

1. E-portfolio

My e-portfolio is hosted on github:

<https://janealdridge.github.io/>

2. Your evaluation of your Literature Review and Research Proposal

Submissions

For this reflective piece I have used Gibb's reflective cycle (University of Edinburgh, 2020).

2.1 Literature Review Evaluation

For the Literature review, I chose the topic of 'Cloud Computing for Building Effective Information Systems for the Banking Sector.

I was really interested in the topic, and felt that I would also learn a lot about cloud computing through this exercise. This was a good experience, my mark was 68%, I felt that the feedback points raised by the lecturer I wouldn't have thought of myself even if I had longer on the assignment, because the literature review was a very new concept to me.

My approach of carrying out a literature review for papers which provided a comprehensive literature review themselves was a good starting point, it quickly gave me an overview of the current knowledge in this area and what the gaps were. The literature review by Adwan et al (2022) was the most comprehensive and provided a detailed summary of previous papers in this area.

I learnt from the literature review exercise, that for any research project you need to build on knowledge, and to do this you need to know what knowledge already exists in an area. Although this may seem obvious, it comes under the theory of knowledge, and it did make me reflect on how to extend knowledge in a particular area, and how a researcher is carrying on the work of others. This is why it is important to capture what knowledge already exists, and then contribute to that field by extending that knowledge.

The literature review assignment helped me to gain skills in time management, critical thinking and analysis, problem solving, critical reflection and research. One area that I could have improved on during the overall MSc was critical thinking, and I felt that during this module I became more proficient at this, as evidenced by my literature review and research proposal.

2.2 Research Proposal Submission

For the research proposal submission I chose a different topic, from the literature review one. The topic was 'A control framework for preventing and detecting insider threats carried out by technologists within banking'. I was very interested in this topic, although I think it is a hard subject to select for a MSc project. My mark was 70%, I think I did have a lot of detail in the proposal, and presented a complicated topic well.

The topic of ethics covered in unit 1 made me realise how important ethics was going to be, in terms of my research proposal, because of the human element involved.

The research proposal risk matrix highlighted that in order to be successful I would have to control the scope of the research project, and monitor this closely.

Another important point was that through my research proposal I realized that I needed to state clearly, without ambiguity the research problem which I was trying to solve, and I need to focus on this.

The research proposal developed the following skills, critical thinking and analysis, problem solving, communication skills, critical reflection and research.

3. Reflections

For this reflective piece I have used Gibb's reflective cycle (University of Edinburgh, 2020).

3.1 Statistical Analysis Skills

I completed the worksheets for both unit 8 and unit 9, and the worksheets are included in my e-portfolio. I was apprehensive about these exercises, because I hadn't used statistics for a long time. By working methodically through the worksheet examples before doing the actual exercises I found that I really enjoyed the exercises and was able to complete them.

I realized how important statistical analysis is in analysing data, it provides new insights. For example, the graphs produced as part of unit 9, provided transparency and insights into the data very quickly. As an example, the graphs in exercise 9.1 show that area 1 and area 2 have very similar percentages in terms of brand preferences. The graphs provided insight into the data which wouldn't have been obvious.

The unit 8 and unit 9 exercises definitely improved my numeracy skills, as well as my problem solving skills by providing a way to analyse statistics, so that meaning and patterns could be derived from the data.

3.2 The Research Methods Process

The research methods process provided a framework by which to find, analyse and interpret different types of information. The research methods process was applied to my research project, and provided a set of tools which could be used during my research. Without this framework it would be very difficult to decide which tools were appropriate for a particular problem.

Not having the correct tools, which have also been designed well, can really impact the results of research. It is so important to use the correct tools to capture data.

Research methods have definitely provided me with the research skills which I need for my MSc project.

3.3 The Impact on my Professional and Personal Experience

As part of analysing my professional and personal development, I have completed the professional skills matrix, which was part of unit 11, and have also uploaded this to my e-portfolio.

Although I have extensive computing experience, I have further developed my skills during this course and also gained new knowledge. The areas where I have learnt the most and developed skills are legal and ethical awareness, technical and digital numeracy skills, and an understanding of research methods. Without the research methods module I would not now be able to complete my research project.

References

Adwan, E., Alsaeed, B., (2022) *Cloud Computing Adoption in the Financial Banking Sector - A Systematic Literature Review (2011-2021)*. International Journal of Advanced Science Computing and Engineering (2022) Vol.4, No.1, April 2022, pp. 48-55.

The University of Edinburgh (2020). Gibb's Reflective Cycle. Available from: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/gibbs-reflective-cycle#:~:text=One%20of%20the%20most%20famous,analysis%2C%20conclusion%20and%20action%20plan>.

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