Learning Journal

9th August – 16th August

**LaTeX**

Problem 1

Upon opening a LaTeX document, I immediately encountered issues. I thought I would attempt to get into the habit of using underscores in my project names and titles. This didn’t work in LaTeX. The formatting looked extremely strange; there were no spaces in my title and the first letter of each word was lower and smaller than the others. Evidently, the underscore is used as a sort of ‘subscript command’.

Solution 1

The solution was simple – replace the underscores with spaces in ‘Rich Text’. Rich Text looked confronting and seemed to behave temperamentally when I clicked on different places in Rich Text, and I am frankly afraid to click on too many things, but I see how it can quite easily be figured out.

Problem 2

When I Recompiled by document, I got a message saying “Error Rendering PDF Document” multiple times. This made my PDFs inaccessible for a while, and it was worrying at first.

Solution 2

Recompiling the document again fixed this problem, and my PDF (which I didn’t actually know was a PDF until that error showed up, although it seems obvious in hindsight given that I can’t directly type into it) was returned to normal. I have no idea why this happened or continues to happen, and I can’t find any hints in Rich Text. However, it doesn’t seem to be putting any of my data in Rich Text at risk, so I am not to concerned. I will have to ask about this.

Problem 3

Lost internet connection. The entire webpage was inaccessible, so I couldn’t even type, which is not normally something you need to worry about when working on a mere word document. Fortunately, I save often and I was able to recover my document easily, at least this time.

Solution 3

Naturally, save more often. Also figure out how to upload LaTeX documents to GitHub. It’s easy to upload the PDF, but as of yet, I don’t actually even know how to save a TEX document to my desktop, if that is even possible. Updates soon… (solution cont. below)

Problem 4

Out of curiosity, I clicked on a button whose function I didn’t know. It didn’t have a tooltip. It turned out to be a ‘back’ or ‘main page’ button. I think I may have lost a small amount of data since my last save. Not a big setback, but something to remember. Fortunately, I discovered how to download my LaTeX document – from the main page. It came in a ZIP folder. The next job will be figuring out how to reopen it from the ZIP folder or my desktop, or if it needs to be done from the site.

Solution 4

Luckily, I found the solution to problem no. 3 through this problem. To avoid problem no. 4 in the future, I will play around with a document one day and click on every button to test what they each do, so that I may learn.

Notes

LaTeX has a confusing format at first, but I am becoming more familiar with it. I can assume the function of most of the lines of code that appear in Rich Text when you start a new document, but I don’t yet understand know what ‘\usepackage[utf8]{inputenc}’ could possibly do. I intend to play around with the commands to try to break the document and see what other things I can do. I will also try to find a list of commands if such a thing exists; I don’t see a place on the page where this could exist.

When I was trying to download the TEX document, I ran into so many problems that it shocked me. I didn’t think I was too bad with computers and software, and I knew I was not particularly knowledgeable with these aspects, but working with all these different file types made me realise how little I know about how files actually function. I don’t even know what a ZIP folder technically does aside from store and compress files. Maybe that’s all it does. I really need to do some research on my own time about this next week. Right now, trying to figure out basic software is making me feel like a child.