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| **MODULE TITLE:** | Game Project |
| **MODULE CODE:** | IMDCGD307 |
| **LEVEL:** | 6 |
| **CREDITS:** | 40 |
| **PART ONE** | |
| **TOTAL STUDY HOURS:** | 400 |
| **STUDY HOURS BREAKDOWN** | 20 hours in tutorials and class based work 380 in independent study |
| **PRE-REQUISITES:** | None |
| **EXCLUDED COMBINATIONS:** | None |
| **MODULE LEADER:** | Dan Mayers |
| **MODULE CONTRIBUTOR(S):** | Robert Kurta, Dave Pimm, Chris Janes, Eddie Duggan |

**RATIONALE**

Throughout the preceding two years on BA (Hons) Computer Games Design/BSc (Hons) Computer Games Programming students have iterated a wide range of digital and non-digital games. As a final year Computer Games graduate a student needs to demonstrate their ability to produce a finished game that represents the culmination of their design and development skills either as part of a team or on their own. This will then form a significant component of the professional portfolio the student builds in their final year of study.

The Game the student develops can be created for any platform including non-digital and on any subject matter, but should have a clear and identified target market.

The student will then create their game within an agile led development structure, drawing on experience they have gained in the Group Project Level 4 and Managing Game Production module at Level 5 to plan and document their progress.

This module provides an exciting opportunity for students to apply the knowledge and skills gained so far as well as those which will be gained during their study at Level 6.

**AIMS**

1. To further develop and advance the students’ game development skills either as part of a group or on their own.
2. To further develop and advance the students’ project management skills.
3. To provide an opportunity for students to apply the skills and knowledge from a range of other modules to a complete development cycle.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Be able to deliver a successful and effective working game based on a specified design and product backlog.
2. Be able to negotiate, document and consistently communicate an achievable, innovative and high quality game design within identifiable constraints.
3. Be able to accurately postmortem the game development.
4. Be able to demonstrate the application of skills from a range of other relevant modules to an advanced level.

**INDICATIVE CONTENT**

Review of project management fundamentals; roles and responsibilities, task tracking. Understanding risk analysis across an extended project timeline, project control, communication skills, project documentation, Agile methods, Use of JIRA, resource management, presentations. Development and consistent implementation of QA test cycle.

**LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGIES**

Key project management concepts and techniques will be introduced through lectures. Most of the module will be delivered through the weekly meetings and presentations. At the start of the year there will be a number of set up sessions delivered by tutors. Students will be working with team and or directly to stakeholders closely, building a project plan, executing that plan across the academic year and responding to the risks and issues that arise across the course of the project.

**EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS**

On successful completion of this module, a student will be able to demonstrate achievement of the following Employability Skills:

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| --- | --- |
| C1 | Reading, selecting and analysing information from a range of sources |
| C2 | Producing different kinds of documents |
| C3 | Participating in discussion |
| C4 | Making presentations |
| N1 | Collecting and recording data |
| N2 | Working with data |
| N3 | Presentation of your findings |
| SM 1 | Planning personal work schedules |
| SM 2 | Monitor and manage progress on long task |
| SM 3 | Reviewing objectives and your personal self-management skills |
| T1 | Preparing information |
| T2 | Processing and presenting information |
| T3 | Reviewing the use of information technology |
| PS1 | Develop a strategy for using skills in problem-solving, for a short term routine problem or a longer term extended problem |
| PS2 | Monitor progress and adapt any problem solving strategy to achieve a quality outcome with one complex problem |
| PS3 | Evaluate previous strategies and consider any improvements you can make |
| WWO1 | Planning activities with others |
| WWO2 | Working towards identified targets |
| ILP1 | Develop a strategy for using a range of skills to improve your own learning and performance |
| ILP2 | Review and critically reflect on your progress |
| ILP3 | Evaluate overall effectiveness of your strategy and present your achievements |

**ASSESSMENT**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Component Number** | **Form of assessment** | **Assessment size** | **Weighting (%)** | **Learning Outcomes assessed** |
| 1 | The Game |  | 20 | 1 |
| 2 | Individual Contribution |  | 80 | 2,3,4 |

**ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

**Assessment 1 The Game component:**

1. Ability to deliver a complete game against an initial design specification.
2. Quality of game play experience.
3. Quality of iterative development of the game.
4. Ability to satisfy an identified market through appropriate game play design.

