

Academic and Employability assignment

by Elliot Barnett

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TIME SUBMITTED	08-JAN-2019 04:02PM (UTC+0000)	WORD COUNT	4611
SUBMISSION ID	98486105	CHARACTER COUNT	23940



Academic and Employability Skills

Reflection on Academic and Employability Skills

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BSc Computer Networks and Security

Table of contents

1. Abstract
2. Introduction
3. Section 1
4. Section 2
5. Section 3
6. Section 4
 - 6.1. Looking after your data
 - 6.2. Time management and self-organisation
7. Section 5
8. Reference list / Bibliography
9. Appendices

1. Abstract

This report is a reflection on the Academic and Employability skills module. Within this report, there are different sections that are labelled and shown in the table of contents. The report is based on how much students have learned over the period of the Academic and Employability skills module.

2. Introduction

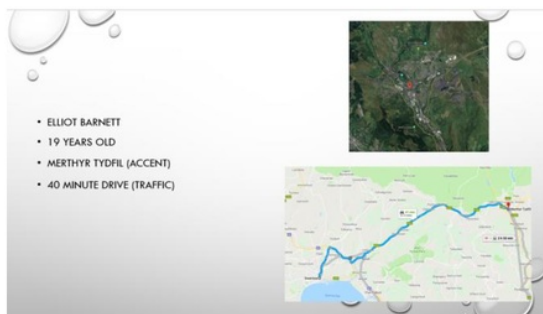
Reflection is one of the last sections of learning. It shows how much you have learned over the module. The academic and employability module has shown the writer many different aspects of himself and how he can improve on being a better person, academically and socially. This report will go into more detail on the different aspect of the module.

3. Section 1

Brief overview

In this section, students were asked to provide a brief overview of themselves. The author of this report is from Merthyr Tydfil. He is 19 years old and currently studies a BSc Computer Networks and Security at the University of Wales Trinity St David. He has a number of different hobbies and interests that include playing video games, sports, Network, and Security and computer related hardware. His strengths include Self-motivation to complete tasks, Good communication skills, Punctuality and works well in both team and individual based work environments. His Weaknesses include Time management, creativity, and leadership skills. When studies finish for his degree he would have liked to of gained a good understanding of networking and security, also certifications to help him with getting a job in that field and for the job to pay good money for him to support his future self and family. He would like to see himself moving to Australia and traveling the world soon, also working in the I.T industry, either in cybersecurity (Penetration tester) or a Network engineer. He would also like to live by the coast because of his favorited hobby surfing.

Screenshot 1 – Overview of himself



Screenshot 2 – Hobbies

HOBBIES

- PLAYING GAMES (COUNTER STRIKE, CALL OF DUTY, FORZA)
- SPORTS (RUGBY, FOOTBALL, SURFING, FISHING, BIKING)
- LEARNING ABOUT IT (NETWORKING, SECURITY)
- COMPUTER HARDWARE (GRAPHICS CARDS, CPU'S ETC)



Screenshot 3 – Strengths and Weaknesses

STRENGTHS WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- SELF MOTIVATION
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- PUNCTUALITY

WEAKNESSES

- TIME MANAGEMENT
- CREATIVITY
- LEADERSHIP



Screenshot 4 – Future Work

FUTURE WORK

- WORKING ON NETWORKS
- (NETWORK ENGINEER, NETWORK ARCHITECTURE)

OR

- WORKING IN CYBER SECURITY
- (PEN TESTING, ETHICAL HACKING)



Producing and delivering a PowerPoint

Within this section, students were asked to list key points that they learned when producing and presenting their PowerPoint presentation. There were a couple of key issues that must be covered when producing a PowerPoint. This includes:

- The use of a consistent colour scheme. This will prevent the audience from getting confused and overwhelmed.
- Use the full use of the slide for content rather than creating five different slides for the same thing.
- Use the same font throughout the presentation. This will make sure that the PowerPoint has consistency. Avoid using serif as it might confuse the reader in thinking that it is a different letter.
- Making sure that the titles included in the presentation are relevant to the content on the slide.
- The use of high-quality images without text will encourage the reader to engage with you rather than the PowerPoint on a particular slide.

When presenting a PowerPoint there are many different aspects that have to be considered. These include:

- Using a medium loud voice and to make sure that your speech is clear. This will allow the user to understand and engage with you.
- Making sure that you don't stand in front of the screen when presenting your presentation. Doing this will allow the user to see the content on the screen.
- Always face the audience when presenting and interact with people when necessary.
- Do not read off the board like a 'robot'. This will prevent the audience from getting bored and falling asleep.

