Unit 13: Understanding the Computer Games Industry

Unit code: A/600/6683

QCF Level 3: BTEC National

Credit value: 10

Guided learning hours: 60

Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is to provide knowledge and understanding of how the computer games industry operates. Learners will analyse organisations, financial issues and legal constraints, and prepare career development material. Learners will practise formal project management techniques.

Unit introduction

Game publishing is an enormous business. The computer games industry has become one of the fastest growing forms of media entertainment. Global sales of game software exceed £10 billion annually. The game industry is more diverse than might initially be imagined. In addition to the traditional publisher-developer-retailer model, there exists online distribution, wireless gaming, browser gaming, and many serious areas of other industries that are quickly adopting game technology for training and simulation.

Those planning to work in this industry must develop an appreciation of how the industry operates and all aspiring entrants need an awareness of the role of each organisation in game publishing. No matter what job they plan to undertake, they must learn about organisational behaviour and how to perform in both a corporate environment and in a smaller independent concern. This unit will provide learners with an overall understanding of organisational structures and the various job roles they can aspire to within the computer games industry.

The business of computer games depends ultimately on both creativity and finance and some understanding of the economics of the business is required. It is important that learners gain an appreciation of the costs, turnover and profits available to each company in the development, publishing and distribution of a title. They should also keep abreast of market trends affecting the industry.

All those working in games are affected by, and should understand, the legal constraints, professional considerations and ethical obligations particular to the computer games industry. Learners should appreciate personal work contracts and the types of contract that obtain between industry organisations. The importance of intellectual properties must be understood by all who seek jobs in the industry, and it is vital that they develop an understanding of governmental and regulatory body constraints affecting their creations.

The unit will enable learners to develop a professional approach to project management that will be invaluable in any future career. An examination of the stages of game development and how the process is effectively managed using modern software and other approaches will encourage a disciplined approach to timely and effective production.

Finally, learners will look at how to prepare personal career development plans and material.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

1   Understand organisational structures and job roles within the games industry

2   Understand financial issues and current market trends affecting the games industry

3   Understand contractual, legal and ethical obligations in the games industry

4   Be able to use project management techniques commonly used in the games industry

5   Be able to prepare personal career development material.

Unit content

1 Understand organisational structures and job roles within the games industry

Organisational structures: type of company (development studios, publishing houses, independent studios); departments (design, production, programming, quality assurance (QA), marketing, distribution, legal)

Job roles: job types (3D modeller, animator, artist, audio engineer, designer, scriptwriter, level designer, localisation technician, producer, programmer, quality assurance tester); level of responsibility (team member, lead, producer, management); working patterns (office hours, irregular hours, hot-seating, freelance, fixed-term contract, staff)

2 Understand financial issues and current market trends affecting the games industry

Financial: business models; budgetary systems; financial responsibilities; preparing a budget; evaluating performance against budgets; budgeting periods; management and reporting systems; break-even analyses; funding groups; milestones; licensors; franchises

Market trends: products and services; vision of organisation; objectives and plans of organisation; competitors; customers; organisation's attitude to risk; international and national market trends

Industry trends: franchised intellectual property (IP); original IP; sequels; discount sales; comparison with film industry; outsourcing; mergers and acquisitions

3 Understand contractual, legal and ethical obligations in the games industry

Contractual: types of contract; format holders (licensors, naming conventions, look and feel); negotiating contracts; commissioning processes; costing; scheduling; time management; risk management; sub-contracting; outsourcing; working to a brief

Legal: regulatory requirements; compliance; copyright; trademarks; intellectual property rights; Pan European Game Information (PEGI); British Board of Film Classification (BBFC); implications of franchising; licensors; health and safety policy

Ethical: policies and procedures; ethical requirements; emerging social concerns and expectations

Professional bodies: The Entertainment and Leisure Software Publishers' Association (ELSPA); The Independent Games Developers Association (IGDA); Women in Games; British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA); The Mobile Entertainment Forum (MEF)

