to each group, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of their report. This document is intended to give feedback to the class as a whole, explaining the strengths and weaknesses that were seen across the whole set of reports.

## 2 Strong points

- Most groups have embraced the agile development approach and many reports gave an interesting account of how you were finding the experience of paired programming and scrum/sprint-based development.
- The best reports were able to describe the organisational and communication strategies but also reflect on their effectiveness. Relating the technical information to your personal experience demonstrates that you have reflected on your experience as well as understood the techniques that you are describing.
- Some reports included diagrams illustrating their organisation structure. Other reports had photographs of their robot, or a series of photos illustrating the evolution of their robot. In any case this visual content was welcome and served to make the report more attractive and engaging for the reader.
- Many reports had good assessments of the potential risks and possible mitigation approaches; the best assessments remembered to include the human factors as well as the technical risks. It was a good idea to format the risks and mitigations as a table – it provides a concise representation of the necessary information. This avoids giving the reader too much to read and breaks up the monotony of reading lots of text.
- Don't be afraid to show a bit of individuality in your reports, particularly in how it is formatted and presented (within reason). This can make it more engaging for the reader.

### 3 Common weaknesses

There were a number of weaknesses that appear in the reports of many groups:

- The overall structure for your report was strongly hinted at in the guidance on the webpage that told you the topics your report was expected to cover, and most groups followed this structure fairly closely. However, all documents should start with a short introduction that orientates the reader and tells them the purpose of the document and outlines its structure. Unfortunately some of the submitted reports started too abruptly and did not have any form of introduction. This significantly reduced the readability of the report.
- There seemed to be some confusion as to what was required for “milestones” that you were using to monitor your progress. In some cases group process reports only listed back the events identified on the course web page (e.g., “first friendly match”, “second friendly match” etc). In the process report the milestones were intended to be the technical goals or check points that you set for yourselves to gauge your progress towards the overall objective of the course. It is reasonable that you might choose to align these with the events that occur within the structure of the course, such as the matches. Higher marks were achieved when a group aimed for a technical goal such as “*have a vision system that can reliably find the ball by the time of the second friendly match*”.
- Some groups did not present any information about how their project would proceed beyond the time when the process report was submitted (or the second friendly match which was slightly earlier). The report was a *process* report rather than a *progress* report so we did expect to see some projection into the remainder of the course.
- Some reports had been submitted without careful proof-reading, meaning that the reader had to make extra effort to understand the content of the report. You should anticipate that a substantial part of the work of writing a report (50% or more) should be spent on editing i.e., reading through what you have written, trying to put yourself in the place of the reader, making sure that enough detail is included but the reader is not over-burdened with extraneous information, and making necessary corrections. It is in your interest to make your report as comprehensive, concise and easy to read as possible.