



**Faculty of Arts and Creative Industries** School of Film

**Professional Studio Practice** GAM1102

**Module Handbook Part One** Module Information

**Module Leader** Josh Barton

**Delivery** Term 2, 2024 - 2025 (12 Weeks)

**Programme** BA Game & Level Design, BSc Games Design & Development

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## Other Formats Available

This handbook is available in a large print format. If you would like a large print copy or have other requirements for the handbook, please contact the Disability Support Service at [disability@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:disability@mdx.ac.uk).

## Disclaimer

The material in this handbook is as accurate as possible at the date of production. You will be notified of any minor changes promptly. If there are any major changes to the module you will be consulted prior to the changes being confirmed. Please check the version number on the front page of this handbook to ensure that you are using the most accurate information.

## Other Documents

Your module handbook should be read and used alongside your programme handbook and the information available to all students on My Learning and UniHub, including the Academic Regulations. Your programme handbook can be found on the My Learning programme page for your programme.

## 1. Welcome

A fundamental aspect of working in the games industry is collaborating and clearly communicating with other people across a variety of creative and technical disciplines to ensure the successful completion of a particular project. This is especially true for designers so that an agreed vision of various game elements can be realised as intended.

This module provides the opportunity to engage in this collaborative process by working within a small team to design, develop, iterate upon and test a prototype for Project Threshold; an exciting single-player, first-person puzzle adventure game. This will require you to gain a variety of new skills to complement the creative and technical abilities that have been developed during the first part of the academic year. These will include using a concept specification document to understand and work within project constraints, as well as making use of established production methodologies to plan, manage and delegate individual tasks required to deliver the final product.

At the heart of the collaborative process is effective communication, and the development of associated skills will also be a focus for this module. You will need to effectively express ideas to your team and stakeholders, as well as understand how sensitivity, compromise and understanding will lead to better outcomes and a happier team. Continual reflection also forms part of our practice for this project, and you will have several opportunities to consider the efficacy of your efforts and work as a means of identifying actions which will enhance delivery of the prototype and contribute to establishing a career trajectory.

## 2. Module Teaching Team

Josh Barton		
	<b>Role</b>	Module Leader
	<b>Email</b>	j.barton@mdx.ac.uk
	<b>Discord</b>	InfiniteRockets
	<b>Office Hour</b>	Discord: Friday 10:00am - 11:00am

## 3. Communication

We will communicate with you through your student email account and we expect you to communicate with us that way too. Your student email is identifiable you, unlike MasterChief2347@hotmail.com. It is secure, which is important because we may need to discuss private and confidential information with you. MyLearning, which is used for your learning materials, will send you emails when we message the whole class.

The programme leader, module leaders, and other module tutors are likely to send urgent and/or individual messages about the module to you by email, so it is important that you read your University email regularly, even during the summer. You can access your university email account through the app.

There is a games design course Discord server too where you can get help from your peers, and staff (during normal office hours 9am – 5pm and when they are not teaching). If you have properly identified yourself on the server, we will give you access to channels for your year group and the general channel where you can potentially get help from other students and graduates. Be aware that there are graduates on shared channels of the server some of whom are industry professionals. Write and post in a professional and careful manner, these people may be interviewing you for your dream job in the future. It is good to ask questions and ask for help and it is good to give help and advice too.

Be aware that no matter whether you send an email, PM, or post on Discord we are not always available, and we may take time to see and answer your messages. Try to get your timing right and give us plenty of time to get back to you with an answer.

Your tutors have an office hour each week when they are available to all students on their modules. Please book tutorials via email as we find that we get busy especially in the assessment periods.

There are several ways in which feedback about individual modules and the course are gathered. The most useful way to give feedback is to share it with one of your Student Voice Leaders, whom we will vote on in Term 1. Your student voice leader can then ensure that the feedback is raised at a student voice meeting. However, there will be an anonymous survey at the end of each module and you can also email feedback to the tutors or programme leader too.

## **4. Module Overview**

### **Aims**

This module will allow students to:

- Cultivate teamwork skills by engaging students in collaborative efforts to design and develop a basic game prototype.
- Enhance students' game design, development and management skills through practical projects.
- Develop students' practical understanding of project management within team environments.
- Encourage students to evaluate and respond to the requirements of established brief, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving.

