

Programme Specification

BA (Hons) Games Design and Art (2019-20)

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

Awarding Institution	University of Southampton
Teaching Institution	University of Southampton
Mode of Study	Full-time
Duration in years	3
Accreditation details	None
Final award	Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA (Hons))
Name of award	BA (Hons) Games Design and Art
Interim Exit awards	Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)
FHEQ level of final award	Level 6
UCAS code	IL6f
Programme code	8239
QAA Subject Benchmark or other external reference	
Programme Lead	Adam Procter (ap2x07)

Programme Overview

Brief outline of the programme

The research-led Games Design & Art programme provides design thinking and critical making skills to enable you to pursue the production of games that question, test and push the boundaries of what games are and what games could be.

Games created on the programme will test the emerging areas of games as art, games for purpose and games as cultural artefacts. Through creative investigation and studio based working you will be encouraged to become cultural producers through games. The programme utilises making through thinking, experimentation, prototyping and testing with an emphasis on the application of creative skills at all stages.

You will be asked to be “designer-practitioner-researcher”, moving fluidly in and out of the modes of creative thinker and creative maker to produce innovative game products that challenge and seek to advance the games industry. You will be given the opportunity to develop as a T-Shaped game maker, building your own specialism within the programme whilst working alongside others. Working together with fellow students will align your process with industry practices. Throughout the programme you will be making numerous types of games, testing them and evaluating your ideas and thinking. At the culmination of your study you create a professional level

game artefact led by critical and creative investigation, showcased to the industry.

In Part One we introduce techniques and methods in design thinking, critical and creative investigation, deconstructing game methodology and the concept of play and games alongside standard asset creation, game engine use. Through a flexible and fluid approach in our projects you will get to try a wide variety of games design & art related roles. The year involves lots of making through prototyping, iterating and documenting: you will be working in teams and will be constantly user testing your ideas internally and in public events.

In Part Two we take those initial critical thinking and making practices, guide you to apply them to industry standard applications and consider games design documents, vertical slice production and approaches to debugging and code testing. You will take the processes introduced in Part One and apply them within tried and tested industry methods of game production and team work.

Within Part Three you will work to develop an innovative game artefact from a series of investigative research activities driven by your own passion for game making. This artefact will be marketed to the public and launched at our final year Arcades event.

Your contact hours will vary depending on your module/option choices. Full information about contact hours is provided in individual module profiles.

Learning and teaching

The programme employs a variety of teaching and learning methods designed to support you in developing your own learning skills and in becoming an increasingly independent learner. The vast majority of the modules revolve around Studio-based activities. A smaller set of modules ask you to respond to material in a written form in both reflective and more formal academic writing.

The studio activities include tutorials, workshops, technical inductions, group work and external studio, location and exhibition visits. This is coupled with theoretical lecture style delivery, seminars and group discussions.

Learning methods include process documentation, sketchbooks, researching, investigation, seminars, peer feedback, group tutorials and a broad range of formative and summative feedback activities such as critiques, presentations and portfolio submissions, including one to one summative feedback. Making, documenting and thinking through the process of game making form the basis for the majority of Learning and Teaching activities.

Throughout your study you will be making, producing and contributing to a variety of game outcomes including numerous prototypes, games documentation and fully realised game artefacts. Individually and in teams you will create portfolios of work that point towards your own specialism in games design & art. Each studio based module will help you produce a sophisticated body of work that you can directly apply to the creative industries. At the end of the programme you will have a portfolio of both excellent theoretical study along with practical examples of finalised games and game related materials, some of which may well have already been released to the public.

