



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Games Design: Pitch a Treatment (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: HH3G 34

Superclass: CB

Publication date: November 2016

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 02

Unit purpose

This unit is designed to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to enable them to create a treatment for a potential game concept and develop a game design document. These activities will lead to a professional pitch to a potential client with justification of the game's market potential to allow future development of the game design.

This unit is suitable for learners who are interested in computer games development and may in their future careers have to pitch their ideas for a game concept. This is also a useful unit to provide a foundation for activities they may have to do in other units where they have to practise communication skills.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Propose a game design treatment.
- 2 Produce a game design document (GDD) for the treatment.
- 3 Pitch the treatment in a professional manner.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7).

Higher National unit specification: General information (cont)

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Recommended entry to the Unit

Access to this unit will be at the discretion of the centre. However, it would be beneficial for learners to understand how projects work. This may be demonstrated by possession of the Higher National Units *Project Management* and *Working within a Project Team* or any other equivalent qualifications or experience.

Additionally, experience in art or digital imaging would also be beneficial. This may be demonstrated by previous use of graphic software applications.

Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following Core Skills component:

Complete Core Skill	None
Core Skill component	Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6 Planning and Organising at SCQF level 6

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

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.

Equality and inclusion

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

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. Learners 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

Propose a game design treatment.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Game overview including title, target audience, category or genre, storyline (if appropriate), game mechanics, game mode
- ◆ Specification of Delivery Platform
- ◆ Market justification through research
- ◆ Unique selling points (USPs)
- ◆ Mood board

Outcome 2

Produce a game design document (GDD) for the treatment.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Look and feel: game appearance, mood, colour palettes, genre, style
- ◆ Game play: ultimate aim, objectives, player experience
- ◆ Menu system design: player navigation; controls — gamepad/keyboard; in-game information — Graphical User Interface (GUI)
- ◆ Character movement and response: interaction with environment, character health
- ◆ Level design: level structure, narrative, maps
- ◆ Art work

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 3

Pitch the treatment in a professional manner.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Concept development
- ◆ Justification of game potential in the market
- ◆ Visual evidence to highlight game concept and genre
- ◆ Game design
- ◆ Communication in a confident and professional manner

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills across all Outcomes.

The evidence for this Unit may be written or oral or a combination of these. Evidence may be captured, stored and presented in a range of media (including audio and video) and formats (analogue and digital). Particular consideration should be given to digital formats and the use of multimedia.

The Evidence Requirements for this unit are practical and project based. The Outcomes are sequential in nature but a holistic approach should be taken where the candidate will be issued with a project brief.

Candidates must demonstrate that they will be able to:

- 1 Carry out research activities, identify a potential games concept and propose a games design treatment for the potential concept. The proposal must cover:
 - ◆ A game overview with:
 - a working title
 - target audience
 - genre
 - a game narrative outline
 - game mechanics
 - mode of delivery
 - ◆ Specification of the Delivery Platform
 - ◆ Market justification through research
 - ◆ Unique selling points (USPs)
 - ◆ Mood board

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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- 2 Produce a game design document for the proposed treatment, including:
 - ◆ Look and feel:
 - the game's visual appearance
 - mood
 - colour palettes
 - genre
 - style
 - ◆ Game play: ultimate aim, objectives, player experience
 - ◆ Menu system design: player navigation; controls — gamepad/keyboard; in-game information – Graphical User Interface (GUI)
 - ◆ Character movement and response: interaction with environment, character health
 - ◆ Level design: level structure
 - ◆ Game Narrative
 - ◆ Maps
 - ◆ Art work
- 3 Present a confident and professional pitch based on the game design document produced in Outcome 2 to a potential client. The pitch must:
 - ◆ outline the development of the concept.
 - ◆ provide a Justification of game potential in the market.
 - ◆ provide visual evidence to highlight the game concept and genre.
 - ◆ include games design features they wish to highlight.
 - ◆ be presented in a confident and professional manner.

Evidence of practical competence may be produced over an extended period of time under open-book conditions; but where it is generated without supervision some means of authentication must be carried out.

