



BSc (Hons) Computer Games Technology

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose

Course management and quality assurance.

Secondary Purpose

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

Disclaimer

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification; however, changes may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, review and update of units and courses. Where this activity leads to significant changes to units and courses, there will be prior consultation of students and others, wherever possible, and the University will take all reasonable steps to minimize disruption to students. It is also possible that the University may not be able to offer a unit or course for reasons outside of its control, for example; the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the University will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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Course Details

1. Named Awards

BSc (Hons) Computer Games Technology

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

C1671S (G452)

3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

4. Teaching Institution

University of Portsmouth

5. Accrediting Body

TIGA (game developers association: tiga.org¹)

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

Computing 2016

Art and Design 2016

Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies 2016

7. Document Control Information

Version 6, September 2017

8. Effective Session

2017/2018

9. Author

Gavin Wade

10. Faculty

Creative and Cultural Industries

11. Department

School of Creative Technologies

¹ <http://tiga.org>

Curriculum

12. Educational Aims

The Computer Games Technology Programme:

Aims to equip students to work as game producers, game programmers, game designers or game artists in the leisure or simulation software industry. The course will also prepare students embarking on careers in related industries (such as the entertainment or media industry).

The course is broadly divided into four strands: Game Design, Project Management, and Game Graphics and Game Programming with opportunities to take specialist options in these areas. In addition, and more generally, the course aims to:

- Provide a challenging, stimulating and self-rewarding study environment.
- Provide a framework whereby individual study paths may be forged based on choice from a range of options.
- Enable students to broaden their studies by including study units from outside their discipline as substitutes for degree option choices.
- Develop a range of key skills by means of opportunities provided in the study units.
- Accommodate student needs in relation to maximising their career potential by enabling them to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in their chosen subject area.
- Promote career aspirations by including study topics on general professional practice and study skills.

13. Reference Points

The major reference points are:

- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document;
- University policy on Placement Learning;
- Subject Benchmark Statements;
- Framework for HE Qualifications;
- The UK Quality Code for Higher Education;
- Creative Skillset accreditation guidance documentation on programming and art;
- TIGA accreditation guidance documentation.

The following benchmarks have been taken into account:

- **Computing (C)** - Work involving problem identification, the analysis, the design and the development with accompanying documentation. Develop skills in requirements, testing and evaluation. Identify practices within a professional and ethical framework and understand the need for continuing professional development. Discuss applications based upon the body of knowledge.
- **Art and Design (A)** - Generate ideas, concepts, proposals, solutions or arguments independently/collaboratively to set briefs and/or as self-initiated activity.
Use convergent and divergent thinking in the processes of observation, investigation, speculative enquiry, visualisation and/or making.
Develop ideas through to material outcomes, for example images, artefacts, products, systems and processes, or texts.
Apply resourcefulness and entrepreneurial skills to support their own practice, and/or the practice of others.
Use visual languages to develop the artist's/designer's relationship with audiences, clients, markets, consumers, and/or participants.
Study independently, set goals, manage their own workloads and meet deadlines.

Interact effectively with others, for example through collaboration, collective endeavour and negotiation.

Present ideas and work to audiences in a range of situations.

- **Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies (M)** - Consider and evaluate work in a reflexive manner, with reference to academic and/or professional issues, debates and conventions.

Produce work, which demonstrates the effective manipulation of sound, image and/or the written word.

Manage time, personnel and resources effectively, by drawing on planning and organisational skills.

Work in flexible, creative and independent ways, showing self-discipline, self-direction and reflexivity.

Work productively in a group or team, showing abilities at different times to listen, contribute and lead effectively.

Deliver work to a brief and deadline, referencing sources and ideas and making use, as appropriate, of a problem-solving approach.

Apply entrepreneurial skills in dealing with audiences, clients, consumers, markets, sources and/or users.

- **Skillset** - Skillset is the UK Sector Skills Council (SSC) for Creative Media, including computer games. Skillset accreditation guidance documentation on programming and art has been used to inform the design of this course and to ensure that the teaching on the course meets or exceeds relevant standards recommended by Skillset.

14. General Learning Outcomes

Level 4

Certificates of Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study
- an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work
- communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments
- undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility

Level 5

Diplomas in Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed
- ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context

- knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study
- an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis
- effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively
- undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making

Level 6

Bachelor's degrees/Bachelor's degrees with honours are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline
- an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline
 - to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline
- an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge
- the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline)

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects
- critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem
- communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
 - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
 - decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts
- the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature

15. Learning Outcomes

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

- A.1 Managing and understanding computer game production processes and how they apply to game genres. (C&M)
- A.2 Computer software tools used to plan and execute material for producing computer games. (C)
- A.3 Creative games design within software and technological constraints. (C, A&M)
- A.4 Management and evaluation of game related projects. (M)
- A.5 Business planning, project management and ethical considerations. (M)
- A.6 The production and management of game assets. (A).

