ETHICS & PROFESSIONALISM ESSAY

Version 1.0
BSc Computing for Games

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Introduction

In this assignment, you will research ethical and professional issues in the games development community and bring an academic perspective to its culture. Specifically, to explore:

(i) Which ethical and professional challenges are prominent;
(ii) and how professionals can conduct themselves in an ethical manner.

The culture of the games industry will not only play a key role in shaping your future job satisfaction, but it will also be instrumental in determining the form of the cultural artefacts that you produce. You need to explore your values and determine what is important to you. Issues in the games industry span a wide range of topics, from *EA Spouse* to *Hot Coffee*, from the *Edge Fiasco* to *GamerGate*, from *ConFlag Censorship* to *Bondi Snubs*. Not to mention, controversy surrounding issues such as anti-social behaviour, violence, and addiction. Notions of ethical principles, codes of conduct, and professional bodies (e.g., BCS, ACM, IGDA, etc.) will aid such explorations.

"Beware of bugs in the above code; I have only proved it correct, not tried it!"

— Donald Knuth

"I'm not a real programmer. I throw together things until it works then I move on. The real programmers will say: Yeah, it works but you're leaking memory everywhere. Perhaps we should fix that!"

— Rasmus Lerdorf

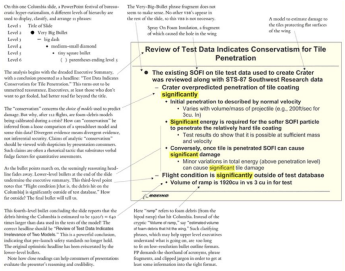
"I'm sorry Dave, I'm afraid I can't do that."

— HAL 9000

This assignment is formed of several parts:

(A) **Write** a 200-word proposal **with** references which must:
  i. **justify** the importance of **one** ethical and/or professional issue;
  ii. and then **cite** at least **12** appropriate academic references.
(B) **Present**, as a **group**, a 30-minute summary of your research that will:
  i. **clarify** each issue **and** its importance;
  ii. **identify** appropriate research questions **and** avenues for research;
  iii. **debate how** each issue could be resolved;
  iv. and **discuss how** these issues affect the development community.
(C) **Write** a draft 1000-word essay which will:
  i. **address** the research question.
(D) **Write** a final 1000-word essay which will:
  i. **revise** any issues raised by your tutor and/or your peers.

Note: All research questions must be distinctive. Members of the same group must **not** target the same research question.



Edward Tufte makes the case that the 2003 Columbia shuttle disaster was caused through use of PowerPoint for communication.

Assignment Setup

This assignment is an **academic writing task**. Fork the GitHub repository at the following URL:

`https://github.com/Falmouth-Games-Academy/comp230-ethics`

Use the existing directory structure and, as required, extend this structure with sub-directories. Ensure that you maintain the `readme.md` file.

Modify the `.gitignore` to the defaults for **TeX**. Please, also ensure that you add editor-specific files and folders to `.gitignore`.

Part A

Part A consists of a **single formative submission**. This work is **individual** and will be assessed on a **threshold** basis. The following criteria are used to determine a pass or fail:

(a) Submission is timely;
(b) Research question is appropriate and distinctive;
(c) At least 12 academic peer-reviewed sources are cited.

To complete Part A, write your proposal in the `readme.md` document and then prepare the reference list using a `*.bib` file. Show these to your tutor. If acceptable, this will be signed-off.

You will receive immediate **informal feedback**.

Part B

Part B is a **single formative submission**. This work is **collaborative** and will be assessed on a **threshold** basis. The following criteria are used to determine a pass or fail:

(a) Research questions are adequately addressed;
(b) Some evidence of academic rigour;
(c) Some insight into the relationship between theory and practice.

To complete Part B, prepare a presentation, and practice your debate and discussion. Prepare your slideshow collaboratively in TeX. Use the combined reference list of the group to broadly discuss each individual research question. Help each other. Ensure that the source code and related assets are pushed to GitHub prior to the scheduled session. Then, attend the scheduled session.

