Module Descriptor

Title	Retro Games Archaeology		
Session	2025/26	**Status**	Published
Code	COMP07081	**SCQF Level**	7
Credit Points	20	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	10
School	**Computing, Engineering and Physical Sciences**		
Module Co-ordinator	Dr Gavin Baxter		

Summary of Module

This module provides a historical overview and perspective of video games from their initial conception, evolution, and current developments. A core focus of the module will involve examining the aesthetic development of video games in addition to their cultural fruition.

A key component of the module involves reviewing the concept known as retro gaming and whether the principles behind the notion are still applicable and relevant towards current games design. The games industry has evolved at a continuous and rapid rate with game genres such as FPS, RPS, MMOs, console games, arcade games, mobile games and F2P games. In addition to an historical account of the games industry the module will also focus on the aspects of game audio and pixel art and its affiliation towards games development and retro gaming.

This module adopts a student-centred community driven approach via informal discussions during lectures on-campus. Lectures are run on-campus with additional support provided to students during tutorials which are also delivered on-campus. The module provides students with relevant enterprise meta-skills, appropriate for the games industry, such as creativity, critical thinking, planning, written and presentational skills. Physical and digital accessibility is adhered to in the module with access to the module's material via Aula. Students can access and download relevant course material to learn at their own pace and within their own time.

• Provide a broad overview of the historical evolution of the games industry by genre.

• Examine and reflect upon the concept of a game reviewing potential evolution of the term.

•Explore the notion of retro gaming and its impact upon current aspects of games design.

• Review the concept of pixel art and its affiliation towards retro gaming.

• Provide scope to articulate about retro gaming concepts and present a retro game idea.

• Assess the immersive qualities of early retro games and how they have impacted upon modern game design.

• This module embeds the key “I am UWS” graduate attributes and in particular: Universal (collaborative, culturally aware), Work Ready (effective communicator, digitally-literate, problem-solver) and Successful (creative, driven, transformational).

Module Delivery Method	On-Campus[1] ☒	Hybrid[2] ☐	Online[3] ☐	Work -Based Learning[4] ☐
Campuses for Module Delivery	☐ Ayr ☐ Dumfries	☐ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☒ Paisley	☐ Online / Distance Learning ☐ Other (specify)	

Terms for Module Delivery	Term 1 ☐	Term 2 ☒	Term 3 ☐		
Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term	Term 1 – Term 2 ☐	Term 2 – Term 3 ☐	Term 3 – Term 1 ☐		

Learning Outcomes	
L1	Demonstrate an understanding of the concept of a game and how this concept has developed over time.
L2	Analyse and gain an understanding of the chronological history of games development in terms of game genres.
L3	Discuss, articulate, document, and write about the influence and importance of early retro game gameplay innovations and how they have influenced modern game design.
L4	Present and document the influences of retro games in the context of modern game design and how they have shaped modern gaming.
L5	Produce a retro games design document and provide an oral presentation by outlining a retro game idea based on relevant retro game influences, design decisions and justifications.

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
SCQF Headings	**During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:**
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	**SCQF 7** Understanding the concept of what constitutes a game and the salient components that define the principle of a game. Acknowledging and being able to identify different types of game genre in addition to how the games industry has evolved through the ages. Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of retro gaming assessing its contemporary principles and relevancy towards modern games design.

[1] Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[2] The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[3] Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[4] Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

