Assessment 3: Final Reflective Piece

Course Name: MSc Cyber Security

Module Name: Security and Risk Management

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Introduction

This piece reflects on my development and feelings over the course of the module Security and Risk Management (SRM).

In my previous module, I utilised a modified version of Jasper's Evaluation, Reflection and Action (ERA) Cycle (Jasper, 2013), and double loop reflective learning. The process was useful and will be used again for this reflection.

In this modified ERA cycle, the previous module's reflection leads to my Personal Development Plan (PDP) for this module, therefore the cycle for this piece is AER. Double loop reflective learning is considered by Gribbin et al. (2016) to achieve deeper reflection, that allows people to evaluate their own motivations and biases. Here the double loop is to reflect on firstly my performance in the module, and secondly the success of the PDP itself.

PDP Goals

Following previous reflection, my primary goal for the module was to improve my time management. I felt that I had spent too much time on some tasks and neglected others. A strategy of breaking tasks into smaller sections with individual deadlines was chosen to help rectify the issue. The secondary goal was to imprint more of my own voice into group and collaborative tasks. In previous group work I had been more of an industrial presence, taking on more labour-intensive activities, and did not find an distinct point of view in collaborative discussion tasks.

Assignment 1

This was a group project to create a risk report containing a qualitative analysis of a potential digitalisation of a developing business. The learning outcomes were to identify and analyse risks, before synthesizing information from multiple sources to create the final report.

This assignment was an interesting opportunity to collaborate with two people who work in cyber security. Overall, the project was a success. The team worked together well, creating clear and concise plans and distributing work evenly. The finished report was strong and showed a good level of understanding of the material and learning outcomes. However, after feedback from the tutor it became clear that the report was descriptive and could have been taken further.

I felt somewhat responsible for the negative feedback, as I did internally assume a junior role in the team, due to the experience of my colleagues in the field. This did mean that I went against my PDP and took on higher effort, lower strategy workload. I did contribute to strategical discussions, and felt the others took my opinion into consideration, but I should have made better use of my greater experience in academic writing to push a deeper level of synthesis. Conversely, my time management was

improved for this task. Previously I overanalysed and was slow to complete tasks, but here I found a good balance, as did the team generally – the project was ready to submit a week in advance.

Collaborative Discussion 2

This discussion presented a chance to demonstrate an ability to provide deeper analysis. The initial post was to provide a critique of an article on CVSS and its weaknesses, and to provide an argument for a chosen replacement for the system. This was then followed by responses to peers and a summary of the discussion.

I felt that my contribution to the discussion was strong and that I was able to provide a unique perspective. My post had the most responses, and my recommended replacement system was broadly given positive feedback and suggested by peers to improve the work of others.

Overall, my work in this task met the goals of my PDP; I completed all the work on time and without focusing too much on any individual aspect. I also found a distinct voice.

Assignment 2

As individuals we were tasked with producing an executive summary for the business from assignment 1. This consisted of a quantitative analysis of moving to an international supply chain and setting up automatic warehouses, and a disaster recovery / business continuity plan. The learning outcomes were to critically determine appropriate methodologies, tools and techniques to mitigate and/or solve security risks and their business impact and to articulate the legal, social, ethical, and professional issues faced in the field.

I did achieve the learning outcomes of this task; I learned how to use both Monte Carlo simulations and Expected Monetary Value (EMV) to quantify risks, and determined what risks to the business were more pressing and I found appropriate mitigations for these risks. I presented risks of GDPR well and its considerations for a global business. Generally, I felt that the task helped me develop a strong understanding of the topics.

However, I was ultimately disappointed in my executive summary. I struggled to manage my time effectively – most of my effort was spent on finding precise statistics to help calculate risk probability. This proved to be a challenge, and I concluded that some estimates would need to be used. This came late in the timeline and caused the rest of the work to feel rushed, and for some analysis to be superficial.

Conclusion

The module was interesting, and I did achieve the learning outcomes. My overall knowledge of risk assessment is much higher, and I would feel confident conducting qualitative risk analysis in a professional setting. My general knowledge of CVSS, AI in

risk assessment and following compliance guidelines all improved. However, I need more experience with quantitative methodology and practices before using it in a real-world setting.

I did not meet my PDP goals in this module. My time management caused problems during the final assignment, and I did not implement the proposed strategy to combat this. I had mixed results pushing my point of view to the forefront and should have been more proactive during the group project. The PDP itself was too focused on my general progress and was missing an element that was more specific to SRM. Future PDPs should contain long- and short-term goals to be more effective.

References

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