

ECE 445 / ME 470  
Senior Design Laboratory  
Final Report Draft

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# Automated Intelligent Document Stamping System with Machine Vision Integration

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Team #6

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## Abstract

The Automated Intelligent Document Stamping System is a desktop mechatronic device for processing multi-page administrative documents with less repetitive manual labor and fewer placement errors. The system combines single-sheet paper handling, machine-vision-based target selection, an X-Y gantry, and a force-limited Z-axis stamping head. Users select either a blank-space mode, which searches for an open 5 cm by 5 cm region, or a keyword-offset mode, which locates a target word and computes a stamping coordinate relative to it. A master controller coordinates the camera, vision logic, gantry motion, paper sensors, rollers, actuator, and user interface. The high-level design targets more than 95% coordinate-detection accuracy within 5 s, X-Y placement within  $\pm 5$  mm, a stamping force between 15 N and 25 N, and less than 2% page-feed error across 50 consecutive A4 sheets. This report presents the final system architecture, design rationale, tolerance analysis, verification plan, cost estimate, and safety and privacy controls.

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# 1 Introduction

Administrative offices often stamp large numbers of documents by hand. The task is repetitive and slow, and errors can occur when a stamp is skewed, placed on text, or applied with inconsistent pressure. The goal of this project is to build a compact automated stamping system that can feed A4 pages, identify an appropriate stamping location, move a stamp head to that location, apply controlled force, and output the completed sheet.

The project differs from a fixed-coordinate stamping fixture because the target location is selected from the document image for each page. In Mode A, the vision subsystem searches for an available 5 cm by 5 cm blank area. In Mode B, the system detects a user-specified keyword and applies a programmed offset from that keyword. This content-aware behavior is intended to support forms with different layouts without requiring the user to manually reconfigure stamp coordinates for every document type.

The system is divided into four main modules:

- Vision and Logic Module: captures the page image, detects blank regions or keywords, and converts pixel coordinates to physical X-Y coordinates.
- Motion Control Module: drives the X-Y gantry and Z-axis actuator, monitors stamping force, and executes the stamping motion.
- Page Handling Module: separates sheets, feeds pages into the stamping area, detects paper position, and ejects stamped pages.
- User Interaction and Integration Module: provides the user interface (UI), distributes power, manages emergency stop behavior, and coordinates communication among subsystems.

The final high-level requirements are listed below. They are intentionally quantitative so that the completed system can be judged by measured data rather than by visual inspection alone.

1. The vision and logic subsystem must identify either the target keyword or a valid 5 cm by 5 cm blank stamping area with more than 95% accuracy within 5 s under 300 lux to 500 lux office lighting.
2. The motion control subsystem must move the stamp to the target coordinate with no more than  $\pm 5$  mm physical placement error in both X and Y while applying a stable Z-axis stamping force between 15 N and 25 N.
3. The page handling subsystem must feed and output 80 g/m<sup>2</sup> A4 sheets with less than 2% jam or multi-feed error across 50 consecutive stamping cycles.

Figure 1 shows the project flowchart and signal organization, and Fig. 2 shows the intended physical arrangement of the paper path, camera, gantry, stamp head, UI, and enclosure.

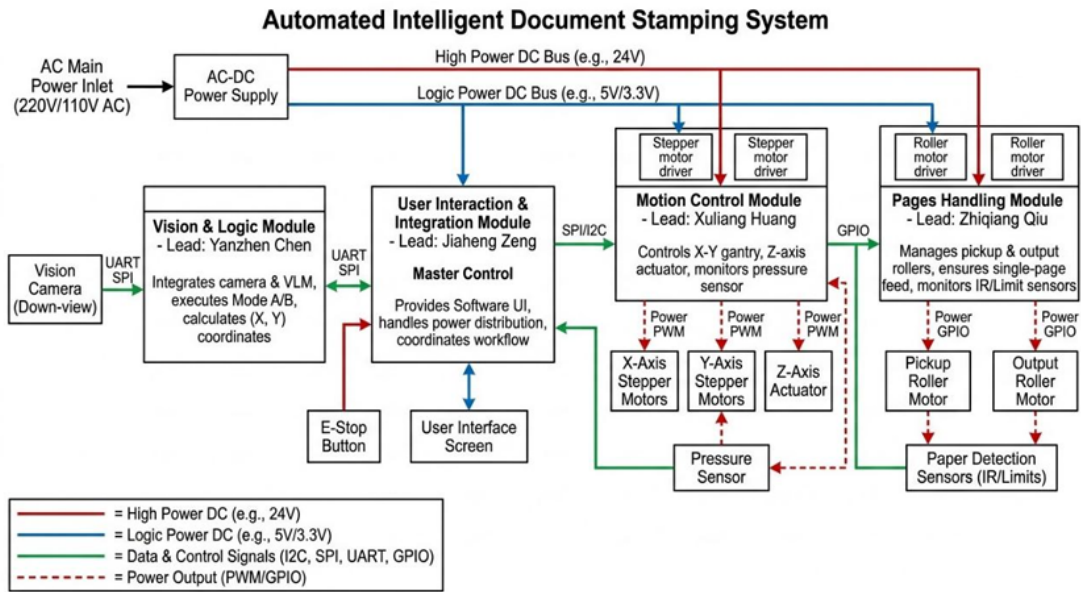


Figure 1: System flowchart showing the power paths, control buses, and major functional modules.