Access and use of various resources including but not limited to the library, web access, TV and film archives (for example BoB National) and video tutorials and training (for example on Lynda.com) along with the VLE (for example Blackboard / Panopto) materials repository and studio resource sharing (for example Slack) support and extend your learning around and outside the teaching that is directly delivered within the programme

Assessment

A variety of informal assessment methods for example, visual presentations, seminars, group critiques help provide you with on-going feedback on the progress of your understanding and development of your work. These formative assessment situations will also give you the opportunity to learn to constructively critique the work of others. Summative assessments which concentrate on specific evidence of your work, such as a portfolio, reflective documentation, a presentation or a short or extended essay at the end of each module and your attainment will be assessed against the modules' stated learning outcomes

Special Features of the programme

Research-led Games Design
Field trips
Studio visits in the UK and abroad.

Conference and exhibitions trips.

Pop up Arcades and Public showcases.

Ability to publish games via App Stores (e.g. iOS / Android) and other online outlets (e.g. Steam / itch.io).

Participation in exhibitions

Special Games Design & Art Alumni connections through events, projects, guest lectures or workshops

Field Trips & Studio Visits

The programme plans field trips and studio visits each year, some field trips are covered by the programme whilst others are optional, these trips are either in the UK, Europe or further afield to develop a wider appreciation of games design & art. Trips have included locations such as Berlin, New York and London. Studio visits have included UsTwo, Sennep and UFOMamoot along with attending events include Games London, Norwich Games Festival and Women in Games conferences and award shows. The trips and visits aim to expand your understanding of game design and can also include shows, studios and relevant cultural events or exhibitions.

Your first year Interrogate, Investigate, Instigate and Iterate and Prototype modules contain compulsory field trips and the associated costs for travel and admission are covered by the Programme.

Some modules may include optional visits to a museum, galleries, etc. You will normally be expected to cover the cost of travel and admission, unless otherwise specified in the module profile.

Please note: As a research-led University, we undertake a continuous review of our programmes to ensure quality enhancement and to manage our resources. As a result, this programme may be revised during a student's period of registration; however, any revision will be balanced against the requirement that the student should receive the educational service expected. Please read our [Disclaimer](#) to see why, when and how changes may be made to a student's programme.

Programmes and major changes to programmes are approved through the University's [programme validation process](#) which is described in the University's [Quality handbook](#).

Educational Aims of the Programme

The BA (Hons) Games, Art and Design at Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton, and offers a welcoming, supportive and student-focused environment in which to study games design and art. The core modules provide the opportunity to explore and advance knowledge relevant to specialist contexts and theories in games design and art. The optional core modules enable you to select and extend your learning directed towards your career orientation. All modules focus on allowing you to develop specialist knowledge and understanding applicable to future employment in the creative industries.

The aims of the programme are to:

- Enable you to develop and promote creativity through enquiring, analytical and imaginative methods
- Enable you to develop digital and technological literacies and specialist technical skills
- Develop and apply research skills, critical thinking and independent judgement
- Develop innovation through practical intelligence and experimentation
- Enable you to locate your work within theoretical and cultural context
- Provide you with advanced communication skills, in a range of formats
- Equip you with professional skills to facilitate employment and further study
- Promote collaboration, ethical and social engagement

Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

On successful completion of this programme you will have knowledge and understanding of:

- A1. Contemporary contexts and issues in the theory and practice of games design and art.
- A2. How to creatively integrate and employ a range of research approaches and technologies to realise your ideas;
- A3. Industry processes, roles, and methods of games development and design thinking;
- A4. A research-informed approach to games design and art practice;
- A5. Social, environmental and ethical dimensions of games design and art.
- A6. How to apply commercial and professional skills to a range of contexts.

Subject Specific Intellectual and Research Skills

On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

- B1. Research, generate ideas, concepts and proposals independently or collaboratively;
- B2. Apply methods of enquiry and reflection to critically evaluate your ideas;
- B3. Challenge the conceptual and technical boundaries of your discipline;
- B4. show independent judgments and self-critique in the selection of ideas, materials, tools, techniques and processes;
- B5. Inform your practice through reflection on relevant theories;
- B6. Question, review and evaluate personal strengths within industry roles and practices.

