Individual Essay

Systems Development Group Project

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During this project, I have been effectively working with 4 group members to produce a feeding dashboard, as well as appropriate project documentation. Our work was completed both in-person and independently. Our in-person sessions consisted of two 4-hour practical sessions every week. Whilst working remotely, we used of a *Discord* server which allowed us to send messages in a group chat. Working files were coordinated using *Gitlab*.

# Group Organisation

The in-person sessions saw most of our group organisation. Officially, we did not specify team roles to each member. This is because under a scrum methodology, we all shared the same responsibilities. The exception to this was to assign a team coordinator to each week. This was necessary to enable our weekly team meetings. In each meeting, the coordinator was to discuss with each member what they had completed in the week prior, and what they were going to complete in the coming week. This was to be logged and compared with adjacent weeks during our in-person sessions. We rotated the role of team coordinator, so as to maintain equal responsibility.

# Project Execution

Our execution of the project has been generally successful. Each group member has continued to attend in-person sessions, and made themselves available to complete tasks. The quality of the meetings may have decreased in later weeks, with less detail being ascertained. This likely occurred as the tasks became clear and were effectively delegated. Team members did not feel they required the meetings as they were already aware of what they were doing, or they were continually working on the same task over multiple weeks. Despite the documentation suggesting less work was accomplished towards the end, this is not a true reflection.

## Risk Management

Our risk management consisted of a risk register which was written before implementation. Different risks were identified, and given a rating on their impact and probability to produce an overall rating. The initial ratings were chosen by myself, which I then presented to the group to gain feedback. In hindsight, it would have been better to choose the initial ratings based on a voting system with the group. This would have avoided bias, as members are less able to simply agree with the present rhetoric and rather think about it themselves.

## Legal and Ethical

The project did not present many legal difficulties. One instance was ensuring that the dataset we used complied with GDPR legislation. This is because our dataset consisted of medical records, which is highly personal data. However, we avoided any difficulties as there are no personal references in the data – each record is listed as an ‘encounter’ number, with no reference to personal details such as name, age, gender etc. “The principles of data protection should therefore not apply to anonymous information, namely information which does not relate to an identified or identifiable natural person or to personal data rendered anonymous in such a manner that the data subject is not or no longer identifiable.” (*Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council* (2016)).

Furthermore, we complied with the *Equality Act* (2010) by avoiding any discrimination within our system. It is designed to be used by everyone.

## Sustainability

To follow good practice in terms of sustainability, we made sure to optimise our computing resources. We avoided running any programs for unnecessary amounts of time, and we were not required use any live service resources which runs continuously. The code was also written with efficiency in mind. Excessive assignment of variables was avoided by localising operations, which would exit after completion. We have also limited work to our independent laptops, none of which have excessive energy usage.

# Individual Contribution

Although we did not assign team roles, members tended to specialise towards different aspects of the project. My main contribution to the team was producing the documentation. I have contributed heavily towards the group report and presentation, working both on the elements and organisation of such elements in these documents. I also encouraged dialogue between the team. In-person, I made efforts to involve everyone in every discussion, asking for their thoughts and ensuring they were in agreement before making decisions. I have also regularly communicated on our *Discord* chat, keeping track of the work we were completing. I did contribute towards the development, where I implemented the login system for our dashboard.

# Lessons Learned

During this project I have learned the importance of leadership or coordination roles in a team. Despite agile methodologies like scrum being designed to equal responsibility among the members, it is still essential for someone to coordinate the progress. Otherwise, members will produce incompatible or duplicate work which will require time to resolve. I think that in a future project I will take this idea further, and include others more in the work to ensure that the outcome is representative of every member.

# References

Equality Act 2010 [online]. (2010) legislation.gov.uk. Available from: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents [Accessed 04 April 2024].

Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council [online]. Chapter 1. (2016) legislation.gov.uk. Available from: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2016/679/contents#/ [Accessed 04 April 2024].