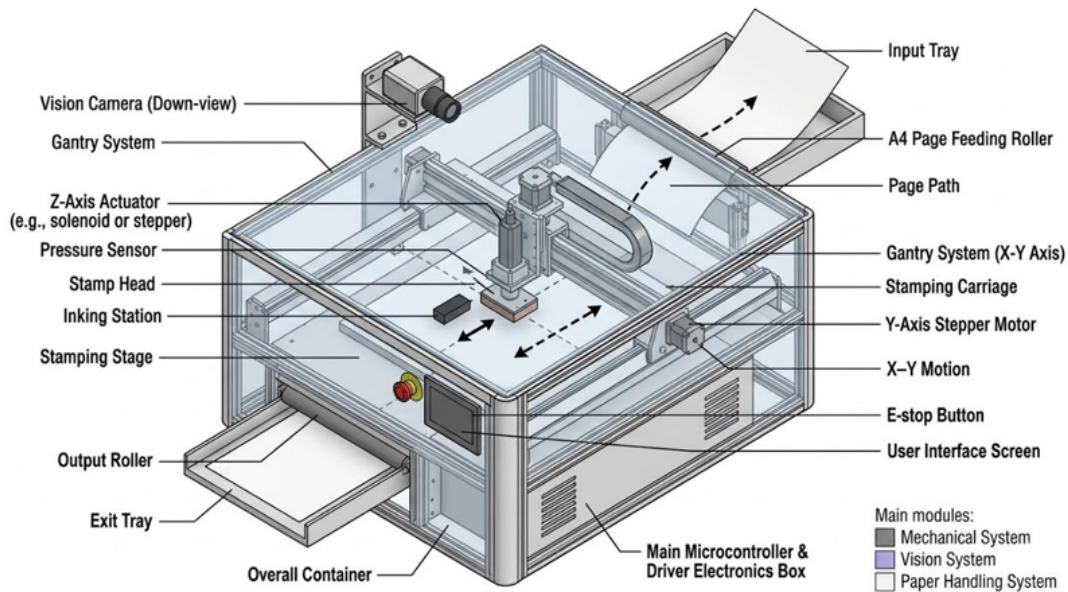


Figure 2: System rendering of the automated document stamping machine.

## 2 Design

### 2.1 System Architecture

The system follows a feed, scan, compute, stamp, and eject workflow. After the user selects a mode from the UI, the input roller advances one sheet into the stamping stage. Paper-detection sensors confirm that the page is stationary and correctly positioned. The down-facing camera captures an image, and the vision logic returns a target coordinate. The master controller then sends motion commands to the gantry controller, lowers the stamp head until the force target is reached, retracts the actuator, and commands the output roller to eject the page.

The architecture separates high-level document interpretation from time-critical motor control. The vision processor handles image capture, optical character recognition (OCR), blank-space detection, and coordinate mapping. The motion controller handles deterministic stepper timing, actuator control, and sensor feedback. This division keeps image-processing latency from interfering with step generation and makes each subsystem easier to test independently.

### 2.2 Vision and Logic Module

The vision module uses a down-facing 1080p RGB camera to image the page after it reaches the stamping stage. The camera resolution requirement is based on the need to distinguish 12 pt printed text and locate whitespace boundaries over the A4 page area. The OCR pipeline is responsible for keyword detection in Mode B, while the blank-space detector identifies candidate rectangular regions in Mode A. OCR systems commonly use page-layout analysis, line finding, character classification, and confidence scoring; the Tesseract OCR architecture is one well documented example of this processing class [1].

The coordinate conversion uses a calibrated relationship between image coordinates and page-plane coordinates. Camera calibration can correct lens distortion and determine the relation between pixels and real-world units such as millimeters [2]. Because the paper is treated as a planar surface, the implementation can use a homography from image points  $(u, v)$  to page coordinates  $(x, y)$ :

$$s \begin{bmatrix} x \\ y \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} = H \begin{bmatrix} u \\ v \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \quad (1)$$

where  $H$  is the image-to-page transformation matrix and  $s$  is an arbitrary scale factor. During calibration, known page markers or measured reference points are used to estimate  $H$ . During operation, the selected pixel coordinate is transformed with Eq. (1), offset if necessary, and sent to the motion controller.