Transferable and Generic Skills

On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

- C1. Effectively communicate across visual, oral and/or written formats using an appropriate range of media;
- C2. Identify and draw upon a wide range of sources to inform and challenge your thinking;
- C3. Employ digital literacies to support your learning;
- C4. Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively;
- C5. Manage your time effectively as an independent learner;
- C6. Demonstrate innovation in the application of knowledge to practice;
- C7. Understand and utilise appropriate academic conventions.

Subject Specific Practical Skills

On successful completion of this programme you will be able to:

- D1. Undertake and evaluate user testing of games prototypes;
- D2. Design and develop games products and methodologies appropriate to the contemporary games industry;

D3. Employ practical intelligence and experimentation to exploit games technologies.

Programme Structure

The programme structure table is below:

Information about pre and co-requisites is included in individual module profiles.

Where optional modules have been specified, the following is an indicative list of available optional modules, which are subject to change each academic year. Please note in some instances modules have limited spaces available.

Part I

Typical Course Content

The Games Design and Art programme is a three-year full-time programme, which consists of core and optional core Modules. You are able to choose from a list of optional core modules to introduce broader themes of study. Throughout the programme a key focus will be thinking through making and applying what you are learning to produce new ideas, insight and artefacts in the games studios. Each module builds on previous modules and each Part builds on the previous Part. This progression is detailed in the module specifications and designed to provide a holistic, structured learning experience.

Programme Structure

Modules in this programme are either 22.5 ECTS (45 CATS), or 7.5 ECTS (15 CATS). The programme is worth 180 ECTS (360 CATS) with each level of study worth 60 ECTS (120 CATS).

Part One

In Part One, the module Interrogate, Investigate, instigate will equip you with the central research skills, design thinking skills and software skills (e.g., Unity, Illustrator) to produce a variety of prototypes coupled with an introduction to the types of project management skills and roles used within a Games Design & Art environment. Critical, Cultural & Contextual Studies will focus on introducing you to a range of material and written communication skills appropriate to Games Design & Art. Iterate & Prototype will take forward skills from projects within Interrogate, Investigate, Instigate, allowing you to gain additional insight into processes within games practice and encourage you to understand and consider the various games disciplines and roles within games studios of various sizes and complexity. The majority of work undertaken in Interrogate, Investigate, Instigate and Iterate & Prototype will be individually assessed team activities. In Game Changers you will develop your theoretical, conceptual, and study skills from both intellectual and practitioners' perspectives alongside providing you with an introduction to the nature and context of contemporary games design and art makers and thinkers. Part One will conclude with user testing events and public Arcade exhibitions

Part I Core (must take and pass) Semester 1

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
ARTD1115	Critical, Cultural and Contextual Studies	7.5	Core
ARTD1114	Interrogate, Investigate, Instigate	22.5	Core

Part I Core (must take and pass) Semester 2

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
ARTD1117	Game Changers	7.5	Core
ARTD1116	Iterate and Prototype	22.5	Core

Part II

Part Two

The modules Games Design and Games Development allow you to become increasingly familiar with games documentation, games research, asset building skills, and the practical knowledge required to develop a game within industry understood standard conventions, that of the Games Design Document and the Vertical Slice. The latter is an individually assessed team based game making module, in which you elect a role for yourself within a formal team structure mirrored on industry practice, to produce a fully-fledged game artefact. In The Business of Games module you will undertake a series of activities to understand how games are supported through various means such as self-funding, crowd funding, publishers and more, specifically aimed at the business of small indie style approaches to game making. You will also select an optional core module that complements the programme. Part Two culminates in an public Arcade mirroring in a Sony E3 style event to show case your Games Development module work.

As part of your studies in Part 2, Semester 1, you will be able to select one of six optional core modules, each designed to provide you with an opportunity to broaden your studies and engage with peers from other art and design subjects in an interdisciplinary environment.