Improving future presentations

For this task, students were asked to describe what they would improve and enhance on when producing and presenting a PowerPoint presentation in the future. The author of this report has several improvements that he would like to make in the near future. This includes:

- The amount of content in the PowerPoint needs to be increased. This will allow him to give more information to the audience.
- In addition to the lack of content, the time it took to present the presentation was low. This was due to the lack of information to give to the audience.
- The number of words used in some slides would need to be decreased to make sure that the audience is engaged with him and not on the presentation when he speaks.

- When presenting the presentation, he did not vary the tone of his voice. When the tone of his voice is the same throughout the presentation it becomes very boring for the audience to listen to.

4. Section 2

Key skills required for successful learning

Resilience

Having resilience to never back down when told that your work is not good enough is a good skill to have for successful learning. Making sure that the criticism you gain from your marked work does not affect you mentally and helps you improve and motivate you, even more, to succeed in learning. [1]

Time management

Managing time is a very important skill that will not only help you academically but in the future when you get a job. Being discipline towards yourself on completing work at certain times will allow you to be successful when learning. Managing priorities is another way of using the skill time management, making sure that top priorities are taking care of first rather than last. [2]

leadership

Developing leadership skills in higher education will enable you to lead in future jobs and life. Leadership can be in anything from leading a small group of people on a piece of work or leading a large group on a major project.

Organisation

Keeping organised is a very good skill to have. It enables you to structure and plan different stuff out and prevents it from being rushed. Using checklists will enable you to stay in a structured format throughout the day and it helps remind you of what needs to be done and when. [3]

Communication

Communication is a skill that would be used every day and when perfected will be a very useful tool to use when in school and future work. It enables someone to improve on interacting within a group or a discussion [4]. Also, the skill will help on coming to a conclusion when speaking in a group about an idea.

Key skills required for successful employability

Problem-solving

Problem-solving is a required skill to have when being employed. When a problem occurs, being able to use a logical process to solve it will enable somebody to solve the problem [5]. For example, if you were asked to create a program in an unknown programming language then you would have to research the unknown language to enable you to solve the problem and create the program.

Professionalism

Being professional when working means having an ethical way of communication and being organised and wearing suitable clothing to match the job description [6]. For example, when delivering something in a meeting, there must be no slang used and the speech must be clear to make sure that the people in the meeting get a good understanding of what you are delivering.

Numeracy

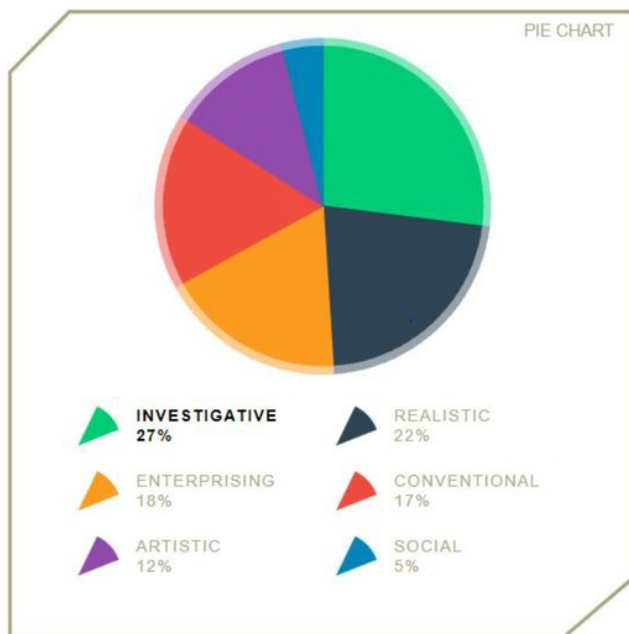
Being able to use and work with numbers is a good skill to have to enable you to get employed. Most jobs will require a basic knowledge of maths and will you will use it on a daily basis. When working you can use numbers to back up and validate different arguments [7].

Computer Literacy

Having computer knowledge is a must nowadays. With the increase in technology, there is a big need for computer literacy when trying to get a job. Having IT skills will be required for all roles [8] and will especially be required for IT job roles.

Self-evaluation

The writer undertook a class exercise and found that he is organised and meets deadlines, and he knows how to use I.T equipment correctly. His weaknesses are being able to find information from different sources and being able to make and store notes from lectures that he attended. The table will be in the appendix for further reading. He also took a self-evaluation test online and found that he is an investigative person. Below is a chart created by the website [9].



