

Programme Specification

Every taught course of study leading to a UAL award is required to have a Programme Specification. This summarises the course aims, learning outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment methods, and course structure. Programme Specifications are developed through course validation and are formally approved by UAL Validation Sub Committee (VSC). They are available to prospective students through the course web page, and must be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure currency of information (for example, following any modifications or local developments).

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| Awarding Body | University of the Arts London (UAL) |
| Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) | N/A |
| Teaching Institution | London College of Communication |
| Final Award | BA (Hons) Games Design |
| Length of Course | 3 Years FT |
| UCAS code | I600 |
| Date of production/revision | July 2017 |

The course aims to equip students with the knowledge and the technical skills to design and develop computer games.

The statement “We are here to make games” encapsulates the spirit of the course and we work independently of specific genres and platforms in order to create a variety of game experiences. Students develop a deep understanding of the fundamentals that drive game design and utilise knowledge of the core concepts of play i.e. challenges, choices, strategies and goals. This runs parallel to a thorough grounding in the programming and asset manipulation required for games design.

A game designer is fundamentally responsible for creating a challenging experience for players to engage with. The craft of the game designer is to make this challenge an enjoyable (fun) experience which entertains rather than simply frustrates. As challenges are subjective to the player, the game designer must consider the types of player he wishes to entertain and under which circumstances players will experience a game.

The course ensures students have an understanding of the concept of play i.e. the learning curves, problem solving and strategic thinking players undergo when engaged with a game. In understanding play conceptually students will study the range of motive forces which games can evoke and use these to build immersive interactive systems. By integrating theory and design students gain vital practical skills and knowledge to use in the production of artwork assets and code.

The course is aimed at students who wish to design and test games which experiment with interesting mechanics and play styles. They will have the ability to communicate original ideas and the ability to see them through development and testing.

Our students have a passion for creating games at all levels enabling them to explore and enjoy the process of games design.

Course Aims

The aims of the course identify the rationale underlying the student's educational experience and own personal achievement from studying on the course and its affect upon the student's long term achievement and career.

This course aims to:

- Critically analyse and discuss theoretical issues in order to understand Games Design within a broad cultural context and the specific context of Games Studies.
- Develop design skills to support a variety of game systems and experiment with original mechanics and player challenges.
- Gain the technical knowledge to develop and evaluate games for a variety of platforms and markets.
- Develop the communication skills to enable effective team working and present game concepts to a variety of audiences.
- Embed research skills necessary to cope with the fast pace of technological change in the games industry to ensure continual professional development.
- Develop the ability to describe games as cultural artefacts with credibility in order to undertake research through post graduate study.
- Ensure students are confident with the concept of play in games design theory and practice in order to critically understand the motive forces inherent in games design.

Course Outcomes

The course enables the student to demonstrate the following subject knowledge and understanding, intellectual and academic skills, practical subject skills, key attributes and transferable skills. Each outcome should be detailed below.

The outcomes that you will have demonstrated upon completion of the course, are:

Outcome: Critically analyse and evaluate cultural and historical influences on the development of games design as a discipline and understand its position within contemporary culture. **(Analysis); (Research)**

Outcome: Conduct visual and theoretical research in the relevant to the design and development of games. **(Analysis); (Research)**

Outcome: Apply skills in communication, problem solving, critical evaluation and teamwork by creating and testing game content with cross platform design software and prototyping techniques. **(Technical Competence); (Experimentation); (Communication and Presentation)**

Outcome: Identify career goals, develop a personal career plan and/or identify opportunities for progression to postgraduate study. **(Personal and Professional Development)**

Outcome: Critically analyse and evaluate opportunities for employment and freelance professional practice in the games design and development industries. **(Collaborative and/or Independent Professional Working)**

Apply key game design theory to original ideas and evaluate outcomes. **(Subject Knowledge); (Experimentation); (Communication and Presentation)**

Produce a portfolio of work that will demonstrate both your personal development and ability to produce a game and game components. **(Technical Competence)**

Learning and Teaching Methods:

Provide a summary of the relevant learning and teaching methods for the course (i.e. lectures, seminars, independent learning).

- Supervision
- Tutorials
- Peer review
- Lectures
- Seminar
- Tutorials
- Workshops supporting individual and group needs

- Guest lectures

Scheduled Learning and Teaching

State the notional learning hours and provide a percentage breakdown of timetabled teaching and learning activities per level.