## 2.3 Motion Control Module

The motion control module consists of an X-Y gantry, stepper motors, motor drivers, a Z-axis actuator, and a pressure sensor. The X-Y stage moves the stamp head over the document. The Z-axis actuator applies the stamp, and the force sensor prevents excessive downward force. The design target is a controlled stamping force between 15 N and 25 N, which is high enough for a clear imprint but low enough to avoid damaging the document or mechanism.

Figure 3 shows the current prototype frame before the paper rollers and paper tray were installed. The image verifies the basic three-axis motion structure: a belt-driven horizontal frame, a moving carriage, and a vertical stamp axis mounted above the document area.

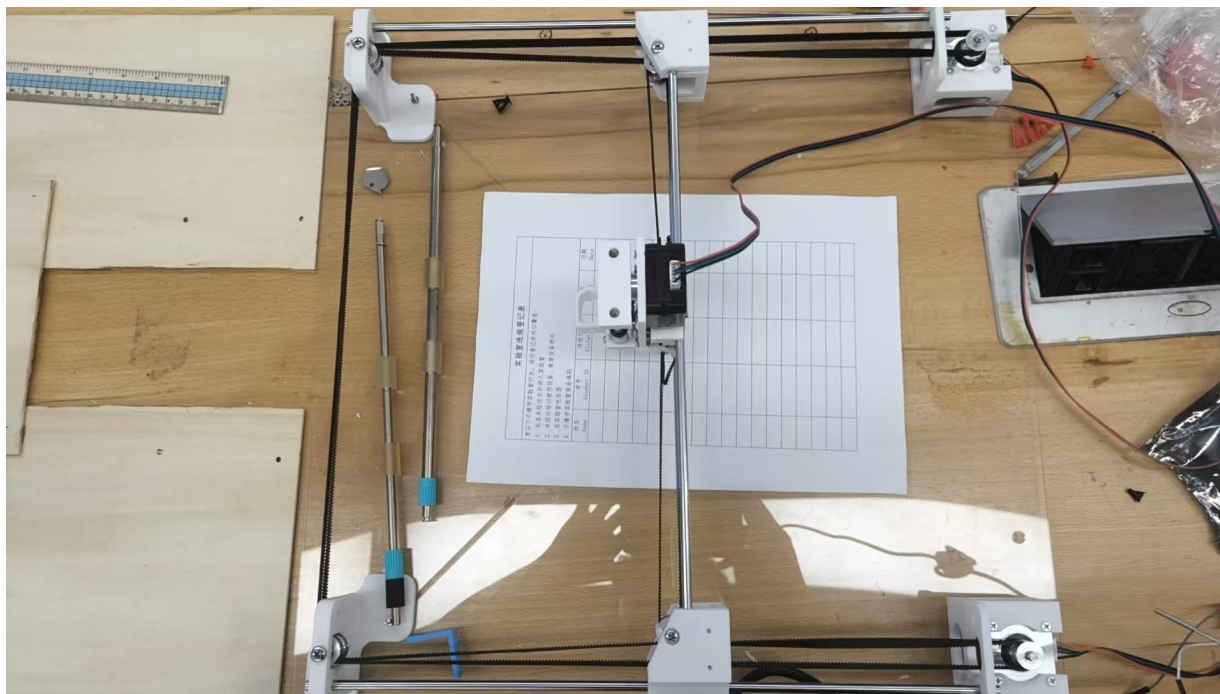


Figure 3: Prototype frame showing the three-axis transmission structure before installation of the rollers and paper tray.

The gantry can be controlled through G-code-style motion commands. Grbl is an open-source embedded G-code parser and motion controller that supports stepper pulse generation, acceleration planning, and common motion commands on AVR-based controllers [3]. The development material also includes CNCjs, a web-based interface for controllers such as Grbl that can send G-code over a serial connection and visualize tool paths [4]. These tools are useful for initial motor bring-up, motion calibration, and manual jogging before the complete stamping workflow is integrated.

For stepper actuation, the A4988 class of microstepping drivers is appropriate for compact gantry prototypes because it integrates a translator and supports up to 1/16 microstep resolution [5]. The final driver setting must be matched to the motor current limit and

supply voltage. Current limiting is particularly important because the gantry must hold position during the stamping event while avoiding overheating.

## 2.4 Page Handling Module

The page handling module uses an input tray, pickup roller, separation mechanism, paper path, output roller, and infrared or photoelectric sensors. Its main failure modes are no-feed, multi-feed, skew, and jam. To reduce these risks, the input roller advances only one sheet per cycle, and the sensor sequence confirms the expected leading-edge and trailing-edge events. The output roller completes each cycle by clearing the sheet from the stamping stage before the next page is accepted.

