BUSA8031 – Client Report and Presentation

Course Coordinator: Dr Hamed Jafarzadeh   Semester 2, 2023

Assessment 3: Client Report and Presentation

Word limit: 3000 to 4000 words

Weighing: 40% of total mark (30% Report, 10% presentation)

Output Format: docx or PFD for the report, plus oral presentation

Type   Group work (groups of 4 students)

Submission deadline: Reports: Week 13 (see iLearn for exact timing)
Presentation: Week 13 during class time

About Assignment 3

Students will be required to work in teams on the client organisation's issues. Students will be required to: 1) write a professional group report for the client organisation, and 2) deliver a formal presentation to the client organisation.

Purpose (the 'Why') of this assignment and the skills to develop

The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to experience the practice of undertaking a business analytic project in (close to) real-world situations. The assignment/project provides a platform for you to put the knowledge and skills that you have gained in your Master of Business Analytics degree into good use and address a business problem for the industry partner: NSW Health.

By doing this project, you will gain insights into the analytical problems faced by organizations and be able to contextualize your postgraduate capabilities into a final business project. Similar to the actual work in organizations which is always in teams, you will do the project in groups. This will engage you in the challenges of interpersonal communication, task allocation, coordination and control.

In addition to the above, the project gives you an opportunity to enhance your CV by including an experience of direct engagement with the industry in the CV – which is great for employability.

The Scene and Background

The scene

As a group of talented graduates from Macquarie University who have successfully completed your degree in business analytics and have learned how to use relevant tools and techniques, you have been recruited by **Agency for Clinical Innovation** at **NSW Health** to explore the huge amount of publicly available COVID-19 data (nationally and internationally) and work out what insights can be drawn from data to inform the health-related decision makings in Australia, and to support evidence-based interventions and policies.

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on individuals, communities, and countries worldwide. It is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which can spread from person to person through respiratory droplets when an infected individual coughs, sneezes, or talks. The pandemic has resulted in numerous public health challenges, including widespread illness, hospitalizations, and fatalities.

To mitigate the spread of the virus, various measures have been implemented, such as social distancing, wearing face masks, and practicing good hand hygiene. These measures aim to reduce transmission rates and protect vulnerable populations. Additionally, travel restrictions, lockdowns, and quarantines have been implemented in many regions to control the spread of the virus. Global vaccination campaigns have been implemented worldwide in response to the advancement of vaccines, aiming to effectively combat the virus and ultimately achieve herd immunity.

Data collection and reporting

Data collection is essential for understanding, managing, and combating COVID-19 by providing critical insights, informing decision-making, and supporting evidence-based interventions and policies. Numerous organisations have established platforms that facilitate the collection and dissemination of data across countries, with the objective of informing global and local actions and policies to effectively combat the virus. World Health Organization, Our World in Data, John Hopkins University, and GISAID are among the global platforms which continue to source and monitor data.

Data source: Our World in Data

Our World in Data (OWID) provides raw data on number of indictors including daily (or weekly) COVID-19 cases, deaths, hospitalisation, tests, and vaccination. These trends data are publicly accessible via: https://github.com/owid/covid-19-data/tree/master/public/data

In addition to the trends data, OWID has developed and reported several indicators on policies that countries implemented to control the outbreak. The policies indictors are accessible via: https://ourworldindata.org/policy-responses-covid

Your Task

The task given to you by your manager at Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI) is a broad task and is exploratory in nature. It comes from the fact that now, after the pandemic, analyzing the vast amount of data available about COVID-19 is of paramount importance. There is a lot that still is unpacked in data and in what we can learn from the data. You and your team are recruited by the ACI with the main mission of digging into data, analysing the data, and uncovering important and interesting insights from the data. You are free, and it is completely your choice, what aspects of the data you focus on or what sort of analysis to carry out. In fact, your manager at ACI does not have more to tell you in terms of what they are after from exploring the data because basically, they do not know! This is the whole point of the project! They have to rely on you, and your sharp brain and good thinking, to tell them what is in there in the data and what the data tells. However, as a starting point and in an initial discussion, ACI managers convey to you:

> While many indicators and visualization have been developed and provided by OWID, there are opportunities to triangulate and investigate data and create local, regional, or global insights. Areas for in-dept exploration could be (but not limited to):
> - Number of waves and how selected countries experienced the waves; in particular the first wave (Early 2020), Delta (Mid 2021) and Omicron (Early 2022).
> - Burden of pandemic in terms of hospitalisation and excess mortality among selected countries or age groups.
> - The uptake of vaccination and the effect on cases numbers and trends
> - Association between policies implemented and cases numbers
> - Pattern or abnormality in data such as weekend effect in reporting or unexpected and significant jumps or drops due to changes in data collections

Some of you may feel that the above business problem statement is not clear enough! This is not surprising nor is a worry! That's something that happens exactly in real-word projects. Ambiguity is normal! In many cases, a client or manager comes to you with a need/problem/idea/request/etc but many aspects are not clear even to the client themselves. You will have the opportunity to prob with the client (ACI) when they come to our class during their visits to better understand the problem/project and unpack the unknowns. ☺

It is expected that your analysis encompasses a wide range of analytical techniques and do not limit to some visualizations and descriptions (descriptive analytics only). Elements of predictive analytics (forecasting, data mining, predictive models, etc) is expected. Bring in your judgment, imagination and creativity. Creativity is the spice! Both breaths and depth of your analysis is important.