The Guidelines on Approaches to Assessment (see the Support Notes section of this specification) provides specific examples of instruments of assessment.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

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Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This unit is intended to provide key knowledge and skills relating to creating a game concept and developing this into a tangible GDD that allows learners to develop their initial ideas. The majority of this unit will be self-driven with input from the peer group and the lecturer. The unit is designed to develop the learner's skills in the early part of the games design production.

It is designed as an early unit, which forms part of the HNC/HND Computer Games Development and should be run at an early point in a matrix or introduced into the course as soon as possible to help the learner focus on the required elements of the overall project. Ideally this unit will be run early in the year or in conjunction with other units from the HNC/HND awards. The HN Unit F8R5 *34 Games Development: Character Creation and Storytelling* might aid the development of this unit. It will be at the discretion of the centre how to map these units.

The content of this unit is about the stages involved in the design process and how to develop ideas into realistic project goals. In researching other game projects and working in a variety of other ways the learner will be able to develop their own ideas into a feasible project. Through a research based Outcome the learner will be able to develop this knowledge into a planned project and then into a presented format. Other sources and examples of developing a pitch should be referred to especially in the early part of the unit. This may be used to provide a context for the HN Unit *Game Design Theory*.

Outcome knowledge should form part of the overall development of the learner's project and should naturally converge into a presented document or oral presentation. It is an idea to use a variety of different software applications to carry out the skills required to produce Outcome evidence. This could be through use of online technologies that will form part of the Evidence Requirements.

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Outcome 1

This Outcome concerns itself primarily with the initial investigation into a game proposal and what that involves. This list of knowledge is not exhaustive but is concerned with the principal areas that should be considered when creating a proposal for the idea of the game. In order to develop an idea it is important that the learner considers all approaches to their game giving thought to the alternatives and clarification to what their game is about and the impact this would make to its future development.

It is thought that the learner will thoroughly research utilising a range of different media. This list could contain (not limited to) the following:

- ◆ Internet search facilities Games forums
- ◆ User communities Wikis
- ◆ Blogs Podcasts Online video
- ◆ Books and articles
- ◆ Any other knowledge base

The knowledge list should be listed and discussed in ways that show the learner has understood their meanings and they have shown a degree of autonomy in relation to collating this information.

The learner should build up a source of all work produced in this Outcome in a range of different ways highlighting the knowledge list. Through researching, the learner should begin to develop their own ideas to how they will use them in their own project development. The proposal should be created from knowledge developed in this Outcome.

Hardware and software application knowledge should be developed in accordance to what the centre has available to use and should allow the learner to understand how they will be implemented in their idea. At this stage the proposal will deal generally with the overall project and be specific enough to allow the learner to progress onto Outcome 2 and provide enough information to build on.

It is important that the learner understands the existing systems in a game and utilises the requirements for platform and chosen media in the analysis of current technology and games development.

Part of the decision making process regarding a game concept should focus on market potential for the chosen idea. This will involve reference to market statistics or charts which justify that there is a market for the proposed concept in terms of popularity of the proposed platform, target audience segment and genre. The USP's will be a key feature of market potential.

Other areas that should be discussed are copyright legislation and the impact upon development of a game. This should not restrict the creative process but should help to inform the learner of the factors to be aware of in the production of a game.

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Outcome 2

This Outcome is about how to produce a game design document (GDD) and develop on from Outcome 1 in its knowledge and skills. It is the transitional process between the concept and the design phase, incorporating what functional and technical specifications are to be utilised in the game production. It is prior to the production phase where the learner will apply the knowledge and skills learned in this section.

It is important to explain to learners that there is a degree of modification involved in the development of a GDD and indeed the project as a whole. Certain aspects will be useful to notify the learner of this in order to help them accept and deal with these situations as and when they arise.

If this unit is used as an introduction to other game design and development units within the course, it will be the catalyst enabling the learner to see the functional aspect of a team and how this team will co-ordinate itself in relation to the project itself. The learner will develop different ways to project manage and see the project holistically in relation to the different areas to be developed. It would be useful to provide information on Gantt Charts and creating realistic time frames within which the project will progress.

Emphasis should be placed on the importance of the initial development of a GDD and how this will influence the eventual success of the game in later stages. The learner should develop their earlier concepts from Outcome 1 into developed ideas relating to how the menu items will function and a variety of other interactive elements within the game environment. It would be helpful to discuss the use of diagrammatical elements such as navigation charts for menu options or level design.

