Rationale – Assignment 1 (Basic Web Application)

This assignment provided me with a very steep but effective learning curve. I am now moderately confident in PHP and SQL databases.

The development process of my site began with deciding on a topic to collect data on. I finalised my decision to create a database which showed the current (March 2019) statistics of  
Formula 1 drivers. This included their country of origin, number of grand prix entries, podium finishes, wins, and overall career points.

With a topic in mind, I began creating a basic structure for the site using PHP and HTML programming languages in ‘Brackets’. Prior to this assignment, I had no experience with server-side programming such as PHP or MySQL, and because of this, my first port of call was to learn the basics of PHP. I used to the written weekly tutorials and a site called “<http://learn-php.org/>” to build a sound understanding of this new language.

As I used the weekly written tutorials as a guide for building my site, I needed to retrace my steps and modify the code to suit my needs. This meant that any code that referred to “artworks” (Ben’s demo site topic), needed to be changed to relate to Formula 1 driver statistics. This process was very finicky and caused some great frustrations during the final weeks of this assignment. Some finer details in the code that I had not noticed at first glance, contained references to Ben’s demo site and caused errors in mine. The slow and tedious process of troubleshooting became a habit that I quickly got used to. The “Find” function was a tremendous help in finding and replacing words.

My biggest issue during the assignment was during the final week. After transferring the database and website onto my host (<https://www.000webhost.com>), all referencing to my database in my code was now incorrect. I firstly needed to locate the lines where the database was referenced, this was the easy part. The difficult part was finding the correct credentials to replace them.

After many password resets and hours of scrolling through forums, I found where to find the credentials for my database on *000webhost* through *PhpMyAdmin*. Once this issue was solved, the website worked excellently and the only thing left to do was to make the site look a little less bland. I found a font on Google Fonts called ‘Open Sans’ and imported it into my script. I created a CSS style sheet and copy and pasted in Meyer’s CSS Reset and then added some differentiation between headings and the body.

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