4 Be able to use project management techniques commonly used in the games industry

Techniques: project lifecycle; milestones; agile methods; software, eg Microsoft Project; management tools; burn-down charts

Risks and contingencies: identifying and managing potential risks; contingency planning; communicating information; processes for evaluating success

5 Be able to prepare personal career development material

Methods of recruitment: eg national press, trade press, internet, word of mouth, personal contacts, internal promotion; networking, eg IGDA membership, conferences and trade fairs

Skills and qualifications: education and training, eg full-time, part-time, Level 2, Level 3, graduate; skills analysis (personal skills, technology skills, training needs, personal development plan); sources of information, eg Sector Skills Councils, trade unions, careers services

Career development: training on the job; continuing professional development; self-training

Transferable skills: personal attributes, eg knowledge and skills, commitment, efficiency, reliability, punctuality, self-presentation; functional skills (ICT, Mathematics, English)

Application for employment: portfolio, eg digital gallery, showreel, personal website; application documents (curriculum vitae (CV), letters of application, references); job-seeking skills, eg interviewing skills, presentation skills, self-presentation skills (linguistic codes, dress codes, interpersonal skills)

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 describe organisational structures and job roles in the games industry, with some appropriate use of subject terminology [IE]	M1 explain organisational structures and job roles in the games industry with reference to detailed illustrative examples and generally correct use of subject terminology	D1 comprehensively explain organisational structures and job roles in the games industry with reference to elucidated examples and consistently using subject terminology correctly
P2 describe current market trends and financial issues in the games industry with some appropriate use of subject terminology [IE]	M2 explain current market trends and financial issues in the games industry with reference to detailed illustrative examples and generally correct use of subject terminology	D2 comprehensively explain current market trends and financial issues in the games industry with reference to elucidated examples and consistently using subject terminology correctly
P3 describe contractual, legal and ethical obligations in the games industry with some appropriate use of subject terminology [IE]	M3 explain contractual, legal and ethical obligations in the games industry with reference to detailed illustrative examples and generally correct use of subject terminology	D3 comprehensively explain contractual, legal and ethical obligations in the games industry with reference to elucidated examples and consistently using subject terminology correctly
P4 apply project management techniques to direct a project with some assistance [SM]	M4 apply project management techniques to direct a project competently, and with only occasional assistance	D4 apply project management techniques to direct a project to a quality that reflects near-professional standards, working independently to professional expectations

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	**To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:**	**To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:**
P5 prepare personal career development material using basic formal language. [RL]	**M5** prepare carefully produced personal career development material using generally correct formal language.	**D5** prepare personal career development material to a quality that reflects near-professional standards consistently using correct formal language.

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Successful teaching of this unit requires a blend of tutor-led input and practical sessions with individual learner research and reading.

Professional and trade journals will be very important in keeping abreast of financial trends and debates in the industry, and visiting speakers can add that air of authority in addressing financial issues, in addition to formal class lectures and presentations. Visits to organisations and conferences can be very helpful in illustrating working conditions and explaining job duties.

Centres are advised to subscribe to trade journals such as *MCV* in order to keep up to date with industry trends. Learners could be encouraged to regularly identify for themselves an article of note from a current issue, and present to others in their group their personal interpretation of its impact, covering both the article and their views on its implications. There should be regular group discussions on current trends identified in the professional press, and learners should learn and practise independence of thought and the ability to argue strongly held views whilst respecting the rights of others to hold contrasting viewpoints. By assessing the learners' presentations and contributions to discussions tutors could build up a good body of evidence for grading criterion 2.

Centres are also strongly encouraged to seek a close relationship with at least one organisation in the game industry (a publisher, design studio or distributor, for example) which could be approached to provide guest speakers and content for classroom use. It is very important that centres develop these contacts with game developer studios and publishers to maintain up-to-date knowledge of this rapidly changing industry. These links will assist tutors in developing realistic case studies.

When studying organisational structures and job roles, learners could, after initial lectures, produce one or more case studies of games industry enterprises, allowing discussion of organisation structures and an examination of job roles.

