



BTEC Esports helps to explore the industry as a whole

College:  Gower College Swansea

Location:  Swansea

Area type:  Town

BTEC full-time students:  2,000

IT/Esports students:  150

Pioneering the new BTEC Esports qualifications, Gower College Swansea jumped at the chance to deliver professional qualifications in a booming, rapidly developing industry that captures the imaginations of today's learners.

"I have been teaching for a number of years and deliver on the BTEC level 1, 2 and 3 computing courses. I also deliver on the HND (Higher National Diploma) courses for Applied Computing," says Neil Griffiths, Curriculum Leader. "I recently started delivering on the BTEC Level 3 in esports and Gower College Swansea was one of the first colleges to run the course when it was launched."

"I have a passion for gaming and follow the esports industry closely," says Rhys, one of the first BTEC Esports learners at Gower College Swansea. "There are a wide range of jobs in esports, and I hope to make a career in the industry. I was really pleased when I saw that Gower College Swansea was running a Level 3 BTEC esports course."

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The GCS Owls esports team



One of the five gaming rooms at Gower College Swansea

Now, after completing his first year studying the new BTEC in esports, Rhys says he loves “the wide range of topics and how it allows us to explore the esports industry as a whole.” Topics like video production, games design, and psychology for esports performance give learners taking the qualification a well-rounded overview of the industry and all the skills required to succeed.

“The course has challenged me in exploring new topics and to become a team player. I have become involved in coaching and team strategies, and this has involved me working as part of a team and leading a team. It has shown me the management involved in running a team and the roles a team manager takes on.”

“I also like competing in competitive online games in the various leagues that exist. We have competed in the British Esports Championships where we have reached quarter and semifinals on Rocket League and Overwatch. We have also competed against other colleges and even took part in an American-run tournament.”

Getting hands-on experience is one of the huge benefits Neil sees in teaching BTEC qualifications. “For me, the part I love most about teaching a BTEC is the volume of practical work and real-world skills I can teach students,” he says, “These skills have been tested in competitions like Skills Wales where we have won Gold and Silver in areas like Coding, Server administration and Software solutions.”

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These practical experiences are also a major benefit when it comes to young people like Rhys looking to start their careers. “I believe that BTECs offer an advantage into finding employment because of the practical elements involved in the courses,” explains Neil.

“I would say the most interesting area has been helping to run our college team, the GCS Owls. I have seen how much work goes into organising games, picking players, the huge social media effort needed along with trying to raise funding,” explains Rhys. It’s these experiences that will stand him in good stead when he comes to starting his career in the booming esports industry.