The module choices will provide you with the creative freedom to explore areas outside of your main specialism.

Business Skills for the Creative Industries will introduce you to a range of creative techniques and design thinking skills to help you develop a business idea within the creative industries. As part of this module you will have the opportunity to gain knowledge of business start-up ideas and develop the skills required to produce and present an effective business plan.

Creative Writing will introduce you to a range of diverse non-academic writing styles, from journalism to more 'creative' forms such as prose fiction, memoir, poetry and scriptwriting, developing skills in handling writing voice and in understanding the process of effective communications both in the creative industries and the wider public arena.

Creative Futures focuses on the capacity of creative practices to influence new scenarios and creative futures. You will have the opportunity to understand creative practices as part of an ethical and participatory framework. The module will explore democratic forms of innovation through citizen participation, including collaborative and environmental practices, activism, social innovation and economic sustainability.

Image & Branding will promote your understanding of key concepts around brand signature and visual aspects of branding. The module provides you with an opportunity to analyse case studies to build your knowledge in relation to brand signature design and explore debates and trends impacting brand aesthetics.

Visual Culture will introduce some of the core theoretical issues that underpin the production of visual culture, questioning the role of images in the construction of identity and the ways in which we understand the world around us. The module engages you in various themes around visual production and sub-cultures, using the premise that- as future artists, designers or workers in the creative industries- you will be future producers of visual culture or even visual counter-cultures.

Sight & Sound will introduce you to the language of cinema. Using key texts and self-generated or found visual samples as a basis for learning, Sight and Sound will explore film genres for you to understand the usefulness of cinematic studies as a way of strengthening your academic and practice based portfolio.

The optional core module choice will allow you to take increasing responsibility for the direction of your studies in preparation for your final year

Part II Core (must take and pass) Semester 1

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
ARTD2113	Games Design	22.5	Core

Part II Core (must take and pass) Semester 2

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
ARTD2114	Games Development	22.5	Core
ARTD2115	The Business of Games	7.5	Core

Part II Optional/Core (must choose one and pass) Semester 1

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
ARTD2117	Business Skills for the Creative Industries	7.5	Optional/Core
ARTD2118	Creative Futures	7.5	Optional/Core
ARTD2125	Creative Writing	7.5	Optional/Core
ARTD2119	Image and Branding	7.5	Optional/Core
ARTD2126	Sight and Sound	7.5	Optional/Core
ARTD2120	Visual Culture	7.5	Optional/Core

Part III

Part Three

The modules in Part Three enable you to develop your games design & art ideas and skills to a higher theoretical and professional level through working competently as an independent learner and practitioner. Within the modules Project Proposal and Major Project GDA, there is the opportunity to work within teams, individually assessed, to build a final game artefact. The Professional Contexts module is designed to enable guest industry speakers to engage with the student ideas alongside providing context for your forthcoming graduation. The Playful Thinking module encourages you to undertake a body of critical writing and journalism in games design. The Project Proposal module and the Major Project allow you to develop games design and art work for exposure to a public audience, through a directed public marketing campaign and external industry-facing exhibition to launch your final product

Part III Core (must take and pass) Semester 1

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
ARTD3071	Professional Contexts	7.5	Core
ARTD3070	Project Proposal	22.5	Core

Part III Core (must take and pass) Semester 2

Code	Module Title	ECTS	Type
ARTD3073	Major Project (Games Design and Art)	22.5	Core
ARTD3072	Playful Thinking	7.5	Core

Progression Requirements

The programme follows the University's regulations for [*Progression, Determination and Classification of Results : Undergraduate and Integrated Masters Programmes*](#) and [*Progression, Determination and Classification of Results: Postgraduate Master's Programmes*](#) as set out in the University Calendar: <http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/sectIV-index.html>

Support for student learning

There are facilities and services to support your learning some of which are accessible to students across the University and some of which will be geared more particularly to students in your particular Faculty or discipline area.