Formal lectures and independent study will be the main method of teaching understanding of contractual and legal obligations. Advantage should be taken of the websites of the regulatory and professional bodies, and learners should be encouraged to debate ethical issues in class and develop personal views. These personal views could be tested in questioning at conferences, in individual email communication or written communication with industry professionals. Once again, professional magazines and trade journals will allow a study of topics currently debated within the industry. Learners might prepare articles to offer to editors of local newspapers.

When completing practical work for other units, learners can practise their understanding of modern methods for monitoring and managing their projects, and use software or agile methods, but such management is fruitless unless actually used to adjust daily targets to ensure completion on time to the desired quality. Learners can be encouraged to maintain burndown charts and scrum daily, or monitor progress using a software product, keeping logs of unplanned changes to their schedules. These logs could be used to provide input to any critical self-reflective practice.

This unit is designed to be of direct and immediate relevance to each learner's future career, so a practical approach is to be promoted wherever possible. Learners should be encouraged to treat the preparation of their personal development material seriously. Such material may be best presented as a portfolio, and this could be offered to prospective employers and higher education institutions in support of planned career moves. Early preparation of personal career development materials by learners is to be encouraged and should be regarded as an ongoing activity culminating in well-considered action plans and personal development portfolios. All learners should be encouraged to gain and use student membership of IGDA and other game industry bodies.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way of planning the teaching and assessment of this unit.

Topics and suggested assignments and activities
Introduction to unit and unit assessment.
Introduction to organisations and job roles in the games industry. Learners: • receive lectures explaining organisational structures • receive lectures explaining job roles and responsibilities • conduct private research into organisational structures and job roles and develop a case study of a chosen organisation in the games industry.
Introduction to financial issues and current market trends. Learners: • receive lectures explaining financial issues • receive lectures explaining market trends • receive lectures explaining industry trends • conduct private research into financial issues and trends, through internet research and regular reading of trade journals and specialist magazines • participate in tutor-led class debates discussing current trends in the games industry.
Introduction to contractual, legal and ethical obligations. Learners: • receive lectures explaining contractual obligations • receive lectures explaining legal and ethical obligations • receive lectures explaining professional bodies within the games industry • conduct private research into contractual, legal and ethical obligations and investigate games industry professional bodies, through internet research and regular reading of trade journals and specialist magazines • participate in tutor-led class debates discussing obligations required for work, and the various professional bodies of the games industry.
Assignment 1 – The Games Industry: What You Need to Know Learners will write an article for a media careers ezine on: • organisational structures in the games industry • types of job • current financial issues in the industry • industry and market trends • contracts of employment • legal and ethical obligations on those working in the industry • professional bodies that support the industry.
Introduction to project management techniques. Learners: • receive lectures explaining the purpose of project management, how it should reduce risks, and examining contingencies that can be considered • receive lectures explaining basic techniques that they can employ, and examining software solutions • conduct private research into modern project management techniques and their use in the games industry.

Topics and suggested assignments and activities
Assignment 2 – My Project Management Portfolio
Responding to a brief set in another unit, learners will apply project management techniques to manage that project.
Introduction to personal career development. Learners: • receive lectures explaining typical recruitment methods in the games industry • undertake personal research via trade journals and internet identifying current job opportunities • receive lectures explaining typical skills required for game industry jobs and identifying typical career paths for workers in the games industry • participate in tutor-led workshops to develop personal transferable skills • practise developing personal career documents including CV, digital portfolio of best work and exemplar job application letters • participate in tutor-led workshops to develop job-seeking skills including interview and self-presentation skills.
Assignment 3 – My Job Application Portfolio Learners will: • prepare a personal career development portfolio • prepare applications material for a specified job • undertake a simulated interview for that job.
Unit learning and assessment review.

Assessment

Evidence for assessment

Evidence for achievement of all the outcomes of this unit is likely to comprise presentations and reports describing structures, issues, trends and obligations, with logs, portfolios and blogs evidencing personal development planning, and charts and logs recording application of project management techniques to a project of around 20 hours work. This project can be attached to another unit.

