**Unit 7 Reflective Learning Dairy**

**Unit 7 Proposal**

For Unit 7, I plan to integrate two external web services into my personal portfolio website in order to enhance functionality and better serve the personas and scenarios identified in Unit 1.

1. GitHub API Integration

I will use the GitHub REST API to display my latest repositories or commit activity directly on my site. This feature supports the needs of my recruiter persona, who wants to quickly assess my ongoing engagement in coding projects without leaving the site. By dynamically fetching and presenting this information, my portfolio will appear more current and interactive, reinforcing my credibility as an active developer while providing immediate value to visitors.

2. EmailJS Service Integration

I will enhance my existing contact form by integrating the EmailJS service, which allows form submissions to be sent directly to my email without requiring a backend server. This aligns with the needs of both recruiters and potential collaborators, who value a reliable and straightforward way to reach me. The integration not only ensures that messages are delivered but also provides users with confirmation feedback, improving trust and usability while keeping the experience consistent with the overall look and feel of the site.

By adding these two integrations, my portfolio will both consume external data (GitHub) and send data (EmailJS), demonstrating practical API use while directly improving the experience for my target personas.

**Reflection**

For Unit 7, I enhanced my portfolio site by integrating two external services: EmailJS for handling contact form submissions and the GitHub API for displaying my public activity feed. Both services required working with asynchronous requests, which gave me more hands-on experience with AJAX and JavaScript.

The first integration was EmailJS, which allowed me to connect my contact form to an email service without needing a custom backend. I learned how to properly initialize the library, secure my public key, and handle form submissions with meaningful feedback for the user. This directly tied into my original persona goals, where recruiters and collaborators needed an easy way to contact me.

The second integration involved the GitHub API. At first, I used the modern fetch() method to retrieve my public events, but then I switched to jQuery’s $.ajax() so that my implementation explicitly demonstrated AJAX usage, as outlined in the course unit. I learned how to handle success and error callbacks in AJAX, parse the returned JSON, and dynamically update my site with the most recent events. This added a live, professional element to my portfolio and highlighted my ongoing coding activity.

A key realization during this process was how valuable my Unit 1 planning turned out to be. Back then, I had already identified a GitHub feed and a contact form as potential features. Because of that foresight, when Unit 7 required external services, I was able to select and implement these two features without hesitation. The early planning gave me a clear roadmap and prevented me from scrambling to come up with ideas at the last minute.