BA (Hons) Games Development

Programme specification document

Contents

Overview

Awarding institution	Bath Spa University
Teaching institution	Bath Spa University
School	Bath School of Design
Department	Creative Computing
Main campus	Newton Park
Other sites of delivery	Locksbrook Campus
Other Schools involved in delivery	N/A
Name of award(s)	Games Development
Qualification (final award)	BA (Hons) Games Development
Intermediate awards available	CertHE, DipHE
Routes available	Single
Sandwich year	Yes

Duration of award	3 years full-time (4 years with Professional Placement Year) 6 years part time
Modes of delivery offered	Campus-based
Regulatory Scheme[1]	Undergraduate Academic Framework
Exemptions from regulations/framework[2]	No
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body accreditation	N/A
Date of most recent PSRB approval (month and year)	N/A
Renewal of PSRB approval due (month and year)	N/A
UCAS code	GD01 (GD02 with Professional Placement Year)
Route code (SITS)	GMDSIN (GMDSIN-SW with PPY)
Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements (including date of publication)	Computing (2022) Art and Design (2020)
Date of most recent approval	November 2022
Date specification last updated	January 2023

[1] This should also be read in conjunction with the University's Qualifications Framework

[2] See section on 'Exemptions'

Exemptions

There are no exemptions.

Programme Overview

Whether you are interested in the artistic, technical, or production side of gaming, BA (Hons) Games Development introduces the tools to build your own game worlds. By joining this course, you become part of a committed community of game makers. You can expect to learn by making, to be encouraged to be curious and experimental, and to collaborate with others. We value and reward unique ideas and risk-taking, and help you think about games not only as commercial products but also meaningful cultural experiences.

Our key aim is to help you develop a balance of technical skills and artistic competencies that will present a wide range of opportunities for entering the game sector. This may include joining an established company, starting your own independent studio, or pursuing emerging opportunities in interactive entertainment.

Module content with Games Development targets the following themes:

- Game culture
- Game design
- Play and player experience
- Immersion and extended realities
- Technical game art (2D & 3D)
- Sound for games
- Game programming
- The extended capabilities of games and game engines
- Industry Insight

The course begins with a close review of the fundamentals of game making or the 'rules of play', while covering the key design skills, programming techniques and co-creation methods that lead to compelling titles. You explore game history and culture, learn about game sound, produce 2D concept art, and test your developing knowledge in a series of mini game jams.

In the second year we shift attention to narrative design, 3D game art and industry-standard game engines. Alongside this you engage emerging forms of game-making for extended realities (XR), while considering games from the point of view of publication and commercial viability. In optional modules you explore the world of tangible games and custom controllers, or alternatively, investigate how the real-time capabilities of game engines can add a playful twist to a range of art, design and performance disciplines.

Year three targets industry readiness. You begin by building a deeper awareness of the scope and practices of the games industry, as well as undertaking preparatory activities that support the next stage of your career. This is complimented with a practical investigation of games beyond entertainment, and with it, an appreciation of alternative routes to establishing yourself as a professional game designer/developer. The course culminates with a semester-long simulated experience of a games studio. Here you adopt industry standard workflows and production roles with the intention of developing a complete and polished title that caps your games portfolio

Programme Aims

1. Knowledge - to expose the histories, theories and cultural contexts of games and play, while supporting an applied understanding of the design principles, technologies and workflows of game production.
2. Practice - to shape practitioners that hold a holistic understanding of game design and development, and an ability to consolidate its artistic and technical dimensions.
3. Play - to support recognition and deployment of the concept of play as a tool for concept generation, prototyping and problem-solving.
4. Experimentation - to promote divergent thinking and creative risk-taking, and encourage individuals to establish the experimental mindset and intrinsic motivation needed to pursue novel and surprising game ideas.
5. Collaborative working - to encourage an appreciation of the multidisciplinary nature of game production, and facilitate opportunities for students to develop an open and effective approach to co-creation.
6. Critical thinking - to develop critically aware individuals that can draw on academic, artistic and industry insight to inform creative practice in the field of games development.
7. Employability - to embed professional development and industry insight across all levels of study through initiatives that encourage practice-led interaction with the games industry

