Greetings to the panel. Thank you for taking the time to review my RPL request. My name is Damian Vather and I would like the opportunity to present my knowledge and experience in order to be awarded credits. I am just another friendly face who loves sports, spending time with family and friends, gaming and before covid karate. I love a challenge hence my LinkedIn profile says, "Learning to disrupt the market' as I'm looking at new ways to bring good change and continuously develop myself and others.

Over the years we as children go through career phases from race car drivers to wanting to be president. I for one have been on a roller coaster. From wanting to be an astronaut to CA, a mathematician etc to where I am now a Data Scientist. This was a challenging transition into a field that was new, exciting and unknown. On paper, it will show 3years experience which might not sound a lot but the scope and the range of work I have done hopefully will show.

The journey starts at the EXPLORE academy where I learnt the skills of Data Science. From the basic definitions to learning how to work with data on various tools and frameworks to finally developing customer focus products. Showing promise in the academy I was given the opportunity to teach Java with CITI for students who come from underprivileged backgrounds. This was the first eye glimpse into the world of teaching but for change. What is change? The change we focus on is teaching the right skills to give previously disadvantaged students an opportunity to get a job in the workforce. We have had great success as an intuition with a 90% placement rate on our course. The main thing here and what drives us is seeing our students succeed wherever they go.

Over the years I have taught various courses from Java, Data Analytics and Data Science. With the goal to change a life. I have been able to grow hugely in the field delivering talks at large events, teaching thousands of learners, to directly consulting with some of the biggest companies in SA and the UK. The data science path has opened great doors for me and I look to do the same for others. I am currently the Head of Part-time delivery at Explore where we look to upskill the corporate workforces as well as young individuals to give them an opportunity to thrive in the data world.

As much as I have grown I believe we can never stop learning hence my studies at Unisa. This gives me the opportunity to enhance my knowledge in a field I have grown hugely attached to. I enjoy teaching and the knowledge I have received doing the modules so far has hugely improved my skills. That being said, there are modules in the course which I have a lot of experience in, working first hand in business developing data solutions by data modelling, coding, building dashboards, predictive modelling and prescriptive modelling. Awarding these credits will accelerate me in the course and allow me to continue my goal of developing others.

Where to from here well I still have some subjects that I am excited to start and learn more about. In terms of personal growth, I have shared part 1 of 6 in a free to join class to learn how to code and work with data and the opportunities that exist out there. This is aimed at everyone. I believe there is a huge demand for local teachers to bring awareness to some of the leading trends and careers that exist out there and one can't go wrong with knowledge about data.

Within a company space, we look to continue to grow our reach and positively influence as many lives as possible both in South Africa, Africa and hopefully in the near future Internationally.