



National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Gameplay (SCQF level 5)

Unit code: FN8P 11

Superclass: CB

Publication date: August 2011

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 02

Summary

This Unit is designed to introduce candidates to the underlying characteristics of games that control the way a game is played and to develop an understanding of the parameters that enable a game to function successfully. A key element of this Unit is that the candidate has to play games and observe games being played with a view to identifying and exploring the game characteristics. Although the possibilities are expansive the key purpose is to allow candidates to understand the basic framework within which games are designed.

This Unit is a mandatory Unit within the National Certificate in Computer Games Development, but can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

This Unit is suitable for candidates who wish to acquire a basic understanding of how games function.

Outcomes

- 1 Identify and describe game characteristics.
- 2 Produce a modification document for a game.
- 3 Test a game with modified game characteristics.

Recommended entry

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

National Unit specification: general information (cont)

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Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 5: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5*)

**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.*

Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill Problem Solving at SCQF level 5

Core Skill components None

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

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.

Outcome 1

Identify and describe game characteristics.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify game characteristics.
- (b) Describe the characteristics of a game from observation of gameplay.
- (c) Compile and present main findings.

Outcome 2

Produce a modification document for a game.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Compile a proposal document for modifying a game.
- (b) Effectively contribute to group discussions about proposed game modifications.
- (c) Clearly identify the key tasks, required resources and timeline for modification proposal.
- (d) Complete final modification document.

Outcome 3

Test a game with modified game characteristics.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Modify and test a game in line with modification document.
- (b) Evaluate testing activity.
- (c) Compile and present findings of the test.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Gameplay (SCQF level 5)

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria. Evidence should be gathered under open-book, supervised conditions.

Outcome 1

Written and/or oral evidence is required showing that candidates can identify and describe game characteristics.

The written and/or oral evidence must include:

- ◆ Identification of at least five characteristics from the list below:
 - aim, objective
 - rules, mechanics, boundaries, confinement, limits, restrictions
 - environment
 - tools, equipment, components
 - rewards, consequences
 - challenges, single/multiplayer, competition, collaboration, conflict, teamwork, dilemmas
 - chance, physical skill, mental skill
 - strategies
 - storyline, characters
- ◆ Description of characteristics of the chosen game must include short introduction about its origins and its gameplay
- ◆ Presentation of findings must include how information about game characteristics was gathered

Outcome 2

Written/oral evidence is required to show that the candidate has a complete modification proposal document. The completed document must be clearly structured and cover:

- ◆ what the candidate proposes to do
- ◆ how the candidate intends to do it
- ◆ what resources are required
- ◆ what key tasks are required
- ◆ when key tasks will be carried out

As part of documenting the organisation of the Outcome 2 activities, the candidate will also compile written and/or oral evidence covering:

- ◆ communication of meetings to be organised
- ◆ minutes/main points of meetings
- ◆ final modification document
- ◆ plan of action/key tasks/resources
- ◆ log of activity
- ◆ Gantt chart

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Gameplay (SCQF level 5)

Outcome 3

Performance evidence must include:

- ◆ modification of game in line with modification document

Written and/or oral evidence will include:

- ◆ short introduction to game including its origin and its gameplay
- ◆ what tasks were to be carried out
- ◆ how tasks were to be carried out
- ◆ evaluation of activities
- ◆ findings of testing activity

National Unit specification: support notes

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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 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

No limitations are placed on the choice of games that can be looked at in this Unit. It is suggested a range of game genres be taken into account. However, by looking at the characteristics of simple games, candidates will gain an appreciation of how games are designed and what basic, key characteristics make them work. It is not the intention of the Unit to venture into the realm of formal game theory.

Importance is placed on developing the candidate's ability to organise and implement a planned activity as well as problem solving and working with others covering a range of recognised Personal Development such as organisation, communication and time management.

Activities undertaken as part of this Unit are linked to the following Skillset National Occupational Standards (NOS):

- ◆ IM20 Design Electronic Games.

Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

Candidates should be encouraged to work in groups where games are played, observed and the activities recorded. Photographic, video evidence of games being played could then be used as the basis for discussion by group and contribute towards assessment evidence.