Factor	Factor label	Raw score	Score percentile
I	Extroversion		33
II	Emotional stability		89
III	Agreeableness		17
IV	Conscientiousness		67
V	Intellect/Imagination		6

Big five personality trait scores calculated by openpsychometrics.org

Above is a referenced chart created by using a website. The chart shows the writers personality traits. [10]

These are the results of the [Open Extended Jungian Type Scales](#).

Jungian/Myers-Briggs Personality Type is based on four preferences, that when combined produce personality type. This page will first cover your scores for each of the preferences then finally give a description for the type that they produce.

Introversion (I) | **Extroversion (E)**
 Introversion-Extroversion is your cognitive orientation. Introverts centre themselves inside their bodies. Extroverts centre their attention outside their bodies. [\[more\]](#)

Sensing (S) | **Intuition (N)**
 Sensing-Intuition is the first pair of cognitive functions and the preference for how you prefer to be served information; through the five senses or from the subconscious. [\[more\]](#)

Feeling (F) | **Thinking (T)**
 Feeling-Thinking is the second pair of cognitive functions, the judging functions, which are used to evaluate goals; either through personal values or objective principles. [\[more\]](#)

Judging (J) | **Perceiving (P)**
 Judging-Perceiving is what pair of cognitive functions you prefer to use. Judging is a preference for a structured lifestyle and the use of feeling and thinking while perceiving is the preference for a flexible lifestyle and the use of sensing and intuition. [\[more\]](#)

Above is a referenced chart created by using a website. The chart shows the writer's personality traits [11]

Comparison

In this section, students were asked to compare the results that they gained from the online and other tests and compare them with the original PowerPoint slides about themselves. The writer states that he has self-motivation, good communication skills, and good punctuality. His weakness is time management, creativity, and leadership. The results gained from the self-evaluation test show that he is organised and meets deadlines, he is self-motivated and knows how to use IT equipment. The test shows that his weaknesses are finding information from different sources and being able to find and take notes either at home or in a lecture room. The skills and traits that the writer thought he had been similar to the test results. The only difference is that he finds that he works better by doing it practically rather than theory.

5. Section 3 – Action Plans

Within this section, students were asked to produce goals on a short-term basis. The author's short-term goals include:

- Achieving a BSc in Computer Networks and Security
- Gaining work experience in the IT field, specifically networks, and security
- Achieving certifications (CCNA and Security+)

The author's long-term goals include:

- Obtain a job in either cybersecurity or Networking
- Invest in his first house
- Travel the United Kingdom to surf

In this section, the student was asked to create action plans for the above short-term and long-term goals. The author's action plans include:

Short term action plans

Goal	Type of Goal	Processes	Date/Duration	Description	Deadline
BSc in Computer Networks and Security	Short-term	Year 1	28 th September 2018 – 12 th July 2019	Successful completion of the first year.	12 th July 2019
		Year 2	28 th September 2019 – 12 th July 2020	Successful completion of the second year.	12 th July 2020
		Year 3	28 th September 2019 – 12 th July 2021	Successful completion of the third year and degree in BSc Computer Networks and Security.	12 th July 2021

Goal	Type of Goal	Processes	Date/Duration	Description	Deadline
Work experience in the IT industry	Short-term	Research into local IT jobs	1 st January 2019 – 1 st March 2019	Research into local jobs for available work experience.	1 st March 2019
		Volunteer for work experience	7 th July 2019 – 28 th September 2019	Volunteer throughout the summer for experience in the IT industry.	28 th September 2019
		Gain experience in the IT field	7 th July 2019 – 28 th September 2019	Gain knowledge and experience in the IT industry.	28 th September 2019

Goal	Type of Goal	Processes	Date/Duration	Description	Deadline
Achieving Certifications	Short-term	CCNA	28 th September 2018 – 7 th July 2021	Achieve the CCNA certification within the period of studying computer networks and security.	July 7 th , 2021
		Security +	7 th July 2021 – 31 st October 2021	Achieve the Security+ certification within the time period.	31 st October 2021

Long-term action plans

Goal	Type of Goal	Processes	Date/Duration	Description	Deadline
Obtain a job in either cybersecurity or Networking	Long-term	Research	1 st January 2022	Research into jobs in networks and security.	Dependent on job results
		Application	1 st January 2022	Apply for as many jobs possible to increase the chances of obtaining a job.	
		Interview	Dependent on application success	Preparing and proceeding with the interview will be dependent on whether the applications are a success.	Dependent on application success

Goal	Type of Goal	Processes	Date/Duration	Description	Deadline
Invest in a house	Long-term	Research	2025 - 2030	Researching for the best house, money value and quality are the main aspects.	2030
		Investing	2025-2030	Investing money to the house and making sure that it is affordable.	2030

