

## Higher National Unit Specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Interactive Fiction

**Unit code:** DE2X 35

**Unit purpose:** This Unit is designed to provide candidates with the knowledge and skills to enable them to create an interactive sequence for a computer-based fiction product.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

1. Describe the core concepts of computer-based interactivity.
2. Critically evaluate the interactive elements of a range of computer-based fiction sequences.
3. Develop an interactive computer-based fiction sequence to a given brief.

**Credit value:** 2 HN Credit(s) at SCQF level 8: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8\*)

*\*SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

**Recommended prior knowledge and skills:** Access to this unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, it is recommended that candidates should have some prior knowledge and skills in human-computer interface design. This may be evidenced by the possession of relevant National Units, HN units or experience. It is recommended that candidates have completed HN Unit, DE34 34 User Interface Development. It would also be beneficial if candidates had completed HN Unit, DE30 35 Narrative and Genre in Computer Games.

**Core skills:** There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards core skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components.

**Context for delivery:** If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

## **Higher National Unit Specification (cont)**

### **General information for centres**

**Assessment:** This unit should be assessed by means of:

1. Written or oral responses showing that candidates can describe the core concepts of computer-based interactivity.
2. Written or oral responses showing that candidates can critically evaluate a range of interactive elements of 3 different computer-based fiction sequences
3. A completed fiction sequence, including supporting documentation explaining why the interactive elements used were chosen.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards**

### **Unit title:** Interactive Fiction

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

### **Outcome 1**

Describe the core concepts of computer-based interactivity

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- Core concepts of computer-based interactivity

#### **Evidence requirements**

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by producing a report or oral presentation of not less than 600 words (or oral equivalent) describing the core concepts of computer-based interactivity.

The report must correctly describe the core concepts of computer-based interactivity:

- Perspective (2d, isometric, first person, bird's eye etc),
- Interface (goal, control, movement, object manipulation, help, dialog, inventory, hidden/invisible elements, control devices, feedback etc),
- Story rhythm (key tasks, branching paths etc),
- puzzle/game descriptions,
- Game difficulty/diversity distribution.
- How at least one core concept has made a significant contribution to the development of computer-based interactive fiction

#### **Assessment guidelines**

The report or presentation should include a general description of each of the core concepts listed above and a specific detailed description of at least one core concept that has made a significant contribution to the development of computer-based interactive fiction.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Interactive Fiction

### **Outcome 2**

Critically evaluate the interactive elements of a range of computer-based fiction sequences

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- Core interactive elements of computer-based fiction
- Critical evaluation of interactive elements

#### **Evidence requirements**

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by completing a series of proformas or oral presentations for computer-based fiction sequences, critically evaluating all five core elements.

Candidate must identify and critically evaluate the use of at least two of the following core elements for each sequence:

- perspective (2d, isometric, first person, bird's eye etc),
- interface (goal, control, movement, object manipulation, help, dialog, inventory, hidden/invisible elements, control devices, feedback etc),
- story rhythm (key tasks, branching paths etc),
- puzzle/game types,
- game difficulty/diversity distribution

#### **Assessment guidelines**

There should be a variety of genre and techniques for the chosen sequences, e.g. a 3d real-time strategy game, a children's multimedia storybook and a text-based adventure.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Interactive Fiction

### **Outcome 3**

Develop an interactive computer-based fiction sequence to a given brief

#### **Knowledge and/or skills**

- Interpret a brief
- Create a development portfolio
- Identify interaction requirements
- Specify interaction elements
- Integrate core interaction elements into a working interactive computer-based fiction sequence
- Use software tools to create a sequence
- Write a production log
- Evaluate the sequence

#### **Evidence requirements**

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by creating a development portfolio containing:

- A proforma containing the interaction requirements for the interactive fiction sequence from the given brief
- A proforma specifying the interaction elements required for the sequence.
- A working sequence of at least 2 minutes (or equivalent) saved to CD-ROM or equivalent storage device. The sequence should integrate at least three of the following core elements:
  - perspective (2d, isometric, first person, bird's eye etc),
  - interface (goal, control, movement, object manipulation, help, dialog, inventory, hidden/invisible elements, control devices, feedback etc),
  - story rhythm (key tasks, branching paths etc),
  - puzzle/game type,
  - game difficulty/diversity distribution
- A production log detailing the production process (tasks, roles, progress)
- Supporting diagrams/charts/drawings and/or notes
- An evaluation of the completed sequence

#### **Assessment guidelines**

The brief may be one successfully created by the completion of HN Unit, Narrative and Genre in Computer Games.

