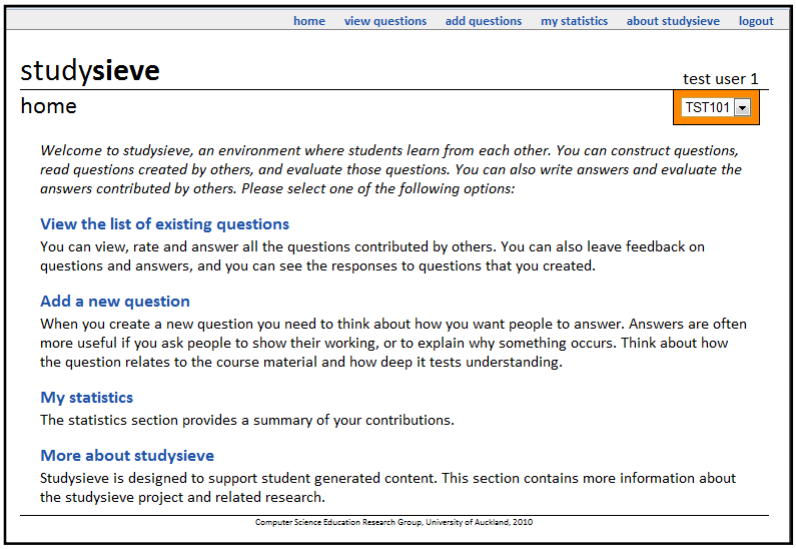
studysieve *student guide*

Requirements for COMPSCI 111: Each week, you must create 1 question and answer at least 1 question. You may create more questions and answer more questions if you wish. Take a screen shot of the question and answer and submit them with your lab report each week. The question should be related to the material covered in either lectures or labs over the previous week (i.e. the question does not have to be lab related, but could be about the recent lecture material).

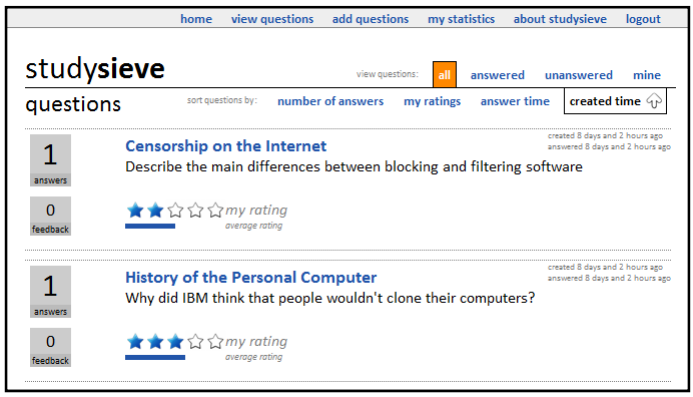
study**sieve** is a system designed to support student learning by developing questions and answers. Students use study**sieve** to develop an exam-style question and an associated sample solution. When the question is submitted, it becomes available for other students to use for revision. The questions and answers can be evaluated, rated for quality and discussed.



The process of developing good questions and sample solutions to those questions requires students to understand the relevant concepts and express their ideas clearly and concisely. Answering, evaluating and discussing the questions and answers contributed by their peers allows students to compare their own performance with others in the same class. The collection of questions, answers, ratings and discussion provided through studysieve provides timely feedback to teachers on student perceptions and performance.

Home page

After logging in, you will be shown the home page for studysieve. The main menu allows you to view questions that have already been submitted, add a new question, view a summary of your own contributions, and find out more information. Although you have to log in to use the system, all contributions are confidential (i.e. none of the other users can see who has contributed a particular question, answer, rating or feedback).



Viewing the list of existing questions

By default, all of the questions submitted to studysieve are displayed in a single list. You can choose to filter the list, so it only shows you questions that you have already answered, questions that you have not answered yet, or questions that

you have created yourself.

You can also decide how to sort the list. You can order the questions by the number of answers submitted to the question, the question rating, the time of the most recent answer, and the time the question was first created.