Goal	Type of Goal	Processes	Date/Duration	Description	Deadline
Travel the United Kingdom for surf	Long-term	Research	2018 - 2020	Researching into the best surfing spots across the United Kingdom.	2020
		Plan	2020	Planning the trip around the United Kingdom with hotels and vehicles booked.	2021
		Execute	N/A	The execution of the trip will be dependent on the plan	N/A

6. Section 4

5.1 Looking after your data

In this section, the students were asked to discuss the “in three different places” rule for backups. The in “in three different places” rule means that data must be stored in three different places to make sure that any natural disasters or incidents that occur will not affect the data. For example, if there was a disaster that occurred on two data backup sites, then the third site will still be up, and the data will not be affected by the other two disasters. The purpose of the “in three different places” rule is to allow the data to be recovered after the disaster, also allowing someone to retrieve data from a past date. when studying at University it is vital that the work is created is backed up. Backing up work will prevent any confusion when missing deadlines because of loss of work. When using this backup strategy there are different challenges that will have to be completed to make sure that the data is safe. This includes what type of data needs to be backed up, when is the data going to be backed up (routine), How big is the storage space of the servers, how big is the space for the physical servers, how secure is the location of the servers, who is responsible for taking care of problems and what types of hardware and software is need for the data that is being stored inside it.

Scenarios that could affect data

- Natural disasters (Fire, storms)
- Blackout (no electricity)
- Cyber attacks
- Hardware failures
- War

Natural disasters

Natural disasters will be one of the scenarios that will most likely not happen in more that one place at the same time. For example, if there was a fire in a house that had NAS servers within it, and the people who lived in the house also had external cloud backup. Then it would be very unlikely that the server for the cloud backup to be on fire as well. But having the backup strategy that obeys the

“in three different places” rule will also help save data in the most unlikely situations. For example, if the cloud backup was down due to a hardware failure then another external backup system would be in place to make sure that no data is lost when these two disasters happen at the same time. To restore things back to normal you would have gathered the data from the external back up servers and see what time the last backup was to make sure that no data was lost before or when the disaster happened. Then start copying the data onto a new backup system to place in the fixed house.

Blackout (no electricity)

A total blackout is one of the scenarios that have a low chance of happening. If so it happened there must be either a backup system that runs on an external power source or a system that runs on a UPS that will prevent the system from being interrupted. If the backup system failed there would be many problems. These problems include:

- Fuse breaks in the backup servers, preventing the servers from coming back on.
- Corruption of files due to lack of electricity going into the backup system.
- Data being worked on within the blackout will not be backed up if the system is not running.

The use of external power will prevent any system from going offline when the blackout happens.

The combining of the backup strategy that obeys the “in three different places” rule with the external power sources will provide a robust level of protection from loss of data.

Cyber attacks

Cyber attacks are an ever-grown trend that is only increasing every single day of the year. They can cause a major threat to not only the leak of sensitive data but the deletion of data, this can cause people and businesses around the world millions every year. The backup strategy that the author would create for cyberattacks includes:

- Making sure that they are backups in three different places.
- Not allowing internet or any unknown external networks to reach one of the three places where the backups are located. Then the only way a hacker can gain access is physically being there.
- Making sure that the backup site is secure.
- Also, not putting sensitive data in the backups that are connected to the internet or any external unknown networks.

If a cyber attack was to wipe out two of the three backup systems, then there are different steps that must be taking to make sure of what and how the data was lost. These steps include:

- Checking the logs for what types of data was deleted or taken.
- Taking note of what data is left on the backup system.
- Comparing the data from the system that has lost data to the external backup system that is secluded from any networks.
- Reporting the cybercrime.
- Copying the data from the untouched system to back to the system connected to the internet and other networks. Making sure that the sensitive data is kept on the system that is not connected to the internet to reduce the risk of sensitive data being leaked.

This backup strategy is effective in reducing the risk of cyber attacks affecting the backup systems. The use of one of the three backup systems do not connect to the internet or unknown networks will make the strategy have a high level of robustness to data leaks and data loss.

Hardware failures

Hardware failures are one of the most common threats to affect someone's data. It can cause major damage to different businesses and has the power to lose millions of the users' data if not kept in the correct condition. The backup strategy would help stop the loss of data because of the use of multiple pieces of hardware with the same data on. This means if one fails, there is still data backed up on another device, e.g. hard drive. If a disaster was to occur, then there are steps that will have to be taken to ensure that the data is restored and working back as normal. These steps include:

- Unplugging the faulty piece of hardware.
- If the piece of hardware stores data, then try to see if you can still access the data.
- Make sure the other pieces of hardware haven't been affected.
- Add a new device to the backup system.
- Add the same settings for backing up. e.g. routine backup times.

