

# Clusters of MSc projects in the School of Informatics, UoE:

## A brief guide for internal and external supervisors

This guide explains **MSc Cluster Projects** at the School of Informatics (UoE). It concerns *large numbers of similar MSc projects* supervised by (a team of) internal and external supervisors. External supervisors who supervise smaller numbers of distinct projects: these are normally not cluster projects. Please refer to the standard guide for external supervisors instead (see link at the course page).

### General course webpage:

<http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/teaching/courses/diss/>

### Timetable:

<http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/teaching/courses/diss/timetable.html>

(in 2020/21, projects are proposed 7. Dec.–15. Jan., students select projects 22. Jan.–5. Feb.)

We provide more MSc topics in popular areas via **Cluster Projects**.

- Cluster projects are MSc projects where several (2-25) students work on a set of topics that are related (a cluster) and are supervised by the same (team of) supervisor(s). Each student produces his/her own MSc thesis, however.
- The supervisors of a cluster project are 1-3 staff members (+TA support), plus an optional collaboration with an external partner (who may be a co-supervisor, or not; see below). Examples:
  - Analysis of data gathered by the University library. With an external partner from the library.
  - Analysis of traffic data gathered by the city council. With an external partner providing the data and questions for its analysis.
  - Replication studies in machine learning, simulation and other fields. Take one (or several) research papers and try to replicate the results by repeating the experiments.
- The organization of the cluster projects is as follows.
  - The team of supervisors for a cluster picks a staff member as leader/representative.
  - External collaborators may act as co-supervisors, if they want to.
    - \* For external collaborators who do not want to be directly involved in student supervision (e.g., just providing data for the projects), the contact goes via the staff members supervising the projects.
    - \* External collaborators who act as co-supervisors for a cluster are administered in the same way as external co-supervisors of individual MSc projects: Get an iFriend account, get added as user in the DPMT system, log into DPMT, and register as co-supervisor for the project in DPMT.
  - A detailed guide is available:  
<http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/teaching/courses/diss/guide-external.html>  
Consult with the other team members for the cluster about student selection/supervision.
  - The leader of a cluster project files **one** project proposal for the entire cluster (with a chosen number of instances) in the DPMT system:  
<https://dpmt.inf.ed.ac.uk/>  
For student allocation purposes in DPMT, the supervisor capacity of the leader is increased to the size of the cluster. Other members of the team have their out-of-cluster capacity reduced accordingly (possibly to zero, if the cluster is large). Depending on their remaining capacity, they may propose other MSc projects, or not.
  - The leader for the cluster informs the MSc project manager (msc-project-mgr (at) inf.ed.ac.uk) about the size of the cluster project and about the members of the supervisor team, so that the capacities can be suitably adjusted in DPMT.  
(This is necessary to allocate the right number of students and to balance the workload of the supervisors.)