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:

- B.1 Analyse and evaluate computer games and game genres. (M)
- B.2 Select appropriate computer software processes to realise game mechanisms, dynamics, graphics, sounds and effects. (C, M&A)
- B.3 Develop critical skills with regard to literature searching, appraising and evaluating from a variety of sources and synthesising the results.
- B.4 Develop general abilities of an intellectual, analytical, creative and problem-solving nature.
- B.5 Integrate common skills into all tasks, which are both necessary and appropriate for a reflective and professional practitioner in the computer games industry and other industries that use these technologies.
- B.6 Critically appraise the effects upon society of technical and technological development and professional conduct in relation to society's increased use of computer game technology. (C&M)
- B.7 Apply professional codes of conduct and appreciate the ethical considerations that underpin them.

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:

- C.1 Explore, develop and exchange information expressed in various forms.
- C.2 Make a presentation about a complex subject.
- C.3 Write different types of documents (especially game design documentation), read and synthesise information. (M)
- C.4 Reflectively agree project targets with others, plan how these will be met and evaluate progress towards them. (M)
- C.5 Use appropriate software tools to create material appropriate for use in the production of a computer game. (C, M, A)

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to:

- D.1 Communicate effectively in appropriate forms and mode to meet defined objectives.
- D.2 Read and understand documents related to software products and client briefs or specifications.
- D.3 Use information technology to handle data, simulation and assist with design and testing.
- D.4 Assess problem domains and formulate appropriate problem solving strategies that build on previous experience in order to generalise.
- D.5 Ability to work in teams to achieve goals but nevertheless be distinctively individual.

- D.6 Demonstrate productive capability in the placement setting where this is applicable and demonstrate productive capability within groups during problem based learning.
- D.7 Work towards achieving agreed objectives, seek to establish, maintain co-operative working relationships in meeting responsibilities

16. Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Knowledge will be gained through formal lectures, tutorials, workshops, self-directed study, peer support, group work and practical project work. This will be supported by visits from industry professionals to provide students with insights into working practices and professional standards within the games industry.

Cognitive skills will be gained through formal lectures, tutorials, workshops, self-directed study, peer support and practical project work. Teaching and learning will involve group and individual work. Regular seminar and presentation during the various stages will allow the development of students' ability to contextually position and justify the work. Project work will develop effective teamwork and problem solving skills.

Lectures, tutorials, workshops in graphics, self-directed study, peer support, team working skills and an emphasis on project management will underpin specific game related projects as required.

Development of Key Skills is essential for successful performance in the course. Projects will demand that students develop a full range of abilities to enable conception through development to successful implementation of solutions and promotion of solutions. Students will also need to develop skills that will facilitate future learning after they complete the course, since in a fast moving industry like the games industry there is a very high rate of new technological and conceptual developments. Professionals in this industry need to continually update their knowledge; self-directed learning on the course will enable students to develop the skills to do this.

17. Assessment Strategy

Assessment is both formative and summative. Examinations will be either written or computer based.

Theoretical knowledge will be examined through a mixture of coursework projects, timed tests, projects, individual and group work, portfolios, essays, case studies.

Cognitive abilities will be evidenced through course work projects, timed tests, individual and group work, portfolios, essays, case studies, oral presentations.

Subject specific skills will be evidenced through planning, concept generation, research and development and production. Research and development portfolios, effective project management, 'real' projects and a completed game product or artefact. Competence in the application of underlying technologies will be assessed, in part by examination, case studies and demonstration. Examinations will be either written or computer assessed.

Key Skills are embedded within project work. Team working, project management and problem solving skills will be assessed through peer assessment and tutor observation by means of course work projects, timed tests, individual and group work. Communicating effectively, visual, oral and written skills along with continuous development of knowledge and implementation of acquired subject specific skills will constitute a major part of every substantial project. Emphasis on the development of self-promotional material and planning an individual career path.

The assessment strategy is part of the School's Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Support Strategy and is coherent through all the units selected by the particular student. Assessment is determined to be appropriate to the individual unit in regard to its subject area and level. A wide range of different assessment methods are embedded within the course units.

At Level 4, many units are assessed with a coursework component which requires the production of an artefact with an associated report. Assessment is mostly related to the acquisition of skills, but formal essay/report writing is also developed within the course. The wide range of assessment types should build their confidence in dealing with different assessment strategies. All Level 4

students will engage in group activities that are assessed and will receive guidance on team role and team dynamics.

At Level 5, the course retains a balance between the proportion of units with examination-based assessment and those requiring coursework, with many units requiring a practical artefact-based component. Assessment is mostly related to the underlying understanding of concepts and a development of the project management extending the skills introduced at Level 4.

At Level 6, a significant part of the assessment is related to project work, always with a major individual project, but often with opportunity for significant group project(s). These mostly involve production of artefacts, often for 'real' clients. The associated reports are significant pieces of work and assessment is biased towards the production of professional quality artefacts, with an associated focus on analysis, critical reflection, research methodology, report writing and project management.