War

War is one of the threats that depend on where you are in the world. Different places have higher possibilities of loss of data due to war. War can be from a bomb blowing up a data centre to a cyber-attack wiping all the government's data systems. It can be prevented by having backups in multiple locations. For businesses and governments, they would have their data saved in a remote location

that on authorised people have access too. When recovering data from an incident of war, there must be different steps that are similar to natural disasters. The steps include:

- Recovering as much hardware that is functional.
- Try to access the data affected.
- Make sure the external backup systems have not been affected.
- Build a new backup system to take over the old backup system that was destroyed.

Having multiple backups in multiple locations will reduce the risk of all data being wiped. Making sure that one of the systems are located remotely away from anything, allowing only authorised people to access the system.

Ransomware

Ransomware is an ever-growing threat and is becoming more of an epidemic in the modern cyber field. Ransomware is a big threat to your data, the virus can encrypt and destroy most types of files including (.xlsx, .pdf, .jpg, .raw etc) [12]. Ransomware such as 'crypto wall' can potentially destroy all data you own unless you pay the ransom in the desired currency.

5.2 Time management

Productivity and organisation

There are a lot of different steps that you can take to enhance your productivity and organisation. These steps include:

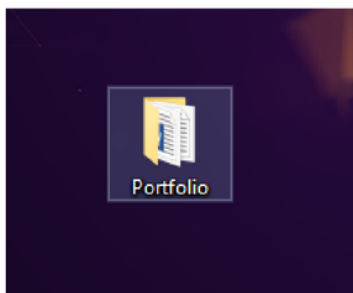
- SMART objectives are one of the steps that must be taking when enhancing your productivity. SMART stands for, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Bound. Using this structure on stuff like assignments will allow your productivity to increase and makes you more organised.
- Having short-term and long-term goals will help organise your future. Making sure the goals are realistic will allow you to be more productive towards a goal that you are sure to achieve in the near future.

- Using biorhythms will help reduce your stress levels. This will allow you to complete difficult tasks at the correct time of day and take breaks when stress increases. The times are different for every person.
- Planning and prioritising will help organisational and productivity skills. Prioritising different tasks every day will help you increase the productivity on tasks that need the most prioritisation.

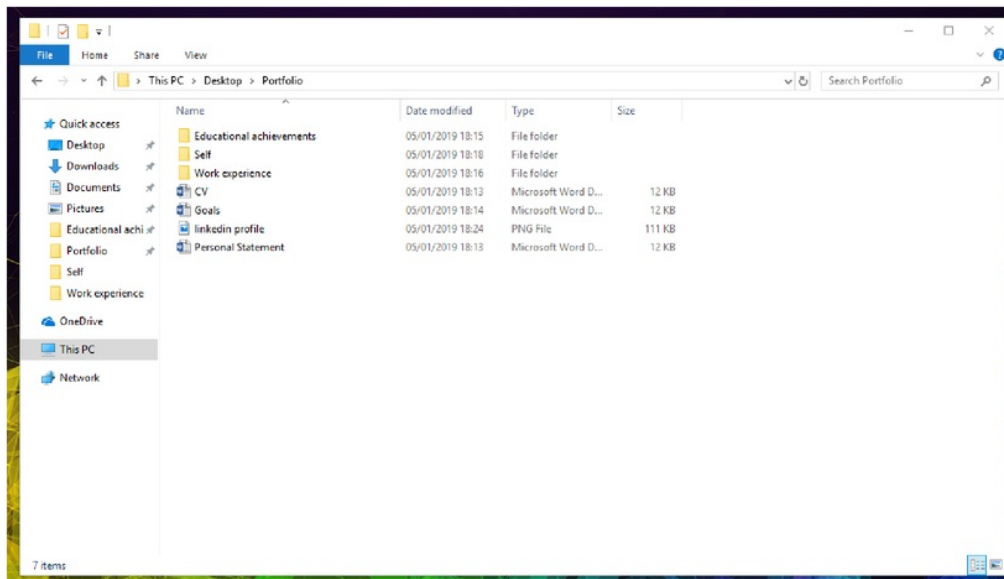
e-Portfolio/PDP Plan

Below are screenshots of the writer's e-portfolio and included a PDP plan. This portfolio will help him in the future with job interviews and will also help keep all his personal information organised ready for future interviews. The following structure is used to allow him to be organised and to prevent the loss of data due to not being organised.