The University provides:

- library resources, including e-books, on-line journals and databases, which are comprehensive and up-to-date; together with assistance from Library staff to enable you to make the best use of these resources
- high speed access to online electronic learning resources on the Internet from dedicated PC Workstations onsite and from your own devices; laptops, smartphones and tablet PCs via the Eduroam wireless network. There is a wide range of application software available from the Student Public Workstations.
- computer accounts which will connect you to a number of learning technologies for example, the Blackboard virtual learning environment (which facilitates online learning and access to specific learning resources)

- standard ICT tools such as Email, secure filestore and calendars.
- access to key information through the MySouthampton Student Mobile Portal which delivers timetables, Module information, Locations, Tutor details, Library account, bus timetables etc. while you are on the move.
- IT support through a comprehensive website, telephone and online ticketed support and a dedicated helpdesk in the Hartley Library.
- Enabling Services offering support services and resources via a triage model to access crisis management, mental health support and counselling. Support includes daily Drop In at Highfield campus at 13.00 – 15.00 (Monday, Wednesday and Friday out of term-time) or via on-line chat on weekdays from 14.00 – 16.00. Arrangements can also be made for meetings via Skype.
- assessment and support (including specialist IT support) facilities if you have a disability, long term health problem or Specific Learning Difficulty (e.g. dyslexia).
- the Student Services Centre (SSC) to assist you with a range of general enquiries including financial matters, accommodation, exams, graduation, student visas, ID cards
- Career and Employability services, advising on job search, applications, interviews, paid work, volunteering and internship opportunities and getting the most out of your extra-curricular activities alongside your degree programme when writing your CV
- Other support that includes health services (GPs), chaplaincy (for all faiths) and 'out of hours' support for students in Halls and in the local community, (18.00-08.00)
- A Centre for Language Study, providing assistance in the development of English language and study skills for non-native speakers.

The Students' Union provides

- an academic student representation system, consisting of Course Representatives, Academic Presidents, Faculty Officers and the Vice-President Education; SUSU provides training and support for all these representatives, whose role is to represent students' views to the University.
- opportunities for extracurricular activities and volunteering
- an Advice Centre offering free and confidential advice including support if you need to make an academic appeal
- Support for student peer-to-peer groups, such as Nightline.

Associated with your programme you will be able to access:

- Programme documentation
- Dedicated Games Studios including specialist computing (Mac and Windows) at the Winchester campus
- Computing and ICT facilities at WSA: including specialist games computer suites, specialist hardware and consoles (for example Nintendo Switch, Playstation, 3d Printing, VR and Mobile technology) alongside access to additional WSA computer suites and IT facilities available on the Highfield campus
- Specialised Technical Inductions
- Specialist Game Materials such as a Board Game collection, iPad, Wacom and digital lightboxes.
- Digital Campus Game related material through the Virtual Learning Environment including services such as Bob National and Lynda.com
- Virtual Desktop Environments and Virtual Private Networks to support remote working with University software and resources
- Institutional subscriptions to various services for Specialist subscriptions, eBooks and other games related resources
- Industry-linked projects and internships
- WSA Library - supporting studies through specialist collections, research method inductions and other supporting facilities to include:
 - Library and Study Skills Hub inductions
 - Books and Exhibition Catalogues
 - Journals & Magazines
 - Special Collections
 - Personal Academic Tutors

Methods for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning

You will have the opportunity to have your say on the quality of the programme in the following ways:

- Completing student evaluation questionnaires for each module of the programme
- Acting as a student representative on various committees, e.g. Staff: Student Liaison Committees, Faculty Programmes Committee OR providing comments to your student representative to feedback on your behalf.
- Taking part in programme validation meetings by joining a panel of students to meet with the Faculty Scrutiny Group

The ways in which the quality of your programme is checked, both inside and outside the University, are:

- Regular module and programme reports which are monitored by the Faculty
- Programme validation, normally every five years.
- External examiners, who produce an annual report
- A national Research Assessment Exercise (our research activity contributes directly to the quality of your learning experience)
- Review by the Quality Assurance Agency

Further details on the University's quality assurance processes are given in the [Quality Handbook](#).

