

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>KAMOGELO</b>
<b>SURNAME:</b>	<b>MAIMELA</b>
<b>STUDENT NO:</b>	<b>2103503</b>
<b>CLASS:</b>	<b>GAME DESIGN</b>
<b>UNIVERSITY:</b>	<b>WITS UNIVERSITY</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	<b>DIGITAL ART DEPARTMENT</b>
<b>GAME:</b>	<b>GWENT</b>
<b>ASSIGNMENT:</b>	<b>MDA FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS</b>
<b>DUE DATE:</b>	<b>29 MARCH 2021</b>

## **Plagiarism Declaration and Assignment Cover Sheet**

### **ESSAY COVER SHEET**

Name: Kamogelo

Student Number: 2103503

Course: Game Design

Due date: 29 March 2021

Topic: MDA Analysis Essay

### **Plagiarism declaration**

1. I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is to use another's work and to pretend that it is one's own.
2. I have used the author date convention for citation and referencing. Each significant contribution to and quotation in this essay from the work or works of other people has been acknowledged through citation and reference.
3. This essay is my own work.
4. I have not submitted this work, or a substantial portion thereof, for assessment previously.
5. I have not allowed and will not allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.
6. I have done the word processing and formatting of this assignment myself. I understand that the correct formatting is part of the mark for this assignment and that it is therefore wrong for another person to do it for me.

Signature: K.Maimela

Date: 29/03/2021

## **Introduction**

*Gwent* is a turn based strategy card game set in a dark fantasy world where armies clash and the player, as the commander, leads the charge. It was developed and published by CD Projekt Red for Microsoft Windows and multiple other gaming consoles. It boasts a wide variety of factions, each of which offers unique leaders and abilities. The aim of this report is to analyse *Gwent* regarding its formal components as well as implementation through the MDA framework.

## **Formal Components**

### **1. Objective and outcome**

The objective of *Gwent* is to gain more points than the opponent and win at least 2 of the 3 rounds.

### **2. Rules**

Players begin by choosing factions, all of which offer a distinct playstyle. Then, players assemble their armies where each card has a recruit cost – the higher the cost, the more powerful the card is. Playing starts with each player having 10 cards in hand. The player has to craft devious combos and strategies in order to outperform their opponent.

## **Mechanics**

The game includes a number of varied mechanics such as:

### **1. Swapping cards**

Players can swap cards at the start of the battle as well as between rounds.

### **2. Economy**

*Gwent* has multiple currencies which the players can use in order to build themselves strong and solid decks, as well as focus on the cosmetics which the game provides. Deck building relies heavily on using recruit points in a wise and efficient manner.

### **3. Round commitment and passing**

Players can utilize the passing mechanic only if they have not used any Order or Leader abilities and did not play a card during that turn. However, should the player have 0 cards in hand at any point in the game, the turn will pass automatically.

## Dynamics

Table 1: Dynamics that arise from the game's mechanics.

Mechanic	Dynamic
1. Swapping cards	Swapping cards in <i>Gwent</i> provides a layer of strategy within the game. Players need to think strategically about which cards they are going to swap and how that might affect them in the long run.
2. Economy	The economy results in the player having to spend quite a bit of time exploring the limitations and affordances of this mechanic. For instance, with recruit points, the player cannot willingly spend however much they feel like spending because of the cap put in place, thus they need to think carefully about how they wish to spend their points.
3. Round commitment and passing	This mechanic allows the player to be flexible in their style of play. Players can either commit to the round and play their card in a turn or they can pass the turn when they perhaps have a trick up their sleeve for later in the game. The player with more cards is likely to have card advantage leading into the following rounds. As much as they may not grant automatic victory, the player with card advantage stands a chance of doing so.

The game mechanics provide certain limitations towards the player. However, certain dynamics can come about due to the player wanting to discover more. Depending on player personalities, the player will most likely take the opportunity to try and push the limits of the mechanics in the game.

## Aesthetics

Aesthetics are based on the MDA framework (Hunicke, LeBlanc, & Zubek, MDA: A Formal Approach to Game Design and Game Research, 2001).

1. Challenge

The game has a number of varied challenges which it proposes towards the player. Firstly, the game is complex and may be overwhelming for first time players with the amount of information it has. The point system is at times almost too intricate to comprehend with numbers flying left, right and centre.

The starter decks provided by the game are most of the time not good enough to win you games and they do not even have all the provision points assigned to them. This results in you having to build your own decks from scratch.

## 2. Submission

The game provides an imaginary world to which the player escapes into. The player feels as though they are in the world of the Witcher. The music is ingrained to the game itself and enables the player to fall within the entrapments of the game. The whistling of the swords being drawn to attack an enemy, the blood splatter and the chirping birds in the background all set the tone for the world in which the player escapes into.

Another element to this is the colour schemes within the game. This contributes to the overall mood the game sets to the player.

## **Conclusion**

*Gwent* is a strategic card game with complex data systems and mechanics which provide a steep learning curve for its new players. However, players can grasp how the overall systems in the game work by giving themselves more playing hours.

## References

Hunicke, R., LeBlanc, M., & Zubek, R. (2001). *MDA: A Formal Approach to Game Design and Game Research*. San Jose: Game Design and Tuning Workshop at the Game.