The page handling requirement is expressed as a system-level reliability target: fewer than 2% feed or output errors across 50 consecutive A4 sheets. This requirement is strict enough to reveal repeatability problems while remaining feasible for a desktop prototype.

## 2.5 User Interaction and Integration Module

The UI allows the user to select Mode A or Mode B, enter a keyword for Mode B, start or pause the cycle, and observe status states such as Idle, Feeding, Scanning, Stamping, Ejecting, Complete, and Error. The integration module also manages the emergency stop input, the screen, power rails, and communication buses. UART is used for simple coordinate and status messages where appropriate, while SPI, I2C, GPIO, and PWM signals connect lower-level devices such as drivers and sensors.

## 2.6 Software Implementation

The current software package implements the automatic workflow as a local FastAPI backend with a browser-based control panel and a PyWebView desktop wrapper. The backend modules are organized around configuration, camera capture, document preview rendering, paper detection, calibration, target resolution, G-code generation, serial communication, and workflow execution. The frontend exposes Target, Motion, Camera, and Advanced tabs. The desktop application is started with `scripts/run_app.bat`, while `scripts/setup_env.bat` creates or updates the SD conda environment.

In addition to the proposal-level automatic blank-space and keyword modes, the UI now supports two practical teaching workflows for integration testing and operator-controlled placement. In the file-teach workflow, the operator uploads an A4 PDF or image, clicks the desired stamp location on the preview, and confirms the file position. Figure 4 shows this workflow with a PDF preview and the selected stamp point.

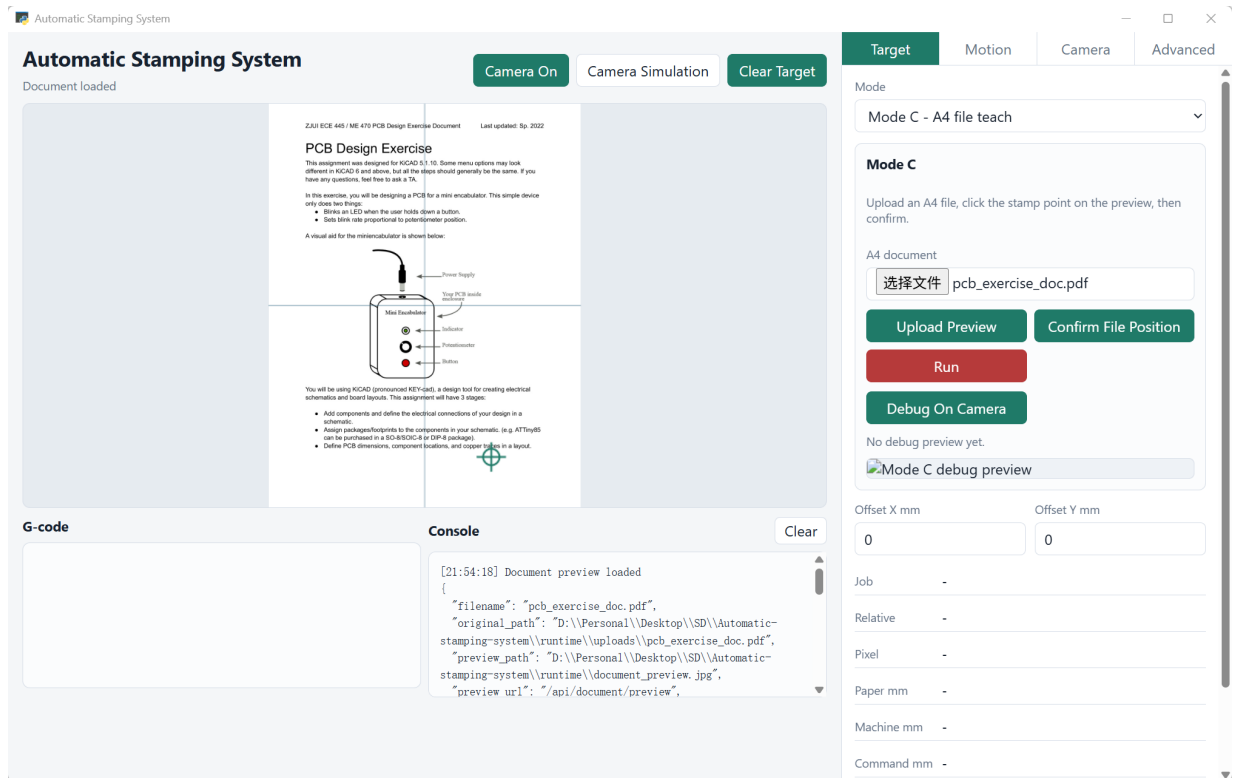


Figure 4: UI file-teach mode: the operator uploads an A4 document preview and clicks the desired stamp point.