**Assessment 2 Individual Contribution:**

1. Ability to estimate and control the project resources at your disposal.
2. Ability to implement and execute a test plan on an ongoing basis.
3. Ability to communicate game and individual progress in a consistent and effective manner to team members and stakeholders.
4. Ability to pitch game developments to stakeholders in an engaging and accurate manner.
5. Ability to use documentation and software related to project management in a consistent and effective manner.
6. Ability to reflect on work and to identify best practice on a range of issues.

**How the module is organised.**

1. **FORMING TEAMS:**

You will be given the opportunity to form teams of your own over the summer vacation. If you do not wish to work in a group then it is possible to work on your own for this module however a clear and consistent rationale will be expected for students wishing to undertake this module solo.

We recommend that no team is greater than 4 in total. The additional demands of project managing a larger team has to be weighed carefully against the indentified advantages of the larger team size. Our experience over the years has taught us that risks outweigh any advantages here.

As ever please remember that working in any particular group is a privilege not a right. The key stakeholders in your project are the project management team, headed by Dan Mayers and the rest of the games design teaching staff. If we feel that the project is being compromised by a student not making a significant contribution / or is being disruptive to the project we will remove them from the group and reassign them. As in previous years we will not take this decision lightly but it is, fundamentally, to protect both the interests of the students who are working hard within the group and also to protect the student removed. It will give all an opportunity to work and produce a game to a high standard and it will not compromise their overall grade.

1. **PRODUCING YOUR BRIEF:**

The first stage to the game project module will be the production of your own brief. In years 4 and 5 it is staff that provide the brief for you to respond too. As we have discussed, at level 6 you need to demonstrate your own developing knowledge of the discipline of games design. The first stage of your project and where it differs from previous years, is you coming up with a suitable brief to which you wish to respond. Some detailed advice on this was issued in that latter part of your second year of study and all teams need to get the brief they wish to respond to in the pitch green lighted before they proceed. This can be negotiated and agreed at any point from the end of the second year onwards.

1. **PITCHING YOUR GAME:**

We will be running 10 minute game pitches in the early part of the final year. Staff will have your agreed brief before them and will be viewing your response. All pitches will be videoed so that students can receive feedback on their performance and view it for themselves.

We will be looking to judge the pitch on the reasoned response to the brief, on the feasibility of the proposal based on the resources you have available – manpower, time, skillset. We will expect you to be demonstrating that you have learned the lessons of previous game development exercises. We want to focus on the player experience, to know your target market and to have an idea of the core mechanics, dynamics and aesthetics that you are looking to achieve. This will tell us what will make your game fun. We do not want a long ‘background story’. We need crystal clear evidence that you are focussing on core design considerations in response to your brief in this pitch.

We expect your pitch to cover the following elements:-

High Level Description (Logline)  
Target Audience  
Genre  
USP’s  
Gameplay – Goals, Character, Narrative, Significant Wow Moments.  
Locations and Environments  
Technical Restrictions.

