COIT20257 *Distributed Systems: Principles and Development*
Term 2 - 2021

Profile information current as at 14/12/2025 05:57 pm

All details in this unit profile for COIT20257 have been officially approved by CQUniversity and represent a learning partnership between the University and you (our student).The information will not be changed unless absolutely necessary and any change will be clearly indicated by an approved correction included in the profile.

General Information

Overview

Distributed Systems: Principles and Development you will learn basic principles of distributed systems including architecture, design, and algorithms and how to use these principles in the development of distributed applications. You will explore the significant distributed system characteristics of scalability, heterogeneity, security, and failure handling in addition to the fundamentals of networking, inter-process communication, remote invocation, and operating system support. You will examine different approaches to supporting distributed applications including distributed objects, web services, and peer-to-peer solutions. You will learn about distributed file systems, naming, and data-related aspects of distributed transactions, and data replication. Algorithms associated to timing, and coordination and agreement will also be studied. You will also analyse the areas of mobile and ubiquitous computing and the social impact arising from the ubiquity of distributed systems. You will consolidate the key theoretical material through the computer lab tutorial sessions and development of software applications.

Details

Career Level: *Postgraduate*
Unit Level: *Level 9*
Credit Points: *6*
Student Contribution Band: *8*
Fraction of Full-Time Student Load: *0.125*

Pre-requisites or Co-requisites

Prerequisite unit: COIT20256 Data structures and AlgorithmsAnti-Requisite unit: COIT23005 Distributed Systems Important note: Students enrolled in a subsequent unit who failed their pre-requisite unit, should drop the subsequent unit before the census date or within 10 working days of Fail grade notification. Students who do not drop the unit in this timeframe cannot later drop the unit without academic and financial liability. See details in the [Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)](#).

Offerings For Term 2 - 2021

- Brisbane
- Melbourne
- Online
- Rockhampton
- Sydney

Attendance Requirements

All on-campus students are expected to attend scheduled classes – in some units, these classes are identified as a mandatory (pass/fail) component and attendance is compulsory. International students, on a student visa, must maintain a full time study load and meet both attendance and academic progress requirements in each study period (satisfactory attendance for International students is defined as maintaining at least an 80% attendance record).

Website

[This unit has a website, within the Moodle system, which is available two weeks before the start of term. It is important that you visit your Moodle site throughout the term. Please visit Moodle for more information.](#)

Class and Assessment Overview

Recommended Student Time Commitment

Each 6-credit Postgraduate unit at CQUniversity requires an overall time commitment of an average of 12.5 hours of study per week, making a total of 150 hours for the unit.

Class Timetable

Regional Campuses

Bundaberg, Cairns, Emerald, Gladstone, Mackay, Rockhampton, Townsville

Metropolitan Campuses

Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney

Assessment Overview

1. **Practical Assessment**
Weighting: 30%
2. **Practical Assessment**
Weighting: 35%
3. **Written Assessment**
Weighting: 35%

Assessment Grading

This is a graded unit: your overall grade will be calculated from the marks or grades for each assessment task, based on the relative weightings shown in the table above. You must obtain an overall mark for the unit of at least 50%, or an overall grade of 'pass' in order to pass the unit. If any 'pass/fail' tasks are shown in the table above they must also be completed successfully ('pass' grade). You must also meet any minimum mark requirements specified for a particular assessment task, as detailed in the 'assessment task' section (note that in some instances, the minimum mark for a task may be greater than 50%). Consult the University's Grades and Results Policy for more details of interim results and final grades.

CQUniversity Policies

All University policies are available on the CQUniversity Policy site.
You may wish to view these policies:

- Grades and Results Policy
- Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)
- Review of Grade Procedure
- Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – Domestic Students
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – International Students
- Student Refund and Credit Balance Policy and Procedure
- Student Feedback – Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Information and Communications Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure

This list is not an exhaustive list of all University policies. The full list of University policies are available on the CQUniversity Policy site.

Previous Student Feedback

Feedback, Recommendations and Responses

Every unit is reviewed for enhancement each year. At the most recent review, the following staff and student feedback items were identified and recommendations were made.

