Ravensbourne University London

Unit Title	How to Create Stories for Games
FHEQ Level	Level 5 (Production Pathway)
Unit Code	GMD20205
Credit Value	15 credits
Unit Type	Subject

Learning Hours			
Staff – Student Contact Hours		**Independent Study Hours**	
Classes	30	Independent Study	50
Supervised access to resources	7.5	Preparation for Assessment	12.5
		Unsupervised Access to Resources	50
Total			150

Unit Description

This unit introduces students to story-telling and the design of narrative within games. It will concentrate on the fundamentals of story-telling in visual media and how we can apply that to designing compelling narrative in games.

Looking at narrative in visual media the unit will develop students' understanding of how story works in cinema, serial television and comics. It will take that understanding and analyse how it has been applied to games through the study of key titles and common structures.

From choose you own adventure TV, walking simulators and narrative games to RPGs and AAA action adventures the unit will encourage students to research effective storytelling techniques and design for deep player engagement through narrative.

Students will be expected to create stories for games and playable prototypes of the narrative mechanics involved.

The Five Principles underpin the Mindsets and Skillsets Manifesto and are the foundation upon which all course curriculum frameworks and unit specifications are based. The relevant Principles as stated below have been mapped against the Learning Outcomes relevant to each course unit and at each level (see Programme Specifications for full description of the Five Principles):

1. Cultivate / Where the individual thrives.
2. Collaborate / Where disciplines combine and evolve.
3. Integrate / Where education engages industry.
4. Advocate / Where purpose meets practice.
5. Originate / Where enquiry informs creativity

Unit Indicative Content

- Introduction to narrative design and an exploration of narratology vs ludology.
- Review fundamentals of visual storytelling.
- Understand how narrative has been used in games.
- Practical exercises encouraging development of writing skills.
- Reflect on the development of a story game.

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Unit Aims

Within the context of the Honours Degree credit framework, the aims of the course are to:

• Enable students to design narrative for games, to create compelling stories and encourage player engagement.

• Provide a supportive environment for students to engage in debate about games and the role of narrative in them.

• Encourage students' intellectual and personal development by fostering, enhancing and promoting their skills in writing, visualising and creating narratives for games.

• Promote diversity, inclusivity, ethical, social and environmental awareness and provide opportunities for study and progression to all students.

The curriculum design and units will *"facilitate acquisition of appropriate knowledge and understanding, development of the necessary personal attributes, and application of the skills which equip and prepare students for continuing personal development and professional practice."* (Subject Benchmark Statements, 2017).

Unit Learning Outcomes (Items in bold are the main focus within each LO for the unit)

LO1 Cultivate

- **Technical Competence**
- **Subject Knowledge**
- **Resilience**

Evidence capacity for evolving discipline specific knowledge and technical competencies, supporting academic & practical self-efficacy and evolving employability skills.

LO4 Advocate

- **Critical Reflection**
- Professional Identity

Evidence ability to engage with Critical Reflection, to review, analyse and interpret personal and professional development.
Evidence developing working process that identifies consideration and interpretation of social and ethically responsible working methods and how this guides personal professional practice.

LO5 Originate

- **Research**
- **Experimentation**
- **Ideation**

Evidence capacity for considered and aligned enquiry processes to inform practical and theoretical development in physical, written and oral forms.
Evidence capacity to combine ideas, materials, tests and outcomes into solutions that inform and guide practical and theoretical development in physical, written and oral forms.

Learning and Teaching Methods

Learning will be developed through: lectures, practical demonstrations, and online courses provided by 3rd parties. It will also feature seminars, tutorials, master classes, critical self and peer appraisal and collaborative working.

Where appropriate external guest speakers will further support delivery on the unit. Students will also need to undertake self-directed independent study to support learning.

The following methods play a significant role in learning and teaching on the course:

- Group projects underpin peer learning and are used to promote transferable skills such as team working and communication.

- Aligned Workshops, Lectures and Seminar sessions support the core teaching delivery.

- Research led projects are used to embed an understanding of research and research methods from the beginning to ensure students develop the skill to explore the contexts and conditions of their practice.

- Reflective journals are used throughout the course to promote the development of autonomous, confident and critically reflective, self-directed learners.

- Self-evaluative writing is used to enable students to take responsibility for their own learning by identifying needs and prioritisiIgboayaka90ng and planning their learning.

- Self-assessment encourages students to take responsibility for monitoring and making judgments about aspects of their own learning.

- Peer assessment is used to promote assessment as part of learning.

- Live projects and student exhibitions and /or pop up events, support an outward facing ethos and encouraging students to develop their practice in relevant professional contexts.

Assessment methods and tasks

Brief description of assessment methods

- *Formative Assessment: You will be given the opportunity for formative feedback/feedforward. This will be given midway through the unit or at an appropriate time.*
- *Summative assessment: Is the completion of the main unit tasks – typically a finished outcome together with associated research and reflective elements and the completion of a digital workbook and accompanying treatments or presentations.*
- *Presentations to peers are usually within a small group environment where at least two tutors are present.*
- *Playable builds should be self-contained and not the editor project files unless stated by the brief*
- *In some cases digital files will be required to assess technical skill.*
- *You will be notified of your grades within 3 weeks of the hand in date and feedback is usually via an audio file in which at least two tutors contribute to feedback and feedforward.*

Assessment tasks	Weighting (%) *(one grade or multi-grade unit)*
Game Prototype	**50%**
Narrative Portfolio	**50%**

Indicative Assessment Criteria

- **Demonstrate the ability to design a playable game or level showcasing narrative design (LO5,**

LO1)
- **Demonstrate the ability to produce a coherent narrative and present that to peers (LO4)**
- **Demonstrate the ability to research and understand story in different contexts (LO1, LO5)**

Assessment criteria are the basis on which the judgment of the adequacy of the work is made. A more detailed assessment criteria will be specified in the brief.

Essential Reading list

1. Heussner, T. (2015) The Game Narrative Toolbox. Focal Press Game Design Workshops.
2. Skolnic, E. (2014) Video Game Storytelling: What Every Developer Needs to Know about Narrative Technique. Watson Guptil.
3. Marx, C. (2006) Writing for Animation, Comics, and Games. Focal Press.
4. Ursula K. Le Guin (2018) Dreams Must Explain Themselves. Gollancz.
5. Pinker, S. (2014). The Sense of Style. Viking.

Detailed further reading and online resources will be provided in the brief and through the unit via AULA