

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR COURSE

BA (HONS) GAMES DESIGN

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Our Games Design degree will prepare you for a life in the games industry. You'll gain an understanding of games design from the creative process to game engines, such as Unreal Engine. We examine the principles and theories of games design, systems, mechanics, narrative, and gameplay, while equipping you with the knowledge and understanding of professional workflows and software.

Considering students as 'professionals in training', this 3 year course will form the foundation of your workplace practice.

The first year provides foundational skill and knowledge in games theory and development. This includes an academic approach to games and the concept of play; also a broad study of 3D modelling, game and level design, narrative and gameplay loops.

The second year will consolidate and develop your skills with advanced 3D modelling and games design modules. You will have the opportunity to undertake some research in an area of games design of your choice and with our games specialism module, you will be able to experiment and develop an understanding of your specialism.

By the final year, you will be ready to embark on your self-directed final year project which will focus on your chosen career specialism. You will also devise and create a working game demo. Supported by tutors in a 'producer' role, you will put into practice your previous two years of learning, as well as continue to stretch your ability and understanding as your projects progress. You will also undertake a research-based module which will allow you to reflect on games industry trends to come up with a hypothesis on the future of games. Finally, rounding off the year, you will be taught the skills to prepare you to apply for jobs in the games industry.

Final projects are tailored to not only be the best possible degree submissions, but also the backbone of portfolios, so that, by the time of graduation, you are ready for the workplace or post-graduate study.



ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Standard Entry: Applicants are required to have at least a Level 4 or grade 'C' in GCSEs Maths and English Language or equivalent and 104 or above UCAS points (for example B, C, C or above at A2 Level, DMM or above at BTEC Extended Diploma Level, M or above at UAL Level 3 Extended Diploma Level) and a proven interest in the subject area. Qualifications such as Graded Examinations in Music Performance and Arts Award (Gold) can also count towards your UCAS points.

International Entry: Equivalent international qualifications will be considered towards meeting the entry requirements for standard entry. Additionally, international applicants will need to have an English Language qualification at International Level B2 or higher, such as an IELTS of 6.0 or better (with 5.5 in each skill: reading, writing, speaking and listening). Students with equivalent qualifications will also be accepted.

Equivalences include:

- Trinity College London: a pass in test ISEI and a pass in test ISEII
- Language Cert: Academic SELT (from 18 December 2023): 60 or International ESOL SELT: 33/50
- Pearson PTE Academic for UKVI: 59
- PDI Services (UK) Ltd: Pass in Skills for English UKVI

Non-standard Entry: Applications from individuals with non-standard qualifications, relevant work or life experience will be equally considered. These applicants will be required to attend an interview as part of the application process. Interviews will be in person or online, depending on the location and availability of the applicant.

Accreditation for Prior Learning: UK and International applicants with qualifications or professional experience equivalent to the knowledge and skills developed during years one or two of this programme may be granted Accreditation for Prior Learning (APL), enabling them to join the programme at the start of year two or three.

If an applicant thinks they may be eligible for APL they should contact our Admissions team on admissions@futureworks.ac.uk. Please note that APL will not exempt applicants from the selection process, or, for international students, the IELTS 6.0 (or equivalent) requirement.

MODULES (CREDITS)

YEAR 1

Historical Contextual Studies (20 credits) – An academic approach to the study of games design, looking at theories of play and the history of games in the context of human history from early civilisations to the present day.



Narrative Design (20 credits) – You will examine narratives in games, with a view to understanding key narrative structures and principles. These include storytelling traditions from around the world and throughout history.

Introduction to Games Design (40 credits) – You will be introduced to some core theories behind games and gameplay. Looking at tabletop games, you will analyse play experience through the study of mechanics, calibration, balance, narrative, currency, and key analytical frameworks.

Digital Games Design (20 credits) - You will also be introduced to Unreal Engine touching on Blueprints and basic game construction, exploring the creation of simple mechanics and systems.

3D Modelling Fundamentals (20 credits) – This module introduces core 3D modelling concepts. Alongside fundamental technical practice in 3D modelling, you will be introduced to PBR materials and learn the importance of observation and analysis.