You will receive **peer feedback** within 3 working days after the session.

Part C

Part C is a **single formative submission**. This work is **individual** and will be assessed on a **threshold** basis. The following criteria are used to determine a pass or fail:

(a) Submission is timely;
(b) Enough work is available to conduct a meaningful review;
(c) A broadly appropriate review of a peer's work is submitted.

To complete Part C, prepare a draft version of the essay. Ensure that the source code and related assets are pushed to GitHub and a pull request is made prior to the scheduled session. Then, attend the scheduled session.

You will receive **peer feedback** within 3 working days after the session.

Part D

Part D is a **single summative submission**. This work is **individual** and will be assessed on a **criterion-referenced** basis. Please refer to the marking rubric at the end of this document for further detail.

To complete Part D, revise the essay based on the feedback you have received. Then, upload the essay to the LearningSpace. Please note, the LearningSpace will only accept a single `.pdf` file.

You will receive **formal feedback** three weeks after the final deadline.

Additional Guidance

As you progress into your second year, you will discover that a much greater level of intellectual independence is expected of you. Sessions now focus on student-driven dialogues where important issues are explored instead of merely presenting material. Your tutor is there to highlight opportunities for learning and to facilitate the dialogue. Not to provide answers. It is, therefore, critically important that all students research the topic for each dialogue in advance of attending. These are indicated to you in the session schedule on the LearningSpace.

Again, identifying the most appropriate ethical or professional challenge to address and then developing an appropriate research question is the most challenging aspect of these assignments. It is very unlikely that you will settle on the first research question that you propose. Question arise out of research and gaps in the literature. Furthermore, the question should relate to issues in the games industry. An example might be: "What legal powers does an employee have to remedy a situation where a company refuses to credit their contribution to a game they worked on?". You will need to discuss your question with your tutor and your peers to help focus it.

Areas where students tend to lose marks are: depth of insight; analytical skill; and evaluative skill. Depth of insight implies rigorous research, addressing one key challenge in much detail, rather than several challenges with weaker research and/or in less detail. Adequate analysis implies going beyond mere description, perhaps through: performing calculations, comparing sources, or even deploying reasoning to generate new insights. Adequate evaluation implies making appropriate reference to evidence and ensuring that evidence is of appropriate quality. Further to this, sound and valid arguments are constructed, criticising the claims made by other authors.

Focus on answering your research question. You have but 1000-words! Depth over breadth. Quality over quantity. Write concisely. Your ability to recall facts is not under assessment, your ability to construct an argument through critical analysis and making it relevant to practice is.

FAQ

- **What is the deadline for this assignment?**
  Falmouth University policy states that deadlines must only be specified on the MyFalmouth system.
- **What should I do to seek help?**
  You can email your tutor for informal clarifications. For informal feedback, make a pull request on GitHub.
- **Is this a mistake?**
  If you have discovered an issue with the brief itself, the source files are available at:
  `https://github.com/Falmouth-Games-Academy/bsc-assignment-briefs`.
  Please make a pull request and comment accordingly.

Additional Resources

- Baase, S. (2012) A Gift of Fire: Social, Legal, and Ethical Issues for Computing Technology. Pearson Education.
- Sicart, M. (2009) The Ethics of Computer Games. MIT Press.
- `https://www.igda.org/?page=codeofethics`
- `http://www.bcs.org/category/6030`
- `https://www.acm.org/about-acm/acm-code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct`

