

Computer Games Design

Final award	BSc
Intermediate awards available	Cert HE, Dip HE, Ordinary Degree
UCAS code	N/A
Details of professional body accreditation	N/A
Relevant QAA Benchmark statements	Art & Design, Computing
Date specification last up-dated	March 2011

Profile

The summary - UCAS programme profile

BANNER BOX:

Combine your passion for computer games with a range of other subjects.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The minimum requirements for entry for Level 1 entry is 280 UCAS tariff points from: A/AS level (Including 2 A2 passes), GNVQ, AVCE, Scottish Highers, International Baccalaureate. European Baccalaureate, BTEC / SCOTEC Diploma, Relevant Access Course or successful completion of the Level 0. Other qualifications, including overseas, may be considered.

Applicant are expected to have an A2 level in English Literature or Language, or the equivalent, or they may be asked to provide a sample of written work, which will be assessed by the programme team.

Applicants who do not fulfil the admission requirements for Level 1 may be considered for entry into Level 0. Applicants should have 80 UCAS tariff points from GCE A2 or equivalent.

We also welcome applicants from mature students who do not have formal qualifications but may have relevant experience.

Students may be admitted through Accreditation of Experiential Learning (AEL) or Accreditation of Certificated Learning (ACL) processes.

Students applying to this programme will be expected to demonstrate a specific interest in this area of study and should have a commitment to engaging with the subject. Applicants may be invited for interview.

Overseas Qualifications

Overseas qualifications are accepted for entry and will be checked for appropriate matriculation to UK Higher Education undergraduate programmes. You can get advice from the British Council or our admissions unit on 020 8223 2835 on the different overseas qualifications accepted for entry. You must be able to understand and express yourself in both written and spoken English and some evidence e.g. For level 1 entry a TOEFL score of

550 or an IELTS score of 6.0 (no skill level below 5) and for Level 0 entry and IELTS score of 5.5 (no skill level below 5) would be required.

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

What is Computer Games Design?

This is a program that shows you how to plan, design and implement computer games. Traditionally, undergraduate programmes in the area of videogame/computer game design focus on either programming or visual design, requiring students to have skills or a portfolio of maths/computing or fine art. This programme concentrates on the iterative design process.

Computer Games Design at UEL

The Computer Games Design Combined Honours programme offers students and opportunity to study the interactive design process and theories underpinning the design and development of computer games. In addition to the theoretical elements students will learn and use software applications to apply their understanding of computer games design.

Programme structure

Students following the programme will study:

- The principles and practice of graphic production – the design process and vector and raster based image manipulation
- The theoretical basis and the production process of computer games design.
- 3D Design and Modelling including model creation techniques, texturing, lighting, rendering and exporting
- Level design - the essential elements required for level and world design and 3D environment construction.
- Analysis of the games industry, the differing games markets and the different types of game players.

Learning environment

Learning takes place through lectures, seminars and practical workshops in Mac and PC computer labs, screenings, presentations, crits and invited speakers from industry. Tutorial sessions are also available, as well as personal one-to-one supervision of final year projects and dissertations.

Assessment

Students undertake six modules per year. Marks for level 0 and level 1 modules do not count towards the final degree classification. Most assessment is via practical, theoretical and group and individual project coursework. A proportion of optional or other subject modules may include exams.

Work experience/placement opportunities

There is the opportunity to work in small groups or individually on live client briefs in the 2nd year of this degree programme.

Project work

Students are expected to undertake project work at all levels of study. In the Major pathway this culminates in a third year double project module which counts as almost a quarter of the total mark for the degree. This, and other areas of study, allows students to develop their own ideas, work in groups and/or research specific topics.

Added value

The programme offers a range of extracurricular games design and development activities, including Games Design workshop, Games Club and the UEL SU Computer Games Society which run a number of events throughout the year. Games Design and Games Club sessions give students from all levels of study an opportunity to meet, both for technical or coursework assistance, planning, discussion and implementation and playtesting of non-assessed projects. In Games Club students play a wide-range of paper-based role-playing, board and card games as well as playtest paper-based prototypes of assessed work as well as non-assessed design projects. The games design teaching team attend and support these sessions.