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module, the student will be able to:

1. Introduce team-based game production workflow
2. Design and develop a prototype using a game engine and established workflows
3. Present game design work using established industry formats
4. Evaluate and reflect on their own role and outputs within the group

## Syllabus

This module allows students to create a game through participation in a team-based development process. They are required to devise and develop a game prototype in response to an established brief that refers to specific characteristics including genre, gameplay and structure. Students will be introduced to ways of working collaboratively and constructively across different domains development, with reference to established approaches to planning and management used by industry. They will also develop game production practices through sessions relating to design, expression of ideas and implementation. As they create, delegate, test and iterate towards delivery, students will continually evaluate their own work and the work of others in order to identify actions for their own development.

## Learning & Teaching Strategy

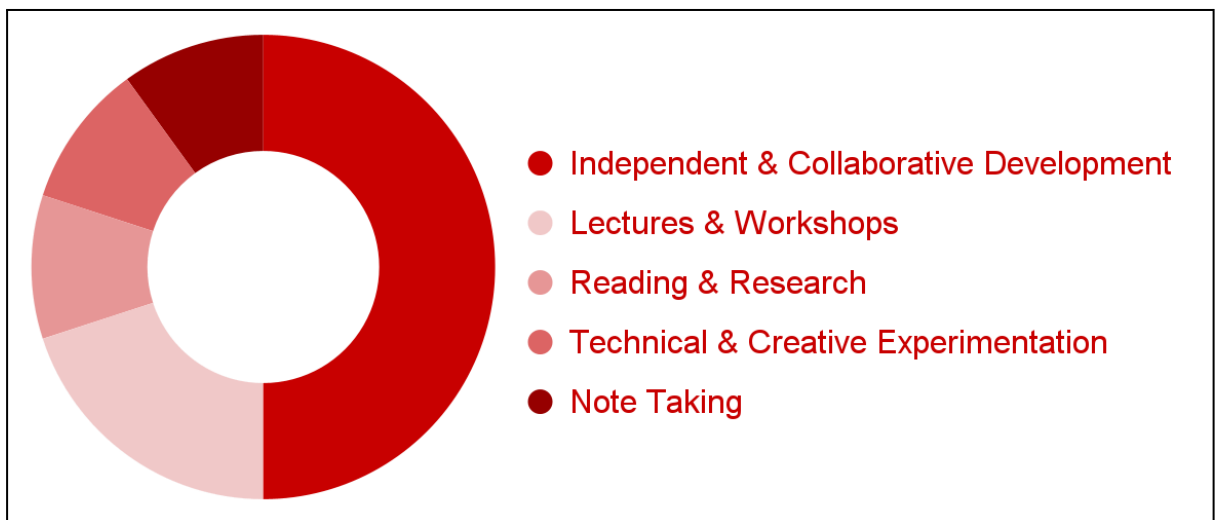
Teaching on this module consists of student-led workshops in which each topic or development practice will be critically discussed and, where appropriate, demonstrated with the support of engaging presentation materials designed to stimulate further investigation. Within this framework, team-based activities (such as meetings and reviews) will also be facilitated and supported. Formative and summative assignments are introduced at the beginning of the module and through subsequent briefings as necessary. Support and structure documents are also provided to assist students in approaching each piece of work. Students will largely undertake assignments as a team, though some elements will be approached on an individual basis. Assessment will therefore be based upon a combination of these components. The team-based nature of the module organically lends itself to peer discussion, and further opportunities will be presented for inter-team and lecturer support.

Much of this module centres around fulfilling an established brief that makes reference to particular game characteristics as they relate to design, content, audience and other elements. This brief is written in collaboration with industry partners who have overseen aspects of structure and content to ensure currency and relevance. Additionally, other materials and examples used in the module (i.e. pitch decks, design documents) have been provided by industry partners to ensure that students are able to understand how their own work should echo similar standards.

The team-based nature of working and assessment in this module presents many opportunities to develop positive deployment of soft skills. For example, frameworks and models are presented to help students resolve managerial and interpersonal problems in a respectful and productive manner. There is also a significant component of reflective practice reinforced throughout delivery, and students must make use of an ongoing journal in which they record and evaluate thoughts relating to the teamwork process, as well as other personal considerations. As a first-year module, much time is also spent establishing what each student possesses in terms of knowledge and understanding drawn from both earlier modules and their pre-university experiences. This takes place through tasks and questionnaires so that they are able to recognise and build upon the inherent skills and abilities that they already have, as well as better understand the contexts in which they perform their best work (i.e. Belbin Team Roles).