Reports and presentations, or articles for submission to professional and trade journals, might be suitable assessment vehicles. Alternatively, learners could provide content for a website explaining legal and contractual issues to recruits to the games industry, or to undergraduates on a games development degree programme. Learners must prepare career development material.

Presentations must be recorded for the purposes of internal and external verification.

For some elements of this unit, and for some learners, a formal viva voce assessment might be appropriate. When more than one learner in a cohort is assessed in this way care must be taken to ensure that all learners are asked equivalent questions, and that all are given equal opportunities to expand or clarify their answers. Interviewers must also ensure that questions are not phrased in such a way as to provide or suggest an answer. Formal vivas should be recorded for the purposes of internal and external verification and at least 50 per cent of such assessments must be internally verified.

Application of grading criteria

When applying the grading criteria, tutors should follow the advice given below. Please note that any examples of evidence given here are indicative only. This advice is not exhaustive and the examples need not specifically be included in a learner's work in order for that learner to achieve the exemplified grade.

Pass

To achieve a pass grade, learners must achieve all the criteria at pass level. For each of the criteria learners must present evidence that addresses each italicised sub-heading of the content for the learning outcome.

P1: learners will give accurate and substantially full descriptions of major organisational structures in the games industry and correctly describe common job roles. They will discuss only conventional, easily found generic roles. For example, 'Level Designer: works with a team, creates levels and missions for third-person games, racing games, action and combat games. Must have good communication skills in order to be able to work as an effective team member; Must also have good written communication skills.'

P2: in describing financial issues and current market trends learners will be accurate but make broad, limited descriptions of the basic and most obvious trends. For example, 'The games industry gets bigger every year; hundreds of games studios producing over a thousand games a year, but only the best games will make it big. Millions are spent, maybe even billions. For a game to be created it takes around two years to do, copyrights need to be sorted, concepts need to be made and then the actual development of the game.'

P3: learners will accurately describe the most readily observable contractual, legal and ethical obligations. Their work will reveal a basic but accurate grasp of important concepts. For example, 'Game developers must not break copyright law. They must not use ideas or images that they did not think up themselves.' Or, 'When designing a game, a designer must decide the age rating because young players should not play extremely violent games.'

P1, P2 and P3: evidence will show a basic understanding of relevant technical terminology but learners will generally be unsure about this vocabulary and will make fairly frequent mistakes when they do use it.

P4: learners will evidence some project management monitoring for a project of reasonable duration. The application of the project management techniques may not have substantially affected the progress of the project, but they will have been evidenced, even though effects will have been largely disregarded. Learners will need frequent assistance, support and encouragement. If they have been in frequent need of such help but failed to make positive use of it they should not be considered for a pass grade for this unit.

P5: learners will identify obvious training opportunities and environments. A basic understanding of initial employment opportunities will be shown in the form of, for example, a job search sourced from the internet or media publications listing posts available. Learners will prepare basic personal career documents – a basic CV containing information on the skills and education they have achieved, and a showreel of work to date – indicating little appreciation of matching their skills to the needs of the industry and only the most elementary preparation of plans for a career in the game development sector. Learners will be able to create an application letter for a specific post matching some of their skills to the needs of the job. In addition, there should be evidence of an understanding of the function of relevant professional bodies such as Skillset and the trade unions. When expressing themselves formally in writing, learners' skills will be basic, typically with frequent errors of spelling and punctuation and occasional lapses in grammar and syntax.

Merit

To achieve a merit grade, learners must achieve all the pass and all the merit grade criteria. For each of the criteria learners must present evidence that addresses each italicised sub-heading of the content for the learning outcome.

M1: learners will describe and address organisational structures and job roles in some depth, and will refer to well-researched and appropriate examples. When discussing job roles, a learner might write, 'The Level Editors for Game X require skills in both 2D and 3D software as content will be made in both 2D and 3D, therefore a good understanding is required. This would also require good experience in art. As game levels must be convincing, they need an artistic touch to make them appealing. Good literacy and communication skills are required in team discussions to explain development progress and comprehend work tasks.'