The candidates should be encouraged to experiment with existing gameplay and to identify the consequences of any modifications. Group exercises involving play and discussions could be beneficial for knowledge and skills development and engagement with the subject.

There is an opportunity for self-guided learning within the context of the Unit through exploration of games to identify characteristics. Game characteristics could also be introduced and identified within a range of games.

Candidates may find it helpful in understanding how they might approach this Unit if they are given realistic examples of acceptable and achievable modifications.

Candidates should be encouraged to develop a range of possible modifications before considering which to include in their proposal document.

Candidates could discuss and develop these potential modifications to a range of existing game characteristics in order to expand or limit potential gameplay. Potential modification should employ sufficient change to the original gameplay in order for candidates to successfully meet the assessment requirements.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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It is not a requirement that all characteristics are covered. It may be that simply changing one characteristic may be sufficient.

The proposals could be presented to assessor / peer group for feedback. The assessor/peer group should ensure the modifications are both non-trivial, of sufficient depth but not onerous in terms of scope and time. Peers could suggest recommendations for further changes.

Candidates are required to document the consequences and results of the newly implemented modifications. Candidates are expected to provide evidence of these findings. This could be done as a presentation in order to share the results of testing. Both benefits and limitations of the implemented game modifications are valid.

Outcome 3 should document what happens when characteristics of a game are modified. Although the aim is to constructively develop the game, candidates should be made aware that the assessment focus is on documenting and presenting the consequences of modifications. Candidates should not be penalised for game modifications that cause a game to fail.

Candidates should seek guidance regarding acceptable use of equipment in the course of producing the evidence and operate within the parameters of the centre's policies and health and safety procedures.

Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

Candidates should be individually assessed. The participation of other candidates is encouraged to create an environment or atmosphere where the nature of gameplay can thrive and be observed. Group activities may provide a suitable platform for discussion, analysis and ideas throughout the delivery of the Unit

Candidates will benefit from formative exercises in the initial stages of this Unit to establish an understanding of the role of game characteristics and the results of modifications.

Assessment subject matter should be different from any formative exercises.

The candidate should be encouraged to use any appropriate medium for delivery of evidence including written documentation, web based presentation, and/or suitable audio/visual presentation format, portfolio or e-portfolio.

The candidate should be encouraged to submit work electronically by using standard IT software packages. The candidate should be encouraged to be creative with the presentations as long as this does not impact on the timescale.

The written and/or oral evidence for Outcome 1 could take the form of an audio-visual presentation with a guide time of 5 minutes where information that has been gathered for Outcome 1 is presented. This will reflect industry practice where information is presented to client or peers and an idea pitched and then discussed through a question and answer session.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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For Outcome 1, the candidate's choice of game could be negotiated between candidate and assessor and could include the peer group. This will ensure the activities are robust enough to enable satisfaction of the required standard but are not onerous.

For Outcome 2, meetings should be organised and documented. Pro forma may be used to encourage clear and concise documenting of information such as:

- ◆ Gantt chart
- ◆ minutes of meetings
- ◆ modification document structure
- ◆ log book

The written and/or oral evidence for Outcome 3 could take the form of an audio-visual presentation with a guide time of 10 minutes where information that has been gathered for Outcome 3 is presented.

For Outcome 3 the candidate's choice of modifications to a game could be negotiated between candidate and assessor and could include the peer group. This will ensure the activities are robust enough to enable satisfaction of the required standard but are not onerous. It is not a pre-requisite that this be the same game as Outcome 1.

Opportunities for the use of 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 e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

In this Unit candidates will learn about the underlying characteristics of games that control the way a game is played and the parameters that enable a game to function successfully.

Candidates will:

- ◆ identify and describe the characteristics of a game from observation of gameplay
- ◆ compile and present main findings and a proposal document for modifying the game which identifies the key tasks, required resources and timelines
- ◆ modify and test a game in line with the modification document
- ◆ evaluate testing activity
- ◆ compile and present findings of the test

This Unit has the Core Skill of Problem Solving embedded in it, so when candidates achieve the Unit their Core Skills profile will be updated to show they have achieved Problem Solving at SCQF Level 5. In addition, candidates will develop aspects of the Core Skill of Communication.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Core Skill Problem Solving at SCQF level 5 embedded.	31/08/2011

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