Module Descriptor

Title	Level Design		
Session	2025/26	**Status**	Published
Code	COMP08092	**SCQF Level**	8
Credit Points	20	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	10
School	**Computing, Engineering and Physical Sciences**		
Module Co-ordinator	Dr Gavin Baxter		

Summary of Module

The primary focus of this module concentrates upon the theory and practice of level design in the domain of games development. The core concepts, fundamentals, and considerations in the context of level design will be studied including but not limited to, level design hierarchies, structure, foundations of design including use of game space, architecture, spatial types, scale and awareness, environmental design, and lighting.

Working in small project teams, students will be required to apply the theory of level design learnt on the module towards implementing playable game levels or walk through environment. Project planning and control is utilised via the GitHub platform. In addition, project teams are required to undertake the important process of playtesting and document how this has been addressed with regards to the development of their level.

This module adopts a student-centred community driven approach via informal discussions about level design on-campus during the lectures. The lectures and labs for the module are run on-campus. Students are also provided with a range of level design topics to discuss online with their peers. Students can access and download relevant course material to learn at their own pace and within their own time.

• Provide a broad yet in-depth overview of the function of level design within the context of the game's development life-cycle.

• Distinguish and inform the co-dependent and interrelated nature of level design and making students culturally aware of this in the context of level design.

• Review and assesses the job role of a level designer and the meta-skills required by the games industry for the position.

• Support students in their abilities to work autonomously and collaboratively in their project roles towards critically thinking about planning and developing their creative outputs.

• Identify and articulate the required employability skill sets required as a level designer such as critical, analytical problem-solving, team working and communication skills.

• Provide scope to utilise industry standard games engine platforms (e.g., Unity or Unreal Engine) required for working in the games industry to create innovative playable levels or environments.

• This module embeds the key "I am UWS" graduate attributes and in particular: Universal(Critical Thinker, Analytical, Culturally aware, Collaborative), Work Ready(effective communicator, motivated) and Successful (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 principles and theory behind successful level design for engaging game levels that present appropriate challenges to players.
L2	Use a commercial game engine platform to create a game levels or an stand alone environment that include relevant elements of game play and mechanics.
L3	Analyse game environments and levels for navigation of gameplay and explain how the analysis relates to the theories and principles of level design.
L4	Undertake playtesting of developed levels or environment and document the results analysing user feedback.
L5	

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 8** Demonstrate by way of documentation and development a critical understanding and awareness of the principal theories, concepts and principles associated with level design.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 8** Understand the importance of planning, designing, and conceptualising the layout of a level or environment in the documentation stage of development.

[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

Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 8** Offer professional level insights, interpretations, and solutions for successful level design in response to current challenges and problems for level design.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 8** Use relevant game engine software such as Unity or Unreal Engine to support and enhance the development of a level or game environment. Utilise version control, project management and online communication platforms work at this level and use this to aid project planning and communication with peers in a project team environment.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF 8** Exercise autonomy and initiative in professional activities. Practise in ways which show a clear awareness of own and others' roles and project responsibilities.

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
Laboratory / Practical Demonstration / Workshop	38
Independent Study	152
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:

The core textbook for the module is: Totten, C.W. (2014). An Architectural Approach To Level Design. A K Peters/CRC Press.

The following books are useful supplementary reading materials for the module:

Adams, A. (2013). Fundamentals of Game Design. (3rd ed.) New Riders.

Bernhaupt, R. (2016). Game User Experience Evaluation. Springer.

Calleja, G. (2011). In-Game: Immersion to Incorporation. MIT Press.

Isbister, K. (2016). How Games Move Us: Emotion by Design. MIT Press.

Kremers, R. (2010). Level Design: Concept, Theory & Practice. A K Peters/CRC Press.

Macklin, C. (2016). Game, Design and Play: A Detailed Approach to Iterative Game Design. Addison Wesley.

Pears, M. (2020). Let's design: Combat. Joshua Maxwell Pears.

Salmond, M. (2021). Video Game Level Design: How to Create Video Games with Emotion, Interaction, and Engagement. Bloomsbury Academic.

Totten, C.W. (2016). Level Design: Processes and Experiences. A K Peters/CRC Press.

Totten, C.W. (2019, 2nd Edition). An Architectural Approach to Level Design. A K Peters/CRC Press.

(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 Sylvestre Arnab
Moderator	Dr Thomas Hainey
External Examiner	Professor Sylvestre 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 – Level Design Document (40%)
Assessment 2
Assessment 2 – Development of Level(s)/Game/Environment and evaluation (60%)
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	☒	☒	☒	☐	☐	40	0

Component 2							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**

Creative output/ Audiotapes/ Videotapes/ Games/ Simulations	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐	60	1

Component 3							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Combined total for all components						100%	1 hours

Change Control

What	**When**	**Who**