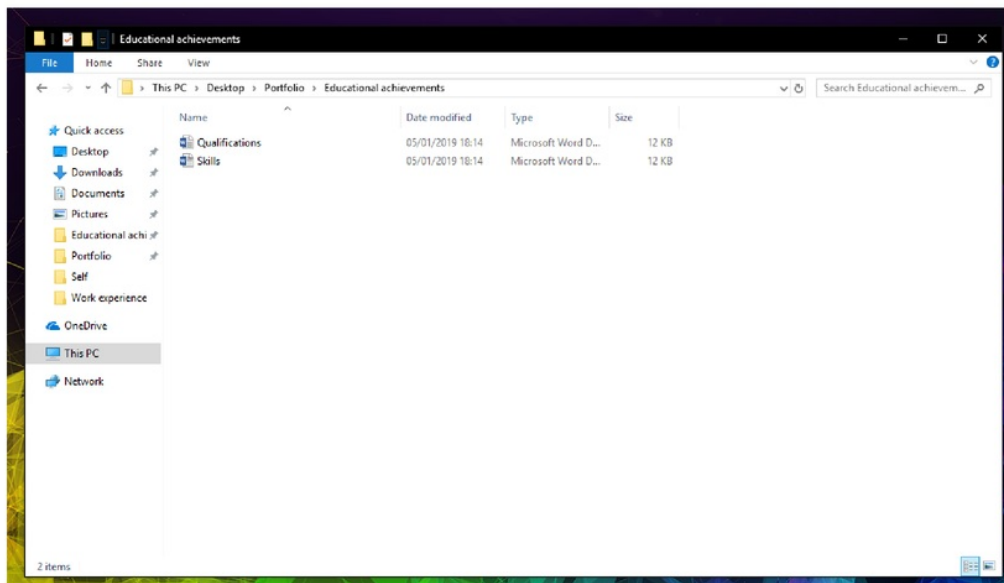
e-Portfolio Folder



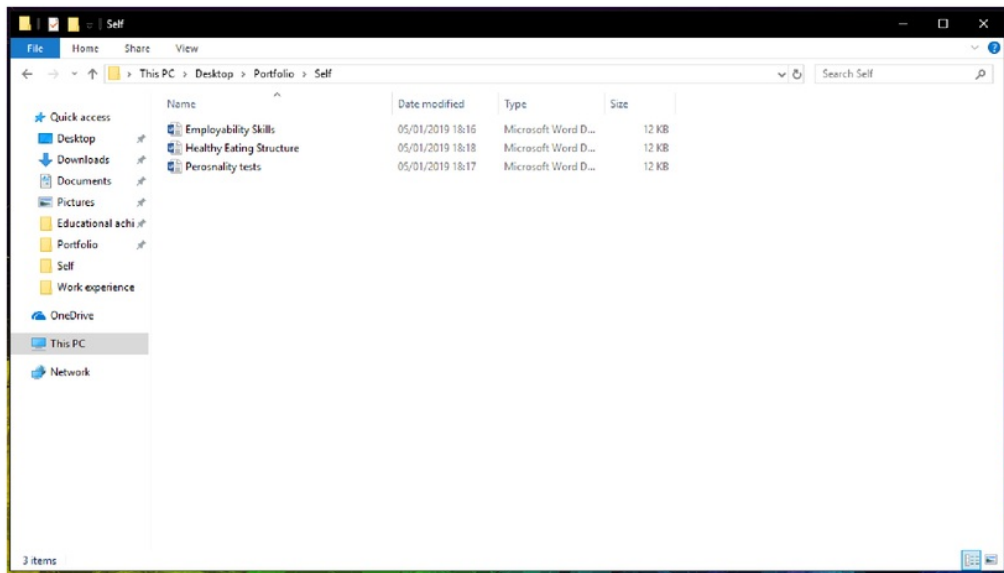
Inside the 'portfolio' folder



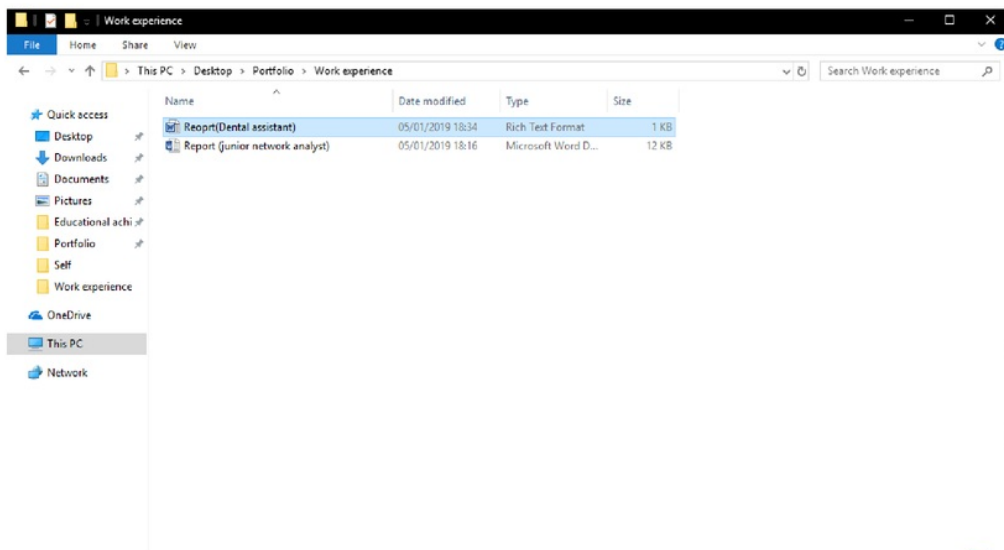
Inside the folder 'Educational achievements'



Inside the folder 'Self'



Inside the folder 'Work Experience'



7. Section 5

Conclusion and Evaluation

To conclude, the writer has found a lot of useful and interesting findings about himself and how to improve on being a better person. Especially the data that was carried out within the various tests that he undertook, should that he is a better practical learner rather than learning through theory work. Another key finding that took the writers interest was the resilience skill. It showed to him that criticism is a way of improvement and should not be taking as an insult. The writer has an interest in the resilience skill and will consider a further study on this topic. Lastly, the final finding that the writer found interesting was ransomware. He found that ransomware has the capability of destroying businesses and people's personal information. He will consider further study into the different types of ransomware and will find more information to add to the 'Ransomware report' [13] that he created and is in the appendix for further reading.

8. References

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9. Appendices

Ransomware

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Ransomware
3. Types of Ransomware
 - 3.1. Scareware
 - 3.2. Screen lockers
 - 3.3. Encrypting Ransomware
4. Crypto wall
 - 4.1. What is Crypto wall
 - 4.2. How it affects a business
5. Conclusion
6. References

Abstract

Within this report, there is a brief overview of the virus 'Ransomware'. There are different sections within this report that covers the different types of ransomware and an individual piece of ransomware that shut down the NHS in 2017 causing major disruption.

Introduction

Ransomware is a virus that is become more of an epidemic in the cyber field and has the potential to destroy businesses and people's lives. Within this report, the writer will be going over the types of ransomware, crypto wall and will be concluding on the overall effects of ransomware.