Students will be introduced to basic project management concepts and techniques, including Kanban and Scrum using appropriate tools, for example Trello. This includes helping students break down tasks and responsibilities to fairly share work between the team.

### Weekly Module Breakdown



### Assessment Weighting

The assessment for this module is 100% coursework.

### 5. Learning Resources

To get the most out of this module, you are expected to engage with a variety of texts and other materials which underpin the theoretical and practical knowledge presented in lectures, seminars and workshops. You can access a reading list encompassing essential and recommended publications at [this address](#).

## Online Resources

- Diagrams.net - <https://app.diagrams.net/>
- Dimensions - <https://www.dimensions.com/>
- GDC Vault - <https://www.gdcvault.com/>
- Trello - <https://trello.com/>
- Unreal Engine Documentation - <https://docs.unrealengine.com/>

## 6. Module Study Expectations

### Attendance & Engagement

Engaging with online and on-campus in-person learning and activities is integral to your success. Middlesex University supports you to achieve your full potential through a number of strategies, all of which provide a supportive learning environment online, remotely, face-to-face, or blended. Further information on attendance and engaging with your programme will be available at your Induction and updates online at UniHub at [this address](#).

### Professional Conduct

The programme of study you are undertaking is underpinned by developing professional behaviour and attitude. You are expected to behave in a professional, supportive manner to your peers and teachers. You must come to sessions prepared and ready to contribute where appropriate. Please remember that your University ID should be carried with you always whilst on campus and you must be able to identify yourself if asked to do so. Please conduct your email communication with fellow students, tutors and all relevant staff in a formal and courteous manner.

In the same way that we help you understand how to effectively participate in learning on campus, we also want to make sure that you can make the most of online learning. Our principles of online learning class conduct are available at [this address](#).

### Academic Integrity & Misconduct

You should be aware of the University's academic integrity and misconduct policies and procedures. Taking unfair advantage over other students in assessment is considered a serious offence by the University. Action will be taken against any student who contravenes the regulations through negligence, foolishness or deliberate intent. Academic misconduct takes several forms, in particular:

- **Plagiarism** - Using extensive unacknowledged quotations from, or direct copying of, another person's work and presenting it for assessment as if it were your own effort. This includes the use of third party essay writing services.

- **Collusion** - Working together with other students (without the tutor's permission) and presenting similar or identical work for assessment.
- **Infringement of Exam Room Rules** - Communication with another candidate, taking notes to your table in the exam room and/or referring to notes during the examination.
- **Self-Plagiarism** - Including any material which is identical or substantially similar to material that has already been submitted by you for another assessment in the University or elsewhere.

Students who attempt to gain unfair advantage over others through academic misconduct will be penalised by sanctions, according to the severity of the offence, which can include exclusion from the University. Links to the relevant University regulations and additional support resources are detailed below.

- Full details on academic integrity and misconduct and the support available can be found at [this address](#).
- The Policy and Procedures for Academic Integrity and Misconduct is available in our Public Policy Statements under Academic Quality at [this address](#).
- The Student Success Essentials Course: Academic Integrity can be accessed by first logging onto myUniHub and then navigating to MyLearning.
- [Referencing & Plagiarism: Suspected Of Plagiarism?](#)
- [The Writing Process - Plagiarism & Referencing](#)
- The Middlesex University Students' Union (MDXSU) Advice Service offers free and independent support in making an appeal, complaint or responding to any allegations of academic or non-academic misconduct. You can find more information at [this address](#).

### Extenuating Circumstances

There may be difficult circumstances in your life that affect your ability to meet an assessment deadline or affect your performance in an assessment. These are known as extenuating circumstances or ECs. Extenuating circumstances are exceptional, seriously adverse and outside of your control. Further information and guidelines can be accessed at [this address](#).



## 7. Assessment

### Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is completed during your year of study and provides the opportunity to evaluate your progress with your learning. Formative assessments help show you and us that you are learning and understanding the material covered in this course and allow us to monitor your progress towards achieving learning outcomes for the module. Although formative assessments do not directly contribute to the overall module mark they do provide an important opportunity to receive feedback on your learning.