M2: learners will show good understanding of financial issues and current market trends, revealing consideration of how or why the issues mentioned have importance. To explain current market trends, a learner might write, 'Sequels are one of the most profitable elements in game retail so when developers find an idea that works they will want to continue it so as to make as much money as possible. However, after a few sequels it is hard to keep reinventing the same concept again and again with new storylines to keep the audience happy. Studio A was responsible for the Name series of Game X but since July 2008, Studio B has been responsible for the further development of the Game X series. Their new sequel will be released in April 2010. This keeps the concept fresh and is why it's handy having multiple studios owned by the publishing house.'

M3: learners will show good understanding of contractual, legal and ethical considerations, revealing consideration of how or why the issues mentioned have importance. A typical response might include, 'Trade and service marks, usually both called 'trademarks', are words, symbols and other things used to identify the source of a product in commerce. Some little known trademarks are Kodak Yellow and the sound of a Harley. Both are protected. But usually trademarks are names and logos. So game developers must seek (and probably pay for) permission to include them in a game.'

M1, M2 and M3: learners will use relevant technical vocabulary for the most part correctly, but may make mistakes or be unsure about usages at times.

M4: learners will have successfully managed a project from inception through to conclusion. They will have recorded progress regularly and will be able to evidence some changes to performance resulting from their application of project management techniques.

M5: the personal development material will be neatly presented. Care and some thought will have been put into its preparation. When expressing themselves formally in writing, learners' skills will be sound with typically few lapses in grammar and syntax, though there might be some errors of spelling and punctuation.

Distinction

To achieve a distinction grade, learners must achieve all the pass, all the merit and all the distinction grade criteria. For each of the criteria learners must present evidence that addresses each italicised sub-heading of the content for the learning outcome.

D1: learners will justify the points they make, providing reasons for their explanations, and making clear their depth of knowledge and understanding of how the well-researched examples they provide illustrate their arguments. They will have sought carefully to find that complex example which illustrates their point exactly, and then will make fluent, confident comments which develop the points made. They will draw out of an example precisely what it is about it that exemplifies the point it illustrates. When explaining organisational structures a learner might write, 'A fairly typical example of the organisational structure within a large games development company is provided by Company N, which is the biggest games developer and producer in the UK. It employs 700 people and is led by CEO Name supported by a board of four executive and four non-executive directors. Company N has publishing operations across Europe (France, Germany, Spain, UK) and in the US, Japan and Australia and works with a combination of eight internal and external development studios. These studios in turn employ their own development staff. An example of one of these internal studios is Studio Name (UK). This is Company N's development team responsible for the market-leading football management simulation game, Game Y. Based in Town X; Studio Name currently employs 30 staff. In total, Studio Name has worked on over 90 published titles, 60 of which were football-related games. An example of an external development studio that works closely with Company N is Studio A (Country Y), responsible for the hit Game Z.'

D2: learners will justify the points they make, providing reasons for their explanations, and making clear their depth of knowledge and understanding of how the well-researched examples they provide illustrate their arguments. They will have sought carefully to find that complex example which illustrates their point exactly, and then will make fluent, confident comments which develop the points made. They will draw out of an example precisely what it is about it that exemplifies the point it illustrates. Concerning market trends a

learner might write, 'While it is normal for there to be more demand than supply for any launch, the amount of Console A made available at launch was disappointing. Between the release date and Christmas approx 500,000 consoles (worldwide) were sold. This sent Christmas sales down even further; dropping 9 per cent from November 2008 and consequently software sales fell 18 per cent. How this less than perfect launch will affect the next-gen battle when the Console B and Console C are finally released remains to be seen. However, it is obvious that an early launch was a huge advantage to Company X.' The explanation of financial trends will be topical, authoritative and supported by excellent bibliography and citation.