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

A Subject-Specific Skills and Knowledge

	Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) On Achieving Level 6	On Achieving Level 5	On Achieving Level 4
A1	Ideation - demonstrate an individual and experimental approach to the generation of game concepts that is informed by a systematic understanding of and critical evaluation of existing games.	Ideation - demonstrate an ability to apply established and fringe methods of generating game concepts and their creative components.	Ideation - demonstrate an understanding of key methods of generating and appraising game concepts and their creative components.
A2	Design - demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate, consolidate and challenge existing approaches to game design in order to establish a distinct creative voice	Design - demonstrate an ability to apply established approaches to game design to address a creative brief.	Design - demonstrate an understanding of the core components of game design and how these are handled by game designers.
A3	Play - demonstrate a systematic understanding of play as a tool for conceptual thinking, problem-solving and creative expression in contexts that extend into traditionally non-gaming disciplines.	Play - demonstrate an applied understanding of play as a tool for critically evaluating and iterating game prototypes.	Play - demonstrate an awareness of the role of play in the analysis of games.
A4	Tools - demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate, shortlist, select, combine and adapt specialist tools as required to realise a self-devised brief in the field of games development.	Tools - demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate and apply industry standard tools in the design and development of games.	Tools - demonstrate an understanding of key tools for prototyping and testing original game concepts.
A5	Process - demonstrate an ability to devise and deploy techniques and workflows that negotiate the constraints of a self devised creative brief in the field of games development.	Process - demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate and apply techniques and workflows to address a creative brief in the field of games development.	Process - demonstrate an awareness of the techniques and workflows used by game designers.
A6	Collaboration - demonstrate ability to select, critically evaluate, adapt and apply co creation methodologies and tools as required to address a creative brief.	Collaboration - demonstrate ability to critically evaluate and apply strategies for co creation used in the games industry.	Collaboration - demonstrate an ability to devise and critique game concepts in partnership with peers.

A7	Industry Context - demonstrate an ability to systematically identify career opportunities within the games industry and critically evaluate personal abilities and motivations against the expectations of such opportunities.	Industry Context - demonstrate an ability to identify and critically evaluate characteristics of key roles within the games industry.	Industry Context - demonstrate an awareness of the scope, composition and motivations of the games industry.

B Cognitive and Intellectual Skills

	Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) On Achieving Level 6	On Achieving Level 5	On Achieving Level 4
B1	Knowledge - demonstrate a systematic understanding of emergent theory and methodologies in the field of games development, and the evolving role of games in contemporary culture.	Knowledge - demonstrate a critical understanding and ability to apply established theories and methodologies in the field of games development.	Knowledge - demonstrate an understanding of the foundational theories, principles and cultural context of games development.
B2	Critical Thinking - demonstrate an ability to identify, critically evaluate and synthesise ideas and practices across disciplines to inform the conceptual direction, goals and form of original games.	Critical Thinking - demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate ideas and practices in the field of games development, and apply conclusions in the derivation of creative work.	Critical Thinking - demonstrate an ability to evaluate ideas and practices in the field of games development in an objective and balanced manner.
B3	Computational Thinking – demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate and apply appropriate methods to deconstruct abstract problems and propose solutions that are efficient and maintainable.	Computational Thinking – demonstrate an ability to apply established strategies for computational thinking to represent a problem as an executable procedure.	Computational Thinking – demonstrate an ability to express a defined problem as a series of small and solvable steps.
B4	Critical Reflection - demonstrate an ability to systematically identify and deploy appropriate evidence and methods of critical reflection to evaluate ideas and artistic outcomes.	Critical Reflection - demonstrate an ability to apply self-critique and respond appropriately to feedback from others in the development of ideas and artistic outcomes.	Critical Reflection - demonstrate an ability to evaluate the key successes and limitations of personal work and experiences.