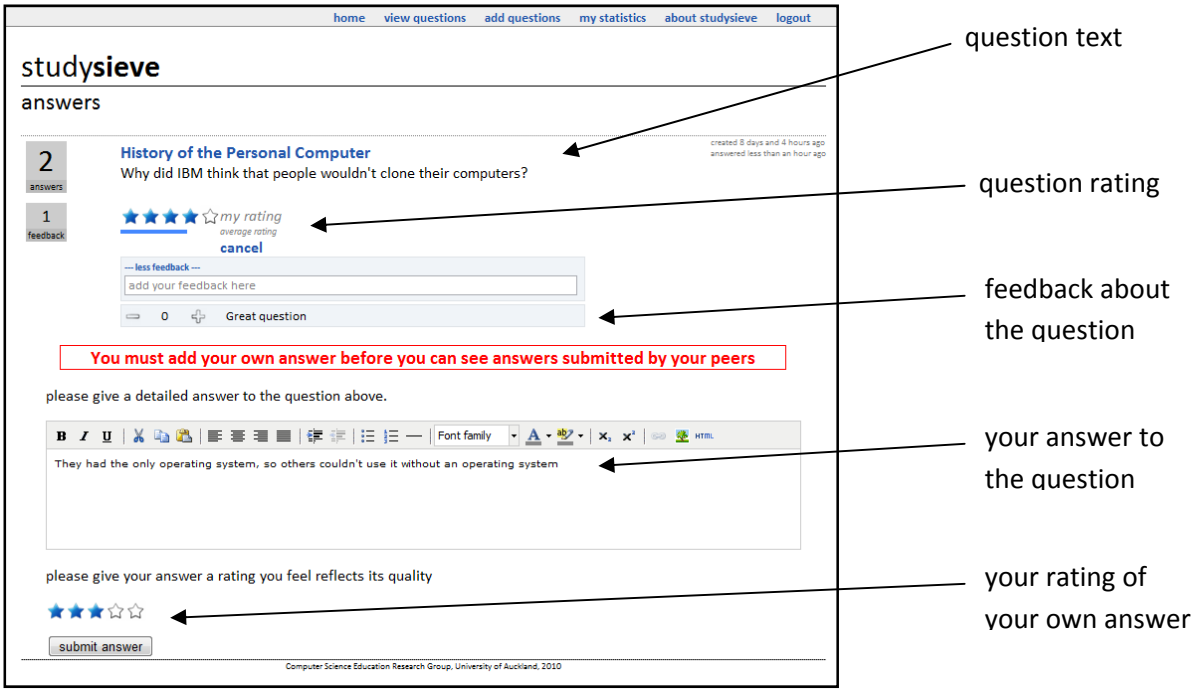
On the left side is a summary showing the number of answers submitted to the question, and the number of posts containing feedback that has been left by others. If the box is displayed in blue, it means that you have contributed one or more posts in the corresponding category (i.e. answers or feedback).

Initially, the ratings are not displayed. After you have read the question, you can rate it on a scale of 1- 5 stars by clicking on the corresponding star below the question. A highly rated question should be clearly written, relevant to the course learning outcomes and should be a useful learning and study resource. Remember that an easy question is not necessarily a good question!

Once you have rated a question, a horizontal bar will appear below the stars indicating the average rating for that question. You can compare your own rating with that of your peers for each rated question.

Answering a question

To answer a question, you first need to click on the title of a question. You will see a page similar to the following:



Feedback

On this page, you can view the feedback that your peers have written about the question. You are encouraged to write constructive feedback about the questions that you see. Next to each piece of feedback you will see a minus sign, a number and a plus sign. You can agree or disagree with a

comment by clicking on the plus or minus sign. The number shows the total number of students that have agreed or disagreed (+1 for each agreement and -1 for each disagreement).

Rating your answer

Once you have written an answer, you must rate your answer before you submit it. A highly rated answer should be accurate, clearly written and should be an answer that will help others understand the topic.