Types of ransomware

Scareware

Scareware is a type of ransomware that makes people download software's that are viruses and potentially asks them to pay money for it. One of the more commons uses of scareware is the use of windows defender. Scammers take advantage of people's computers and ask them to pay yearly for a fake version of windows defender. [14]

Screen lockers

Screen locker is a piece of ransomware that stops users from accessing their computers. It will freeze someone's system and won't unfreeze until its off the system. Governments may use this ransomware to catch criminals to help gain evidence to bring the criminal to justice. [15]

Encrypting ransomware

Ransomware's that encrypt will encrypt the data that is on the computer system and will give a decryption key back to the customer if the customer pays the ransom. Some will encrypt the data for a long time. Ransomware such as crypto wall will encrypt someone's data. [16]

Crypto wall

What is crypto wall

Crypto wall is a trojan horse virus that will encrypt businesses and people's computer systems. The encryption will only be decrypted by paying the hackers money in bitcoin for them to give you decryption key. They use bitcoin because the cryptocurrency is untraceable.

How it affects a business

Crypto wall has the potential to shut down businesses if the wrong security is put in place. In May 2017 the NHS was affected by the similar ransomware WannaCry 2.0, this ransomware has the same process that crypto wall has and caused a lot of chaos. It encrypted data within the NHS and asked for money for the data to be decrypted. [17]

Conclusion

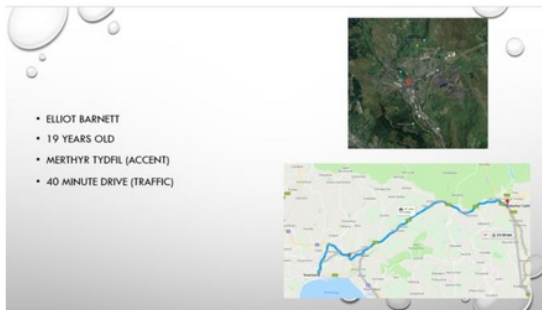
To conclude, ransomware is an ever-growing threat and is becoming an epidemic to modern day technology. It has the potential to destroy business and people's lives over financial gain. More research and tests should be taken underway to reduce the risk of another attack happening.

