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SCHOOL OF MEDIA ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

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***“Balanced First Person Shooter Level Generator Engine Plugin”***

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Abstract

The abstract is a summarised version of your complete paper. A reader could get the main ideas from just the abstract or use the abstract to decide whether to read the rest of the paper.

Briefly outline what your paper aims to do.

Briefly outline the results and the conclusions you have drawn from them.

Note: Any pages which come before the content of your dissertation are given using roman numerals, with the traditional numbering starting with the Introduction on page 1. This is achieved by inserting a continuous section break at the heading for your introduction, then setting the page numbers differently for each section.

This report details the process of development, for an engine-plugin (for Unreal Engine 4 (UE4)), that generates a level for a First-Person Shooter, by considering the coefficients of Defensiveness, Flanking and Dispersion, for the placement of Zones (sub-divisions of a level), in a manner that would not favour one side or the other.

This tool was able to be developed for UE4, with access via a custom menu option, allowing the User to define the starting point and dimensions, of the level to generate. Only the Defensiveness and Dispersion coefficients are considered by the Level Generator, when it is assembling the level. Although levels generated by the tool, are mostly traversable, balance for one side or the other, is not clear in the levels generated.

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Note:

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# Overview

Considering the competitive play of recent First-Person Shooters (FPS) titles (such as Counter Strike: Global Offensive (CS: GO)). (Valve Corporation, 2012)

It has become apparent, that creating balanced levels for FPS titles, could be considered a project in of itself. That is, levels that would not favour one side or the other, (with advantages and disadvantages for each team, given where they start in a level, that the Players must overcome). For the creation of balanced levels, having a team dedicated to such a purpose seems necessary, with them using a substantial quantity of the overall project’s resources (the game’s), to create balanced levels. (LevelCapGaming, 2014)

This leads to Players having feelings of unfairness, in relation to how they are at a disadvantage from the start of a game (irrespective of Player skill-level). This is in respect to the paths Players can take through the level, along with where they would have to look to find enemies at certain points in a path, or from entrances/exits to/from a path, as well as entrances to other paths. (LevelCapGaming, 2014)

The scope of the project, will be broken down into one main phase (with four Bonus Phases, see Appendix A: Stretch Goals, for these bonus phases):

* Greybox Phase: In this phase, the initial framework for the level generator will be implemented, so that it can produce the geometry for the level (such as the walls, entry and exit points, as well as obstacles to provide cover). The generator will also have to consider other factors too, such as where the chokepoints in the level will be and how props will affect lines of sight within the level. It will also have to consider the vantage points on the level and the routes of navigation, through the level

For the first phase, to generate a balanced level, it is important for the generator to consider various aspects. This is because one would not want the level generator to generator levels, that are unfair to one side or the other, reducing the enjoyment of the game, when played on a level generated by this generator.

Examples of these aspects are as follows:

* Positional Advantage: Spaces where one Player has an advantage over another
  + Gallery: An elevated area parallel and adjacent to a narrow passageway
  + Choke Point: A narrow area with no alternative routes, causing Players to be exposed to engagement as they move through
* Large-Scale Combat: Areas designed to facilitate combat involving large numbers of Players.
  + Arena: An open area or a wide corridor
  + Stronghold: A Confined area with dense cover and limited access points
* Alternative Gameplay: Introduce new elements that break from the established mechanics of the game
  + Turret: An area with a fixed high-powered weapon, where one side has a clear advantage
* Alternate Routes: Create alternatives for the Players, in how they approach the level
  + Split Level: A corridor with an upper and lower section, where those on the upper section can attack those on the lower section
  + Hidden Area: A small area off the main route that contains secrets (such as special items), that Players can obtain
  + Flanking Route: A path that allows Players to gain a positional advantage

(Kenneth M. Hullett, 2012)

# Project Specification

## Potential Solutions

### Filling Space

After the program has defined the space of the level to generate, this space must be filled. The following algorithms have been considered for filling space:

#### Random Walks

These fill space by starting at a given point and then taking steps in random directions (filling the space that has been traversed, along the way). Random Walks can accurately model certain natural processes, such as molecular motion. They are also useful for generating ‘naturalistic’ paths and features in a game level. (Brian Bucklew, 2017)

##### Positive Aspects

* Varied Sub-Types: As a Random Walk can be executed in as many of the 3 dimensions as one would want to (for 1D, 2D or 3D Random Walks), this offers flexibility. Examples of the results of 1D and 2D walks, are shown below:

Figure 1: 1D-Random Walk.