YEAR 2

Applied Games Design (40 credits) – Gives you the opportunity to iterate knowledge gained so far with a view to understanding the technical and creative building blocks of game development including level design. Made up of a number of short ‘rapid prototyping’ projects designed to highlight technical and creative skills; along with an introduction to industry standard documents.

Advanced 3D Modelling (40 credits) – This module will develop more advanced 3D modelling processes incorporating modular modelling, trim sheets, high-to-low polygon retopology workflows as well as more advanced PBR material creation.

Research Project (20 credits) – You will have the opportunity to do a deep dive into an area of games design of your choice. Using research, interviews, reading and other references, you will work towards a written academic submission and an appropriate industry document.

Games Specialism (20 credits) – A module which gives you the opportunity to test two areas of interest and undertake two projects with the view to learning new skills and identifying a possible area of specialism in your final year for your future career path or postgraduate study.

YEAR 3

Major Project (40 credits) – You will negotiate a substantial final year practical project, underpinned by research, focussed on career direction or postgraduate study. New learning is a key aspect of the module, along with research and iteration.

Game Prototype (40 credits) – A yearlong project requiring you to create a playable demo of a game. This to be supported with industry standard documentation along with reflections on your creative and technical progress.



Games Future Research (20 credits) - You will reflect on industry trends with a view to offering a hypothesis on the future of games and the games industry from a technological, sociological or cultural perspective.

Professional Development (20 credits) - You will prepare for entering the games industry. You will be equipped with skills and knowledge in CVs, portfolios, interview techniques, networking and preparing an online presence.

WHAT ARE CREDITS?

As a guide, 20 credits typically represents around 52 hours of tutor contact time (e.g. lectures/workshops/feedback) and 148 hours of self-study time (usually over the course of a semester). These numbers may increase or decrease depending on the nature, length and level of the module, especially towards the end of the course.

LOCATION OF DELIVERY

Your primary location of study will be at our Riverside Campus, which is located on New Bailey Street in Manchester.

LEARNING HOURS

A combination of lectures, tutorials, peer reviews, discussions and observations will ensure that you are industry ready. External trips will present you with a wider range of topics and the opportunity to expand your portfolio, whilst guest speakers will help you to understand the world of games, how it works and how you can make your mark on it.

TEACHING STAFF

Everyone who teaches on this degree is active in the industry. Whether that's games design, character design, gameplay programmer or independent developer; when your tutors aren't busy teaching you, they're busy honing their craft. As a result, we are always working and teaching the most current industry workflows. We practice what we teach. We also have an extensive network of industry contacts that we can draw on for guest lectures and workshops, industry-set briefs, and as guests for our degree shows.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

We want to do everything we can to prepare you for working within the creative industries, and this is reflected in the way we teach and assess you. The programme is mostly coursework based, which means your tutors will be able to give you regular, constructive feedback. Presentation techniques will give you valuable experience of how to present your thoughts and ideas successfully and enthusiastically, so you are better at selling your ideas to prospective employers. The written work is an important part of assessment and will improve your communication skills.



There is formative and summative feedback for all modules. Formative feedback is given on a mid-module assignment; the final module mark and summative feedback is based 100% on an end of module assignment. Assessment is based around performance in solutions to briefs and project work and assessment takes place through a series of small exhibitions, hand ins and crits.

COURSE DETAILS

Award to be received on successful completion: BA (Hons) Games Design

Length of course: 3 YEARS (FULL TIME)

Mode of delivery: In-person, on campus

In-person lessons: Typically between 12 and 14 hours per week

Self-study time: Typically between 35 and 40 hours per week

Regulator: Office for Students ([OfS](#))

Awarding Institution: The Open University

Futureworks is approved by The Open University as an appropriate organisation to offer higher education programmes leading to Open University validated awards.

FEES / COSTS

TUITION FEES

Home Students: £9,790 per year

International Students: £17,000 per year

You may be eligible to apply for a student loan from Student Finance. Please see our [Tuition Fees](#) page for more information.

EQUIPMENT & ACTIVITIES

You may find it beneficial to invest in additional equipment and/or study resources to support your learning. Additionally, there may be the option of attending events outside of Futureworks which would further enhance your studies. Example costs are:

- Pens, pencils and notebooks: around £50
- Adobe Creative Suite license (for home use): £16.24 per month (with student discount)
- Hard drive/storage (approx. 500GB): £30-£50

