

Choosing Careers with BTEC IT

What BTEC qualification did you study and at which school/college?

BTEC (Level 3) National Diploma IT Practitioners (Software Development) at Filton College, Bristol.

Why did you choose to study a BTEC?

I knew very early on that I wanted to work in video games and software development was a great entry into the work of interactive entertainment. Doing a course that was solely built around a single set of subjects was more important to me than a spread of different subjects like A levels.

Were you influenced/inspired to study a BTEC by anyone?

I did a lot of my own research, and knew early on I did not want to stay on to do A levels in sixth form.

What skills did you learn as part of your BTEC course?

Early fundamentals to programming, advanced computer systems, and applications software development.

What was the most challenging thing about your BTEC course?

Studying in an environment that is far more aligned to a career path or vocation than when studying GCSE's. It takes some adapting but feels like a far more mature way of studying and learning.

What did you enjoy most about your BTEC course?

The step up in maturity that is required at that level of learning - it feels more relaxed, the field of study is more focused from the teaching materials and staff, the environment is far more collaborative, and **it really allows for career goal setting.**



Scott Davis, 33

What is your job title?

Producer.

Can you tell us a bit about your current role? What does your typical day look like? Who do you interact with on a day to day basis?

My role is to manage a large group of developers working on a particular set of features or content - I manage our roadmap for delivering content on time, ensuring what we deliver is of the quality our players expect, but also to work through any blockers the team have, working through dependencies we have with other teams outsourcers, and to ensure the team are enthused and excited about the content they are making.

A typical day sees me coordinating standups with the designers, engineers, and artists working in my team. Reviewing content, providing feedback, scheduling changes, preparing and running playtests, organising content reviews with stakeholders, and preparing our next set of work.

What do you enjoy most about your current role?

As a producer, I am responsible for the quality of the work my team produces - which means I have to be very involved in a lot of various aspects of the game from the design, development of features, art concepting, through to VFX delivery and Audio. No day is never the same and I get to engage with so many great and talented individuals who are all so excited about what they're working on. It's a great working environment.

Do you feel the skills you learned during your BTEC helped you to succeed in your current role?

A lot of those early collaborative projects on the BTEC have set me up for the role that I am doing now - working in teams on very complex projects with each individual having to carefully work with one another to deliver a cohesive, working, and high quality piece of work.

Did you always know what kind of job you wanted to do? Why did you think a BTEC would help with this?

Ever since playing Final Fantasy 8 on the Playstation, at about 13 years old, I knew I wanted to work into games. Knowing what I wanted to do early on, and setting a clear path to get there was very important to me. **The BTEC I took was a very clear and crucial step in my grand plan to work in the games industry.**

Did the practical side of your BTEC help in your current role?

The college and BTEC environment was very mature from what I was used to with my GCSE's - it really helped in my personal growth and set expectations for working in a professional environment.



How important do you think roles in the games/creative industries are at the moment?

The games industry is the largest entertainment industry in the UK and the world at the moment and it is growing at a phenomenal pace. It has one of the highest rates of satisfaction, and when you get to work on the type of projects you enjoy playing yourself at home - it can sometimes feel like more than just a job, it's a passion you get paid for.

What advice would you give someone looking to get involved in the same industry as you?

Finding that break into the industry can be quite tough - but there are so many roles in so many other industries that have transferable skills into the games industry that can help get your foot in the door. I was doing temp work for an analytics department at a bank before I got into games. Without me realising it responsibilities of that role on my CV were being picked up by recruiters for transferable skills for roles in games - and not before long I was being contacted.

What do you like most about working in the games/creative industry?

Everyone who is working in games is doing so with a passion for games - everyone wants to be here and they wear their inspirations on their sleeves. **It's a great collaborative environment for extremely creative people.**

What's been your greatest achievement to date?

The project I am currently working on is still in development - but being promoted up to being a producer of a large and key content team for our game felt really great. The project leadership trusted me to deliver this to them at a high quality level - and we're still working hard to ship this game.

Anything else you'd like to tell us?

I would say that some courses on games can be quite generalised. At a college level, I think that is okay as you work to figure out where in the games industry you would like to fit. But when you get to university level, I would recommend specialising in a particular discipline - be it design, code, VFX, 3D art, level design. Games companies aren't looking for jack of all trades at entry level, so specialising and excelling at a particular discipline will really give you the leg up over the competition.