Feedback from Teaching evaluation

Feedback
The unit provides good topics of the theoretical and practical knowledge of distributed systems.

Recommendation
Continue the current learning and teaching practices as the student feedback are all positive.

Feedback from Self-reflection

Feedback
Teamwork (assessment) encourages critical thinking and enhancement of communication skills.

Recommendation
Continue the current standards for teamwork assessment.

Feedback from Teaching team reflection

Feedback
Engagement is important for deep learning.

Recommendation
Nudge the absent students to attend classes; use group work and share and present work in classes.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Develop distributed applications using networking, inter-process communication, and remote invocation
2. Design and develop distributed applications using one of the approaches of distributed objects, web services, and peer-to-peer solutions
3. Solve problems in the distributed systems domain by applying the principles of distributed systems to authentic problems
4. Critique the issues involved in developing reliable, secure, and scalable distributed systems
5. Discuss the technology needs and social impact arising from ubiquitous distributed systems
6. Work independently and collaboratively in small teams.

Australian Computer Society (ACS) recognises the Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA). SFIA is in use in over 100 countries and provides a widely used and consistent definition of ICT skills. SFIA is increasingly being used when developing job descriptions and role profiles.
ACS members can use the tool MySFIA to build a skills profile at
https://www.acs.org.au/professionalrecognition/mysfia-b2c.html
This unit contributes to the following workplace skills as defined by SFIA. The SFIA code is included:

- Systems Design (DESN)
- Systems Integration (SINT)
- Program ming/Software Development (PROG),
- Database/Repository Design (DBDS)
- Testing (TEST)
- Network Support (NTAS)
- Release and Deployment (RELM),
- Application Support (ASUP).

Alignment of Learning Outcomes, Assessment and Graduate Attributes

Legend: — N/A Level | Introductory Level | Intermediate Level | Graduate Level | Professional Level | Advanced Level

Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Learning Outcomes

Assessment Tasks	Learning Outcomes					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 - Practical Assessment - 30%	●		●			
2 - Practical Assessment - 35%		●	●	●		●
3 - Written Assessment - 35%				●	●	●

Alignment of Graduate Attributes to Learning Outcomes

Graduate Attributes	Learning Outcomes					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 - Knowledge	○	○	○	○	○	○
2 - Communication	○		○	○	○	○
3 - Cognitive, technical and creative skills	○	○	○	○	○	○
4 - Research	○	○	○	○	○	
5 - Self-management	○	○		○		
6 - Ethical and Professional Responsibility		○		○		○
7 - Leadership		○				○
8 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures						

Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Graduate Attributes

Assessment Tasks	Graduate Attributes							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 - Practical Assessment - 30%	○	○	○		○			
2 - Practical Assessment - 35%	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	
3 - Written Assessment - 35%	○	○	○	○	○	○		

Textbooks and Resources

Textbooks
COIT20257

Prescribed

Distributed Systems Concepts and Design
Edition: 5 (2012)
Authors: George Coulouris,Jean Dollimore, Tim Kindberg and Gordon Blair
Pearson Education
Gordon Blair , UK
ISBN: 9780133001372
Binding: Paperback

Additional Textbook Information
Both paper and eBook versions can be purchased at the CQUni Bookshop here: http://bookshop.cqu.edu.au
(search on the Unit code).

View textbooks at the CQUniversity Bookshop

IT Resources

You will need access to the following IT resources:

- CQUniversity Student Email
- Internet
- Unit Website (Moodle)
- Java Development Kit (JDK) 1.8 or a higher version
- NetBeans IDE 8.2 or a higher version

Referencing Style

All submissions for this unit must use the referencing style: Harvard (author-date)
For further information, see the Assessment Tasks.

