

# Student – Supervisor Dissertation Expectations

The following applies to students completing individual dissertations within the **School of Computer Science and Informatics**; students on modules CMT400, CMT403 and CMT404.

Students completing team projects on MSc Software Engineering and students completing dissertations within other Schools (MSc Data Science and Analytics, MSc Computational and Data Journalism) will receive guidance on supervision expectations from those schools.

## Supervision

You will receive supervision for your project from a member of staff, who will guide the project and advise on direction, provide feedback on the draft dissertation, and give guidance on the standard and amount of work expected. The supervisor's role does not include problem solving, debugging code, project management, or contributing directly to the dissertation. In particular, supervisors are not responsible for solving technical problems with your work – part of the carrying out of a dissertation project is about demonstrating you have the problem-solving skills required. Extra support is available to help with technical issues (see below). Similarly, your supervisor is not responsible for finding material for your background or literature review, this is work you will need to do yourself as part of the project.

The number and style of meetings you have with your supervisor will vary according to the project scope and your supervisor's preferences. Some supervisors prefer to meet individually and some will offer a mix of group and individual meetings throughout the project.

A potential schedule of meetings and supervisory activity might look like:

- Four 50-minute meetings at 4 points during the project
- or
- Eight 25-minute meetings during the project

Outside of these meetings your supervisor will also be able to spend some time responding to questions via email (see below for advice on scope) and providing feedback on a draft of your dissertation.

A typical schedule of 50-minute meetings would cover (**After starting your project in June 2023**):

Week 1	Discussion of overall project scope, agree project aims, objectives and work plan. Discuss need to follow School ethical procedures
Week 4	Discuss progress towards first milestone

Week 8	Review first milestone (e.g. requirements, prototype, initial experiments), discuss progress towards second milestone and dissertation structure
Week 11/12	Review second milestone, feedback on draft dissertation

Once you have agreed a frequency of meetings with your supervisor it is your responsibility to schedule these meetings (including setting up online meetings), not the supervisors. Note that your supervisor will not be available for meetings throughout the whole project duration due to leave and other commitments. Your supervisor will let you know when they will not be available to provide supervision and it is your responsibility to plan accordingly.

## Resources for Support

If you are stuck on a technical problem, then you can book into one of the drop-in help classes that run throughout the summer. Details of how to access these will be sent to you via email and can also be found in the [COMSC MSc module on Learning Central](#)

Teaching Associates in these sessions will provide the following type of support:

- Technical support and advice with coding issues
- Advice on technology decisions around frameworks/languages/tools/architecture
- Advice on mathematical issues relating to the project

Learning resources to help with dissertation projects can be found in the [COMSC MSc module on Learning Central](#) – direct links are below:

[Dissertation Handbook](#)

[Literature Review and Referencing I](#) (Written Guides)

[Literature Review and Referencing II](#) (Tutorials and Q&A recording)

[Reflective Writing](#)

Asynchronous support is available through the school's [StackOverflow](#). You can use this to ask technical or general questions about the dissertation and get help from the COMSC community. <https://stackoverflow.com/c/comsc/questions>

Any question that does not relate to the topic of your specific project (e.g. when is the submission deadline, how to access support, requests for additional equipment, details of the ethics process, how to submit extenuating circumstances and request extensions) should be directed to the Computer Science & Informatics Office <comsc-office@cardiff.ac.uk>