With steps shown between 0 and ~101 X (inclusive).

(James Moran, 2018) [Image captured from JSim software]

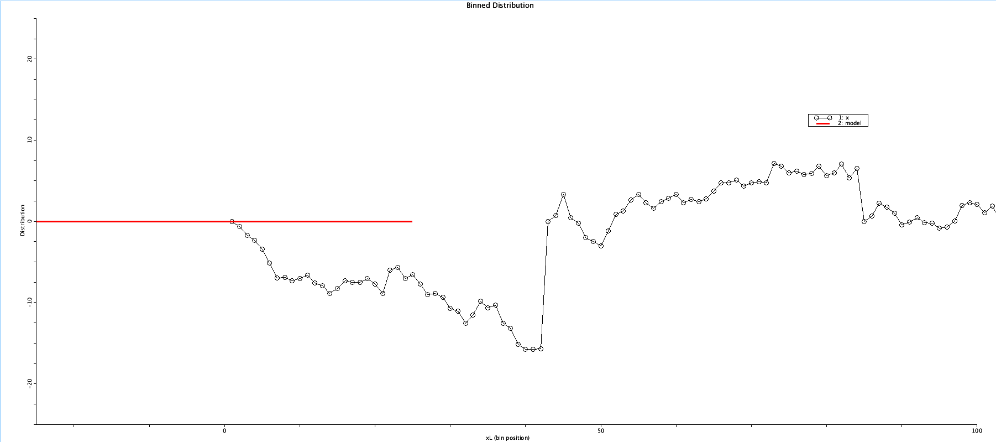


Figure 2: 2D-Random Walk with 2500 Steps

(László Németh, 2013)



* Plausible Randomness: Given the examples provided above, one would find it hard to determine that a procedure was used to generate such output, causing an observer, unbeknownst of the logic for Random Walks, to believe that such an image was created randomly, giving them a sense of discovery (if this algorithm was used as a component in level generation)
* Simple Implementation: The implementation of this algorithm, is relativly simple (given a certain starting point in a generation area, to then move up or down one unit, for 1D-Random Walks (or north, east, south or west for 2D-Random Walks), for a certain number of steps, or until a certain section of the generation area has been filled)

##### Negative Aspects

* Binding to Generation Area (For 2D-Random Walks): As it would make sense to only use this algorithm, to plot a route in a certain area, if ever a step in the algorithm, would move outside of the generation area, that step would have to be discarded. In this case, the direction would have to be determined again, until a step in a direction that is still within the generation area, is taken
* No Consideration of Piece Connectivity: Although this algorithm can establish a route for the ‘pieces’ of a level to be placed on, it would not consider how the pieces are to be connected to each other, or indeed, if a piece connecting to another piece adjacent to it, would be valid (such as a stream length piece, attempting to connect to the back of a corridor wall piece)

#### Cellular Automata

This is a broad category of systems that operate on a graph of discrete cells, where each cell has a state, along with a set of rules that determine how the state of each cell changes, based on the state of adjacent cells (for cardinal directions on the grid). The rules tend to be executed in a step-wise manner (not always though), with each cell computing its current state, based on its neighbouring cells. Then, all the remaining cells, change to their next state as well, one step at a time, following these rules. (Brian Bucklew, 2017)

One example of a cellular automaton, is that of Conway’s Game of Life, which is played out on a 2D grid with two states for each cell, dead or alive. (Brian Bucklew, 2017)

Table 1: The rules for Conway’s Game of Life

(Brian Bucklew, 2017)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Current State Plus Alive Neighbours** | **New State** |
| Alive, plus 0 or 1 alive neighbours | Dead |
| Alive, plus 2 or 3 alive neighbours | Alive |
| Alive, plus 3 or 4 alive neighbours | Dead |
| Dead, plus 3 alive neighbours | Alive |

Figure 3: Specific Cellular Automata example.

After 6 steps through Conway’s Game of Life.