The team will consider the proposal and if they think that the pitch is acceptable they will green light it. If not they will provide suggestions to the team and they will pitch again the following week

1. **DEVELOPING YOUR GAME**

You will be required to develop your game in the following way:-

1. Use of dedicated Agile software management. You are now familiar with the use of JIRA it is widely used in game development studios – including studios in Ipswich. It also merges seamlessly with SVN. You will ALL be required to use the software and to update your work through it. Please remember we are teaching you good studio based practice and we expect you to work within the confines of the process.
2. Focussed weekly review sessions. The team have reviewed the weekly review cycle and believe it to be the optimum way in which the projects can be delivered and monitored. Project presentation, Project Design / Art, Project Coding and Project Management. These 4 areas will be reviewed by in order, Eddie Duggan, Dave Pimm, Chris Janes and Rob Kurta. Over the 3 weeks of the sprint between each presentation you will be assigned one 20 minute slot to meet each tutor to review the 4 aspects of the games you are developing. These meetings are timetabled into the Wednesday mornings in particular rooms. It is absolutely vital that ALL team members are present for ALL meetings. It is not acceptable for someone who does not regard themselves as a ‘coder’ to absent themselves from a meeting with Chris, or an ‘artist’ from a meeting with Dave. **You are all collectively responsible for the delivery of your game**. You will see where and when your slots are in the project calendar that accompanies this document. Please note that this in no way precludes you from asking for additional assistance from tutors for your game projects should you need it.
3. The project is a 40 credit module. As game designers it is very important that your final portfolio contains completed games. The extra time that has been allocated to this module we hope will give you the opportunity to develop a more significantly polished game. Each individual will be expected to devote a MINIMUM of 12 hours per week to the project.

**Eastern Enterprise Hub.**

The game project module forms a central part of the partnership we have with the Eastern Enterprise Hub. Please remember that the relationship, sessions, networking and development you do with them is *completely voluntary.* In other words it forms no part at all of the marking and assessing of the game project module. No individual student or team are required to access these sessions if they do not wish to.

We are planning 2 runs of the workshops with the EE Hub. The first will be from October through to January. The second will be from January through to May. We will look to put those teams that are furthest forward with their game development – who wish to be considered – into the first run of their sessions and those that require more time to get their games up and running into the second round, in January.

One of the key elements of this relationship is helping teams to develop plans to become indie games studios. This will be based around the games you are developing. If this is something you are interested in then in your game development you will need to consider the method of monetization you would wish to take with your game and this will need to be factored into your pitch

**Assessment Schedule**

The assignment for the game project falls into 2 parts: The combined total of work from the individual student should reflect the work of two academic semesters for 40 credits (8k words or equivalent). Details of the two assessments, the criteria and the submission dates are below:-

**ASSESSMENT NUMBER 1: THE GAME**

**SUBMISSION DATE FRIDAY MAY 6TH 2015**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Component Number** | **Form of assessment** | **Assessment size** | **Weighting (%)** | **Learning Outcomes assessed** |
| 1 | The Game |  | 20 | 1 |

The course team will mark the game that resides in the appropriate SVN FOLDER at the end of the date above, unless a team are making a Non Digital Submission in which case this will be a physical submission handed in, in the usual way on the above date.

The game should represent a culmination of both your *design* and *game production* skills. We will look for your efforts to secure emotional responses from the target market you have identified through the design of the game and the overall quality of the experience (criteria 2 and 4) how this matches against the initial and ongoing design specifications of the game based on the feedback you are receiving on the work (criteria 1) and the quality of your iterative cycles of development (criteria 3).

**ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

**Assessment 1 The Game component:**

1. Ability to deliver a complete game against an initial design specification.
2. Quality of game play experience.
3. Quality of iterative development of the game.
4. Ability to satisfy an identified market through appropriate game play design.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Student Name: | | |
| **3rd** | 1st Marker | 2nd Marker |
| Initial and ongoing design specifications showed little insight into target market. |  |  |
| Game Play experience showed some functionality but little or no emotional engagement. |  |  |
| The game was developed but issues that were flagged up during the build (tutors / target market ) were not iterated. |  |  |
| The game would have little appeal to the target market identified. |  |  |
| **2:2** |  |  |
| Design specifications did acknowledge the target market but there was inconsistency across the build. |  |  |
| Efforts were made to elicit emotional responses from the identified target market with some limited success |  |  |
| There was evidence across the build of iteration based on ongoing feedback from the target market and tutors |  |  |
| There is some evidence that the game would appeal to the target market |  |  |
| **2:1** |  |  |
| Ongoing design specifications are clearly and carefully geared towards an identifiable target market |  |  |
| Iteration of the builds is clearly directed towards key improvements in the emotional attachment of the player |  |  |
| **1st** |  |  |
| Production of a game that would clearly appeal to the target market representing a sustained effort across all elements of the game design and development process. |  |  |
| **Grade** |  |  |
| **Agreed Grade** |  |  |
|  | | |