Other areas incorporating the development of visuals and production of artwork should also be included within this part of the unit although online resources such as storyboard creation software applications could be introduced to make this process less challenging for some learners.

Outcome 3

This Outcome is a culmination of the previous two Outcomes Knowledge and Skills and the pitch should ideally take the form of a presentation that incorporates all of the previous information.

The presentation should show the development of the concept stage and how this has developed into the GDD. Ideally all work should be retained to be included (where appropriate) into the presentation. Diagrams and other information should be included to explain the rationale behind the choices made in the games specifications, eg a walkthrough detailing specifics of the gameplay.

Evidence should be visual to show the look and feel of the game idea and to help the client visualise what the proposals are. Visual research and other visual material should be included if it is appropriate to the game development such as scenes from films and any advertising material that gives a flavour of the game — screen design as a GUI would be created from this information.

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The learner should ultimately develop their ideas into a fluid description of how they will explain the choices they have made and how this has developed into a tangible form to be tackled in a practical way. The learner should be aware of all knowledge elements and provide a concise visual representation. The pitch should be taken seriously and delivered in a professional manner and with confidence.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

This unit is designed as a stand-alone unit, which forms part of the HNC/HND Computer Games Development. Delivery should be chronological from the game treatment in Outcome 1 to the development of the GDD in Outcome 2. All Knowledge and Skills should then be applied in the final presentation in Outcome 3. This unit is designed to introduce the learner to producing a game pitch. It is important that the learner has access to a range of computer games to analyse existing systems and research these in context with the unit. Additional to this the learners should have access to a wide range of software development tools to produce visuals and the final presentation. Learners are required to provide evidence for all knowledge and skills through research and evaluation of existing game proposals, game design documents and game pitches.

The structure of delivery may follow these lines:

Outcome 1 — Game Treatment

- ◆ Overview of the use of a game treatment
- ◆ Idea development
- ◆ Proposing a concept and constructing the treatment
- ◆ System specifications for delivery

Outcome 2 — Game Design Document (GDD)

- ◆ Possible contents of a GDD
- ◆ Game objectives
- ◆ Use of Narrative
- ◆ Use of characters
- ◆ Level Design and walkthrough

Outcome 3 — The Pitch

- ◆ Creating a presentation
- ◆ Visual elements
- ◆ Highlighting features
- ◆ Promoting the positives
- ◆ Pitching advice and techniques
- ◆ Verbal and non-verbal communication
- ◆ Accessing supporting documentation
- ◆ Answering questions

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to candidates.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where candidates experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

Evidence could be gathered as pro formas and a final presentation. It is recommended that Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 are integrated into one holistic assessment. Candidates should therefore be encouraged to produce a portfolio of work that covers all Outcomes. This will be a project through which the candidate should create their own game design concept. Candidates should be provided with a brief that covers all Outcomes.

Outcome 1 requires the candidate to decide on a game concept that will appeal to a given target audience and develop a game design treatment with reference to market research that justifies the viability of the proposal. This may involve researching the popularity of genres, platforms and target audience preferences. **Outcome 2** requires the candidate to produce a game design document from the game design treatment. **Outcome 3** requires the candidate to present their ideas to the client in an engaging format.

Assessment of Outcome 1 should be early in the unit whereby it reflects the candidate's response to the initial part of the brief. Integrated with the other Outcomes it should form the first part of the final presentation. The assessor can act as client with peer review as a constructive part of the formative assessment. It is a notional guidance that for Outcome 1, a series of written response questions might be appropriate to use for candidate research.

Assessment of Outcome 2 will be on the candidate's response to the brief using pro-forma documents. It is a notional guidance that for Outcome 2, a series of written response questions might be appropriate to use for candidate research. Integrated with the other Outcomes it should form the second part of the final presentation.

Assessment of Outcome 3 should be a digital presentation including all knowledge and skills using a checklist. The use of a software package should integrate all visual and theoretical information into a highly produced final piece of work. A method of recording the pitch should be implemented which could be by audio or video, implementing an observation checklist, or any other suitable means. Feedback should be tactful and supportive and an opportunity to re-assess the pitch should be given when required.

