

Post-16 Transition Support

BTEC Games Design

Transition Project

In preparation for your course, you should consider completing the following tasks so that you become more familiar with using a range of current resources and developing your ability to work creatively and independently.

Knowledge Topics – Creating a research ‘journal’

Task 1:

What makes video games interesting and unique among other media?

Consider your position in relation to this question and what video games mean to you. Record your thoughts in a digital slideshow (lists/mind maps/doodles).

Task 2:

Consider what makes a video game ‘significant’.

While there are hundreds of video games released every year both digitally and physically, only a few go on to be ‘culturally significant’ in the world of games industry (even fewer in mainstream culture). This list could include Tetris, Street Fighter II, Doom, Super Mario Bros., Mario 64, Minecraft, and Grand Theft Auto V, among dozens more.

Write a 300 word review of a significant video game. This game could be contemporary (last five years), or historical, but you should discuss what you think made this game important to both the games industry and those who play games.

Task 3:

Think in depth about a specific extract of gameplay.

Choose a game you like and are already familiar with. Find a ten minute YouTube clip of the game, and using videoant (which is an online application you can use to add comments to specific points in YouTube videos) annotate your selection of gameplay with your thoughts about what made the game interesting and fun. You might want to consider how the game looks and sounds, or you might want to focus specifically on gameplay. Use this as an opportunity to familiarise yourself with videoant, as this will be a website you will use while on the course. Put a link to your finished videoant in your research folder.

Task 4:

Create an idea for a new game.

Using content generated from your research and recording produce a digital slideshow outlining brief concept ideas for a new game that could be played on modern PCs and consoles. The only instructions you have been given are as follows: ‘develop initial ideas for a new adventure game with a customisable character and a combination of real world and fantastical elements’. You should make reference to the following:



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- core mechanics (jump height, shot distance/damage, character speed, etc.)
- progression (either in character level or levels in your game)
- rewards, challenges
- replay value
- balance

You should include a combination of text and concept sketches in your slideshow - do not worry about the quality of your sketches - this isn't an art course, and they should just be there to illustrate key mechanics and systems in your game. For instance, if you look at these sketches for the original Sonic the Hedgehog, you'll see that they're much more about communicating an idea than looking like the finished game.

Knowledge Topics – Creating a research 'journal'

Use the Summer break to play a range of games - play big games, small indie games, play solo games, play local and online multiplayer games. Play mobile games, and games currently in beta. Replay your favourite game from when you were a child, and play a game that under normal circumstances you wouldn't even consider playing. Even if you don't like the games you play, think about why some people WOULD like those games.

Other key questions you could consider investigating are:

- Who is your favourite game developer and what is your favourite game by them? Why?
- How do video games influence as people - think both positively and negatively.