C Skills for Life and Work

	Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) On Achieving Level 6	On Achieving Level 5	On Achieving Level 4

C1	Autonomous learning (including time management) that shows the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility and enables decision making in complex and unpredictable contexts.	Autonomous learning (including time management) as would be necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making such that significant responsibility within organisations could be assumed.	Autonomous learning (including time management) as would be necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility.
C2	Team working skills necessary to flourish in the global workplace with an ability both to work in and lead teams effectively.	Team work as would be necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making for effective work with others such that significant responsibility within organisations could be assumed.	Team work as would be necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility for effective work with others.
C3	Communication skills that ensure information, ideas, problems and solutions are communicated effectively and clearly to both specialist and non specialist audiences.	Communication skills commensurate with the effective communication of information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences in which key techniques of the discipline are deployed effectively.	Communication skills that demonstrate an ability to communicate outcomes accurately and reliably and with structured and coherent arguments.
C4	IT skills and digital literacy that demonstrate core competencies and are commensurate with an ability to work at the interface of creativity and new technologies.	IT skills and digital literacy that demonstrate the development of existing skills and the acquisition of new competences.	IT skills and digital literacy that provide a platform from which further training can be undertaken to enable development of new skills within a structured and managed environment.

Programme content

This programme comprises the following modules

Key:

Core = C

Required = R

Required* = R*

Optional = O

Not available for this status = N/A

If a particular status is greyed out, it is not offered for this programme.

Games Development					Status	
Level	Code	Title	Credits	Single	Joint
4	GDT4000-20	Rules of Play	20	C	
4	CCO4000-20	CodeLab I	20	C	
4	GDT4001-20	2D Game Art	20	C	
4	GDT4002-20	Sound for Games	20	C	
4	GDT4003-20	Critical Play	20	C	
4	GDT4004-20	Game Jam	20	C	
5	GDT5008-20	Indie Game Design	20	C	
5	GDT5001-20	Narrative Design and Gameplay	20	C	
5	GDT5002-20	3D Game Art	20	O	
5	CPU5004-20	CodeLab II	20	O	
5	GDT5003-20	Extended Realities	20	C	
5	GDT5005-20	Tangible Games	20	O	
5	GDT5006-20	Playful Media	20	O	
5	GDT5107-20	3D Game Art ll	20	O	
5	GDT5009-20	Immersive Audio	20	O	

5	PPY5100-120	Professional Placement Year	120	O	
6	GDT6000-20	Industry Ready	20	C	
6	GDT6001-20	Games Studio Pre-Production	20	C	
6	GDT6002-20	Serious Games	20	O	
6	GDT6004-20	(Re)viewing Games	20	O	
6	GDT6003-60	Games Studio	60	C	

Assessment methods

A range of summative assessment tasks will be used to test the Intended Learning Outcomes in each module. These are indicated in the attached assessment map which shows which tasks are used in which modules.

Students will be supported in their development towards summative assessment by appropriate formative exercises.

Please note: if you choose an optional module from outside this programme, you may be required to undertake a summative assessment task that does not appear in the assessment grid here in order to pass that module.

Work experience and placement opportunities

There are several available opportunities to engage with industry across the programme. We encourage you to take advantage of:

- Summer placement schemes
- Live briefs within modules
- Industry insight events, professional talks and workshops
- Creative and technical work as part of Creative Computing commissioned projects Roles with university-led external projects that cross subject areas
- Personal commissioned work with support from the Creative Computing team Invites to attend or participate in gaming conventions, regional /national/global game jams and game design competitions

Opportunities to study abroad via the Erasmus+, International Exchange and Study Abroad programmes are also available.

Additional Costs Table

There are no additional costs associated with this course.