(Michael Cook, 2013)



##### Positive Aspects

* Simplistic Implementation: As there are only a discrete number of states and rules to account for, which will determine the next state of the cells, on another tick of this algorithm

##### Negative Aspects

* Static Rule Binding: As all the variations of Cellular Automata, use static rules, to determine the result of execution on all of a specific set of cells, this will produce the same outcome each time. Therefore, a system would have to coincide with the chosen Cellular Automata, to generate unique sets of cells, to use in the first instance (to not receive the same result)

#### Settling

This algorithm takes a set of varied shapes that are generated with a certain extent of overlapping. These shapes are then given a simple means to simulate physics, that allows them push away from each other (along with a simple physics rigid body representation). This physics simulation is run, until the shapes are no longer overlapping. (Brian Bucklew, 2017)

This provides a manageable method, to arrange a vast set of pieces, which have different sizes and forms, into a set that is connected, but not overlapping. (Brian Bucklew, 2017)

##### Positive Aspects

* Distribution of Randomly Sized Dungeon Rooms: For a certain set of these rooms, with larger physics collision bounds than the visible extent of the rooms themselves, settling out in an area, then connecting rooms that are not connected to each other uniformly, with a series of hallways. (Brian Bucklew, 2017) This algorithm is well suited to generating a dungeon in this manner.
* Useful for generating a cave system, using randomly and irregularly shaped areas, settling away from each other (starting at the centre point of the area for the level to be generated within) (Brian Bucklew, 2017)
* Useful for using a collection of straight and elbow pieces, settling out from a point, to generate a sewer system (Brian Bucklew, 2017)

##### Negative Aspects

* Uncommon Usage: It appears other space filling algorithms are preferred, as it has not been possible to find a graphical representation (or even a description) of this algorithm, when browsing the World Wide Web (WWW)
* Relatively Complex implementation: It would seem as though there are other algorithms (such as those mentioned here), for filling space, that are simpler to implement

#### Wang Tiles

This is a mechanism for defining a set of tiles, along with the way they connect to each other, side by side, as they are placed one by one, across a plane. One can consider them as squares with a colour for each side, where they are placed so that the colour of each side of the new tile, matches the corresponding colours for the sides of the tiles that have already been placed. (Brian Bucklew, 2017)

It is also possible to put tiles on a plane, via a sub-set of Wang Tiles, along with a specific, carefully selected set of these tiles, so that they will not create a repeating pattern (aperiodic tilling). (Brian Bucklew, 2017)

Figure 4: An example set of aperiodic Wang Tiles.

(Parcly Taxel, 2016)

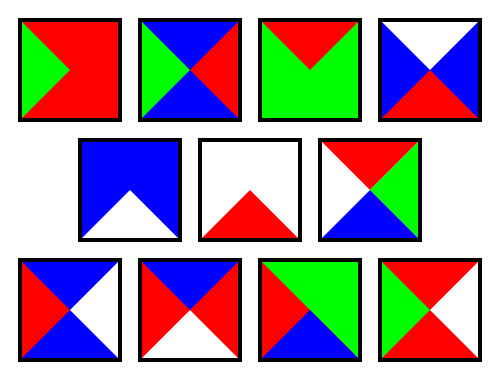
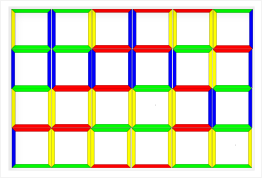


Figure 5: An example of a pattern created with a different set of Wang Tiles.

(Miguel Cepero, 2013)



##### Positive Aspects

* Not Requiring an Undefined Design Process: As Wang Tiles are a defined mathematical process, the use of them is not abstract, versus using ‘typical’ design methods, for image and texture generation, this allows Wang Tiles to also be used in level generation (Sean Barret, 2011)
* Reduction in the Minimum Number of Tiles Required: Via allowing tiles to be rotated or mirrored (rotated 180-degrees), but the edge constraints (colours) on the left and right sides, must be the same as the edge constraints on top and bottom sides (Sean Barret, 2011)

##### Negative Aspects

* Recognisable Patterns: Wang tiles can form long ‘chains’ of repeating colour patterns, even if the overall tiling is irregular (this is due to perception issues with the human eye) (Artificial Mind, 2013)
* Potential Memory Burden: In order to create a plausible pattern of segments in a level using Wang Tiles, one would have to have a vast set of tiles, which could cause the algorithm to use the majority of the computer’s memory (that it was being run on), causing a substantial delay in the generation of the level (Artificial Mind, 2013)

Considering this set of algorithms for filling space, I have decided on using the ‘Wang Tiles’ algorithm, for the generator to fill the predefined space of a level.

