

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE JOB MARKET: INVENT YOUR OWN CLIENT REPORT

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ABSTRACT

No matter where students end up after university, an essential proficiency is the ability to communicate with ‘clients’, whether their employer, a business contact, or the research community. Regardless how the job market changes, students need to be able to convince stakeholders of the importance of their work. How can authentic, client-focused assessments in data science help students to gain this vital skill?

Our study focuses on data from DATA1001 (Foundations of Data Science) at The University of Sydney, which has a large, diverse cohort of more than 2000 students per year. To prepare students for the future job market, the capstone data project takes the form of a “client report”, in which students choose one of three complex data sets, and then pose their own research questions for a chosen client. We investigate how the students approach the open-ended nature of this task, and the types of questions that they ask. Interesting results emerge in terms of the global and ethical nature of the chosen questions, and the nature of the clients, real or imagined. We also consider what type of statistical analysis was needed for such an open-ended investigation and how it aligns with learning outcomes.

REFERENCE

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