

PROBE — INTELLIGENT INTERFACE

SET W06

DUE W09 · TUE 3 NOV

5%

PROCESS + PRACTICE

Build an interface with a model in the loop that asks a question about your domain. It does not have to work. It has to be legible.

PROBES, NOT PRODUCTS

A probe is built to ask a question, not to ship. It can be ugly, partial or non-functional and still be excellent, if it makes something legible that was not legible before. This is stated plainly because upper-year students default to portfolio polish and learn nothing from it.

The rule that follows: raise your documentation fidelity, never your artifact fidelity. Polish tracks equipment, time and money far more reliably than it tracks ability, so it is a bad thing to grade. How well you can explain what you built, what it revealed, and where it broke is a good thing to grade, and it is what I will read.

WHAT TO MAKE

An interface, in your domain, where a model does something the interface could not do without it. Not a chatbot bolted onto a screen — something where the intelligence changes what the interaction can be. It can be a web page, a paper prototype with a human running the model behind it, a video of a thing working, or a script with a terrible front end. The form is yours.

W07 gives you divergence and convergence; W08 gives you plumbing — what the model is actually wired into, and the difference between telling a model about your data and letting it read your data. Both weeks are studio time on this.

WHAT TO SUBMIT

THE PROBE

In whatever form it takes. If it does not run, submit what it would have done and be specific about where it stops.

THE QUESTION

One paragraph: what were you asking, and did you find out?

EDGES

Where it fails, and what you learned by pushing it there. This is worth more than the parts that worked.

DEVICE MATRIX

What it runs on, what it does not, and the fallback. iOS has no WebXR on any browser — if that matters to you, say so here.

decisions.md

Written at the time, not reconstructed. What you rejected and why.

AI STATEMENT

Including what you turned down.

HOW IT GETS REVIEWED, AND HOW IT GETS MARKED

At W09 your work goes through a named-lens panel: four tables, each reading every artifact through one assigned lens, rotating. The four lenses are craft, does it actually work, who could this harm, and would you ship it.

Those four lenses are also the four criteria on the rubric. That is deliberate — the feedback you get in the room and the mark you receive are the same instrument, so you are never reconciling two different accounts of the same work.

WHAT MAKES THIS GO WRONG

- Building a product. If it is polished and asks nothing, it will mark badly here even if it looks the best in the room.
- Hiding the failure. The edges are the content. A probe that only demonstrates its happy path has not been probed.
- “Who could this harm” answered abstractly. Name people. Accessibility belongs here too: who cannot use this, and why.
- Dodging “would you ship it.” You need a position. No, with reasons, is a full-credit answer and often the more interesting one.
- Leaving decisions.md until the night before. The history shows when it was written, and it is marked under the notebook as well as here.

MARKS COME BACK WITHIN 72 HOURS

The withdrawal deadline is Monday 9 November, six days after this is due, with reading break in between. W09 is the last session before you have to decide, so you get a real, returned grade signal — this mark and your notebook feedback — in time for that decision to be an informed one.

HOW THIS IS MARKED

Marked on these criteria. Percentages are shares of this assignment, not of the course. The full rubric — including every indicator behind each criterion — goes out with this brief, and it is the same sheet I mark on.

- 25% **Craft**
- 25% **Does it actually work**
- 25% **Who could this harm**
- 25% **Would you ship it**

REQUIRED TO PASS — NOT SCORED

- AI Use Statement attached
- decisions.md carries the probe’s decisions, written at the time

IF SOMETHING HERE DOES NOT WORK FOR YOU

Any live presentation can be a recorded presentation with live Q&A, or a one-on-one defence. On request, no documentation required. A missed live event is rescheduled in the assessment period and the late penalty does not apply to it. If a tool, sensor, library or device does not work on your machine or your body, there is a declared alternative for every hands-on in this course — take it, no explanation needed. And you can complete this course without using generative AI: tell me and we will set up the equivalent path.