**Reflective Statement**

In this essay I will be sharing my thoughts on my progress throughout the specialism module. Including the briefs I chose for the programming specialism, and what I learned from them, not just in terms of programming but also about my workflow and things I did right but also things that I need to improve upon.

I chose the programming specialism not because I exclusively want to be a coder in the future but because I understood that it is a good skill to have no matter what field of the Game Industry you go into, but especially for me because I want to be a designer and I want to be able to work with the programmers when it comes to nailing down the intricacies of the mechanics of a game.

With this in mind, I chose my first brief: the radar. With little to no programming knowledge except what I had learned during the first semester, naturally I had no clue how to program a working radar in Unity, so I looked up some YouTube tutorials. I clicked on the one with the most views that showed how to make a radar for a top-down 2D game and started following it. After a few days of working on it, it started to become more and more complicated, and I compared what I had so far to what was the requirement and I realised I way over-complicated it. Instead of a basic radar that showed you the location of different transforms relative to the player I was working on this radar that had a sweeping effect like a submarine (which is completely not what the brief was asking for). After this realisation I started looking at other tutorials and thankfully I found one that did just what I needed. I made the radar in 3D including the extra credit in way less time than what it would’ve taken me to finish the one I started in 2D. I learned a couple things from this: always read instruction carefully and regularly double back to them while working, the most popular video isn’t always the most applicable to your problem when it comes to programming and looking around a little bit can’t hurt. However, the main thing I learned from this is that when I get stuck on problem, always look for alternative ways to solve it.

The next brief I started working on was the Speedometer brief. During one of our Tuesday lessons, I managed to get the first part of the code working, which is to record the speed of an object in Unity and convert that speed from m/s to mph. I did this by looking at Unity forums and combining pieces of code from here and there. I didn’t want to just lazily look up another YouTube video, however, to get the extra credit of the brief, which was to have an actual speedometer on the UI working, ended up on YouTube anyway. The script that was used in that video was just slightly different from mine and after realising that it did what I was doing in my earlier script just in a much simpler way I switched to the new script, and by doing that I now managed to get the speedometer working on the UI. For some final touches I ended up adding a character that you can control and see how it speeds up instead of just taking the speed of a random object. The main thing I learned from this is not to overthink too much instead of trying to figure out the script on my own I could have saved a lot of time by going to the YouTube video first where the guy explained how it all worked in a much shorter time than what it took for me to look up all those forums.

For my third brief I chose the FPS Counter brief. The code itself for this one was the simplest out of the three briefs that I did. Having learned from the previous brief and knowing that this is probably something a lot of people look up how to do I knew there had to be a YouTube video covering it. I was right and within an hour I managed to finish this brief.

I left the documentation of these three components to the very end, which was not the best idea. Going back to the radar brief I had already forgotten how I put the scene together so it took much longer to write the documentation that it would have if I had done it right after finishing the coding and putting together the scene.

Overall, I would say I did well in choosing briefs that are going to come in handy in the future for game jams or smaller projects. In the future I will need to pay attention to reading briefs more thoroughly (not like I did with the radar brief in the beginning). I must be careful about getting tunnel vision when working on something (like what happened with the radar), I will make sure to take a step back and try to approach the problem from a different perspective. Looking back, I’m regretting not challenging myself more, especially with the Speedometer and the FPS counter briefs, and just doing just the bear minimum. During the summer break I will definitely look at some of the other programming briefs that we had I will also try just learn more about programming in general.