**ASSESSMENT NUMBER 2: INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION**

**SUBMISSION DATE FRIDAY MAY 6TH 2015**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Component Number** | **Form of assessment** | **Assessment size** | **Weighting (%)** | **Learning Outcomes assessed** |
| 2 | Individual Contribution |  | 80 | 2,3,4 |

The course team will mark your individual contribution to the project. You will be expected to use the usual mechanisms for providing evidence of your contribution, including, but not limited to, emails, regular use of JIRA, materials readily and easily viewable on SVN, minutes, design documentation, game assets etc, attendance at weekly project reviews, contributions to presentations and your ability to project manage.

As with all modules this year we are looking for your *proactive* and *sustained* engagement with the project, your ability to negotiate, flag issues and act on advice.

**Assessment 2 Individual Contribution:**

1. Ability to estimate and control the project resources at your disposal.
2. Ability to implement and execute a test plan on an ongoing basis.
3. Ability to communicate game and individual progress in a consistent and effective manner to team members and stakeholders.
4. Ability to pitch game developments to stakeholders in an engaging and accurate manner.
5. Ability to use documentation and software related to project management in a consistent and effective manner.
6. Ability to reflect on work and to identify best practice on a range of issues.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Student Name: | | |
| **3rd** | 1st Marker | 2nd Marker |
| Little evidence of your ability to estimate and control the project resources (for example your and others time and effort) at your disposal. |  |  |
| Little evidence of an ability to implement and execute a test plan on an ongoing basis so errors in work remain in the project |  |  |
| Little evidence of ability to communicate game and individual progress in a consistent and effective manner to team members and stakeholders. |  |  |
| Pitching of game developments to stakeholders shows little care and attention to detail or improvement over the academic year |  |  |
| Limited willingness to use documentation and software related to project management in a consistent and effective manner. |  |  |
| Limited ability to reflect on work and to identify best practice on a range of issues related to the game development. |  |  |
| **2:2** |  |  |
| Some good evidence of your ability to estimate and control the project resources (for example your and others time and effort) at your disposal but this is not consistent |  |  |
| Some evidence of an ability to implement and execute a test plan on an ongoing basis. |  |  |
| Some evidence of ability to communicate game and individual progress in a consistent and effective manner to team members and stakeholders but this is not uniformly proactive. |  |  |
| Pitching of game developments to stakeholders shows some care and attention to detail and some improvement over the academic year |  |  |
| Willingness to use documentation and software related to project management in a consistent manner but with a lack of care and attention to detail. |  |  |
| Some evidence of reflecting on work and employing best practice on a range of issues related to the game development. |  |  |
| **2:1** |  |  |
| Consistent evidence of your ability to estimate and control the project resources (for example your and others time and effort) at your disposal |  |  |
| Consistent evidence of an ability to implement and execute a test plan on an ongoing basis. |  |  |
| Consistent evidence of ability to communicate game and individual progress in an effective manner to team members and stakeholders. |  |  |
| Care and attention to detail demonstrated in pitching of game developments to stakeholders over the academic year. |  |  |
| Willingness to use documentation and software related to project management in a consistent manner with care and attention to detail. |  |  |
| Consistent evidence of reflecting on work and employing best practice on a range of issues related to the game development. |  |  |
| **1st** |  |  |
| As above with a proactive approach to their own work demonstrating a sustained engagement with design and development issues throughout the year. |  |  |
| **Grade** |  |  |
| **Agreed Grade** |  |  |
|  | | |