18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

See [Unit Web Search](#)² for full details on the course structure and units

This is a 3 or 4 year programme depending on whether a student elects a sandwich placement. The University strongly encourages the 4 year option since students gain invaluable experience from an industrial placement. The placement year usually takes place at the end of the second year and a placement student should expect to be in employment for a full calendar year.

The course normally consists of multiples of 20 credit point units, where 20 credits represent 200 hours of study. The course consists of a total 360 credits for the award and includes a 40 credit full-time individual project.

Standard University rules apply – the regulations must be consulted for a full description of exit awards.

The course includes opportunities for students to study foreign languages to increase their scope of employability.

As an alternative to the sandwich placement students can undertake a Study Abroad year under the Erasmus Scheme or with other exchange programme partner institutions.

19. Employability Statement

There is a strong core of employability development within the course developing from the School-wide unit at Level 4 developing an ePortfolio and continuing through the levels with embedded employability skills in many units. The personal tutoring system, with associated Professional Development Planning, support career-related development is integrated into careers-related units.

- Students are positively encouraged throughout the course from the start of year one onwards to set up their own businesses and grow these while studying. They are further supported in this by the course team who between them have a wide range of industry experience. Students are encouraged to develop business skills and acumen and an awareness of global games developments and trends.
- Core units at Levels 4 and 5 deliver career management skills in the curriculum including:
 - CV and personal Portfolio development
 - Awareness of Industry requirements and opportunities
 - Job application skills
 - Understanding of Industry Content

More widely, many units on the course are industry focussed.

- The course team and department have strong links with industry. These links are maintained and nurtured not only through the departmental industrial liaison co-ordinator but also through informal links with industry and research projects.

² www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch

- Students are able to take a language unit as part of the institution wide language programme (IWLP).
- Entrepreneurial skills are developed in a range of units across all three years.
- A programme of Personal Development Planning is delivered for all students in line with university guidelines. This is supported by personal tutors and is embedded in core units at Levels 4 and 5.
- Students are expected to create professional portfolios and many units contain opportunities to create assessment items that are suitable for inclusion in these.
- Students are offered the opportunity of a sandwich placement year between Levels 5 and 6. On completion of the year-long work placement the student returns to full time study to complete Level 6. Students are supported in this by the faculty's placements arrangements and by their lecturers, but must arrange the placements for themselves.

Course Management

20. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader.
- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course.
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance.
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc.
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK).
- CCI Creative Skills Centre and CCI Academic Skills Centre.
- CCI Creative Careers Centre.
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC).
- Excellent library facilities.
- The University of Portsmouth has consistently been awarded an excellent rating for student support and guidance in a number of Quality Assurance Agency inspections.
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations etc.
- Feedback is provided for all assessments.
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all awards.
- For students that elect for a placement year there is a placement supervisor and a placement handbook.
- All placement locations are carefully vetted in terms of health and safety as well as their potential to support the programme learning outcomes. This is in line with the University of Portsmouth's Code of Practice for Work Based and Placement Learning.

21. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

- 112 points to include a minimum of 2 A levels or equivalent.
- A range of qualifications as specified on the course page on the University of Portsmouth website.
- Applicants whose first language is not English must provide evidence of English language ability with a minimum IELTS score of 6.0 (normally with not less than 5.5 in any one component) or equivalent.
- Prior (formal and/or experiential) learning may be assessed and accredited.

B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

22. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review
- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports
- Periodic Programme Review
- Student Representatives and Student/Staff Consultative Committees
- National Student Survey
- National Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey
- Staff Performance and Development Review
- Peer Review and Development Framework
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course
- Head of Department
- Associate Dean (Academic)
- Associate Dean (Students)
- Quality Assurance Committee
- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners

C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback

- Student Representation on Board of Studies
- Student Staff Consultative Committees
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires
- University participates in external student surveys, e.g. National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and International Student Barometer (ISB)

D. Staff Development Priorities

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes
- New academic staff required to undertake appropriate University of Portsmouth learning and teaching programmes
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership

- Academic staff undertake initial and continuing professional development within the Academic Professional Excellence Framework (APEX) programme which is aligned with the Higher Education Academy (HEA)'s UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)
- Support staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages

23. Assessment Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth academic regulations will apply to this programme (see [Assessment and Regulations](#)³).

24. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- Oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards
- Review unit assessment strategy
- Sample assessment artefacts
- Present report to Unit Assessment Boards

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:

- Oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards
- Scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment
- Ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom

25. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

TIGA (game developers association tiga.org) Accredited

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

The BSc (Hons) Computer Games Technology course participated in a successful Periodic Programme Review on 5th March 2014.

C. Quality Assurance Agency

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (*for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015](#)*⁴).

D. Others

None.

26. Further Information

Further information may be found in:

- Student Handbook
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Prospectus

³ www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/assessmentandregulations/

⁴ www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf

- [University of Portsmouth](#)⁵ and [School of Creative Technologies](#)⁶ websites
- [etCeTera](#)⁷

⁵ www.port.ac.uk/

⁶ www.port.ac.uk/school-of-creative-technologies/

⁷ www.ceetee.net/