Teaching Contacts

Wei Li Unit Coordinator
w.li@cqu.edu.au

Schedule

Week 1 - 12 Jul 2021		
Module/Topic	**Chapter**	**Events and Submissions/Topic**
An Introduction to Distributed Systems	Chapter 1 & 2	
Week 2 - 19 Jul 2021		
Module/Topic	**Chapter**	**Events and Submissions/Topic**
Inter-process Communication	Chapter 4	
Week 3 - 26 Jul 2021		
Module/Topic	**Chapter**	**Events and Submissions/Topic**
Distributed Objects & Remote Invocation	Chapter 5	
Week 4 - 02 Aug 2021		

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Process and Thread Management – Operating System Support	Chapter 7	

Week 5 - 09 Aug 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Replication and Fault Tolerance	Chapter 18	**Assignment 1** Due: Week 5 Friday (13 Aug 2021) 11:59 pm AEST

Vacation Week - 16 Aug 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic

Week 6 - 23 Aug 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Distributed File Systems and Name Services	Chapter 12 & 13	

Week 7 - 30 Aug 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Coordination and Agreement	Chapter 15	

Week 8 - 06 Sep 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Transactions and Concurrent Control	Chapter 16	

Week 9 - 13 Sep 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Distributed Transactions	Chapter 17	**Assignment 2** Due: Week 9 Friday (17 Sept 2021) 11:59 pm AEST

Week 10 - 20 Sep 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Security in Distributed Systems	Chapter 11	

Week 11 - 27 Sep 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Web Services	Chapter 9	

Week 12 - 04 Oct 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Mobile and Ubiquitous Computing	Chapter 19	**Assignment 3** Due: Week 12 Friday (8 Oct 2021) 11:59 pm AEST

Review/Exam Week - 11 Oct 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic

Exam Week - 18 Oct 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic

The unit coordinator of this term is:
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Assessment Tasks

1 Assignment 1

Assessment Type
Practical Assessment

Task Description
Your task for this assignment is to design, implement, test and document a simplified *Remote Invocation Framework* that is similar to Java RMI but lightweight. The purpose of this assignment is to assess your competence in Java TCP Networking, Multi-threading and Object Serialization Programming.

The assignment specification and marking criteria can be found from the unit Moodle site.

Assessment Due Date
Week 5 Friday (13 Aug 2021) 11:59 pm AEST

Assignment 1 Due

Return Date to Students
Week 6 Friday (27 Aug 2021)

Assignment 1 Results Release

Weighting
30%

Assessment Criteria
The assignment will be assessed by the software implementation and user instruction document.

1. Analysis and design of a software application using TCP networking and client-server model for the given problem
2. Implementation of the application using TCP streaming, multi-threading, and object serialization
3. Incorporation of concurrent multi-user access to the software application
4. Use of good programming techniques/practices
5. Rigorous testing of software application.

The detailed marking criteria can be accessed from the unit Moodle.

Referencing Style

- Harvard (author-date)

Submission
Online

Submission Instructions
You must submit your assignment via the online submission system from the unit Moodle site.

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Develop distributed applications using networking, inter-process communication, and remote invocation
- Solve problems in the distributed systems domain by applying the principles of distributed systems to authentic problems

Graduate Attributes

- Knowledge
- Communication
- Cognitive, technical and creative skills
- Self-management

2 Assignment 2

Assessment Type
Practical Assessment

Task Description
You will be tasked with a team-based software development project. You will be part of a small team to design, implement, test and document a simplified Peer-to-Peer (P2P) *File-Sharing Systems*. The purpose of this assignment is to assess your competence in P2P overlay modelling, Java IP multicast programming and UDP datagram messaging. Your ability to work collaboratively in a small team will also be assessed by this assignment.
The assignment specification and marking criteria can be accessed from the unit Moodle site.

Assessment Due Date
Week 9 Friday (17 Sept 2021) 11:59 pm AEST

Assignment 2 Due

Return Date to Students
Week 11 Friday (1 Oct 2021)

Assignment 2 Results Release

Weighting
35%

Assessment Criteria

The assignment will be assessed by the software implementation and user instruction document.

1. Analysis and design of a software application using UDP networking and peer-to-peer communication for the given problem
2. Implementation of the application using IP multicast and P2P overlay
3. Critique the issues involved in developing reliable and scalable distributed systems
4. Work independently and collaboratively in small teams

The detailed marking criteria can be accessed from the unit Moodle site.