In the camera-teach workflow, the operator uses the live camera image to define the usable stamp/detect region or to select the target on the physical sheet. Figure 5 shows the camera view, paper region overlay, and camera controls. Both workflows store the result as a paper-relative coordinate  $(r_x, r_y)$  in the range  $[0, 1]$ , so later sheets can map the same logical stamp point to the current physical page location.

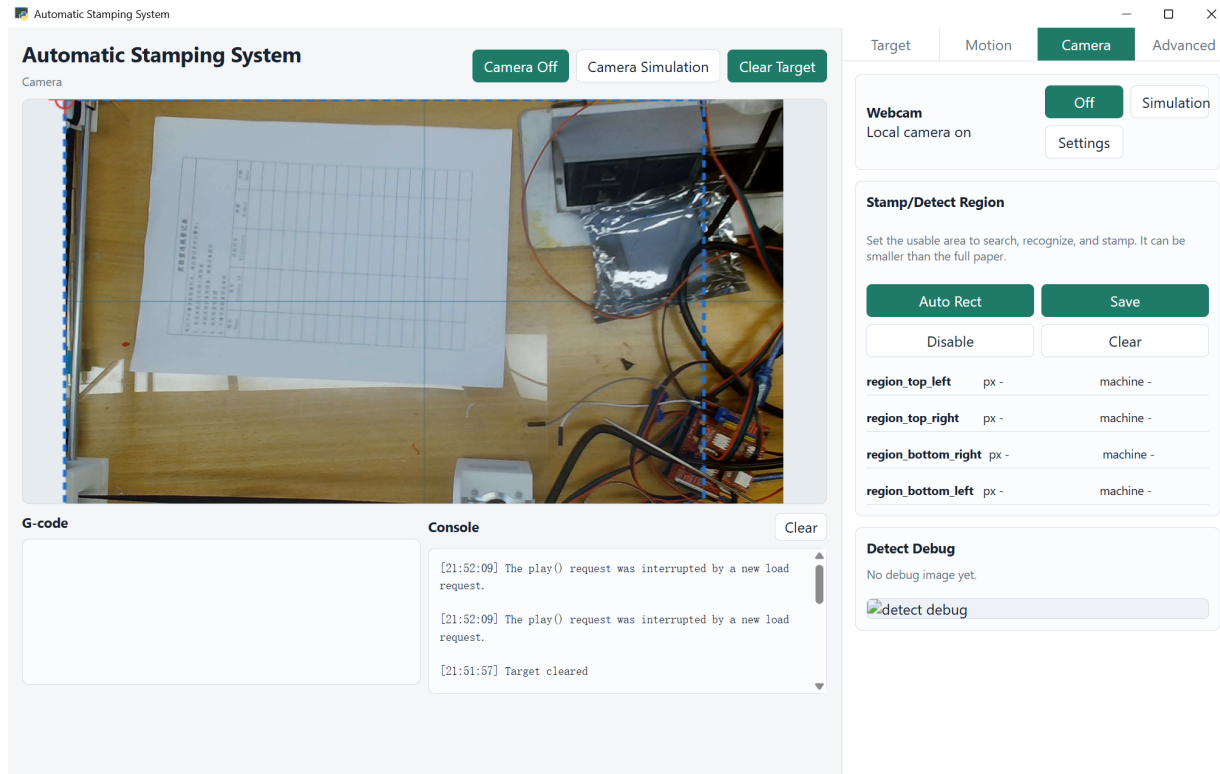


Figure 5: UI camera mode: the live camera view is used to set the usable stamp/detect region and support camera-based target selection.

The backend resolves every target into three coordinate descriptions: relative paper coordinates, real machine coordinates in millimeters, and corrected commanded coordinates. The correction layer accounts for axis scale, offset, inversion, and configured motion limits. The G-code generator then emits a repeatable stamp sequence: set millimeter units, use absolute positioning, lift or hold safe Z, move X-Y, press to stamp Z, dwell, retract, and optionally trigger the paper-feed command.

## 3 Verification

### 3.1 Verification Strategy

The verification strategy follows the high-level requirements and then decomposes them into module-level tests. The most important principle is that each test produces quantitative evidence: detection accuracy, processing time, coordinate error, force, feed success rate, sensor response time, packet error rate, or voltage tolerance. Table 1 summarizes the system-level verification plan.

Table 1: High-level requirements and verification plan

Requirement	Verification method	Acceptance criterion
Vision target detection	Test sample documents under 300 lux to 500 lux lighting. Log target result and processing time for each page.	More than 95% correct target selection and coordinate output within 5 s.
X-Y positioning and stamping force	Command known target points, mark or measure stamp location, and record force with a force gauge or load cell.	Placement error no greater than $\pm 5$ mm in X and Y; force between 15 N and 25 N.
Page handling reliability	Load 50 sheets of 80 g/m <sup>2</sup> A4 paper and run continuous feed, stamp, and eject cycles.	Jam, no-feed, or multi-feed rate less than 2%.

