



Use Cases

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Use Case Diagrams

- Intended to support Requirements Engineering
 - It is an effective means of communicating with users and other stakeholders about the system and what is intended to do.
- **Strengths:**
 - capture different actors views of the system; comprehensible by naïve users; capture some elements of structure in requirements.
- **Weaknesses:**
 - not particularly strong in capturing non-functional aspects; doesn't support analysis particularly well.

Why Use Case Diagrams?

- Model actions of the system at its external interface
- High level view of the system
- Capture how the system coordinates human action
- Rapid change allows exploratory approach
- Link to scenarios keeps the activity concrete
- Comprehensible by users
- Capture some structure



Use Case Basics

■ Actors:

- An Actor is **external** to a system, **interacts** with the system, may be a **human user or another system**, and has a **goals** and **responsibilities** to satisfy in interacting with the system.

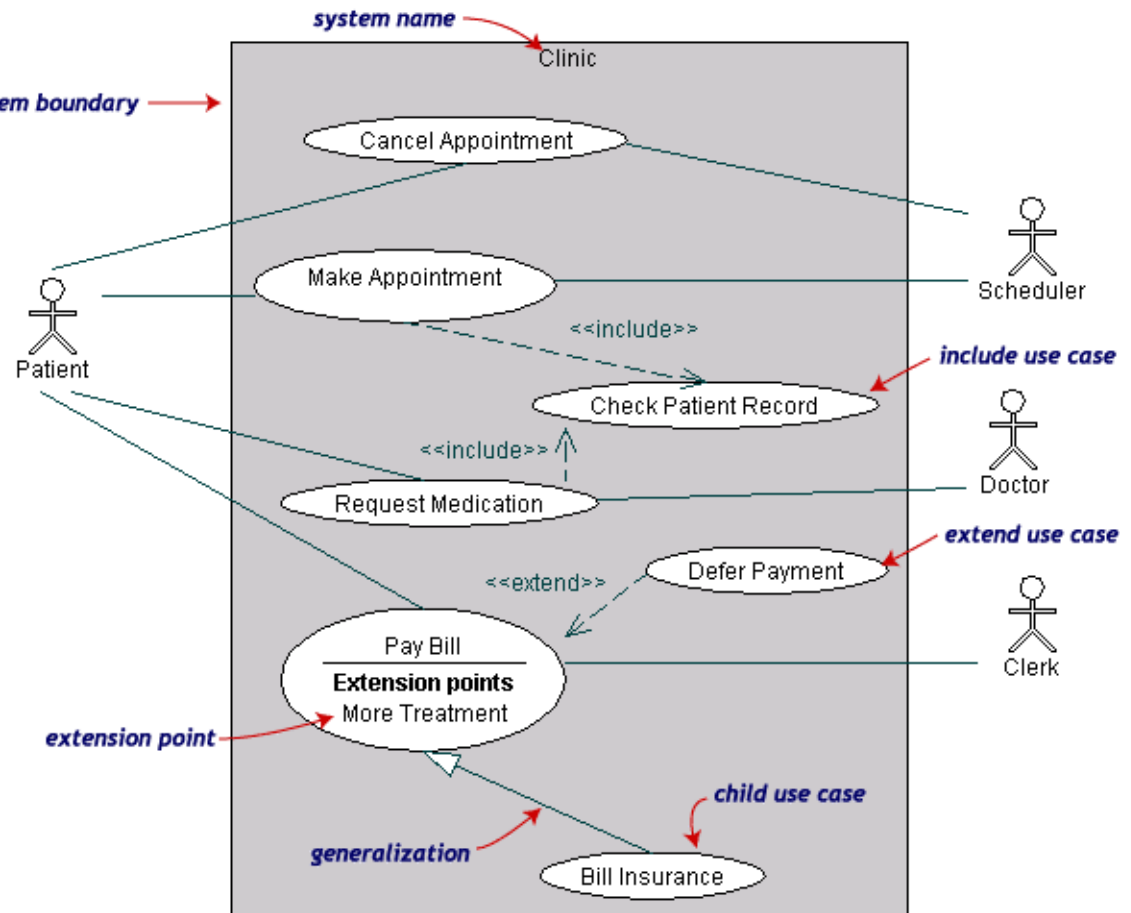
■ Use Cases:

- identify **functional requirements**, which are described as a sequence of steps
- describe **actions** performed by a system
- capture **interactions** between the system and actors.