IS THIS THE PROGRAMME FOR ME?

If you are interested in...

- Computer games and game play
- Designing and developing computer games
- Interaction and experience design
- Level Design

If you enjoy...

- 2D and 3D image creation and manipulation
- Working in groups with clients and external agents
- Researching developments in computer games design and development
- Applying practical skills and theoretical knowledge to real-world design challenges

If you want...

To acquire or enhance a range of practical and theoretical skills relevant to a career in computer game design and development, and be able to combine this knowledge with other subject areas relevant to the games industry

To develop study and research skills essential for exploring the field of games design and development, including analytical reading and note-taking, essay planning and writing, reports, independent thinking, problem solving and coherent reasoning.

To have the opportunity to extend study at the MA level.

Your future career

There are a number of potential careers in games design, development, or management within the games or new media industries.

How we support you

Each student is allocated a personal tutor to guide them through their studies. There is also a programme tutor, who is responsible for your degree and can also offer help and advice. Additional academic support is provided by, the School's dedicated Student Support Office. The university also offers support in the following areas: residential; student finance advice; careers advice; study skills development; IT/learning resources.

Bonus factors

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Outcomes

Programme aims and learning outcomes

What is this programme designed to achieve?

This programme is designed to give you the opportunity to:

- To develop student skills in computer games development practice – design, planning, development
- To develop in students an understanding of and skills in critical practice in the games industry - not solely vocational 'how-to' skills but also the ability to think critically about 'why' and 'with what effects'

What will you learn?

Knowledge

- Develop skills in operating computer gamed design related ICTs and assessing their advantages and disadvantages
- Understand and apply theories of graphical environment designing, software interface development, market analysis and its role in design and development – all related to computer games design
- Understand ethical, legal and professional responsibilities of new media professionals

Thinking skills

- Use theoretical concepts and perspectives to explain the development of computer games in and commercial settings
- Evaluate the relationship between theory and creative practice in the field of computer game design and production

- Analyse the legal and cultural factors which shape the development and implementation of computer games design
- Understand and apply principles of computer game design and group work to project work
- Critically evaluate various approaches to computer games design

Subject-Based Practical skills

- Design and create prototypes of computer games for a variety of environments
- Design and create 2D and 3D graphical environments
- Learn to use professional-level application software with a minimum of direct instructions
- Identify the elements which are likely to make for effective computer games

Skills for life and work (general skills)

- Critically evaluate the experience of developing a project report
- Understand and utilise different research approaches
- Work and research independently
- Work in a group and solve problems associated with group activities
- Create and deliver presentation
- Write technical reports and academic papers
- Use computers and application software effectively

Structure

The programme structure

Introduction

All programmes are credit-rated to help you to understand the amount and level of study that is needed.

One credit is equal to 10 hours of directed study time (this includes everything you do e.g. lecture, seminar and private study).

Credits are assigned to one of 5 levels:

- 0 - equivalent in standard to GCE 'A' level and is intended to prepare students for year one of an undergraduate degree programme
- 1 - equivalent in standard to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 2 - equivalent in standard to the second year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 3 - equivalent in standard to the third year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- M - equivalent in standard to a Masters degree

Credit rating

The overall credit-rating of this programme is 360 credits.

Typical duration

The expected duration of this programme is three years when attended in full-time mode or five years in part-time mode. It is possible to move from a full-time mode of study to a part-time mode of study and vice-versa, to accommodate any external factors such as financial constraints or domestic commitments. Many of our students make use of this flexibility and this may impact on the overall duration of their study period.

How the teaching year is divided

The teaching year begins in September and ends in June. A student, normally registering for 6 modules in one year (3 modules in each Semester) would do so in a full-time attendance mode of study and a student registering for up to 4 modules in one year (2 modules in each Semester) would do so in part-time attendance mode of study.

What you will study when

This programme is part of a modular degree scheme. A student registered in a full-time attendance mode will take six 20 credit modules per year. An honours degree student will complete six modules at level one, six at level 2 and six at level 3.