### 3.2 Vision Verification

The camera test verifies that the captured frame is 1920 by 1080 pixels and that standard office lighting is sufficient for OCR. The keyword-location test uses documents with manually measured ground-truth keyword positions. For Mode A, blank-space detection is evaluated by checking whether the selected 5 cm by 5 cm region avoids printed text, margins reserved by the form, and page edges. For Mode B, the reported coordinate is compared with the known keyword bounding box plus the programmed offset.

Processing latency is measured from image capture to coordinate output. The target is 5 s at the system level and 4.5 s for the algorithm block, leaving margin for communication and workflow overhead.

### 3.3 Motion Verification

The X-Y gantry is tested by commanding repeated moves to a set of reference points and measuring the resulting position. The repeatability target from the design document is  $\pm 2.0$  mm, while the high-level requirement allows  $\pm 5.0$  mm final stamping error after vision and mechanics are combined. The Z-axis actuator is tested with a force gauge placed at the stamping location. A valid cycle reaches the 15 N to 25 N force window, holds long enough to transfer ink, and retracts without dragging the stamp.

### 3.4 Page Handling Verification

The page handling subsystem is tested over repeated A4 cycles. Each trial records whether zero, one, or multiple sheets were fed; whether the front edge stopped at the reference location; and whether the sheet exited fully after stamping. Sensor timing is measured separately by blocking each sensor and recording response on a logic analyzer or oscilloscope.

### 3.5 Integration Verification

Integration tests check whether the UI state matches the physical state within 1 s, whether UART packets reach the receiving controller correctly, and whether the power rails stay within tolerance during peak mechanical load. The final report should be updated with measured values after the completed prototype is tested. The detailed requirement and verification matrix is included in Appendix A.

### 3.6 Software Verification

The software package includes unit tests for homography calibration, relative coordinate conversion, G-code generation, axis scaling, configuration round trip, Mode A zeroing, and paper-feed command generation. These tests provide regression coverage for the coordinate and command-generation layers before live machine testing. During report preparation, the tests were reviewed and run in a local Python environment; one preset-preview test did not pass because the current Y-axis machine limits in `machine.toml` do not yet cover the A4 preset target. The test should be rerun after final machine travel limits are measured and the production configuration is updated.

## 4 Cost and Schedule

### 4.1 Parts Cost

Table 2 lists the current prototype cost estimate from the design document. The total recorded parts cost is 1150 CNY. This estimate does not include spare parts, machining labor, shipping, or final enclosure revisions.

Table 2: Prototype parts cost estimate

Part	Cost (CNY)
RGB camera, 1080p USB	150
Microcontroller or single-board computer	350
NEMA 17 stepper motors, three total	120
Motor drivers and sensors	150
Frame and mechanical parts	300
Power supply	80
Total	1150

### 4.2 Labor Cost

The ECE 445 final report guideline recommends estimating labor cost as hourly rate multiplied by actual hours and then multiplied by 2.5. The final submission should replace the placeholder hours in Table 3 with each member’s actual reported contribution.

Table 3: Labor cost worksheet

Team member	Primary responsibility	Hours	Labor cost formula
Yanzhen Chen	Vision and logic	Not yet reported	hourly rate $\times$ hours $\times 2.5$
Zhiqiang Qiu	Page handling	Not yet reported	hourly rate $\times$ hours $\times 2.5$
Xuliang Huang	Motion control	Not yet reported	hourly rate $\times$ hours $\times 2.5$
Jiaheng Zeng	UI and integration	Not yet reported	hourly rate $\times$ hours $\times 2.5$

### 4.3 Project Schedule

The schedule allocated mechanical, vision, motion, and integration tasks in parallel. Early work focused on CAD, model setup, component sourcing, and roller prototypes. Mid-project work focused on OCR testing, motor calibration, sensor integration, and power design. Final work focused on assembly, debugging, verification, and report preparation.

Table 4: Summary schedule

Week	Zhiqiang Qiu	Yanzhen Chen	Xuliang Huang	Jiaheng Zeng
5	Paper path CAD	VLM setup	Gantry assembly	Component sourcing
6	Roller prototype	OCR testing	Motor calibration	UI design
7	IR sensors	Pixel-to-mm mapping	Z-axis actuator test	Power PCB layout
8	Mechanism refinement	Logic integration	Accuracy tuning	UI-MCU communication
9	Final assembly	Debugging	Testing	Final report

## 5 Ethics and Safety

The project handles documents that may contain personal or administrative information. The system design therefore follows a local-processing privacy policy: document images are used only to compute stamping coordinates, are processed locally, and are not intentionally saved to non-volatile storage or uploaded to cloud services. This approach aligns with the IEEE Code of Ethics requirement to protect privacy and make engineering decisions consistent with safety and public welfare [6].