Examples of suitable forms would be a text adventure sequence, a task in a real-time strategy game, a small "level" in a 3d first-person shooter, a story sequence in a role-playing game, or a short sequence from a multimedia storybook.

## **Administrative Information**

**Unit code:** DE2X 35

**Unit title:** Interactive Fiction

**Superclass category:** CE

**Date of publication:** November 2003

**Source:** SQA

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## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes**

### **Unit title:** Interactive Fiction

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

### **Guidance on the content and context for this Unit**

This Unit is primarily concerned with equipping candidates with an understanding of the core principles of interactivity in computer-based fiction. The emphasis is on analysing existing interaction elements and creating an interactive sequence. Candidates should examine a variety of interactive techniques. There should be a variety of genre and elements for the chosen systems, e.g. 3d real-time strategy games, a children's multimedia storybook and a text-based adventure.

Candidates should be able to complete the Unit using generally available software tools. There is no requirement to produce or evaluate fully completed games; only game/interactive fiction sequences are required, so demos may be used.

Centres should feel free to adapt the delivery of the unit to fit the specific requirements of their course structures.

### **Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit**

This Unit is designed to introduce candidates to ways of analysing and creating interactive fiction sequences and, as such, candidates should have access to a wide range of computer systems and software development tools.

Candidates are additionally required to provide written or oral evidence that they have critically evaluated the range of core interactive concepts in a range of interactive fiction sequences. There should be a variety of genre and techniques used in the chosen sequences, e.g. 3d real-time strategy games, a children's multimedia storybook and a text-based adventure. The completed evidence should be in the form of proformas or oral presentations.

Candidates are additionally required to provide evidence of the creation of an interactive fiction sequence to a specified brief. The completed evidence should be a 2 minute (or equivalent) sequence clearly indicating the operation of the chosen interactive elements while adhering to the core concepts of interactivity in computer-based interactive fiction. Additionally, candidates should include supporting information in the form of proformas or a report identifying the user interaction requirements for the sequence and justification of the candidate's choice of interaction elements in the completed sequence.

## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes**

**Unit title:** Interactive Fiction

### **Open learning**

This unit does not necessitate the student working within a group activity. Assessment is based on the accuracy of responses, and the appropriateness and coherence of the completed sequence. As such this unit can lend itself to delivery by open learning if delivered by means of a pre-defined design brief.

If this unit is delivered by open or distance learning methods, additional planning and resources may be required for candidate support, assessment and quality assurance. A combination of new and traditional authentication tools may have to be devised for assessment and re-assessment purposes. For further information and advice, please see *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, February 2001 - publication code A1030)

### **Special needs**

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering special alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).



## **General information for candidates**

### **Unit title:** Interactive Fiction

This Unit is designed to enable you to gain an understanding of the key ideas in the design of interactivity in computer-based fiction and to create an interactive sequence based on those ideas.

You should learn about and be responsible for:

- Creating a working interactive fiction sequence
- Creating a portfolio of supporting material
- Evaluating your completed sequence

You will be assessed on:

- Your understanding of the core principles of interactivity in computer-based fiction
- Your critical evaluation of at least 3 interactive fiction sequences
- The standard of the sequence you create
- How well you justify your design decisions

On completion of the unit you should be able to:

1. Describe the core concepts of computer-based interactivity
2. Critically evaluate the interactive elements of computer-based fiction sequences
3. Develop an interactive computer-based fiction sequence to a brief