

Game Design Document: Your Game Title

DGTL13007 Game Development, Term 2, 2024

Team Name: *Team Name here*

Team Members: *Student 1 (ID); Student 2 (ID)*

Due Date: Monday, 5th August 2024 (Week 7) @1145pm

Version History

Game Design Document (GDD) for *Your Game Title*.

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Author:	
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1. Overview

Elevator Pitch

This is a simplified recap of your 'elevator pitch'. Keep it simple, but make it sound exciting in **no more than one paragraph**. Points you'd likely cover include:

- *The name of the game?*
- *The aim of the game?*
- *Target audience?*
- *Why does this game **have** to be made? (in other words...what makes it great?)*
- *What platform does it target?*

Note: Simply adapt and include the pitch that you developed for DGTL13007 Assignment 1.

Once you've written your spiel, read it aloud. Would it convince YOU to invest your money?

Hook

This section describes how you will 'hook' (engage) the player's interest. Points to consider:

- *What makes your game unique or special? Is it innovative (offers something new), or does it fill a gap in the market?*
- *What is your game about? Briefly describe the story in a single paragraph (draw upon premise and narrative).*
- *Where does the game take place? Briefly describe the gameworld. Not too much detail, as this is covered in depth further in.*
- *What does the player control?*
- *What is the goal, and what obstacles lay in the way?*

Audience

Briefly discuss the attributes of your audience that are relevant to the design of your game's aesthetics and gameplay, and how they 'informed' your decisions. For example:

- *experience level (e.g. hardcore, regular or casual gamer)*
- *age group*
- *level of language (e.g. is understanding English important?)*
- *cultural and sub-cultural background (e.g. does the game target Emos, Sports fans, Trivia Buffs etc)*
- *level of motor-skills (does the game require fine eye-to-hand coordination)*
- *attention span*
- You are **STRONGLY encouraged** to consider including one (or more) '[Audience Persona' documents in your Appendix](#) and refer to it in this section. Use the data you collect about your audience to inform your responses.

2. Aesthetics

The aesthetics section defines how the game “looks, smells, sounds, tastes and feels” (Schell, 2015).

Describe your game aesthetics, paying consideration to the following:

- *How do you want the player to feel?*
- *What mindset will the game create?*
- *Do you want the player to feel scared, powerful, weak and insignificant or happy?*
- *How will you stimulate these emotions?*

Reflect on genre:

- *which genre does your game align with?*
- *why did you choose this genre? And*
- *discuss some simple expectations, or conventions, of games within this genre.*

Visual Style

How will the game be styled? Draw back on your information about audience and aesthetics; making a game visually appropriate for a three year old will be different to the needs of a twenty-three year old etc.

- *Have you chosen a specific style for your visuals? Why? For example, is the game realistic, cartoonish, surreal, dream-like or given a retro pixel art style?*
- *If you are creating a text-based adventure game, describe the artwork that you are developing to accompany the story ‘pages’*
- *Is the game inspired by something else? If so, what? (TV, film, book, comic, real-life)*

3. Mechanics & Dynamics

Describe the following:

- How will the player interact with the game? What actions can be used? (mouseOvers, mouseClicks, keyboard, text entry etc.)
- Does the game provide any feedback to the player? If so, what? (text messages, icons etc)
- How will you generate surprise events? (e.g. are you using Unity, Construct or Twine code/scripts to achieve this? If so, what are they?)
- How will you ensure that the game plays differently each time that it's played?

Rules and limitations

Think about the following:

- List the actions or procedures that the player can employ during play.
- List what the player cannot do during play.
- List the actions that the player needs to perform in order to **achieve the goal**.
- List the possible strategies that the player can employ, if any.
- Define any limits that are applied within the game:
 - time limits;
 - ammunition (quantity available and rules for use);
 - abilities (magic powers etc);
 - money, and
 - lives.
- How will the player win...or lose?

Goals

Goals define the 'success criteria' for the game i.e. what the player needs to do to be successful. Minor goals are generally required at each level:

- What are the overall goals for each level of the game?
- Are there minor goals that need to be achieved? If so, what are they?
- Which items (if any) need to be collected, or what needs to be achieved as the game progresses?
- What are the success criteria that will dictate whether the player has completed each stage of the game successfully?

Reward system

The reward system, or 'carrots' are the features which are designed to keep the player engaged, for example:

- *Is the player rewarded for completing a level? If so, how?*
- *Can the player collect bonus points during the game, how?*
- *What type of visual or aural feedback (stimulus) is provided to the player when events occur?*
- *What happens if a player loses, or is killed? Do they respawn? If so, how? How many times?*

Target Platform(s)

Which platforms would you like to make the game available for in the future? Why?

4. Game Elements

Characters

The characters should be described in some detail. A brief description of their motivations, what they look like and how they move should be provided, along with supporting concept art.