This is due to Wang Tiles, putting the level together in a uniform manner, as each tile must connect to its surrounding tiles correctly when placed (considering the edge type/colour of its adjacent tiles). The level will hence, be put together, as if each tile are the pieces of a puzzle, having to correctly match up with their neighbours, to complete the puzzle (I will design the tiles, to allow for this algorithm to generate multiple solutions to generate levels, for a given tile set). (Brian Bucklew, 2017)

## Considered Development Tools

There are many different tools for developing a plugin, that can generate balanced levels for an FPS.

The development tools, with their Positive and negative aspects, are listed below. This is followed by a comparison of these methods:

### Unreal Engine 4 (UE4)

#### Positive Aspects

* Tabbed Interface: With context sensitive segments for each tab, whether that is for the active editor level tab, the Project Settings tab, the Output Log etc. This is used to prepare the project in editor for testing, with output provided during testing, as shown in the Output Log and/or the Message Log
* C++ Backend: For the engine, with a modular hierarchy of classes, for the engine’s features, which can be used as a base for custom classes (in bespoke projects using UE4). One can also tailor a project’s optimisation with C++ (even though the engine can handle certain aspects of memory management, custom classes could overload it)
* Blueprint Visual Scripting System: Used for its utility, to allow for faster implementation then using C++, where it would be deemed suitable to use it (if such implementation in C++, is long-winded, with negligible/no gain in performance over using blueprint, for the same functionality)

#### Negative Aspects

* Blueprint Visual Scripting System: Despite its utility, one must take care not to overuse it, given how it can put an unnecessary strain on the computer trying to run the project. This would then lead to optimisation issues, which in turn, would lead the tool taking longer to generate a level
* Interpretation of Output Messages: Although most messages explain why they have been logged in the Output Log/Message Log, a few messages would seem to be cryptic as per the output they provide, so one must spend time looking into what these messages mean

### Unity

#### Positive Aspects

* Class Hierarchy: Assets inherit from one class at the root level (GameObject), this in turn, inherits from either Monobehavior or ScriptableObject, allowing one to start with an unambiguous base for any given project
* Asset Store: As well as asset packs, one can also find useful tools, that build on the engine’s core functionality, polishing-up a few aspects of the engine
* Community: The community surrounding the use of Unity, are helpful in answering questions about aspects of Unity (if a certain query has not already been answered), along with a robust Application Programming Interface (API) reference

#### Negative Aspects

* Scaling: As projects have additional, as well as more complicated, features added to them, the project management systems scale poorly, finding it harder to manage the project’s hierarchy
* Asset Store: Quite a few asset packages on the store are of sub-par quality, some even falling below that level. One is suggested to vet the packages that one finds on the Asset Store. If a certain asset package is specific to a certain type of game, one should create their own assets for their game (if not matching to the package)

(Mike Prinke, 2016)

### Native C++ Implementation

#### Positive Aspects

* Controlled Implementation: From the start, one can define their own hierarchy of classes, along with interfaces between classes, granting them a custom hierarchy for their project
* Online Community: As C++ has been around for many decades, a vast community has formed around it, with a wide pool of knowledge available for general C++, as well as for certain libraries and any other questions regarding using C++ for a project
* Memory Management: As one must manage memory for a C++ project, this allows for bespoke optimisation, for greater performance of a project (in this case, allowing for levels to be generated faster)

#### Negative Aspects

* Use of Libraries: To implement the same basic functionality as game engines, the standard features of C++, are not able to provide this, causing one to have to learn how to use certain libraries/Software Development Kits(SDK)/API to allow for such features, as is required for this project (as an important aspect of game levels in an FPS, is their visual aspect)
* Time Factor: Even if one knows how to put a solution together, starting from scratch with C++, one should consider the additional time that must be used (versus using a piece of existing software), to implement a solution, with the features required

# Development Tool Comparison

## Native C++ Implementation

After looking over the positive and negative aspects of these tools, using C++ for implementation, has been ruled out. This is primarily due to the time constraint factor, of having to implement this level generator, from the ground-up.