You have the opportunity to discuss your ideas and ask questions from ACI reps during their visits to our classes. Outside the visits, your Unit Coordinator might be able to channel your questions or inquiries to ACI rep. However, keep in mind that our industry partners are busy people and it may take a while for their response to come back. Factor this in your work and do not leave things for the last minute.

Remember, it is a data-driven report (and presentation). Everything that you say in the report should be backed-up by data. You should provide evidence from the data and your analysis (for example screenshots of graphs from your dashboards, or similar) in your report to support your finding/statement. No one likes unsupported claims!

You are expected to deliver a professional piece of business report. Consult this MQ guide on StudyWISE for how to write a good business report: Reports: Reports (mq.edu.au). Also search the internet for finding tips and good examples of business reports. While you have plenty of flexibility, your report is expected to have a good execute summary, introduction, and conclusion.

Important Notes

- No detailed instruction for font type, size, line space, margin, etc! … As a postgrad University student, however, you are expected to deliver a professional piece of work that is clear, neat and well organised. Don't forget to include page numbers. Figures and tables should always be numbered and captioned, and you should refer to them at least once in the body of your writing. Using justified text is visually appealing. A good title page, numbering pages, and reasonable page margin are always good practices.

- Clarity of language, layout and general presentation is an assessable aspect of the assignment. The look and feel of the output DOES matter (as it always matters in real-world projects when you produce an output). Always try to impress the reader of your document (which in many cases in real-world projects is your manager or your client) by professionalism, aesthetic, and an appealing look of your work. This is up to you to find out how to do that! Search around the internet, get ideas from good samples, use your own sense of art, etc, etc, etc!

- Remember that your document must look like a professional piece of work. Remember that you are presenting it to your managers of the client companies. Try to impress them by the quality of your work! Managers always care about the appearance and small details.

- MQ's provisions regarding Academic Integrity fully apply. Please refer to the relevant section in the Unit Guide for important information.

- Late submission is NOT allowed given the assignment has a presentation component during class time.

- This is a business report assignment. You don't need to use any references from academic literature (good news? ☺). However, if you chose to use references, correct referencing style and formatting for in-text citations and reference list is expected. References (if used) are not counted in the word limit. Any referencing style is acceptable as long as correct, accurate, and consistent.

- You are free to use any tool for your project. Excel cannot be the primary or the only tool used for this project (despite the fact that it is an amazing tool and we all love it!).

- Checkpoint(s): You will need to submit a checkpoint report by mid semester (and likely another one closer to submission time) to report the progress of the project and confirm the good dynamic of the team works. Details will be provided later.

Deliverables and Submission

Report

- Report of 3000-4000 words.
- Submit your report as one **docx** or **PDF** file via iLearn. Find the submission link under Assessment 3.
- You are allowed to have appendixes to the report. Preferably include them in the single file with the report. If not possible, appendixes could be separate files and submitted along with the main Report file.
- Include a headshot photo of your team members on the cover page of the report, and also in the cover slide of your presentation file.

Presentation

- Presentation in the class for 12 minutes. All group members must participate in the presentation. Group members may receive the same or different marks depending on their individual performance. Each student is free to choose their presentation method (e.g. PowerPoint slides, screen sharing/screenshots of their analysis, etc).
- During the class time at Week 13.
- All group members must participate in the presentation.
- Maximum of 12 minutes (for the whole group). Make sure not to go over time as we have many groups to fit in.
- On the cover slide of the PowerPoint, write the group number and include a headshot of everyone with name (along with other things that you think should be on a cover slide).
- Practice enough! Fitting 4 people in a 12 min presentation requires some trial run.
- You do not need to submit the presentation file on the day of presentation but please submit it along with your written project report by the due date of the report submission, via iLearn.
- Presentations will be in groups but members will receive individual marks based on the quality of the presentation.

Marking criteria

Look…! You are given this marking criteria because it is customary to give rubrics for university assignments, but in real-world projects, you do not have the luxury of receiving detailed rubrics from your manager/client! This is something for the project team to workout and logically anticipate (based on the contract, project description, and discussions with client/managers)! …. Another complexity and ambiguity! …. But anyway, you have some (generic) rubrics here for this project:

Criteria	Value
Content and Analysis - Applying and developing a useful, informative, and insightful analysis appropriate - Incorporating adequate, relevant, and meaningful analysis - Supporting analysis/ models with evidence from data (data-driven analysis)	**30%**

- Good breadth of various type of analysis and good depth of analysis - None-trivial analysis (good depth, and interesting points) - Reasonable alignment between the analysis and discussion	
Argument Development - Logical and well-constructed argument/discussion in the report (each paragraph argues one specific point, clear line of argument, good cohesion between paragraphs, clear main thesis statement for each paragraph) - Avoiding irrelevant and off-track information/discussion - Avoiding unsupported statements, claims, and discussions	
Format and Presentation - Appropriate business report structure - Correct spelling, punctuation and grammar - Clear, logical, concise and professional presentation and writing style - Clear and appropriate language and tone for a professional piece of writing - Readable and good quality images in the report - Adhere to the word count limit - Visually appealing - Good readability and proper use of pictures/tables (clearly referring to pictures/tables with numbers, and captioning them properly).	
Oral Presentation in Class (group presentation but individual mark) - Adequate participation in oral presentation - Clear, to-the-point, and informative presentation - Appropriate use of slides (or similar) - Adhere to timing	**10%**
Total	**40% (of total mark)**