- protagonist (character, or object, controlled by the player)
- antagonist (system controlled 'boss', enemy or main rival), and
- *How many supporting (non-player) characters are there? What are they?*

Levels/Missions/Puzzles

- *How many levels/missions/puzzles will feature in the completed game?*
- *What are they? Briefly describe each level in terms of game flow and the environment.*

Weapons (if applicable)

- *What weapons are used in your game?*
- *Where are they found?*
- *How are they used?*
- *Do they serve a specific purpose?*
- *Describe their effects*

Special Objects

- *What special objects feature in your game? (health boost, special abilities etc)*
- *Where are they found?*
- *How are they used?*
- *Do they serve a specific purpose?*
- *Describe their effects*

Environment

Briefly describe the individual levels in terms of the mood and objects in order to help the design team. For example:

1. Level One: Dungeon exterior

a. Mood

- i. Well-lit and calm, eerily quiet

b. Objects

i. Ambient

1. moonlit
2. light vegetation (gardens)
3. dungeon wall

ii. Interactive

1. hidden Key
2. pony
3. dungeon door

2. Level Two: Dungeon Ante-Room

a. Mood

- i. Dark and dangerous (spooky), threatening

b. Objects

i. Ambient

1. fire brand (torch)
2. skeletons, piles of bones (indicating death)
3. dungeon clutter (rusted or broken weapons – unusable)

ii. Interactive

1. scurrying spiders (designed to make player edgy)
2. small orcs
3. doorway to next level

Game Flow

The *game flow* section will provide a 'talk through' of the game experience and key events within the levels. For example:

1. player starts at the dungeon exterior
2. player must search nearby garden for a key
3. player uses key to unlock dungeon door
4. dungeon is dark and difficult to see
5. player finds a torch and lights up dungeon
6. as soon as dungeon is lit, swarms of orcs pour in
7. torch periodically blows out to increase tension...and so on

User Interface

This is your opportunity to define how the player will interact with your game through the interface, and provide sufficient information for the programmers, level designers, and artists. For example, you may like to mention how the score, energy, power-ups may displayed to the user. Additionally, if there are elements of the interface that the user may click on, these should also be explained briefly.

Screens

The screens that you require in your game must be described clearly. General practise is to include screen diagrams (or mock-ups), indicating placement of buttons or other features, along with brief supporting text.

Note: Even if you are creating a text-based adventure game you will still map out your gameflow and therefore need to provide diagrams.

Start (Splash) Screen Diagram

The start screen is also known as the 'splash screen'. Your diagram should include the following.:

- *Diagram/sketch;*
- *Name of the game;*
- *Name of the developer;*
- *Contact information (website, email, game Facebook page etc)*
- *Version number;*
- *Instructions on how to play, and*
- *Interaction Buttons (Play/Restart/Quit etc).*

Game Level Screens

Provide diagrams for each level (aka scene / chapter / mission), specifically identifying:

- *Level background*
- *Start, Respawn & Exit locations*
- *Object locations*
- *Trigger locations*
- *Enemy locations*
- *Ideal player movement from start > exit (use arrows to indicate path)*

Win/Game Over Screen

The purpose of a Win screen, or a Game Over screen is to provide player feedback about the game. Are these screens required for your game? Generally speaking, yes. Things to include:

- Diagrams for each (as applicable);
- What appears on this screen?
 - replay button, game statistics, credits?

5. Technical Design

Code - scripts, events or custom programming

List the coded events, actions and behaviours that are required for your game. You may have simply stuck with Unity 'Playground Project' scripts; adapted scripts from the Unit 2D or 3D Game Kits; found some useful Twine HTML/CSS code or developed some of your own. Regardless, explain how they are used, and describe how they interact with other game objects in your environment.

For example, the player character may have a keyboard movement script applied, along with *object collisions*. What happens when the player comes into contact with an enemy character, non-player character, hazards or specific objects?

- Shield script
- Dashing script (see appendix)

6. Media Assets

This section must provide sufficient guidance to the artists, 3D modellers, programmers and sound designers in your team (obviously in our teams we don't have access to all of these, but the considerations are still valid).

Visual Art

Briefly describe visual game art assets that are required for your game (remembering that the constraints of the task stipulate that all media objects are to be original work).

For example:

- 2D / 3D art
 - Character (sprite sheets)
 - Environment (textures)
 - other objects
 - illustrations
- animations
 - Movement cycles
 - Environmental (e.g. flickering lights)

You should include examples of the visual artwork within the document to support your explanation, clearly identifying the filename of the actual graphic file (which you will upload with your assignment in a supporting assets folder as per the task instructions e.g. *Figure 1: Main character 'Antares Rex' (refer to file 'hero_character_AntaresRex_concept.jpg')*

Sound Design

List the audio assets that are required for your game, and brief descriptions of what the audio could 'sound like' (remembering that the constraints of the task stipulate that all media objects are to be original work):

Sound: Music

This music may apply to the entire game, or a level. Here's an example:

- *Game music*
 - *jingly, jangly irregular music (like someone playing with cutlery)*
 - *level of audio varies, depending on proximity of threat*

Sound: Ambient

Ambient sounds help to define the mood, or atmosphere of the game.

