**Reflective piece**

E-portfolio link:

**Introduction**

This reflective piece is divided in paragraphs which will be general starting considerations, first assignment, second assignment and final thoughts on the module and its impact. This piece will follow Gibb’s reflective cycle (Gibbs, 1988).

**Starting considerations**

As the module started, I was worried. This type of work is not what I was used to in my previous courses (as expressed in the comparison in my e-portfolio). Although I had done some researching it has never been a focus in previous experiences, I was almost scared to become frustrated. The module started with the promise to be challenging and it kept it. I surely had some difficulties, but they were not as I expected. I never felt frustrated or that I couldn’t make it, although much of it was new. Surprisingly to my early module stages self, this turned out to be one of the most interesting and stimulating of all the modules. For the future, I will need to keep a more opened mind and positive attitude when starting new experiences. I will go deeper about this in the final section of this piece.

**First assignment**

The first assignment was a literature review that I have included in the e-portfolio. It was a new type of work for me, and I was not sure of what to do at the beginning, feeling insecure. As the units went by, I discovered more and started making sense of what I had to do. I was not ready for the outline opportunity (Unit 5 e-portfolio), and it was a big miss for me. This piece of module was good for my growth, it gave me the tools to perform better the second assignment and broke the ice for my research skills.

On my side I could have done better in many aspects, such as organizing my time and go deeper, sooner in certain topics, even if not required by the module, in order to make things clearer for me and not worry unnecessarily. In the future I will apply more organized methods to my research and take more seriously time management.

**Second assignment**

The second assignment was a step forward from the first. It was a bit more challenging and deeper. It also included an oral presentation which I enjoyed as it is always good practice. I was feeling less nervous than the first assignment thanks to the previous experience. I could feel that my research skills had improved. I spent more time researching trying to be as methodical as I could. Although I was more prepared, I still missed the outline formative feedback (Unit 8 e-portfolio) due to more intense than usual work weeks and time management issues.

This was a rich experience; I think this gave me the opportunity to grow the most in an aspect I was not enough prepared. It changed my perspective in certain aspects of professional and academic life such as the methodical research of information from trustable sources and the need to go deeper and not stop to superficial aspects. It developed my critical thinking and thought me a lot on how to research information on a specific and technical topic better.

I could have tried to start earlier and reach the outline deadline; I also could have done more thorough research at the beginning of this assignment as I often found myself needing to search more during the writing phase. Overall, this assignment felt better than the previous one as I improved in my missing aspects but there is still a long way to go.

**Final thoughts and impact**

The module has been surely challenging but thanks to the good organization and development of the module it has been enjoyable and satisfactory. I enjoyed it much more than I initially thought. As mentioned before I felt worried at first but gained confidence as the units passed. The comprehension of the module topics has been good and the assignments were fit for the module, my research improved a lot, also thanks to articles such as “What is research” (D. Fleetwood, n.d.). The main problem was probably the short time frame and the time I would have liked to dedicate to it was much more. My performance could have benefited from a better time management. Starting big assignments right when the module starts would be a good approach, although I don’t always have the necessary knowledge from the beginning. From another perspective this also allowed me to analyse better my skills in workload management and learn more about myself. In future similar occasions I will act differently, mainly I will give more importance to the initial phases of research and gather as much material as possible, trying to stay focused on the subject, as I lost focus during the first assignment. Start earlier and start better would be ideal, also try to predict what I will need in order to anticipate what I will need to do and prepare accordingly.

The impact of this module has been tangible. It was not about technical skills but more about soft skill and critical thinking. The ability to do research is extremely important and also one I was lacking. It will impact both my professional life and personal life, being able to inform yourself correctly and efficiently, learn to read a scientific paper faster and more accurately can come in handy in numerous situations, professional and non. It also helped me reflect on aspects I had not cared about enough such as ethics, that I now understand much better. Express and understand information, critically analyse and comprehend complex subjects in the field of computer science, stay up to date with current technologies all benefited from this module. The module didn’t involve teamwork or technical skills as intended in the professional matrix so I won’t focus on those aspects, but it has been a superlative experience in the other aspects that I mentioned.

References

Gibbs G (1988). Learning by Doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods. Further Education Unit. Oxford Polytechnic: Oxford.

D. Fleetwood, (n.d.) What is research. QuestionPro. Available at: https://www.questionpro.com/blog/what-is-research/