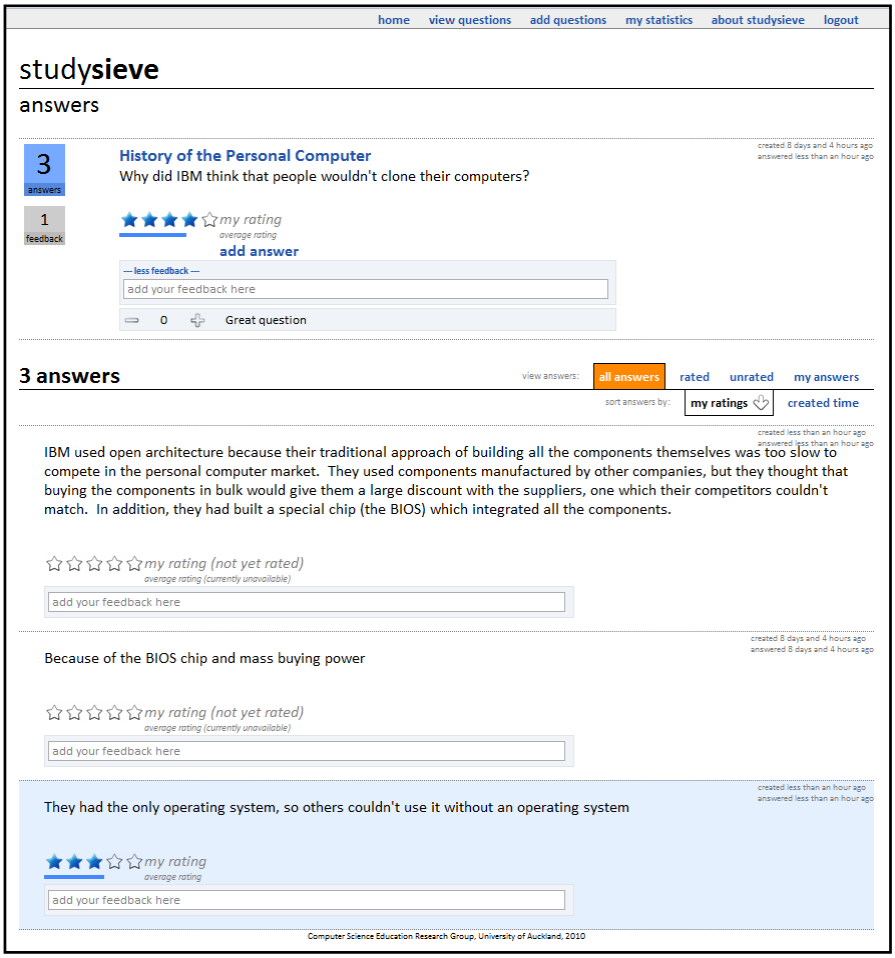
Submitting your answer

When you click the submit button, you will have a chance to review your answer. If you want to make any changes, simply cancel the preview. If you are happy with the answer, then click "Accept" and your answer will be added to the repository.

Reviewing other answers

After you submit an answer to a question, other answers submitted by your peers will be displayed. You can choose to display only questions that you have already rated, answers that you have not yet rated, or only your own answers.

Each answer can be rated on a scale of 1-5 stars. Once you rate an answer, the average rating of the answer will be displayed and you can compare your own rating with those of your peers.



You are also encouraged to write feedback about the other answers you view. Good feedback is very helpful, both to the author of the answer and to other students who are viewing the answers. Good feedback helps to clarify understanding and helps students to improve their answers next time.

Any answers that you have submitted to the system appear with a light blue background.

Adding a question

After you have answered a few questions, it is time to add your own question. When you create a question you need to write a question title, the actual question text, and a sample solution. You also need to rate the question and the sample solution. When you write the title, choose something short that describes the topic that your question is about.

Before you add a question, review the learning outcomes of the course and try to think how you would ask a question that assesses whether a student has achieved the outcome or not. There are many different kinds of questions you could ask. A brief discussion of question types is provided below.

The simplest kind of question requires memorization of facts. These kinds of questions should be used sparingly, since they can be useful for revision, but tend not to improve understanding. These questions typically start:

- What does ... stand for?
- Who was ...?
- What year did ...?
- List all the ...
- Define the term ...
- State the name of ...

Questions that test understanding frequently ask students to express their understanding of a topic in their own words. They typically begin:

- Explain ...
- Summarize ...
- Give an example of ...

Some questions assess the ability to carry out a process. These questions often begin with an instruction to perform the relevant process. For example:

- Convert the ...
- Write a formula that ...

Questions that probe deep understanding often ask students to analyse or evaluate a concept introduced in the course. For example:

- Compare and contrast the theories of ....
- What are the advantages of ... compared with ...
- Discuss why ... is important to ...

When you write material to add to studysieve, remember that the material you write will be used by your peers for learning and revision. You should aim to produce professional, high quality material that will make a real contribution to the learning community.