	Document, present and justify a proposed retro game idea based on a specific game genre of choice.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 7** Utilise knowledge of game genres and aesthetic advances in the games industry towards understanding the core concepts of games design. Articulate a historical account of the games industry in terms of contrasting genres and aesthetics with regards to visual and technical developments. To undertake a written piece about retro gaming and how early innovations of gaming have shaped modern game design.
Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 7** Critically review and consolidate knowledge associated with the concept of retro gaming and the historical evolution of the games industry. Plan, document, justify and orally present a retro game idea based on researching retro game influences and immersive qualities of retro games. Demonstrate original thought, research skills and creativity in presenting a retro game idea.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 7** Present and illustrate knowledge, understanding and interpretations of the evolution of the games industry focusing on specific game genres. Communicate retro game ideas with peers and articulate the evolution and development of game concepts from prototype to final implementation.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF 7** Displaying an ability to work well and collaborate with peers in a professional manner. Ability to display and illustrate elements of creativity and independent thought in a logical way via game design ideas and documentation. Illustrate a degree of autonomy when working on tasks and demonstrate independent cognitive and logical skills in organisation, version control and time management.

Prerequisites	**Module Code** COMP07028	**Module Title** Intro to Games Development
	Other	
Co-requisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**

Learning and Teaching
In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours.

Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	**Student Learning Hours** (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture / Core Content Delivery	10
Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity	26
Independent Study	164
Please select	
Please select	
Please select	
TOTAL	200

Indicative Resources

The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:

Amos, E. (2018) The Game Console: A History In Photographs. No Starch Press.

Craddock, D. (2019) Arcade Perfect: how Pac-Man, Mortal Kombat and other coin-op classics invaded the living room. Press Start Press.

Horowitz, K. (2020) Beyond Donkey Kong: a history of Nintendo arcade games. Jefferson, North Carolina : McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers.

Johnson, J. (2018) From Atari to Nintendo to Sega to the PlayStation: over 100 must play retro video games from the seventies, eighties and nineties. Independently Published.

Lendino, J. (2020) Attract mode: The Rise and Fall of Coin-Op Arcade Games. La Vergne: Jamie Lendino.

Schreier, J. (2017) Blood, Sweat, and Pixels: The Triumphant, Turbulent Stories Behind How Video Games Are Made. Harper Paperbacks.

Stanton, R. (2015) A Brief History Of Video Games: From Atari to Virtual Reality. Robinson.

Silber, D. (2015) Pixel Art for Game Developers. A K Peters/CRC Press.

Simons, I. and Newman, J. (2018) A History of Videogames. Carlton Books Ltd.

(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements

In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are academically engaged if they are regularly attending and participating in timetabled on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:

The School of Computing, Engineering and Physical Sciences considers attendance and engagement to mean a commitment to attending, and engaging in, timetabled sessions. You will scan your attendance via the scanners each time you are on-campus and you will login to

the VLE several times per week. Where you are unable to attend a timetabled learning session due to illness or other circumstance, you should notify the Programme Leader that you cannot attend. Across the School an 80% attendance threshold is set. If you fall below this, you will be referred to the Student Success Team to see how we can best support your studies.

Equality and Diversity
The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code. Aligned with the University's commitment to equality and diversity, this module supports equality of opportunity for students from all backgrounds and learning needs. Using the VLE, material will be presented electronically in formats that allow flexible access and manipulation of content. This module complies with University regulations and guidance on inclusive learning and teaching practice. This module has lab-based teaching and as such you are advised to speak to the Module Co-ordinator to ensure that specialist assistive equipment, support provision and adjustment to assessment practice can be put in place, in accordance with the University's policies and regulations.
(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	**Computing**
Overall Assessment Results	☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded**
Module Eligible for Compensation	☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** **If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details.**
School Assessment Board	Professor Sylvester Arnab
Moderator	Dr Thomas Hainey
External Examiner	Professor Sylvester Arnab
Accreditation Details	TIGA
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**
Changes / Version Number	Version 1

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
Assessment 1
Assessment 1 – Written assessment (50%)
Assessment 2
Assessment 2 – Presentation (50%)
Assessment 3
(N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed.

(ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Component 1							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Design/ Diagram/ Drawing/ Photograph/ Sketch	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	50	0

Component 2							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Presentation	☐	☐	☐	☒	☒	50	1

Component 3							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Combined total for all components						100%	hours

Change Control

What	**When**	**Who**