Career Opportunities

The programme will give you an understanding of design thinking, and creative processes geared to the demands of 21st Century employment across many sectors.

The programme will provide you with the skills to enter the cutting-edge areas of Games Design. This might include: working in a leading role within games design; working as an individual in games making; or running an indie-style company distributing games via App Stores and services such as STEAM and Itch.io.

The idea of serious games - games that address issues of global importance - is new and opens up an innovative space that this programme will encourage you to engage with. Gamification within business practice is also an expanding field. This programme will enable you to apply game principles in new and innovate ways that support the ever-changing environment we live in.

External Examiner(s) for the programme

Name: Mr Justin Parsler - Brunel University of London

Students must not contact External Examiner(s) directly, and external examiners have been advised to refer any such communications back to the University. Students should raise any general queries about the assessment and examination process for the programme with their Course Representative, for consideration through Staff: Student Liaison Committee in the first instance, and Student representatives on Staff: Student Liaison Committees will have the opportunity to consider external examiners' reports as part of the University's quality assurance process.

External examiners do not have a direct role in determining results for individual students, and students wishing to discuss their own performance in assessment should contact their Personal Academic Tutor in the first instance.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information can be found in the programme handbook.

Appendix 1:

Students are responsible for meeting the cost of essential textbooks, and of producing such essays, assignments, laboratory reports and dissertations as are required to fulfil the academic requirements for each programme of study. In addition to this, students registered for this programme also have to pay for:

Additional Costs

Type	Details
Stationery	You will be expected to provide your own day-to-day stationary items, e.g. pens, pencils, notebooks, etc.).
Textbooks	Where a module specifies reading lists these should generally be available in the library. However due to demand, students may prefer to buy their own copies. These can be purchased from the Universities Book Shop or any other reputable book supplier source.
Placements (including Study Abroad Programmes)	Accommodation, Insurance, Travel costs etc. Costs associated with the Study Exchanges will vary depending upon your chosen destination and other variables, i.e. travel, accommodation and subsistence
Other	The Student's Union provide a free shuttle bus service which runs every hour between the Winchester Campus and the Highfield Campus. Students are responsible for all other daily travel expenses.
Optional Visits (e.g. museums, galleries)	Some modules may include optional visits to museums, galleries, etc. You will normally be expected to cover the cost of travel and admission, unless otherwise specified in the module profile. National An optional trip associated with a module would be typically to London by train (off peak) and cost around £25 return with a student rail card. International A typical trip on the programme would be to Europe which would cost in the region of £400
Art Equipment and Materials: Drawing paper; painting materials; sketchbooks	Some protective equipment as well as art/design material is supplied by the University. Each module specified a list of related materials. However students will work with various materials as suited to their individual projects. These materials will be sourced and purchased by the students themselves. A personal computer is recommended, and the programme team can suggest the hardware and software required at application to the programme. However, the games studios provide specialist computer and software for Games Design & Art and provide plenty of access. Campus opening times vary please see http://www.soton.ac.uk Virtual Desktop environments also allow remote access off campus to University software.
Printing and Photocopying Costs	Where possible, coursework such as essays; projects; dissertations is likely to be submitted on line. However, there are some items where it is not possible to submit on line and students will be asked to provide a printed copy. A list of the University printing costs can be found here: http://www.southampton.ac.uk/isolutions/students/printing/

In some cases you'll be able to choose modules (which may have different costs associated with that module) which will change the overall cost of a programme to you. Details of such costs will be listed in the Module Profile. Please also ensure you read the section on additional costs in the University's Fees, Charges and Expenses Regulations in the University Calendar available at www.calendar.soton.ac.uk.