

Proposed changes to INFR11094 Case Studies in Design Informatics 1 and INFR11095 Case Studies in Design Informatics 2

The original design of those two courses relied heavily on two assumptions:

- Students come into the Masters course able to productively take part in group work
- Students on the Advanced Design Informatics Masters will benefit from attending a new series of Case Studies in Year 2, Semester 1, together with the new First Year students, building their leadership skills in guiding teams of First Year students.

Both assumptions have proven to be problematic. Many of the students who apply for and qualify for the programme are from educational contexts overseas that feature relatively independent inquiry. Despite conforming to relevant entrance requirements, spoken English skills may well be insufficient for group discussions. This is not surprising, as their time in Edinburgh is often the students' first exposure to an English speaking country. This is less of an issue in Semester 2, as students acclimatise.

Therefore, we want to use the academic year 2017/2018, when Maria Wolters takes over as Programme Director from Robin Hill, to trial two measures:

Measure 1: Change Assessment of CDI 1

Learning and teaching activities in Case Studies in Design Informatics 1 retain their focus on group work, but assessment, which used to be 100% by group work, will be moved to 50% individual work, 50% group work. This reduces the pressure on group work performance. The individual assessments have been designed to give students further practice in doing reflective writing, a text type they may not be familiar with through their previous studies.

The new assessments are as follows:

Group:

- 20%: multimodal group presentation of a case study prototype at the end of the second section of the course.
- 30%: group report (around 1500 words) about a completed case study at the end of the third section of the course

Individual:

- 10%: comments on readings; students choose five of the core readings in the context of the first and second case study and submit a 50 word long comment or question about it. Administered via TopHat. Students receive 2% per submission as long as it is pertinent to the reading.
- 10%: multiple choice 10-item quiz about key concepts discussed during the first case study. Administered and submitted via LEARN
- 30%: Reflective piece about an ethical, legal, social, or design aspect of the completed case study that is the subject of the long group report. 1000 words.

For reference: DRPS 2016/2017 <http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/16-17/dpt/cxinfr11094.htm>

Measure 2: Teach CDI1 and CDI2 as separate courses and adapt CDI2 assessment accordingly

Currently, CDI1 and CDI2 are taught together. However, experience shows that Advanced Design Informatics students benefit from more formal support for their thesis work in Semester 1 of Year 2. They are also less than keen to attend the Case Studies course again. Decoupling the courses is

also feasible given the size of the Year 2 cohort, which is stabilising at around 15 students across both two year programmes, the Advanced MSc and the MFA.

For 2017/2018, we propose the following:

- Year 2 students no longer attend the same lectures as the Year 1 students. Instead, during 50% of their class time, they attend a series of classroom sessions where they reflect and report on their internship experience and develop a plan for their final year thesis, similar to the Informatics Research Proposal.
- For the remaining 50%, they work with Year 1 students, acting as mentors for case study groups.
- The four phases of the course become three, internship, preparation of a plan for the final year thesis, and mentoring younger students.

Assessments are now all submitted and marked individually:

- 40% report on the internship (as before, but increased in weight)
- 20% 500 word reflective piece on students' experience of mentoring and leadership
- 40% 1500-word plan and motivation for their thesis, comparable to the Informatics Research Project submission.

For reference: DRPS 2016/2017 <http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/16-17/dpt/cxinfr11095.htm>

Going Forward

We would like to trial the new structure as informally as possible, with as few changes to the DRPS as necessary. We need to assess whether the workload involved is feasible, and how student experience and outcomes are affected.