The main mechanical risks are pinch points at rollers, moving belts, and the X-Y carriage. These risks are reduced by using an enclosure around the moving gantry and paper path, placing the UI outside the motion envelope, and installing a front-panel emergency stop button. During testing, operators should keep hands clear of the paper path and should use manual jog controls only when the stamp head is raised.

The main electrical risks are AC mains input, motor supply current, and voltage transients from inductive loads. The AC-DC power supply must be enclosed, grounded, fused, and strain-relieved. Low-voltage logic and motor wiring should be separated where practical. The power distribution verification test checks that the 24 V rail remains within  $\pm 0.5$  V under load and that logic rails remain within their specified operating range.

The broader impact of the system is mainly economic and societal. Automating repetitive document stamping can reduce administrative workload and make batch processing more consistent. At the same time, the system should be deployed as an assistive tool rather than as a substitute for human judgment on official document approval. The machine can place a stamp, but the organization using it remains responsible for deciding when a stamp is authorized.

## 6 Conclusion

The automated document stamping system integrates machine vision, page transport, motion control, and user interaction into a single desktop workflow. The design targets content-aware stamping rather than fixed-coordinate stamping, enabling the system to adapt to different document layouts through blank-space detection or keyword-offset placement.

The most critical engineering risk is coordinate mapping from camera pixels to physical gantry motion. The design document's tolerance analysis estimates 0.4 mm vision error and 2.0 mm mechanical backlash, giving a worst-case accumulated error of 2.4 mm. This leaves 2.6 mm of margin relative to the  $\pm 5.0$  mm placement requirement. The current prototype and software already demonstrate the main structure of the final approach: a three-axis transmission frame, a file-teach UI, a camera-teach UI, homography-based coordinate mapping, and G-code generation for motion and stamping. The remaining work is to install and tune the page rollers and tray, finalize machine travel limits, and collect complete measured verification data on the assembled system.



## Appendix A Requirement and Verification Matrix

Table 5 records the detailed block-level requirements and verification procedures derived from the proposal and design document.

Table 5: Detailed requirement and verification matrix

Module	Requirement	Verification
Vision camera	Capture images at 1920 by 1080 resolution under 300 lux office lighting.	Capture a standard 12 pt text document and verify image resolution and OCR readability on a PC.
Vision algorithm	Output Mode A or Mode B target coordinates within 5 s.	Run sample documents with known targets and log capture-to-coordinate latency.
Coordinate mapping	Convert pixel points to physical X-Y coordinates with no more than $\pm 0.5$ mm mapping error.	Input known calibration points and compare converted coordinates with caliper measurements.
X-Y gantry	Reach target coordinates with $\pm 2.0$ mm repeatability.	Command five points repeatedly and measure return-to-origin and target-point deviations.
Z-axis actuator	Apply 20 N $\pm 2$ N at the stamp contact point in block-level tests.	Place a force gauge at the stamping stage and record peak force over repeated cycles.
Pickup roller	Feed exactly one A4 sheet per cycle with no more than 2% failure.	Load 50 A4 sheets and record no-feed, multi-feed, and jam events.
Paper sensors	Detect paper presence within 100 ms.	Block each sensor and measure signal response with an oscilloscope or logic analyzer.
UI and workflow	Display mode selection, keyword input, and state updates within 1 s of physical state changes.	Run a full cycle and compare UI state transitions against observed machine state.
Communication	Maintain UART communication at 115200 bps with no more than 1% corrupted or dropped packets.	Send 1000 test strings and count missing or corrupted messages.
Power distribution	Supply 24 V DC within $\pm 0.5$ V under a 2 A load.	Connect an electronic load and monitor output voltage with a multimeter or oscilloscope.

## Appendix B Provided Project Materials Inventory

The workspace was reviewed before writing this report. The supplied materials fall into the following categories.