This unit is designed to be both theoretical and practical in nature, therefore, collating all relevant research and production information (mood board/design work) will form part of assessment evidence. Candidates should be encouraged to develop a variety of different approaches and visuals exploring the brief. It is recommended that candidates should be encouraged to produce their own individual response to the brief with sufficient scope to meet the requirements of the assessment. The assessor could act as client in the treatment and pitch scenario, as could peer groups aid this process through review, redesign and evaluation pro-forma documents. Centres should provide a range of software applications to allow candidates both design and research work. A variety of different programs should be

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used giving the ability to develop the *Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Core Skill*. It would make sense to give a variety of resource material for the candidate at the beginning of the unit. It would also be pertinent to give presentations on the use of current technology and systems in games development and how other processes are implemented in producing a game design document.

Candidates could produce evidence for all of the Outcomes in a presentation format. If the presentation is digital, links could be used to direct the assessor to online blogs, wikis or other relevant links showing researched or formative work completed by the candidate. The presentation should contain all the Evidence Requirements and other work to support the initial game design including any research-based work, concept artwork or visuals.

It is suggested that the final presentation should last between 5 and 10 minutes. The assessor could act as client in the treatment and pitch scenario. Centres could use checklists as an instrument of assessment.

Candidates should be re-assessed on an Outcome-by-Outcome basis. There should be opportunities provided to candidates to amend their evidence for each Outcome before progressing to the next Outcome. The final pitch should be repeated if the assessor requires.

Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Information and Communication Technology* at SCQF level 6 and *Communication* at SCQF level 6 in this unit.

Learners will be required, as they produce solutions to a given brief, to analyse and seek solutions to a range of theoretical and practical problems and issues as they identify and work towards specific objectives. Identifying and considering the variables, including all available resources, and analysing the relative significance of each before identifying and justifying an appropriate strategic approach. Learners will develop elements of planning, critical thinking and general problem solving skills to an advanced level. Analysing and evaluating the potential impact of proposed approaches will be a critical aspect of underpinning knowledge and understanding, and learners should be able to identify appropriate evaluative methods to measure achievement.

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The Core Skills that are signposted within this unit are:

- ◆ *Information and Communication Technology (ICT):*
 - The electronic collection, organisation, analysis, presentation and communication of information

- ◆ *Communication:*
 - Discussions, presentations and interacting
 - Written: Produce and respond to written communication

Learners will need to produce and present materials to a standard, which would be acceptable in industry and appropriate for professional practice. This should include the use of technology to support research and the final presentation. Learners should have opportunities to develop a level of oral communication, skills in questioning, giving information and responding to others in the most appropriate way. Learners could develop skills in digital working methods and be made aware of the importance of file saving and storage systems.

Although skills in written communication are not formally assessed, learners should be expected to express essential ideas, information accurately and coherently, to use a formal structure and format. Use of software to check language, spelling, punctuation and syntax for accuracy is good practice.

This Unit has the Critical Thinking and Planning and Organising components of Problem Solving embedded in it. This means that when learners achieve the Unit, their Core Skills profile will also be updated to show they have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6 and Planning and Organising at SCQF level 6.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Core Skills Components Critical Thinking and Planning and Organising at SCQF level 6 embedded.	31/02/17

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General information for learners

Unit title: Games Design: Pitch a Treatment (SCQF level 7)

This section will help you decide whether this is the Unit for you by explaining what the Unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the Unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This Unit is designed to enable you to plan and develop a game concept into a game design document. This Unit will culminate in a presentation where you will deliver your project idea.

You will learn how to analyse your game idea and how to assess each element of the idea. By looking at all the processes involved in the game design treatment stage you will get a better idea of whether your game can be developed.

Finally, you will learn how to apply your knowledge to produce a presentation for pitching your games idea to a prospective client.

The Unit will be assessed in the form of a project through which you will be able to create and present your own game design concept.

This Unit will provide you with opportunities to develop the *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* and *Communication* Core Skills.

This Unit has the Critical Thinking and Planning and Organising components of Problem Solving embedded in it. This means that when you achieve the Unit, your Core Skills profile will also be updated to show you have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6 and Planning and Organising at SCQF level 6.