Referencing Style

- [Harvard (author-date)](#)

Submission
Online

Submission Instructions
You must submit your assignment via the online submission system from the unit Moodle site.

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Design and develop distributed applications using one of the approaches of distributed objects, web services, and peer-to-peer solutions
- Solve problems in the distributed systems domain by applying the principles of distributed systems to authentic problems
- Critique the issues involved in developing reliable, secure, and scalable distributed systems
- Work independently and collaboratively in small teams.

Graduate Attributes

- Knowledge
- Communication
- Cognitive, technical and creative skills
- Research
- Self-management
- Ethical and Professional Responsibility
- Leadership

3 Assignment 3

Assessment Type
Written Assessment

Task Description
Your task for this assignment is to address some theoretical issues in the area of distributed systems or distributed computing. The purpose of this assignment is to assess your understanding of these theoretical issues or competence to apply these theoretical principles. Writing of a formal academic report is also assessed.
The assignment specification and marking criteria can be accessed from the unit Moodle site.

Assessment Due Date
Week 12 Friday (8 Oct 2021) 11:59 pm AEST

Assignment 3 Due

Return Date to Students

The marked assignment will be returned on the day of Certification of Grades

Weighting
35%

Assessment Criteria
The assignment will be assessed by understanding and application of the given theoretical issues.

1. Clear demonstration of your understanding of the topics given in the specification
2. Critical review of relevant information and logical construction of arguments
3. Relevant discussion of the impact of specific aspects of distributed systems
4. Appropriate formatting, clarity of expressions, and relevant and correct use of references.

The detailed marking criteria can be accessed from the unit Moodle site.

Referencing Style

- Harvard (author-date)

Submission
Online

Submission Instructions
You must submit your assignment via the online submission system from the unit Moodle site.

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Critique the issues involved in developing reliable, secure, and scalable distributed systems
- Discuss the technology needs and social impact arising from ubiquitous distributed systems
- Work independently and collaboratively in small teams.

Graduate Attributes

- Knowledge
- Communication
- Cognitive, technical and creative skills
- Research
- Self-management
- Ethical and Professional Responsibility

Academic Integrity Statement

As a CQUniversity student you are expected to act honestly in all aspects of your academic work.

Any assessable work undertaken or submitted for review or assessment must be your own work. Assessable work is any type of work you do to meet the assessment requirements in the unit, including draft work submitted for review and feedback and final work to be assessed.

When you use the ideas, words or data of others in your assessment, you must thoroughly and clearly acknowledge the source of this information by using the correct referencing style for your unit. Using others' work without proper acknowledgement may be considered a form of intellectual dishonesty.

Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in your university study ensures the CQUniversity qualification you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

As a student, you are responsible for reading and following CQUniversity's policies, including the **Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure**. This policy sets out CQUniversity's expectations of you to act with integrity, examples of academic integrity breaches to avoid, the processes used to address alleged breaches of academic integrity, and potential penalties.

What is a breach of academic integrity?
A breach of academic integrity includes but is not limited to plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, cheating, contract cheating, and academic misconduct. The Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure defines what these terms mean and gives examples.

Why is academic integrity important?
A breach of academic integrity may result in one or more penalties, including suspension or even expulsion from the University. It can also have negative implications for student visas and future enrolment at CQUniversity or elsewhere. Students who engage in contract cheating also risk being blackmailed by contract cheating services.

Where can I get assistance?
For academic advice and guidance, the Academic Learning Centre (ALC) can support you in becoming confident in completing assessments with integrity and of high standard.

What can you do to act with integrity?

Be Honest
If your assessment task is done by someone else, it would be dishonest of you to claim it as your own

Seek Help
If you are not sure about how to cite or reference in essays, reports etc, then seek help from your lecturer, the library or the Academic Learning Centre (ALC)

Produce Original Work
Originality comes from your ability to read widely, think critically, and apply your gained knowledge to address a question or problem