■ Relationships: Actors are connected to the use cases with which they interact by a line which represents a relationship between the actors and the use cases.

Specimen Use Case Diagram

A use case describes sequences of actions a system performs that yield an observable result of value to a particular actor.



Anatomy of a use Case Diagram

- Basic Diagrams:
 - actors are represented as stick figures
 - use cases as ellipses
 - lines represent associations between these things
 - basic use case diagrams show who is involved with what.
- Can be used to help in structuring systems:
 - For example, the scheduler and patient more or less form a sub-system - look at delegating appointment management to a single component or sub-system.
- Take care to identify generic actors who do a particular task
 - don't get confused with job titles, etc.
- Aim for reasonably generic use cases
 - try not be too detailed at first.
- Use case diagrams should not be too complex.

Attaching Use Cases

- Use cases should be attached to each case in the diagram
- Use case is a generic sequence of actions undertaken in using the system, e.g.:
 - Patient: request appointment to scheduler
 - Scheduler: queries System for available times
 - System: responds with times
 - Scheduler: negotiates with Patient on suitable time
 - Scheduler: confirms time with system
 - System: responds with confirmation of appointment (e.g. booking number).
 - Scheduler: communicates confirmation to Patient
- Provided generic test scenarios for the full system



Structure in Use Cases

- **Generalisations:**

- between use cases;
- between actors in use cases
 - pay bill is a generalisation of bill insurance.
 - A "health worker" is a generalisation of "nurse", "doctor" etc.

- **Include** relationships hold when one use case is included in others

- For example, looking up medical records is included in many other use cases.

- One use case **extends** another when it has the same function but is more particular

- For example, deferring payment as a means of paying.

Generalisations

- Actor Generalisations:
 - Actors may be similar in how they use the system
 - For example: project and system managers
 - An Actor generalisation indicates that instances of the more specific actor may be substituted for instances of the more general actor.
- Use Case Generalisations:
 - Indicate that the more specific use case receives or inherits the actors, behaviour sequences, and extension points of the more general use case.

Creating Use Cases...

- **Step 1. Identify and Describe the Actors:**
 - can use checklists: who uses the system? who manages the system? who maintains the system? Who provides information to the system? Who gets information from the system? etc.
- **Step 2. Identify and Describes the Use Cases:**
 - What will the actor use the system for? Will the actor create, store, change, remove or read information in the system? etc.
- **Step 3. Identify the Actor and the Use Case Relationships**



...Creating Use Cases continued

- **Step 4.** Outline the individual **Use Cases**
- **Step 5. Prioritize** the use cases
 - for instance, on the basis of utility or frequency of use
 - depending on the process this may be closely linked to what is needed in the process
- **Step 6. Refine** the Use Cases
 - Develop each use case (starting with the priority ones)
 - develop the associated use case
 - structure the use case



Basic Use Case Template

Use Case: <number> <the name should be the goal as a short active verb phrase>
Goal in Context: <a longer statement of the goal, if needed>
Scope: <What system is being considered black-box under design>
Level: <one of Summary, Primary task, Subfunction>
Primary Actor: <A role name for the primary actor, or description>
Priority: <How critical to your system/organisation>
Frequency: <How often it is expected to happen>



Another Use Case Template

Use Case: Use case identifier and reference number and modification history
Description: Goal to be achieved by use case and sources for requirements
Actors: List of actors involved in use case
Assumptions: Conditions that must be true for use case to terminate successfully
Steps: Interactions between actors and system that are necessary to achieve the goal
Variations (optional): any variations in the steps of a use case
Non-Functional (optional): List of non-functional requirements that the use case must meet.
Issues: List of issues that remain to be solved



Using a Use Case Template

1. Learn to fill in all the fields of the template in several passes
2. Stare at what you have so far.
3. Check your project's scope
4. Identify the open issues and a deadline for the implementation
5. Identify all the systems to which you have to build interfaces