Formative Assessment	Submission	Feedback
Game Concept Evaluation	04.02.2025	04.02.2025

### Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is used to check the level of learning at the end of the course. It is summative because it is based on accumulated learning during the course. The point is to ensure that students have met the learning outcomes for the course and are at the appropriate level. It is the summative assessment that determines the grade that you are awarded for the module. There are 2 assessment components in this module which are detailed in the table below.

Summative Assessment	Weighting	Submission	Feedback
Design Documentation	40%	07.03.2025	31.03.2025
Development Evidence	60%	11.04.2025	05.05.2025

In order to pass this module, you need to pass all assessment tasks with a minimum grade of 17 or equivalent. All elements must be successfully completed with an average grade of 16 or better in order to pass the module.

Before you submit your work for final grading, please ensure that you have accurately referenced the work. It is your responsibility to check the spelling and grammar, as all written assessments will assess technical proficiency in the English language. This means accurate and effective spelling, punctuation and grammar. Details of how it will be assessed will be provided in the marking criteria for each assessment and the University overall approach can be found within the Grade Criteria Guide in the [University Regulations](#).

Reasonable adjustments will be made for those students who have a declared disability/specific learning condition which would affect performance in this area.

If you have submitted a formative or draft assessment, you will receive feedback but no grade. The comments should inform you about how well you have done or tell you about the areas for improvement. All assignments should be submitted online unless specified in assessment briefs.

Should you fail to pass the module as a result of your first attempt, you will have an opportunity to resubmit the required elements during the Summer Term after results have been released. The module tutor will contact you via email to discuss resubmission arrangements. The deadline for resubmission is 11.04.2025. Further information is available at [this address](#).

Middlesex University is committed to being fair in its approach to assessing student learning following the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education \(Quality Code\) \(2018\)](#) and the [UK Quality Code - Advice and Guidance: Assessment \(2018\)](#) and [External Expertise \(2018\)](#).

The Assessment Fairness guidance, policies and procedures put in place by Middlesex University is our commitment to ensure fairness in assessment and are available at [this address](#). If you have any queries or would like to know more on how this approach has been applied to modules you are studying please contact your Programme Leader.

### Assessment Feedback

You will be provided with feedback on all coursework that is helpful and informative, consistent with aiding the learning and development process. The nature of the feedback shall be determined at programme level but may take a variety of forms including written comments, individual and group tutorial feedback, peer feedback; or other forms of effective and efficient feedback. Feedback will normally be provided within 15 working days of the published coursework component submission date.

### Assignment Marks

The following table provides an overview of the marking process for your module assessment. Further information on the role of external examiners can be found in Section 4 of the [Learning and Quality Enhancement Handbook \(LQEH\)](#).

Step	Process
1.	You submit your assignment.
2.	The first marker grades the work and provides feedback; this could be completed anonymously depending on the assessment type.
3.	A moderator or second marker reviews a sample of the work to quality assure the grades and feedback, to ensure they are accurate. A final mark for the work is agreed between the first marker and the

	moderator or second marker.
4.	A sample of work, from a selection of modules across the programme, is sent to the External Examiner to check that the grading and feedback is at the right level and in line with external subject benchmarks (this applies to levels 5, 6 & 7 only).
5.	Your final grades are submitted to the subject assessment board.

### Anonymous Marking Assessment Policy

We have worked with the Middlesex University Students' Union (MDXSU) to create an anonymous marking policy, in response to student feedback. Anonymous marking ensures that your identity (your name, student number and other personal/identifiable information) is not made available to academics when they are marking your work. This means that you can have confidence that your assessments will be marked fairly and consistently. However, there are some forms of assessment for which anonymity cannot be guaranteed and these are recognised in the policy.

We believe that it is important to provide you with the support and guidance needed to help you develop and prepare for your final assessments (those which count towards your final grades i.e. summative assessments). Therefore, anonymous marking will not apply to learning activities and assessments that do not contribute to your final grades (i.e. formative assessments). If you require further information and support to understand how anonymous marking works in your programme modules please contact the Module Leader for more information. The Anonymous Marking Assessment Policy is available at [this address](#).