It is possible to bring together modules from one field with modules from another to produce a combined programme. The University offers subjects in a variety of combinations:

- Single 120 credits at levels one, two and three with minimum of 40 credits drawn from university wide option
- Major 80 credits at levels one, two and three with a minimum of 20 credits drawn from university wide option
- Joint 60 credits at levels one, two and three with a minimum of 20 credits drawn from university wide option
- Minor 40 credits at levels one, two and three.

Modules are defined as:

- Core Must be taken
- Option Select from a range of identified module within the field
- University Wide Option Select from a wide range of university wide option across the University

The following are the core and optional requirement for the single, major, joint and minor routes for this programme

Extended Route (Level 0 entry)

LEVEL	TITLE	CREDITS STATUS
		SINGLE

0	Studying in Higher Education	40	Core
0	Understanding the Media and Cultural Industries	20	Core
0	Creative Production	20	Option
0	Writing Practices	20	Option
0	Introduction to New Media	20	Option
0	Introduction to Film and Video Studies	20	Option
0	Understanding Cities and Communities	20	Option
0	Understanding the IPOD Generation	20	Option
0	Globalisation and Social Movements	20	Option
0	Reading and Writing for Academic Studies	20	Option
0	Multimedia Advocacy	20	Option

120 credits from Level 0 Modules (including all cores) must be passed in order to progress to level 1

LEVEL	UEL Module Code	TITLE	SKILLS MODULES	CREDITS	MAJOR
1	MS1300	Games Analysis	Y	20	Core
1	MS1301	Visual Design		20	Core
1	MS1303	Intro to Computer Games Design		20	Core
1	MS1306	Intro to Computer Games Development		20	Core
2	MS2301	3D Graphics		20	Core
2	MS2302	Level Design		20	Core
2	MS2303	Live Team Project	Y	20	Core
2	MS2306	New Media Research Methods		20	Core
3	MS3000	Dissertation/Project	Y	40	Core
3	MS3303	Games Markets: Analysis, Regulation and Targeted Design		20	Core
3	MS3302	Dynamic Computer Game Environments		20	Core

* Skills module must be taken if not taken in other programme

** Option may be taken if Study skills taken in other programme

Requirements for gaining an award

In order to gain an honours degree you will need to obtain 360 credits including:

- A minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher
- A minimum of 120 credits at level two or higher
- A minimum of 120 credits at level three or higher

In order to gain an ordinary degree you will need to obtain a minimum of 320 credits including:

- A minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher
- A minimum of 120 credits at level two or higher
- A minimum of 80 credits at level three or higher

In order to gain a Diploma of Higher Education you will need to obtain at least 240 credits including a minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher and 120 credits at level two or higher.

In order to gain a Certificate of Higher Education you will need to obtain 120 credits at level one or higher.

Degree Classification

Where a student is eligible for an Honours degree, and has gained a minimum of 240 UEL credits at level 2 or level 3 on the programme, including a minimum of 120 UEL credits at level 3, the award classification is determined by calculating:

$$\frac{\text{The arithmetic mean of the best 100 credits at level 3}}{\times 2/3} + \frac{\text{The arithmetic mean of the next best 100 credits at levels 2 and/or 3}}{\times 1/3}$$

and applying the mark obtained as a percentage, with all decimal points rounded up to the nearest whole number, to the following classification

- 70% - 100% First Class Honours
- 60% - 69% Second Class Honours, First Division
- 50% - 59% Second Class Honours, Second Division
- 40% - 49% Third Class Honours
- 0% - 39% Not passed

Assessment

Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning

Knowledge is developed through

- Formal lectures (Thinking skills & Knowledge)
- Interactive lectures/seminars (Thinking skills & Knowledge)
- Group discussions and informal presentations (Practical skills, Thinking skills & Skills for life and work)
- Individual tutorials and independent learning (Thinking skills and Knowledge)
- Debates involving outside speakers (Practical skills, Thinking skills & Skills for life and work)

