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| School of Computing  Faculty of Engineering |

Replacing the obsolete ABSP ratings system with an interactive online database

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of  
BSc Information Technology

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The candidate confirms that the following have been submitted*:*

*<As an example>*

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(Signature of student)

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# Summary

Concise statement of the problem you intended to solve and main achievements (no more than one A4 page).

# Acknowledgements

Myself…

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# Background

## Problem

Currently all Scrabble players who are based in the United Kingdom are responsible for collating their own records from matches they have played and from tournaments they have attended. These records are then sent to the ABSP where they are added to the existing records. Player ratings are calculated using a bespoke piece of software which must be manually extracted and uploaded to the website by the records officer.

The player ratings list is the only meaningful information which is published to the website from all of the records that are stored.

The ABSP requires a new system to replace the current obsolete process of calculating player ratings manually. They propose adapting the existing website to dynamically generate player ratings. This new system must also provide players the opportunity to browse their own player record online.

Finally as part of an ongoing effort by the ABSP to keep records as complete and accurate as possible, the new system must also allow users to supply missing records of their own match results using the website.

## Solution

## Aim

## Scrabble

Scrabble is an American family board game, which was trademarked in 1948 and is currently owned by Hasbro. However the game has gone through much iteration and was originally invented in 1933 by Alfred Mosher Butts under the name of Lexico and later Criss Cross Words.

It wasn’t until Butts met an entrepreneur called James Brunot that the game’s rules and design were refined. It was also then that the name Scrabble was trademarked and the game was widely distributed.

The game uses anagrams created in a crossword puzzle format and is played between two and four players. Players take turns spelling dictionary words on a game board using letter tiles, which are placed either vertically (top to bottom) or horizontally (left to right). Each letter tile also features a numerical value, which determines how many points a letter is worth. Letter tiles values are assigned in a way so that the less frequently a letter is used in the language of the game that is being played then the higher that tile is worth. For example, in the English language the letters Z and Q are examples of the least frequently occurring letters used in words and both reflect this as being worth 10 points in the English language version of Scrabble.

A player receives the sum total of the values of each letter tile used in the construction of a word. The aim of the game is to finish the game with the highest possible score, which is achieved by creating words that either use a large number of letters or that use the tiles that are of a high value.

At the start of the game each player is assigned seven random letter tiles, which they must use to create a word on the board during their turn. Each time a player uses letter tiles to create a word they receive the same number of letter tiles at random at the end of that turn to ensure every player starts their turn with seven tiles. This process continues until there are no more tiles remaining in reserve.

With the exception of the first word played on the board at the start of a match, each new word constructed must contain at least one of the existing letter tiles on the game board. In addition to this, any contact that a player’s letter tiles make with any additional letter tiles must spell a valid word. At no point in a match must an invalid word be created from any move.

Scrabble is sold throughout the world in many formats including the classic board game, junior edition, travel edition and electronic games. In the United States, three out of five homes contain at least one of these iterations. (Scrabble, 2015)

## The Association of British Scrabble Players

The Association of British Scrabble Players (ABSP) is a no-for-profit association formed in 1987 that works to promote the playing of Scrabble. The ABSP is responsible for the provision of a player ratings system for all of its members (Absp.org.uk, 2015).

They also coordinate tournaments for Scrabble players in the United Kingdom. Other focuses of the association are providing support and information for its members and tournament representatives.

The ABSP operates a website which they use to disseminate information to their community such as news articles, tournament timetables, contact details and general content related to the game of Scrabble.

## Player ratings

A player rating is a calculated score that is derived from a player’s performances in competitive one-on-one Scrabble matches at tournaments that have been officially sanctioned by the ABSP.

Players are ordered by their player ratings in descending order with the highest rating receiving the highest rank of 1 and each subsequent player rating receiving the next rank in increments of 1.

In the event of two or more players having identical player ratings all players would be assigned the rank they would have been assigned had their players ratings been distinct and share the rank. The rank assigned to the player with the next highest rating would skip the rating numbers that would have been assigned to the players with identical player ratings had their player ratings been distinct (e.g. if Player A and Player B are both assigned the joint rank of 5 and Player C was the next highest rated player then Player C would receive the rank of 7).

Player ratings are primarily used to determine the rank order of all of ABSP members based on their most recent form. In addition to this, player ratings serve other important functions.

Tournaments that feature a large pool of participants are split into divisions to ensure that each player participates in a reasonable number of games. The player ratings are used to determine certain entry criteria for divisions. This can include, a minimum player rating, a maximum player rating and also a player rating between to numbers.

In the event of a multi-divisional tournament it is prudent to make every effort to ensure that players of similar ability are assigned to the same division. Scheduling a novice player to face a high-ranking opponent would provide no benefit to either individual in terms of development and in all likelihood not prove a competitive match.

### Calculating player ratings

# Requirements

# Design

## Database design

### Background of databases

### Database design (ER diagram, discuss what is already in place)

## Interface design

### Background of interface design

### Interface study of similar systems

# Implementation

## Justifications

# Evaluation

## User study

## WCAG evaluation

# Conclusion

## Reflection on project processes and outcomes

## Future development

# List of References

Scrabble, (2015). *Hasbro*. [online]. Available at: http://www.hasbro.com/scrabble/en\_US/discover/history.cfm [Accessed 12 Feb. 2015].

Absp.org.uk, (2015). *ABSP*. [online] Available at: <http://www.absp.org.uk/index.shtml> [Accessed 29 Apr. 2015].

# Appendix A - External Materials

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# Appendix B - Ethical Issues Addressed

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