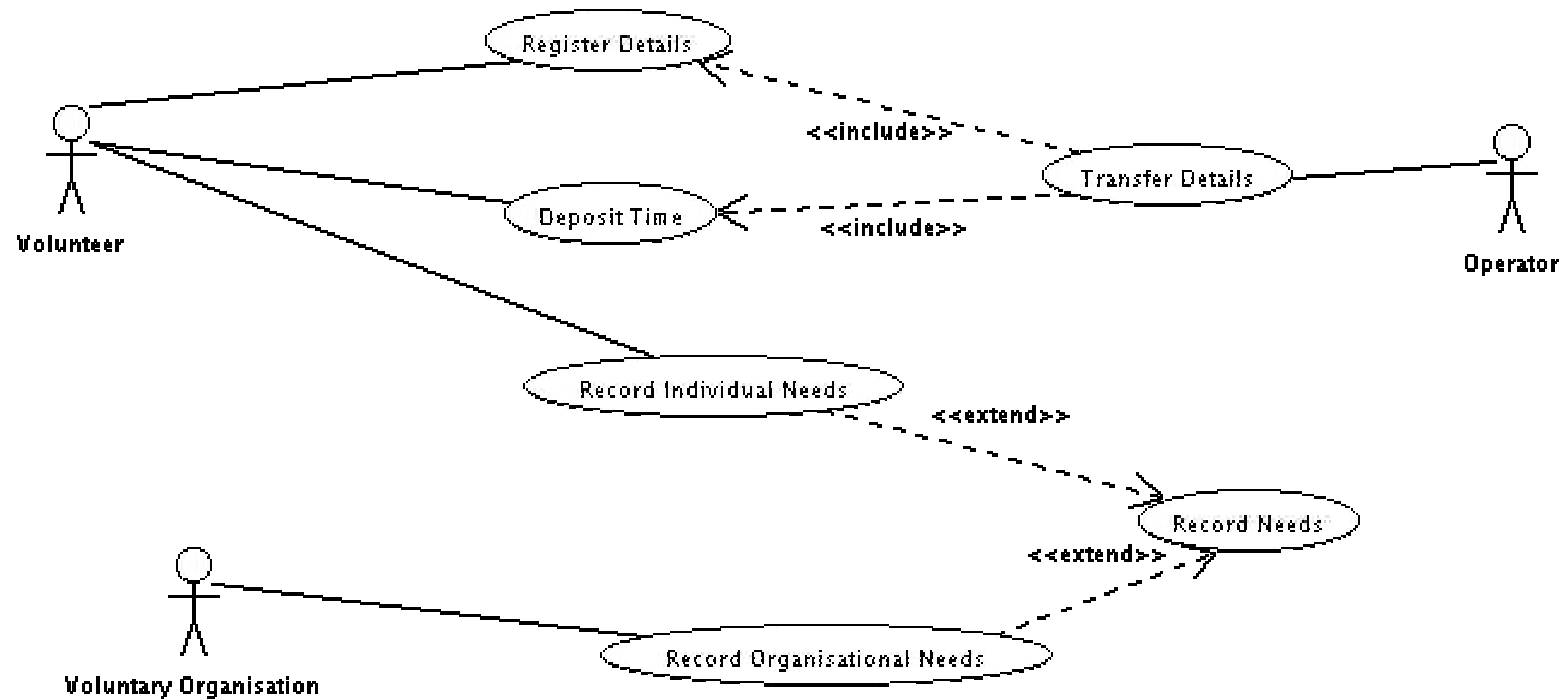


VolBank: Using Use Case Template

Use Case: 01 - deposit time
Goal in Context: The VolBank system allows volunteers to deposit their availabilities in terms of time
Scope: volunteers' profiles are unavailable
Level: Primary task
Primary Actor: Volunteers
Priority: It supports one of the major functionalities of the VolBank system
Frequency: Every time volunteers provide information about their availability



VolBank: Incomplete Diagram



VolBank: Activity

- In class, or afterwards if it is not completed in class:
 - Who are the main actors in the VolBank example?
 - Can you identify all the main use case names in the system?
 - What opportunities are there to structure the use case diagram?
 - Can you see any non-functional requirements that are present in the specification?
 - How well are non-functional requirements represented in the use case diagram?



Reading/Activity

- Please read the **Volere** template that is linked off the notes page on the course web page. You may want to use the **Volere Template** as support to structure your course project's requirements.
- Please read Alistair Cockburn's paper Structuring Use Cases with Goals which is also available off the notes page. You may want to use a **Use Case Template** to collect and represent your course project's use cases.
- Read the outline of the practical activity in preparation for next week tutorials.