Table 6: Source material inventory and role in this report

Material category	Role
ECE final report guidelines PDF	Defines formatting, report organization, figure/table treatment, citation expectations, cost discussion, and verification discussion.
LaTeX template archive	Provides the required project structure, title page style, abstract, table of contents, bibliography setup, and appendix setup used for this report.
Project proposal PDF	Primary source for project title, team information, high-level requirements, module division, tolerance analysis, ethics, and safety goals.
Design document DOCX	Primary source for problem statement, final module descriptions, block-level requirement tables, cost estimate, and schedule.
System flowchart image	Inserted as Fig. 1; used to describe power, control, and module interactions.
System rendering image	Inserted as Fig. 2; used to describe the physical layout and user-facing structure.
Motion firmware source package	Contains Grbl C source, configuration files, upload sketch, and documentation for G-code-based motion control.
CNCjs and firmware flashing guides	Used to understand bring-up workflow, serial connection, baud rate, G-code testing, and motion-parameter adjustment.
G-code generation tools and sample files	Provide context for vector-to-motion command generation and testing with sample G-code.
3D model, CAD, and STL files	Provide mechanical reference for gantry, frame, rollers, brackets, holder parts, and custom printable components.
Power, wiring, and driver images	Provide supporting reference for motor-driver current adjustment, adapter wiring, and cable layout.
Driver packages and executable tools	Treated as setup assets only; they were inventoried but not executed while preparing this report.
Automatic stamping software package	Contains the Python backend, Web UI, PyWebView desktop entry point, Arduino protocol example, machine configuration, firmware images, run scripts, and unit tests.
Prototype and UI screenshots	Added as figures for the three-axis frame, file-teach UI, and camera-region UI.

## Appendix C Software Structure and Code Excerpts

The current code package is organized as a local desktop application. The main user-facing scripts are `scripts/setup_env.bat`, which creates or updates the SD conda environment, and `scripts/run_app.bat`, which starts the PyWebView desktop application. The core backend is in `src/stamping_system/`, the browser UI is in `web/`, and an optional Arduino protocol example is in `arduino/stamping_controller.ino`.

The following excerpt shows the central preview, move, and stamp pipeline. Each target is resolved to machine coordinates before the backend builds G-code and sends it through the serial transport.

Listing 1: Backend target preview and stamp pipeline excerpt

```
def preview_target(target, config=None, include_paper_feed=True):
    cfg = config or load_config()
    resolved = resolve_target(target, cfg)
    plan = build_stamp_gcode(
        resolved.real_xy_mm,
        resolved.commanded_xy_mm,
        cfg,
        include_paper_feed=include_paper_feed,
    )
    return PreviewResult(target=resolved, gcode=plan.lines)

def stamp_target(target, dry_run=None, config=None):
    cfg = config or load_config()
    preview = preview_target(target, cfg)
    result = SerialTransport(cfg, force_dry_run=dry_run).execute(preview.gcode)
    return preview, result
```

The target resolver supports direct pixels, pixels on a detected paper quadrilateral, paper-relative coordinates, presets, OCR keywords, and real machine coordinates. Both file-teach and camera-teach workflows reduce to the relative-paper representation shown in Listing 2.

Listing 2: Relative paper target resolution excerpt

```
def _resolve_relative(rx, ry, target, config, note):
    pixel = None
    if config.paper.use_detected_quad_for_relative_targets and target.paper_quad:
        pixel = relative_to_pixel_on_quad(rx, ry, target.paper_quad)
        real = pixel_to_real(pixel, config)
        note += " Detected paper quad was used."
    else:
        real = relative_paper_to_real(rx, ry, config)
        note += " Static paper origin was used."

    real = (real[0] + target.offset_mm[0], real[1] + target.offset_mm[1])
    paper = (rx * config.paper.width_mm, ry * config.paper.height_mm)
    commanded = real_to_commanded(real, config)
    return TargetResult(
        source=target.source,
```

```

input_point=(rx, ry),
pixel_xy=pixel,
paper_xy_mm=paper,
relative_xy=(rx, ry),
real_xy_mm=real,
commanded_xy_mm=commanded,
note=note,
)

```

The G-code generator produces a concise sequence for each stamping cycle. It validates the X, Y, and Z commanded values against configured machine limits before returning the command list.

Listing 3: Stamp G-code generation excerpt

```

def build_stamp_gcode(real_xy_mm, commanded_xy_mm, config, include_paper_feed=True):
    plan = build_move_gcode(real_xy_mm, commanded_xy_mm, config)
    safe_z = z_real_to_commanded(config.machine.safe_z_mm, config)
    stamp_z = z_real_to_commanded(config.machine.stamp_z_mm, config)
    lines = [
        *plan.lines,
        f"G1 Z{format_float(stamp_z)} F{format_float(config.machine.z_feed_mm_min)}",
        f"G4 P{format_float(config.machine.stamp_dwell_s)}",
        f"G1 Z{format_float(safe_z)} F{format_float(config.machine.z_feed_mm_min)}",
    ]
    if include_paper_feed and config.paper_feed.enabled and config.paper_feed.command:
        lines.append(config.paper_feed.command)
        if config.paper_feed.settle_s > 0:
            lines.append(f"G4 P{format_float(config.paper_feed.settle_s)}")
    return GcodePlan(real_xy_mm=real_xy_mm, commanded_xy_mm=commanded_xy_mm,
                    lines=lines)

```