

MARKET EVALUATION & BUSINESS CASE

Version 1.0
BSc Computing for Games

Dr Michael Scott

Introduction

In this assignment, you will research the market for your COMP240 project and present a business case. Specifically, to explore:

- (i) Whether there is an audience for the product you are developing;
- (ii) and which strategy will be the most successful to commercialise the product.

Making games is a business. For the most part, game studios exist to make money. There are many business models, each having its own constraints and viability—even for those solely interested in games for art. All game developers must eat and sleep somewhere. To maximise your chance of success in the games industry and to confer some of the entrepreneurial agency that Falmouth University is famed for, you must develop an appreciation for the commercial forces behind game development. An evaluation of a market and the construction of a business case will expose some of these forces.

This assignment is formed of several parts:

- (A) **Write** a 100-word proposal **with** references which must:
 - i. **illustrate** the market and audience for your project;
 - ii. and then **cite** at least **4** appropriate references.
- (B) **Present** a 15-minute summary of your research that will:
 - i. **justify how** lucrative the target audience is;
 - ii. **identify** potential risks, such as competitors;
 - iii. **suggest** the feasibility of the product being a success;
 - iv. and **discuss how** to effectively market to this audience.
- (C) **Write** a draft 700-word essay which will:
 - i. **evaluate** the market;
 - ii. and **construct** a sound business case.
- (D) **Write** a final 700-word essay which will:
 - i. **revise** any issues raised by your tutor and/or your peers.

Note: This work is individual and so all submissions must be distinctive, even though your projects are collaborative.

"Research is formalized curiosity, it is poking and prying with a purpose."

— Zora Neale Hurston

"Listening is hearing the needs of the customer, understanding those needs and making sure the company recognizes the opportunity they present."

— Frank Eliason

"Innovation needs to be part of your culture. Customers are transforming faster than we are, and if we don't catch up, we're in trouble."

— Ian Schafer



Team Niche extensively marketed their game at events such as PAX prior to and during its Kickstarter campaign. It was funded.

Assignment Setup

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

<https://github.com/Falmouth-Games-Academy/comp240-business-case>

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 4 appropriate 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 **individual** 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 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. Questions 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 of and Focus on Market Research and Business Case	10%	Little to no focus on conducting market research to construct a business case.	Some focus on conducting market research to construct a business case. Market research is relevant to the business being proposed.	Much focus on conducting market research to construct a business case. The product and its features are explicitly referred to. Market research is relevant to the business being proposed.	Considerable focus on conducting market research to construct a business case. The product and its features are explicitly referred to. Market research is relevant to the business being proposed.	Significant focus on conducting rigorous market research to construct a sound business case. The product and its features are explicitly justified by the research. Market research is relevant to the business being proposed. Conclusion explicitly refers back to the research.	Extensive focus on conducting rigorous market research to construct a sound business case. The product and its features are explicitly referred to. The product and its features are explicitly justified by the research. Market research is relevant to the business being proposed.
Depth of Insight into the Market and the Business Case	15%	Little to no depth of insight into the market and commercial viability.	Some depth of insight into the market and commercial viability. Insights highlight the viability of the business case.	Much depth of insight into the market and commercial viability. Insights highlight the potential success of the business case.	Considerable depth of insight into the market and commercial viability. Insights highlight, in detail, the potential success of the business case.	Significant depth of insight into the market and commercial viability. Critical insights predict the potential success of the business case.	Extensive depth of insight into the market and commercial viability. Critical insights project, in detail, the potential success of the business case.
Specificity, Verifiability, & Accuracy of Claims	5%	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. Appropriate forms of evidence are used to support some claims.	All claims have a clear source of evidence. Almost no errors and/or misinterpretations. Appropriate forms of evidence are used to support many claims.
Adequacy of Analysis of Research	15%	Little to no analysis has been presented.	Some analysis has been presented.	Much analysis has been presented.	Considerable analysis has been presented.	Significant analysis has been presented. The limitations of most analyses is explicitly acknowledged.	Extensive analysis has been presented. The limitations of most analyses is explicitly acknowledged. Some limitations are addressed.
Appropriateness of Academic Writing	5%	Little to no evidence for mastery of academic writing. The reference section is incomplete and/or malformed.	Some evidence of mastery of academic writing. The reference section is nearly complete and mostly 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.	Significant 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%	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. Active voice is prevalent.	No spelling or grammar errors. Active voice is prevalent. Grammar is leveraged deliberately to draw attention to salient points.

Criterion	Weight	Refer for Resubmission	Basic Proficiency	Novice Competency	Novice Proficiency	Professional Competency	Professional Proficiency
Appropriateness of Essay Structure	5%	There is little to no structure. Only a few sentences and paragraphs are well constructed.	There is some structure. Some sentences and paragraphs are well constructed.	There is much structure. Many sentences and paragraphs are well constructed. There is a clear introduction and conclusion.	There is considerable structure. Most sentences and paragraphs are well constructed. There is a clear and well-constructed introduction and conclusion.	There is significant structure, leveraged to effectively highlight the argument and key takeaway points. Nearly all sentences and paragraphs are well constructed. There is a clear and well-constructed introduction and conclusion.	There is extensive structure, leveraged to effectively highlight the argument and key takeaway points. All sentences and paragraphs are well constructed. There is a clear and well-constructed introduction and conclusion.