Module Code & Title	Type of Cost	Cost

Graduate Attributes

	Bath Spa Graduates…	In BA (Hons) Games Development we enable this…
1	Will be employable: equipped with the skills necessary to flourish in the global workplace, able to work in and lead teams	Exposing the tools and skills you need to become an adept games developer, effective communicator and confident collaborator
2	Will be able to understand and manage complexity, diversity and change	Encouraging you to explore, creatively and practically, a wide range of idea generation, prototyping and production tools across diverse contexts in the field of games development
3	Will be creative: able to innovate and to solve problems by working across disciplines as professional or artistic practitioners	Embedding into the programme modules that consider the use of play, gamefulness, gameplay and game technologies in, and between, contexts outside of the field of games development
4	Will be digitally literate: able to work at the interface of creativity and technology	Providing significant and varied production-led exposure to a range of industry standard (and emerging) game development tools and technologies
5	Will be internationally networked: either by studying abroad for part of the their programme, or studying alongside students from overseas	Supporting you in applying for the Erasmus+, International Exchange and other Study Abroad opportunities offered by Bath Spa University
6	Will be creative thinkers, doers and makers	Assessing your creative development through project work, and offering structured opportunities for collaboration with the games industry and creative sector more widely
7	Will be critical thinkers: able to express their ideas in written and oral form, and possessing information literacy	Sharing techniques and best practices that help you develop accurate and probing reflective essays, creative portfolios, pitches and research papers
8	Will be ethically aware: prepared for citizenship in a local, national and global context	Ensuring modules interrogate games through the lens of ethics, diversity and inclusion, while sensitising students to the effects of game subject matter, tone and player experience

Modifications

Module-level modifications

Code	Title	Nature of modification	Date(s) of approval and approving bodies	Date modification comes into effect
GDT5004-20	Commercial Games	Change from Core to Optional	Approved at SQMC March 2022	2022/23
GDT5107-20	3D Game Art II	New Optional Module	Approved at SQMC March 2022	2022/23
GDT5002-20	3D Game Art	Change from Core to Optional	Approved at November SQMC 2023	2023/24

Programme-level modifications

Nature of modification	Date(s) of approval and approving bodies	Date modification comes into effect
GDT5000-20 2D Game Design replaced with GDT5008-20 Indie Game Design	Curriculum Committee December 2022	2023/24
CPU5004-20 CodeLab II - new optional module added	Curriculum Committee December 2022	2023/24
GDT5004-20 Commercial Games deleted	Curriculum Committee December 2022	2023/24
GDT5009-20 Immersive Audio - new optional module added	Curriculum Committee December 2022	2023/24
GDT6004-20 (Re)viewing Games - new optional module added	Curriculum Committee December 2022	2023/24

Appendix 1: Programme Structure Diagram – Games Development

Single Honours	
Level 4	
Semester 1	**Semester 2**
Core Modules	
GDT4000-20 Rules of Play	GDT4002-20 Sound for Games
CCO4000-20 CodeLab I	GDT4003-20 Critical Play
GDT4001-20 2D Game Art	GDT4004-20 Game Jam
Rule Notes: N/A	
Level 5	
Core Modules	
GDT5008-20 Indie Game Design	GDT5003-20 Extended Realities
GDT5001-20 Narrative Design and Gameplay	
Optional Modules	
GDT5002-20 3D Game Art	GDT5005-20 Tangible Games
CPU5004-20 CodeLab II	GDT5006-20 Playful Media
	GDT5107-20 3D Game Art ll
	GDT5009-20 Immersive Audio
Rule Notes: N/A	
Optional Professional Placement Year 120 credits	
Level 6	
Core Modules	
GDT6000-20 Industry Ready	GDT6003-60 Games Studio
GDT6001-20 Games Studio Pre-Production	
Optional Modules	

Single Honours	
GDT6002-20 Serious Games GDT6004-20 (Re)viewing Games	
Rule Notes: N/A	