References (Ransomware Report)

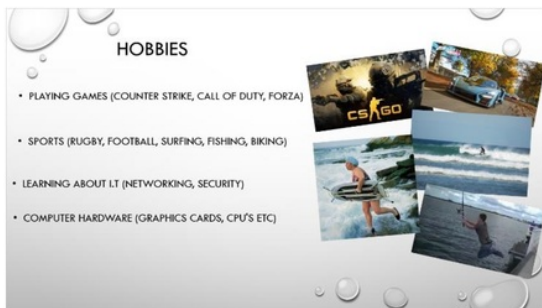
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PowerPoint about himself

Screenshot 1 – Overview of himself



Screenshot 2 – Hobbies



Screenshot 3 – Strengths and Weaknesses

STRENGTHS WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- SELF MOTIVATION
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- PUNCTUALITY

WEAKNESSES

- TIME MANAGEMENT
- CREATIVITY
- LEADERSHIP



Screenshot 4 – Future Work

FUTURE WORK

- WORKING ON NETWORKS
- (NETWORK ENGINEER, NETWORK ARCHITECTURE)

OR

- WORKING IN CYBER SECURITY
- (PEN TESTING, ETHICAL HACKING)



Skill					
	5	4	3	2	1
I have the confidence to try new things and express my ideas			✓		
I am self-motivated and will persevere with difficult tasks		✓			
I am organised and can meet set deadlines	✓				
I am able to find information from different resources easily				✓	
I can read complicated texts and understand the general meaning			✓		
I am able to select what is relevant and what is irrelevant in text			✓		

I can compare different opinions and decide what are the best grounds for deciding who is right			✓		
I can write things in my own words			✓		
I am able to reflect and evaluate my own work			✓		
I have good strategies for starting a new task/assignment			✓		
I have good time management skills and can organise my workload effectively			✓		
I am able to make, store and find my notes				✓	
I am able to manage a range of writing skills appropriately			✓		
I am able to think critically and analytically and evaluate arguments			✓		
I have good memory strategies			✓		
I know how to use IT to help academic study	✓				
I am confident at preparing and delivering oral presentations			✓		

Academic and Employability assignment

GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

56/100

PAGE 1

PAGE 2

PAGE 3

PAGE 4

PAGE 5

PAGE 6

PAGE 7

PAGE 8

PAGE 9

PAGE 10

PAGE 11

PAGE 12

PAGE 13

PAGE 14

PAGE 15

PAGE 16

PAGE 17

PAGE 18

PAGE 19

PAGE 20

PAGE 21

PAGE 22

PAGE 23

PAGE 24

PAGE 25

PAGE 26

PAGE 27

PAGE 28

PAGE 29

GRADING FORM: GJ_2019

ELLIOT BARNETT

281

ENGAGEMENT WITH LITERATURE



Some research sources used, but this needs to be far more extensive and show in more detail how your reading has influenced or backs up your own comments.

55

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING



Reasonable level of understanding demonstrated in most areas. Could have added more content in a number of places though. The report is just a little brief as is. Often the commentary is just skimming the surface – needs more depth and detail.

58

COGNITIVE AND INTELLECTUAL



Too much reliance on simply presenting data. Need to use this information and extract meaningful conclusions or new recommendations etc.

Research/Data/information collection is one thing, but what you do with it is also important. E.g. how do all your findings relate specifically to YOU and what might you do to change things or improve? Could have done more in terms of analyzing the results and formulating plans to make good any weaknesses, (based on more extensive research into these identified areas) The disaster scenario data recovery section should have been far more detailed and formally presented. Weak analysis of the data loss scenarios - doesn't really do what the brief asked for in terms of explaining exactly what you would need to do to recover your system, how long this might take etc.

50

PRACTICAL APPLICATION



Good evidence to show that most of the various aspects have been attempted, however lacking in evidence to describe what steps are going to be taken to improve/change in view of the findings or actually showing evidence to demonstrate things are

58

actually being put into place (e.g. actually USING a calendar system, rather than just mentioning it). No real description of YOUR strategy for backing up data (which is what was asked for!)

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS



A reasonably well presented report. Could have broken the sections down into even more granularity in the TOC.

60