This is the percentage of your time spent in timetabled learning and teaching. You are expected to study for 1800 hours over the duration of the course; below is the amount of time which is timetabled activity. The rest of your learning time will be self-directed, independent study.

Year 1 - 25%

Year 2 - 21%

Year 3 – 10%

Assessment Methods:

Provide a summary of the relevant assessment methods for the course.

- Report
- Presentation
- Self-assessment document
- Reflective diary

Reference Points

List any policies, descriptors, initiatives or benchmark statements used in the development of the course.

The following reference points were used in designing the course:

The following reference points were used in designing the course:

- The College Learning and Teaching Strategy
- The College Assessment Strategy
- The College approach to Personal and Professional Development
- The Learning and Teaching policies of the University of the Arts London
- University of the Arts London Level Descriptors
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
- QAA Art and Design Benchmark statement
- Course forums whereby students on similar courses had direct input into course design and structure
- Industry panel feedback

Details of college policies and initiatives can be accessed at www.arts.ac.uk/assessment including a link to the UAL assessment website which provides fact sheets on marking criteria and the 15-point marking scale. Course Regulations which provide the framework for assessment can be found at www.arts.ac.uk/assessment/course regulations and include a range of student guides.

Programme Summary

Programme structures, features, units, credit and award requirements:

List the course details that constitute the agreed student entitlement for this course. This should include unit titles and credit, types of learning, and details of tutorial support. If the course includes a work or study placement (including Dip Professional Studies), the duration and a summary of expectations around arrangements must be highlighted.

Year 1 examines the subjective nature of games and the motivations for player engagement, defines games as a subset of play and discusses the various psychological and physical challenges they present. It discusses the immersive qualities of games and how they are affected by the dynamic and emergent elements. Through practical work and the application of theory, you will conceptualise original ideas showing the game features before expanding these into workable game design documents. You will also build working interactive prototypes using programming and visual communication skills.

Introduction to Games Design (20 Credits)

Concept and Design 1 (40 Credits)

Prototype Development 1 (40 Credits)

Contextual and Theoretical Studies 1 (20 Credits)

Year 2 builds on the concepts and skills taught in Year 1 to explore the importance of narrative to aid immersion and enhance the player experience. You will examine the importance of genres and styles to specify potential audiences and distribution methods. It introduces you to the integrated development environment and the use of the “content pipeline” to import graphical images and 3D models for testing and evaluation.

All LCC undergraduate courses include a **Cross-college Collaborative Project** unit in Year 2. This unit is a major opportunity for students to work on a project with peers from other disciplines across the college.

Concept and Design 2 (40 Credits)

Collaborative Project (20 Credits)

Prototype Development 2 (40 Credits)

Contextual and Theoretical Studies 2 (20 Credits)

The final year gives students the opportunity to specialise in an area of games design of their choosing. It supports acquisition of specialist skills and knowledge

for the major projects. The end of year show and private view provide a platform to target potential employers and the structuring and presentation of portfolios. Depending on whether you choose Route A or Route B you will create either a piece of written work of 8-10,000 words or of 4-5,000 words plus a studio project unit. If you choose Route B you will also take a unit called Concept Prototyping.

Major Project practical (60 Credits)

Professional Practice (20 Credits)

Contextual and Theoretical Studies Route A (40 Credits)

Contextual and Theoretical Studies Route B (20 Credits)

Concept Prototyping Route B (20 Credits)

Distinctive features of the course:

Identify and list those characteristics that distinguish your course from other, similar courses. Refer to both the student experience on the course and future possible career opportunities.

- Focus on the challenge aspect of games, giving students the skills and knowledge to conceptualise, build and test their own playable games.
- The concept-to-playable prototype approach gives students industry applicable skills. The course equips students with the skills for employment with developers of all sizes working across various technologies and platforms. Alternatively graduates will be able to design, produce and distribute their own games or to establish their own studio.
- The programming and software base of the course insures that students are able to create games in a bespoke manner that allows them to avoid the generic tendency inherent in some platforms.
- Integration of logical and visual design elements mean students can test graphical content in gaming environments and develop original mechanics freeing them from the constraints of genre specific software tools thus improving employability.
- Transferable skills mean flexibility for the students when seeking employment within the games industry. Alumni hold positions designing not only the experience of play, but also 2D and 3D content. They also have roles in production, localization, community support, software development, programming and managing quality.
- A wide range of strong industry links, means vital real world input to develop relevant assignments and feedback, as well as guest speakers and SLs with specialist knowledge.
- Real world practices include pitching, prototyping, workable games design documents and testing.
- The college is well situated for games. London has a long standing and stable Industry for PC and Console development, growing mobile and social networking games companies, a thriving independent scene and a vast array of related creative industries.
- Cross disciplines units have provided useful skills for employment in other creative industries such as 3D modelling for film / TV or architectural and environmental rendering, animation, interactive design or web design and development,