## Unreal Engine 4

Looking at the positive and negative aspects of the aforementioned game engines, although UE4 has been developed and grounded in C++ (with a substantial API, that anyone can look at), allowing for further development of classes and/or modules with C++, a negative (as well as positive) aspect of the engine, is that of the Blueprint Visual Scripting System.

Given the positive and negative aspects of this feature of the engine (noted in the previous section), I would have to take care not to overuse this system, versus C++, for the sake of optimisation.

Other than this and the other noted negative aspect, this engine, would seem a worthy candidate to consider, for implementation.

## Unity

I would not dismiss the use of Unity though, as although C# is used here (given how it is harder to optimise the project with C#), there is also a substantial engine API, providing a base for any project made with it.

As mentioned in the positive and negative aspects section for Unity, I would have to constrain the expanse of the project, given how the structure of Unity, scales poorly to larger projects. But given the scope mentioned for this tool, this should not be an issue (I must simply maintain focus).

Therefore, once again, this is also a worthy candidate to consider, for implementation.

# Overall Aim(s)

Considering this, the overall aim of the project will be that of creating a tool, that generates a level, for an FPS, that has an interior context (such as a cave or an office building), with one main degree of level gradient. In addition, the generator will produce a ‘balanced’ level, factoring in certain aspects for such.

# Initial Objectives

When thinking of some initial objectives for the project, the following come to mind:

* Analyse the project’s goal, to derive requirements (into features), for this Level Generator
* Put together design components for these features, to direct the project (such as UML class diagrams/flow diagrams/pseudocode etc)

# Project Management Approach

The Project will use standard project-management tools and techniques:

* **Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)**
  + **Structured list of tasks**
  + **Organized by phase**
  + **"Living" product backlog**
* **Gantt chart**
  + **Task sequence and progress visualised**
  + **Summary of the current phase**
* **Update regularly and record changes**
* **Supplement with tools you find useful**

(Dave Cobb, 2018)

ADAPTIVE

* **User stories**
* **Product backlog**
* **Iteration planning**
* **Task board**
* **Retrospective**
* **Burndown chart**
* **Velocity chart**
* **Timeboxes**
* **TDD**

PREDICTIVE

* **Task list**
* **WBS**
* **Critical path**
* **Gantt**
* **Dependencies**
* **Baseline**

(Dave Cobb, 2018)

This process is initiated by identifying certain characteristics of the Project, these are:

* The Project’s objective
* When the Project is to have been completed by (scheduling)
* Project Complexity
* Tasks of the Project, the time required to complete these tasks and how one should complete a project task
* Available Resources
* Organisational Structure
* Information and Control Systems

(James Moran, 2017).

# Initial Plan

## Risk Assessment and Evaluation

Table 2: Risk Assessment and Evaluation of the Project.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Risk Description** | **Probability of Occurrence (%)** | **Severity (1-10, 1 = negligible, 10 = catastrophic)** | **Loss Size (Days)** | **Risk Exposure (Probability x Loss Size)** | **Priority (Probability x Severity)** | **Contingency Plan** |
| Following (sample) end-user testing additional features are requested (that were not foreseen). | 70 | 2 | 6 | 4.2 | 1.4 | Put in place a modular system, composed during the initial planning phases, that allows for addition of features to the plugin, on an ad-hoc basis (fluidly). |
| Requirements are found to have not received full definition | 55 | 4 | 10 | 5.5 | 2.2 | Make sure to follow the requirements gathering process thoroughly, to reduce the imprecision of any requirement definitions, if any imprecision is identified. |
| **Risk Description** | **Probability of Occurrence (%)** | **Severity (1-10, 1 = negligible, 10 = catastrophic)** | **Loss Size (Days)** | **Risk Exposure (Probability x Loss Size)** | **Priority (Probability x Severity)** | **Contingency Plan** |
| The project’s deliverables are not finished in the time that was calculated, for how long it should take to finish them. | 50 | 5 | 10 (overtime) | 5 | 2.5 | Making sure to utilise any spare time as effectively as possible (if completing other parts of the project before they are due), as well as allotting suitable leeway, to the time it should take to finish a component of this project, accounting for any delays. |
| Following (sample) end-user testing, more effort on the user guide is required. | 40 | 3 | 4 | 1.6 | 1.2 | Make sure the user guide thoroughly details all aspects of the plugin, as well as the implementation of it in one’s project. |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Risk Description** | **Probability of Occurrence (%)** | **Severity (1-10, 1 = negligible, 10 = catastrophic)** | **Loss Size (Days)** | **Risk Exposure (Probability x Loss Size)** | **Priority (Probability x Severity)** | **Contingency Plan** |
| Software Development Methodology (SDM) deemed insufficient. | 35 | 4 | 20 | 7.0 | 1.4 | Ensure that the SDM utilised meets the expected development practices, for the plugin, considering as many conditions as possible. |
| The project enters an ‘over-budget’ state. | 25 | 6 | 18 | 4.5 | 1.5 | Making sure to accurately identify costs during the planning phases, as well as having an emergency company capital funds account. |
| A power cut occurs during compilation time. | 0.1 | 9 | 40 | 0.04 | 0.009 | Making sure to compile and save as often as possible, as well as backing up the files in multiple locations. |