- Supervised and unsupervised workshops (Practical Skills, Thinking skills, Skills for life and work & Knowledge)
- Analysis of practical and theoretical issues (Thinking skills & Knowledge)
- Project sessions (Practical skills, Thinking skills & Knowledge)
- Research seminars (Practical skills, Thinking skills & Knowledge)
- Project Supervision (Practical Skills, Thinking skills & Knowledge)

Assessment

Knowledge is assessed by

- Coursework essays, reports, evaluations, reviews, reflections and presentations
- Exercises and discussions undertaken in seminar and workshop sessions

Thinking skills are assessed by

- Coursework essays, reports, evaluations, reviews, reflections and presentations
- Exercises and discussions undertaken in seminar and workshop sessions

Practical skills are assessed by

- Practical projects and reflections on production process
- Assignments demonstrating the ability to use software and hardware to produce and end product
- Demonstrating competency in workshops

Skills for life and work (general skills) are assessed by

- Involvement in and contribution to seminar/workshop sessions
- Ability to understand and meet requirements of module specification
- Quality of written work in assignments
- Strict assignment deadlines
- Involvement in and contribution to group project work

Quality

How we assure the quality of this programme

Before this programme started

Before the programme started, the following was checked:

- there would be enough qualified staff to teach the programme;
- adequate resources would be in place;
- the overall aims and objectives were appropriate;
- the content of the programme met national benchmark requirements;
- the programme met any professional/statutory body requirements;

- the proposal met other internal quality criteria covering a range of issues such as admissions policy, teaching, learning and assessment strategy and student support mechanisms.

This is done through a process of programme approval which involves consulting academic experts including some subject specialists from other institutions.

How we monitor the quality of this programme

The quality of this programme is monitored each year through evaluating:

- external examiner reports (considering quality and standards);
- statistical information (considering issues such as the pass rate);
- student feedback.

Drawing on this and other information, programme teams undertake the annual Review and Enhancement Process which is co-ordinated at School level and includes student participation. The process is monitored by the University's Quality Standing Committee.

Once every six years an in-depth review of the whole field is undertaken by a panel that includes at least two external subject specialists. The panel considers documents, looks at student work, speaks to current and former students and speaks to staff before drawing its conclusions. The result is a report highlighting good practice and identifying areas where action is needed.

The role of the programme committee

This programme has a programme committee comprising all relevant teaching staff, student representatives and others who make a contribution towards the effective operation of the programme (e.g. library/technician staff). The committee has responsibilities for the quality of the programme. It provides input into the operation of the Review and Enhancement Process and proposes changes to improve quality. The programme committee plays a critical role in the quality assurance procedures.

The role of external examiners

The standard of this programme is monitored by at least one external examiner. External examiners have two primary responsibilities:

- To ensure the standard of the programme
- To ensure that justice is done to individual students.

External examiners fulfil these responsibilities in a variety of ways including:

- Approving exam papers/assignments;
- Attending assessment boards;
- Reviewing samples of student work and moderating marks;
- Ensuring that regulations are followed;
- Providing feedback through an annual report that enables us to make improvements for the future.

Listening to the views of students

The following methods for gaining student feedback are used on this programme:

- Module evaluations
- Student representation on programme committees

Students are notified of the action taken through:

List the methods that you use e.g.

- Circulating the minutes of the programme committee on UELPlus
- Feedback to student representatives on previous minutes of meeting

Listening to the views of others

The following methods are used for gaining the views of other interested parties:

- Questionnaires to former students

Further Information

Alternative locations for studying this programme

Location	Which elements?	Taught by UEL staff	Taught by local staff	Method of Delivery
-	-	-	-	-

Where you can find further information

Further information about this programme is available from:

- The UEL web site
- The student handbook
- Module study guides
- UEL Manual of Regulations and Policies <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/>
- UEL Quality Manual <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/>
- Regulations for the Academic Framework <http://www.uel.ac.uk/academicframework/>
- UEL Guide to Undergraduate Programmes
- School of Social Sciences, Media and Cultural Studies website <http://www.uel.ac.uk/hss/index.htm>