Recruitment and Admissions

Selection Criteria

Your application will be considered by the admissions tutors and your suitability will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Demonstration of a clear interest in games design and an awareness of the business and technology of games
- An understanding of the need for a critical and analytical approach (through research and practice) to this area of study
- An ability and desire to think creatively and respond to briefs with originality
- Quality of ideas and thought processes in the approach to and production of your finished work

Entry Requirements

The standard minimum entry requirements for this course are:

64 new UCAS tariff points (160 old UCAS tariff points) from one of the following or a combination of the following full level 3 qualifications (see accepted qualifications link here):-

- A Level: subjects studied may include: English; History; Media; Business; Art and Design, or other subjects within Social Sciences). Ideally your A levels will be achieved at Grade C or above.
- One subject at A Level achieved at grade C or above PLUS Foundation Diploma in Art & Design (Level 3/4).
- BTEC Extended Diploma
- UAL Extended Diploma in Art and Design
- Access to HE Diploma
- International Baccalaureate Diploma
- Equivalent EU or Non-EU qualifications

Additionally you will have achieved passes at grade C or above in at least three GCSE subjects including English.

If English is not your first language you will also need an up to date English qualification. IELTS 6.0 (or equivalent) is required overall with a minimum of 5.5 in each of the four skills.

Deferring an offer:

Applicants holding an offer for the coming academic year are permitted to defer their place to the following academic year, e.g. 2018/19 place deferred to 2019/20.

International applicants should first meet any offer conditions and pay the deposit in order to defer. In all cases, deferred places will be held for one year.

Making a deferred application:

Home/EU applicants are permitted to make a deferred application, for example to the following academic year instead of the next, e.g. to 2019/20 instead of to 2018/19. Immigration regulations prevent International applicants from making a deferred application.

Course Diagram

| Course Diagram 17/18 BA (Hons) Games Design | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Autumn Term (Term 1 11 Weeks) | | | | | | | | | | | Spring Term (Term 2 10 weeks) | | | | | | | | | | Summer Term (Term 3 10 weeks) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Week 0 Week 1 Week 2 Week 3 Week 4 Week 5 Week 6 Week 7 Week 8 Week 9 Week 10 | | | | | | | | | | | Week 11 Week 12 Week 13 Week 14 Week 15 Week 16 Week 17 Week 18 Week 19 Week 20 | | | | | | | | | | Week 21 Week 22 Week 23 Week 24 Week 25 Week 26 Week 27 Week 28 Week 29 Week 30 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Year 1 | Freshers Week | Introduction to Games Design (20 credits) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Concept and Design 1 (40 credits) | | | | | | | | | | Concept and Design 1 cont'd | | | | | | | | | | Prototype Development 1 (40 credits) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Year 2 | Induction Week | Concept and Design 2 (40 credits) | | | | | | | | | | Concept and Design 2 cont'd | | | | | | | | | | Prototype Development 1 cont'd | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Prototype Development 2 (40 credits) | | | | | | | | | | Prototype Development 2 cont'd | | | | | | | | | | CTS 1 cont'd | | | | | | | | | | |
| Year 3 | Induction Week | Contextual and Theoretical Studies 2 (20 credits) | | | | | | | | | | Contextual and Theoretical Studies 1 cont'd | | | | | | | | | | CTS 2 cont'd | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Major Project: Practical (60 credits) | | | | | | | | | | Major Project: Practical cont'd | | | | | | | | | | Major Project cont'd | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Collaboration Project (20 credits) | | | | | | | | | | Professional Practice (Progression) (20 credits) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Route A: CTS 3 cont'd | | | | | | | | | | Route A: CTS 3 cont'd | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Route B: CTS 3 cont'd | | | | | | | | | | Route B: CTS 3 cont'd | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Concept Prototyping cont'd | | | | | | | | | | Concept Prototyping cont'd | | | | | | | | | | | |

S = Summative Assessment Point (Your Assignment Brief will give you details on the deadline date, time and how to hand in your assignment)

Formative assessment points will be indicated by your tutor in your unit handbooks or assignment brief