(Cast Software, 2016).

## Task List

The following tasks come to mind for implementing the level generator:

* Let the user supply bounds for the level (width and height), for the generator to know as to what extent to run the algorithm for
* Implement functionality to the generator, to have it generate a floor for the level (to the bounds)
* Have the generator determine the starting positions, for both teams, on this floor
* Using the starting points as reference, have the generator run the algorithm, to put geometry into the level, for the routes between the two teams and each team’s objective (accounting for choke-points, galleries, sniper positions etc.)
* Following on from this, have the generator put power-up collectibles in place around the level (accounting for what has been generated in the above step)

## Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)

Figure 6: The top level WBS Diagram.



This is followed by the WBS Dictionary:

Table 3: WBS Dictionary for the Project.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **WBS Code** | **WBS Node** | **Definition** |
| 1 | 1 | BalancedFPSLevelGenerator | The work required to implement this Balanced FPS Level Generator. |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **WBS Code** | **WBS Node** | **Definition** |
| 2 | 1.1 | Project Initiation | The work for the initiation phases of this project. |
| 3 | 1.1.1 | Project Idea | Initial formation of the top-level idea for this project. |
| 3 | 1.1.2 | Project Proposal | Reformation of the idea, into a defined starting point for this project. |
| 3 | 1.1.3 | Definition Report | A further level of reformation, to add increased levels of detail, for planning of the project. |
| 3 | 1.1.4 | Progress Report | The final version of this report (going into the greatest level of detail), with a highly refined and clear direction for the project. |
| 2 | 1.2 | Analysis and Design | For the Analysis and Design phases of this project (after the initiation and planning). |
| 3 | 1.2.1 | Decide on a Development Platform | After considering the development platforms for the project, choose and justify a certain solution to use for the implementation of this project. |
| **Level** | **WBS Code** | **WBS Node** | **Definition** |
| 3 | 1.2.2 | Assemble Basic Prototypes | Put together basic prototypes, for the key derived features (user stories), of this system. |
| 3 | 1.2.3 | Infer Requirements | From the user stories and also the prototypes put together thus far, to be put into the system during implementation (on top of merging together the prototypes). |
| 3 | 1.2.4 | Design System | Put together diagrams/pseudocode/program flow, for the system, based on the inferred/derived requirements. |
| 2 | 1.3 | Implementation | For the core implementation of the project’s features. |
| 3 | 1.3.1 | Assemble Project Baseline | For the implementation of the core features of the project. This is to be used as a base, to add complimentary features on top of. |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **WBS Code** | **WBS Node** | **Definition** |
| 3 | 1.3.2 | Merge Prototypes | For merging the prototypes put together in the previous stage, on top of the baseline implementation (for most of the project’s features). |
| 3 | 1.3.3 | Refine Prototypes | Refine the implemented prototypes, to suit any derived features, identified in the later sections of the previous phase. |
| 3 | 1.3.4 | Implement Additional Design Aspects | For the addition of design aspects, that would not succinctly fit in with the features provided by the core baseline, or the merged prototypes. |
| 2 | 1.4 | Testing | For testing of the project (to check it still meets the requirements). |
| 3 | 1.4.1 | Conduct Blackbox Testing | For testing certain features of the project, on if they operate as expected (without concerning one’s self on how they operate). |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **WBS Code** | **WBS Node** | **Definition** |
| 3 | 1.4.2 | Conduct Whitebox Testing | For testing certain features of the project, on how they provide the operation, for these features. |
| 3 | 1.4.3 | Conduct Acceptance Testing | For testing certain features of the project, on the values that are accepted from the user, against the values that should be accepted, or for denying transition in the application, if certain parameters have not been provided. |
| 3 | 1.4.4 | Conduct Full System Testing | For testing on all of the features of the project, to make sure they meet the requirements as expected (given the other forms of testing conducted as well). |
| 2 | 1.5 | Maintenance | For maintaining the system after initial testing. |
| 3 | 1.5.1 | Identify System Bugs | Identify any bugs in the system. |
| 3 | 1.5.2 | Resolve System Bugs | Resolve the identified bugs. |