Appendix 2: Map of Intended Learning Outcomes

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Status (C,R,R*,O)[4]	Intended Learning Outcomes														
				Subject-specific Skills and Knowledge							Cognitive and Intellectual Skills				Skills for Life and Work			
				A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	B1	B2	B3	B4	C1	C2	C3	C4
4	GDT4000-20	Rules of Play	C	x	x	x		x	x			x	x			x	x	
4	CCO4000-20	CodeLab I	C				x	x			x		x	x	x		x	x
4	GDT4001-20	2D Game Art	C		x		x	x				x		x	x		x	x
4	GDT4002-20	Sound for Games	C		x		x	x			x	x		x	x		x	x
4	GDT4003-20	Critical Play	C			x			x	x	x						x	
4	GDT4004-20	Game Jam	C	x		x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	
5	GDT5008-20	Indie Design	C	x	x	x	x	x		x		x		x	x		x	x
5	GDT5001-20	Narrative Design and Gameplay	C		x		x	x			x	x					x	x
5	GDT5002-20	3D Game Art	O		x		x	x			x		x	x	x		x	x
5	CPU5004-20	CodeLab II	O				x	x			x		x	x	x		x	x
5	GDT5003-20	Extended Realities	C	x			x		x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x
5	GDT5005-20	Tangible Games	O	x		x	x				x	x	x		x		x	x
5	GDT5006-20	Playful Media	O	x		x	x		x		x			x	x	x	x	x
5	GDT5107-20	3D Game Art ll	O		x		x	x			x		x	x	x		x	x
5	GDT5009-20	Immersive Audio	O		x		x	x			x	x		x	x		x	x

Level	Code	Title	Type	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
5	PPY5100-120	Professional Placement Year	O													x	x	x	x
6	GDT6000-20	Industry Ready	C			x	x			x	x		x		x	x		x	x
6	GDT6001-20	Games Studio Pre-Production	C				x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x
6	GDT6002-20	Serious Games	O			x	x	x			x	x	x	x					x
6	GDT6004-20	(Re)viewing Games	O			x				x	x	x						x	
6	GDT6003-60	Games Studio	C	x	x		x	x	x	x			x		x	x			

[4] C = Core; R = Required; R* = Required*; O = Optional

Appendix 3: Map of Summative Assessment Tasks by Module

C = Core; R = Required; R* = Required*; O = Optional

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Status (C,R, R*,O)[5]	Assessment method													
				Coursework						Practical					Written Examination		
				Composition	Dissertation	Essay	Journal	Portfolio	Report	Performance	Practical Project	Practical skills	Presentation	Set exercises	Written Examination	In-class test (seen)	In-class test (unseen)
4	GDT4000-20	Rules of Play	C						1x		1x						
4	CCO4000-20	CodeLab I	C						1x		1x						
4	GDT4001-20	2D Game Art	C								1x						
4	GDT4002-20	Sound for Games	C			1x		1x									
4	GDT4003-20	Critical Play	C			1x					1x						
4	GDT4004-20	Game Jam	C				1x	1x									
5	GDT5008-20	Indie Game Design	C						1x		1x		1x				
5	GDT5001-20	Narrative Design and Gameplay	C			1x					1x						
5	GDT5002-20	3D Game Art	C				1x				1x	1x					
5	CPU5004-20	CodeLab II	O						1x		1x	1x					
5	GDT5003-20	Extended Realities	C			1x			1x		1x						

Level	Code	Title	Type													
5	GDT5005-20	Tangible Games	O						1x		1x					
5	GDT5006-20	Playful Media	O				1x				1x	1x				
5	GDT5107-20	3D Game Art II	O				1x				1x	1x				
5	GDT5009-20	Immersive Audio	O						1x		1x	1x				
5	PPY5100-120	Professional Placement Year	O					1x	1x							
6	GDT6000-20	Industry Ready	C			1x							1x			
6	GDT6001-20	Games Studio Pre-Production	C					1x					1x			
6	GDT6002-20	Serious Games	O			1x			1x		1x					
6	GDT6004-20	(Re)viewing Games	O			1x		1x								
6	GDT6003-60	Games Studio	C								1x					

[5] C = Core; R = Required; R* = Required*; O = Optional