D3: learners will justify the points they make, providing reasons for their explanations, and making clear their depth of knowledge and understanding of how the well-researched examples they provide illustrate their arguments. They will have sought carefully to find that complex example which illustrates their point exactly, and then will make fluent, confident comments which develop the points made. They will draw out of an example precisely what it is about it that exemplifies the point it illustrates. The full implication of legal and regulatory considerations will be made clear through the considered choice of examples: 'The GTA3 Hot Coffee issue plagued the games industry for months and has caused many changes, especially in America. New legislation and rating systems mean that any developer looking to release a 'graphic game' will need to be careful. It has yet to be seen if this legislation will affect the next-gen consoles. However, I'm not sure that it will. Because the legislation mainly focuses on more stringent age ratings this shouldn't cause too much of a problem for most games. At the most a game might typically jump from a 12 to a 15 rating. However, as games and graphics become ever more realistic, developers will be under increasing pressure from politicians and pressure groups. They will be required to look at the moral and ethical status of their games rather than just the fun element. Professional codes of conduct such as the ACM Code of Ethics are likely to become more widely discussed and promoted.'

D1, D2 and D3: relevant technical vocabulary will be secure and used correctly and confidently at all times.

D4: learners will manage their project with a systematic application of method. Care and thought will be applied to the management of their project. They will evidence that project management techniques have moderated their performance to a successful conclusion. For example, these learners will evidence that burn-down charts have been scrupulously maintained and during the course of the project scrums have been used with serious intent: effects on project quality or deadline will have been explained and contingency plans activated when necessary. At this level, there is evidence of a professional attitude to managing their performance towards a successful outcome.

D5: learners will have produced well-considered personal development material, with nearly complete action plans for future career achievement. These learners will be able to relate their understanding of job roles (learning outcome 1) to their personal career path, identifying their skill gaps, suggesting action plans to rectify this, and showing how their personal skills can best be used in the industry. When expressing themselves formally in writing, learners' skills will be good with typically quite complex sentence structures, very few grammatical errors and infrequent errors in spelling and punctuation.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, M1, D1 P2, M2, D2 P3, M3, D3	Assignment 1 – The Games Industry: What You Need to Know	Article on the computer games industry for an online media careers ezine.	• All preparatory notes. • Article as word processed or electronic document.
P4, M4, D4	Assignment 2 – My Project Management Portfolio	Brief from a production lead to manage a project for a skills-based unit.	Project portfolio containing: • logs and charts • meeting minutes • daily production diary.
P5, M5, D5	Assignment 3 – My Job Application Portfolio	Simulated job application and interview in response to simulated job advertisements.	Career portfolio containing: • academic certificates • CV • letter of application • digital gallery of best work • interviewer's notes.

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Creative Media Production suite. This unit has particular links with the following units in the BTEC Creative Media Production suite:

Level 2	Level 3
The Creative Media Sector	Developing a Small Business in the Creative Media Industries
	Working Freelance in the Creative Media Sector

Though there are links between this unit and other units that deal with understanding the media industries (Units 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12) learners would not be expected to take any of those units alongside this one in the same Creative Media Production programme.

There are opportunities to relate the work done for this unit to Skillset National Occupational Standards in Interactive Media and Computer Games as follows:

• IM1 Work effectively in interactive media.

Essential resources

Learners will require access to information about professional practice within the computer games industry from a variety of sources such as professional bodies, trade magazines, the internet, and visiting professionals. Professional project management software will be useful and learners should have access to modern office applications in order to prepare professional-quality personal career material. It will be helpful to provide access to web authoring or other software to enable each learner to develop a digital gallery of their best work.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Centres should develop links with local game development studios which could be approached to provide visiting speakers, study visits or samples of typical interface layouts and documentation.

Skillset, the Sector Skills Council for the creative media sector, has a substantial section of its website dedicated to careers, including job descriptions – www.skillset.org/careers/.