## Gantt Chart

Figure 7: Project Gantt Chart, from MSProject 2016.

# High Level Implementation Planning

## Class Overview

Considering the steps that have been taken into consideration for the Level Generator, the classes shown in diagram below come to mind:

Figure 8: UML Class Diagram for the project (top-level, initial diagram).



The top-level program flow has been derived from the diagram shown below:

Figure 9: Project Top-Level Program Flow Diagram

## High Level Pseudocode

The pseudocode for the two highest level classes in the hierarchy, is noted here, starting with the upper level of functionality, for the InitialisationInterface class:

1. Show Root Menu to user.
2. Get target Level Dimensions.
3. Get Level-Generation Biases.
4. Initialise LevelGenerationManager with the Level Dimensions and Level-Generation Biases, provided by the User.

Then moving onto the LevelGenerationManager:

1. Initialise Level Bounds.
2. Place a floor within these bounds.
3. Initialise team spawn-points on the level (within the bounds).
4. Initialise the corridors of the level (considering where the spawn-points have been placed).
5. Initialise Power-Up positions on the level (considering the above 2 aspects of the level).
6. Initialise Obstacle positions for the level (considering the above 3 aspects of the level).

The above 6 steps for the LevelGenerationManager, will be affected by the LevelGenerationBiases, defined by the user via the InitialisationInterface.

# Resource Implications

First off, comes the consideration of human resources.

The primary human resource in this project, is myself and so, I will have to strike a balance between working on the project (efficiently, using proper time management techniques, such as sticking to the WBS, Gantt Chart, keeping a log of how I have used my time etc.) and keeping myself contented.

Next, comes the consideration of physical resources.

To acquire the literature for this project, I would have to purchase this literature. Although for certain pieces of literature, I can borrow these from the Mountbatten Library.

For the literature I have purchased, the cost is noted in the table below:

Table 4: Purchased Literature for the Project.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Title** | **Cost (£)** | **Item Payed For** |
| Procedural Generation in Game Design | 41.56 | Yes |

Current Total Project Cost (£): 41.56

# Appendix A: Stretch Goals

The bonus phases (stretch goals), are listed below. These are only to be implemented into the project if there is time left at the end, starting with the first:

* Bonus Phase One: Collision Bounds Phase: This is a bonus phase (a stretch goal), as it is not critical to the purpose of the project and will only receive implementation, if there is suitable time for such, after completing the first phase of the project. After the geometry for the level has been generated, one could import this level, as a mesh into a game project. The problem with that is, the project handling system (e.g. a game-engine), would consider the level asset as one asset, applying a collision box or sphere, that envelops the whole level. For this phase then, the Level-Generator would have to create collision bounds for each piece of geometry it has generated in the first phase (for walls, obstacles, doorways and other entry/exit points to name a few)
* Bonus Phase Two: Texture Phase: This is a bonus phase (a stretch goal), as it is not critical to the purpose of the project and will only receive implementation, if there is suitable time for such, after completing the first phase of the project, as well as the first Bonus Phase. After a level with suitable geometry and collision bounds has been generated, comes that of applying appropriate textures to the geometry, as per the setting of the game’s level (such as clinical, office related textures, for the corridors/cubicles and walls, of an office building)
* Bonus Phase Three: Prop Phase: This is a bonus phase (a stretch goal), as it is not critical to the purpose of the project and will only receive implementation, if there is suitable time for such, after completing the first
* phase of the project, along with the first two Bonus Phases. In this phase, props (either dynamic or static) will be added to the level accordingly (such as chairs, desks, stationary equipment, water-coolers, given an office setting). These can either be destroyed, moved or broken through, to remove them as additional obstacles in the level.
* Bonus Phase Four: Lighting Phase: This is a bonus phase (a stretch goal), as it is not critical to the purpose of the project and will only receive implementation, if there is suitable time for such, after completing the first phase of the project, along with the first three bonus phases. If this phase is not undertaken in the project’s development timeline, an ambient (global) light source, will be applied evenly to the whole level, but if this phase is undertaken, then appropriate lighting for each section of the level, will be generated by the Level-Generator (coming from ceiling lights, lamps, torches, external sources (such as from windows), as well as from certain other props in the level (such as a mobile-light source, provided to one or both teams)

