National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Games Interface Design (SCQF level 5)

Unit code: FN90 11

Superclass:	CB
Publication date:	July 2011
Source:	Scottish Qualifications Authority
Version:	01

Summary

This Unit is designed to provide candidates with knowledge and skills to enable them to evaluate and design user interfaces for games. The Unit is practical in nature and candidates will gain knowledge and understanding of the techniques and concepts used in the creation of user interfaces for games. The Unit offers candidates the opportunity to develop basic skills in the planning, evaluation and design involved in creating a games interface.

This Unit is an optional Unit in the National Certificate in Computer Games Development, but is also available for candidates wishing to study the Unit on its own.

Outcomes

1   Describe the principles of games interface design.
2   Evaluate games interfaces and describe improvements.
3   Design a basic games interface to a given brief.

Recommended entry

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, it would be beneficial if candidates have attained the following, or equivalent:

F3GC 11 Information and Communication Technology (Intermediate 2)

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.

National Unit specification: general information (cont)

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Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

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

Describe the principles of games interface design.

Performance Criteria

(a) Describe the principles of colour theory in games interfaces.
(b) Describe the principles of layout in games interfaces.
(c) Describe the principles of graphic design elements in games interfaces.
(d) Describe the main design considerations relating to game interface design.

Outcome 2

Evaluate games interfaces and describe improvements.

Performance Criteria

(a) Evaluate games interfaces.
(b) Describe feasible improvements that could be made to the user interfaces.

Outcome 3

Design a basic games interface to a given brief.

Performance Criteria

(a) Create a plan for a games interface to a given brief.
(b) Create storyboards for a games interface to a given brief.
(c) Evaluate how well the games interface meets the requirements of the given brief.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Written and/or oral recorded, performance and product evidence is required which demonstrates that the candidate has achieved the requirements of all the Outcomes and Performance Criteria to show that the candidate has appropriate knowledge and understanding of the content of this Unit.

Evidence is required which demonstrates that candidates have achieved all Outcomes to the standards specified in the Outcome and Performance Criteria. The evidence for these Outcomes must be obtained under open-book, supervised conditions.

Outcome 1

Candidates are required to research and produce evidence on the design considerations when creating a games user interface. The evidence should include description of the importance of colour, layout, graphic design and design elements plus one example of effective and one example of ineffective use of the identified design considerations.

Outcome 2

Candidates are required to provide evidence that they have evaluated two existing games user interfaces in terms of colour, layout, graphic design elements and design elements. The candidate should identify a minimum of four improvements which could be made to the user interface and should cover different user interface characteristics.

Outcome 3

Candidates are required to demonstrate effective use of games user interface design to create a plan and storyboards from a given brief which should include:

♦ planning stages
♦ storyboarding
♦ importance of identifying target audience, their expectations, requirements and potential constraints
♦ importance of the design elements and how they relate to each other
♦ design detail and appropriate use of colour, layout, graphics and text
♦ evaluation to justify design of games interface which must include justification of colour, layout, graphic design and design elements

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

This Unit is designed to develop candidate's knowledge and skills in the design of visual user interfaces for games.

This Unit is aligned to the following Skillset National Occupational Standards (NOS):

♦ IM5 Design User Interfaces for Interactive Media Products

The aim of Outcome 1 is to familiarise the candidate with the various design considerations and the principles of colour, layout and graphic design elements in terms of games interface design. Candidates should also be familiar with the design considerations such as the principles of font, accessibility and usability and the impact that these will have on games interface. The following points should be covered

♦ accessibility
 — visual
 — auditory
 — physical
 — speech
 — cognitive
 — neurological disabilities

♦ user centred design
 — ease of use
 — learn-ability

♦ environment
 — device
 — platform
 — software
 — hardware
 — interactivity

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Games Interface Design (SCQF level 5)

The aim of Outcome 2 is to enable the candidate to study and evaluate existing games interfaces and gain knowledge on design techniques that are effective and which ones are ineffective and to recognise these in terms of colour, graphics elements and layout.

The candidate should be able to identify the following information:

♦   *colour* topics:
   — colour wheel
   — colour schemes
   — colour psychology
   — colour symbolism/association

♦   *layout* topics:
   — consistency
   — balance
   — emphasis
   — unity
   — white space

♦   *graphic design element* topics:
   — lines
   — shapes
   — texture
   — movement
   — buttons

♦   *design considerations* topics:
   — font:
      –   serif/sans serif
   — contrast of fonts
   — alignment
   — kerning
   — leading

♦   recommended games interfaces:
   — games console
   — hand held games console
   — mobile phones
   — PC

The aim of Outcome 3 is to allow the candidate to apply the knowledge they have gained to design their own games interfaces for a specific client brief. The Outcome will allow the candidate to be familiar with the various planning and design elements to be taken into consideration in the production of a games interface.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

A variety of games interfaces should explored in Outcome 2 to give candidates the opportunity to gain valuable experiences of multiple device user interfaces. Suggested games users interfaces are PCs, games consoles, hand-held games consoles and mobile phones.

The actual distribution of time between Outcomes is at the discretion of the centre. However, the following distribution and order is suggested:

Outcome 1   15 hours
Outcome 2   15 hours
Outcome 3   10 hours

The allocated timings allow for assessment and re-assessment where required.

Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

For each Outcome the centre may provide the candidate with a brief.

Evidence for Outcome 1 could be in the form of written and/or oral report covering the Performance Criteria. This could also be in the form of oral presentation to allow candidates to indentify the importance of colour, font, layout and graphic design elements in terms of games interface design.

Evidence for Outcome 2 could be in the form of written and/or oral recorded report covering the Performance Criteria. A pro-forma could be provided to assist candidates in their evaluation of different games interfaces against the criteria:

♦ colour
♦ font
♦ layout
♦ graphic design elements

Evidence for Outcome 3 could be in the form of performance evidence as it demonstrates candidates can successfully plan and design the games interface to the given brief including the target audience, their expectations, requirements and constraints. The evidence will include a plan for the given brief and the design storyboards.

An integrated assessment approach across several Units is encouraged particularly where there may be common themes such as design, graphics, games design and implementation.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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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 are required to carry out an evaluation of different games interfaces and are asked to plan and design a games interface which may provide an opportunity to gather evidence towards aspects of IT Core Skill and Problem Solving Core Skill.

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