Marking Rubric

Criterion	Weight	Refer for Resubmission	Basic Proficiency	Novice Competency	Novice Proficiency	Professional Competency	Professional Proficiency
Basic Proficiency Threshold	40% (Threshold)	Parts A—C have not been submitted, are incomplete, or are unsatisfactory.	Parts A—C are complete. At least ten relevant sources have been referenced. Where appropriate, all sources report scholarly research. Some appropriate seminal and highly reputed sources have been referenced.				
Relevance to and Focus on the Research Question	5%	No focus on the research question.	Little focus on the research question.	Some focus on the research question.	Much focus on the research question. Research questions are explicitly defined.	Considerable focus on the research question. Research question is explicitly defined. Conclusion explicitly refers back to the question.	Significant focus on the research question. Research question is explicitly defined. Conclusion explicitly refers back to the question.
Depth of Insight into Software Engineering Principles	15%	No depth of insight into software engineering principles.	Little depth of insight into software engineering principles.	Some depth of insight into software engineering principles. Insight highlights a specific engineering challenge in digital games development.	Much depth of insight into software engineering principles. Insight highlights a specific and relevant engineering challenge in digital games development.	Considerable depth of insight into software engineering principles. Insight explores, in detail, a specific and relevant engineering challenge in digital games development.	Significant depth of insight into software engineering principles. Critical insight that explores and/or addresses, in detail, a specific and pertinent engineering challenge in digital games development.
Specificity, Verifiability, & Accuracy of Claims	5%	No citations to evidence to claims. Substantial errors and/or misinterpretations.	Few claims have a clear source of evidence. Significant errors and/or misinterpretations.	Some claims have a clear source of evidence. Many errors and/or misinterpretations.	Many claims have a clear source of evidence. Some errors and/or misinterpretations.	Most claims have a clear source of evidence. Few errors and/or misinterpretations.	All claims have a clear source of evidence. Almost no errors and/or misinterpretations.
Adequacy of Analysis of Research Articles	15%	No analysis has been presented.	Little analysis has been presented.	Some analysis has been presented.	Much analysis has been presented.	Considerable analysis has been presented.	Significant analysis has been presented.
Adequacy of Discussion on Transfer to the Games Industry	5%	No transfer to the games industry.	Little transfer to the games industry.	Some transfer to the games industry. Appropriate references to the games industry and/or game development practice.	Much transfer to the games industry. Appropriate argument suggesting effective game development practice.	Considerable transfer to the games industry. Relevant criticism of game development practices, demonstrating insight into pitfalls and arguing for possible solutions.	Significant transfer to the games industry. Relevant criticism of game development practices, demonstrating insight into key pitfalls and effectively defending appropriate solutions with evidence.
Appropriateness of Academic Writing	5%	Little or no evidence of partial-mastery of academic writing. The reference section is missing.	Evidence of partial-mastery of academic writing. The reference section is incomplete and/or malformed.	Evidence of partial-mastery of academic writing. The reference section is complete and well-formed in either ACM or IEEE format. Most in-text citations and quotations are correct.	Some evidence of mastery of academic writing. The reference section is complete and well-formed in either ACM or IEEE format. All in-text citations and quotations are correct.	Much evidence of mastery of academic writing. The reference section is complete and well-formed in either ACM or IEEE format. All in-text citations and quotations are correct.	Considerable evidence of mastery of academic writing. The reference section is complete and well-formed in either ACM or IEEE format. All in-text citations and quotations are correct.
Appropriateness of Spelling & Grammar	5%	Substantial spelling and/or grammar errors.	Many spelling and/or grammar errors.	Some spelling and/or grammar errors.	Few spelling and/or grammar errors.	Almost no spelling and/or grammar errors.	No spelling or grammar errors.
Appropriateness of Essay Structure	5%	There is no structure, or the structure is unclear.	There is little structure.	There is some structure. A few sentences and paragraphs are well constructed.	There is much structure. Some sentences and paragraphs are well constructed. There is a clear introduction and conclusion.	There is much structure, highlighting the argument. Most sentences and paragraphs are well constructed. There is a clear and well-constructed introduction and conclusion.	There is much structure, highlighting the argument. All sentences and paragraphs are well constructed. There is a clear and well-constructed introduction and conclusion.