# Appendix B: Literature Review

This is a review of the literature, used in the project to a certain extent.

Procedural Content Generation in Games (Computational Synthesis and Creative Systems) – Noor Shaker, Julian Togelius and Mark J Nelson.

This book covers procedural content generation for games, specifically that of levels (as well as items, quests and other types of content). This book is noted as suitable for undergraduate students, as ‘The authors are active academic researchers and game developers’.

(Springer International Publishing AG, © 2017)

This source will provide me with the relevant theories on procedural level generation, which I can then use as a basis for level generation in this project.

Level design: Processes and experiences – Christopher W. Totten.

This book details the experience of game developers, academics, journalists (as well as others), for their take on level design. Each of these sets of people, provide their perspective on the steps for level design, to create the gamespace for the Player (whether that is a horror environment or a computer-generated level).

(CRC Press, ©2017)

This source will offer me the prerequisite knowledge, for developing an engaging level, that I can then use as a basis, for the properties of a level, that this level-generator must adhere to.

The Science of Level Design: Design Patterns and Analysis of Player Behaviour in First-person Shooter levels – Kenneth Hullett.

This dissertation provides a series of guide lines, for developers to use in the design of First-Person Shooter Levels. This was put together, as the author feels as

though there is no common design pattern, that level design could fit into or be described by effectively. This piece of work also lays the foundation to allow further research into this area of gameplay.

(Kenneth M. Hullett, 2012)

This source will provide me with an in-depth level of detail, into specific design patterns for the levels of an FPS, given extensive detail on the many components to consider in the level of an FPS.

Procedural Generation in Game Design – Tanya X. Short and Tarn Adams.

This book provides a high and low level of depth, into the use of procedural generation in computer/video games. This includes information on the implementation and enactment of procedural generation algorithms in games, including for levels in games.

(Tanya X. Short and Tarn Adams, 2017)

This source will provide me with the knowledge of algorithms, used in procedural generation, to then compare against one another, to find the most suitable for this level generator. It will also provide insight into the implementation, for these algorithms (even for maps/levels in games, as noted).

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Note:

Check whether your faculty requires you to include a reference list or a bibliography (in some cases they may want to see both, if so, put them on separate pages).

Make sure your list is given in **Alphabetical** order of the Author’s surnames, or the Name of the company or institution providing the website if no author is given.

10. Appendices

10.1 Appendix A: Title

An appendix is for anything you feel is useful for your reader to see, but which isn’t essential for understanding your dissertation. It is optional.

Paragraph.

|  |  |
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| **Column heading 1** | **Column heading 2** |
| Write table text here. | Write table text here. |

Note: Notice that the sequence of your appendices is given using letters ‘Appendix A’, ‘Appendix B’, etc.

Also, the numbering of the pages in your appendix is done at the bottom of the page as ‘A-1, A-2’/ ‘B-1, B-2’ etc.

To get this separate numbering, you need to insert a continuous break at the heading of the appendix, this will start the numbering again. Then click into the footer and uncheck the box which says ‘same as previous’. You should then be able to change the letter next to the number (e.g. ‘A-1’ changed to ‘B-1’)to match the letter of your Appendix.

10.2 Appendix B: Title

Paragraph.

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| **Column heading 1** | **Column heading 2** |
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10.2 Appendix C: Title

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