Further general information on work-related learning can be found at the following websites:

- www.aimhighersw.ac.uk/wbl.htm – work-based learning guidance
- www.businesslink.gov.uk – local, regional business links
- www.nebpn.org – National Education and Business Partnership Network
- www.vocationallearning.org.uk – Learning and Skills Network
- www.warwick.ac.uk/wie/cei/– Centre for Education and Industry, University of Warwick – work experience and workplace learning frameworks.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Baylis P, Freedman A, Procter N et al – *BTEC Level 3 National Creative Media Production, Student Book* (Pearson, 2010) ISBN 978-1846906725

Baylis P, Freedman A, Procter N et al – *BTEC Level 3 National Creative Media Production, Teaching Resource Pack* (Pearson, 2010) ISBN 978-1846907371

Boyd GG and Green B – *Business and Legal Primer for Game Development* (Charles River Media, 2006) ISBN 978-1584504924

Irish D – *The Game Producer's Handbook* (Thompson Course Technology Premier Press, 2005) ISBN 978-1592006175

Laramee F D (editor) – *Secrets of the Game Business* (Charles River Media, 2005) ISBN 978-1584503996

Paavilainen J – *Mobile Business, Creating Business with NGage Nokia* (New Riders Publishing, 2003) ISBN 978-0735713758

Portny SE – *Project Management for Dummies, 2nd Edition* (John Wiley & Sons, 2006) ISBN 978-0470049235

Websites

www.allpm.com/ – a project management site with useful resources

www.berr.gov.uk/ – the Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (UK Governments) has articles on the game development industry

www.comp.glam.ac.uk/pages/staff/dwfarthi/projman.htm – the University of Glamorgan – useful project management links

www.gamasutra.com – a comprehensive website on the games development industry run by Game Developer Magazine and Gamasutra, covering industry news, jobs, and education

www.hmrc.gov.uk/index.htm – the Inland Revenue, for information about tax matters relating to both individuals and companies

www.hsegov.uk – the Health and Safety Executive

www.skillset.org/games/careers/article_2768_1.asp – the Skillset website has job profiles information about the computer games industry

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are …
Independent enquirers	researching financial issues in the computer games industry, judging the value of the information found and using it to support their arguments
	carrying out research into current market trends and legal issues in the computer games industry
	carrying out research as a case study of project management techniques used by a games development company
Reflective learners	reviewing their learning and achievements and developing a well-presented personal development plan in response
	setting goals with success criteria for their personal career development
	inviting feedback on their own performance and dealing positively with praise, setbacks and criticism as part of their reflection on their personal development
	evaluating their learning and experience to inform future progress as part of their reflection on their personal development
Self-managers	managing their project to achieve a successful outcome by adapting their project plans as circumstances change,
	seeking out challenges or new responsibilities and showing flexibility when circumstances change while managing a project
	dealing with competing pressures, including personal and work-related demands while preparing work for assessment
	responding positively to change, seeking advice and support when needed during preparation of assignment work.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are …
Creative thinkers	trying out different techniques to communicate their project management decisions
	adapting their plans as circumstances change
Team workers	if working in a group to produce a project, taking responsibility for their own role
	managing their personal contribution to and acting upon information from others in discussions to reach agreements and achieve results when managing a project.

Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are …
ICT – Use ICT systems	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	handling systems to generate their personal digital gallery of best work
Use ICT to effectively plan work and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system they have used	planning their project as part of their project management
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	managing their personal career development material and digital gallery of best work
Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices	handling systems to create their digital gallery
Troubleshoot	handling systems while managing their project
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	sourcing assets to put into their digital gallery of best work
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	researching information on organisations, financial issues and legal and ethical responsibilities in the games industry
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: text and tables • images • numbers • records	building and presenting their personal career development material
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	building and presenting their personal career development material
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	building and presenting their personal career development material
Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively including storage of messages and contact lists	communicating their project management decisions to others in order to successfully manage a project

English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	taking part in scrum meetings and team meetings while managing their project
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	studying research documents on organisations, financial issues and legal and ethical responsibilities in the games industry
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	creating their personal career development material, their notes and plans to manage their project and their responses to assessment tasks.