- *Level 1: Dungeon*
 - *spooky 'mwahaha' sounds*
 - *soft groans*
 - *echoing whispers*
 - *creepy, taunting voice "I'm behind you!"*

Character-specific sounds

These are provided for each character type. Here's an example:

- **Hero Character: Antares Rex**
 - moving
 - *sound of clanking armour as character moves*
 - power-up (shields)
 - *a high-pitched 'jelly-wobbling' shudder*
 - power-up (health)
 - *voice "Ah! That's better!"*
 - collision
 - *a grunting sound, as if in pain*
 - death
 - *a long guttural groan, which fades at end*
 - spawning
 - *an enthusiastic and well-spoken voice "time to skin some dragons!"*

7. Production Schedule

This section will contain information about the project scope, timeline, milestones and the associated deliverables. **It is one of the most important components of your entire GDD.**

Knowing how long things will take to design, develop and implement is the key to success. Maintaining a schedule allows you to remain organised, in control of your team, resources & budgets, whilst ensuring you meet your client (or publisher's) expectations. There is an old saying that puts this in perspective, "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail".

As we are operating within a compressed timeframe, this section can be kept pretty simple. Ordinarily we'd factor in the initial game design and paper prototyping elements, but you can leave these out, as they were covered during *MMST12017 Game Design*.

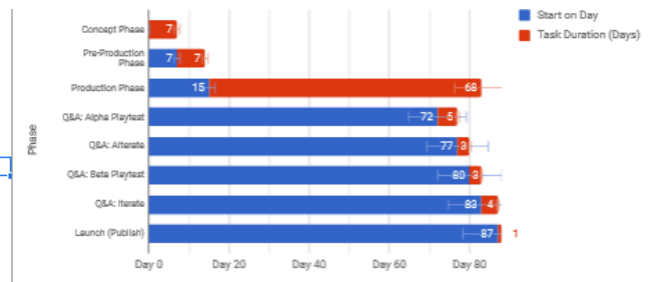
Use the [Game Development Dashboard that I have created for you](#) (or a FREE tool such as [Trello](#)) to keep track of your project and include a screenshot of your modified version in this section. The only area that you will need to modify is the 'Phases' area (in addition to your team information).

Members: *Smith, I* *Wesson, J*

Dev't Timeframe: 15 July - 14 October, 2019

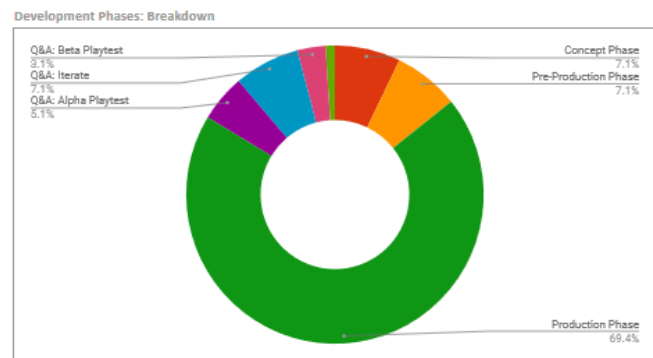
Phases (adjust to suit your proposed timeline)

Phase	Start	End	Duration (days)
Concept Phase	18/07/2019	25/07/2019	7
Pre-Production Phase	25/07/2019	01/08/2019	7
Production Phase	02/08/2019	09/10/2019	68
Q&A: Alpha Playtest	28/08/2019	03/10/2019	5
Q&A: Iterate	03/10/2019	06/10/2019	3
Q&A: Beta Playtest	06/10/2019	09/10/2019	3
Q&A: Iterate	09/10/2019	13/10/2019	4
Launch (Publish)	13/10/2019	14/10/2019	1
Project duration (days)			88
Time remaining (days)			118



Deliverables

Assessment Milestone	Due Date	Days Remaining
Concept Art	16/08/2019	59
Video Pitch	16/08/2019	59
Blog 1 (Wk 2-4)	16/08/2019	59
GDD	06/09/2019	80
Blog 2 (Wk 5-7)	06/09/2019	80
Marketing Strategy	14/10/2019	118
Publish Online	14/10/2019	118
Facebook Page	14/10/2019	118
Blog 3 (Wk 8-11)	14/10/2019	118



The Gantt Chart (top right) allows you to track the progression of your game development phases and will help you identify and mitigate potential risks.

- **Concept Phase** - Pitch, Game Concept Document (GCD), Project Plan, budget;
- **Pre-Production Phase** - Analysis (incl. R&D to identify coding needs (research, gather and test scripts for your game));
- **Production Phase** - Development of basic game project file & supporting media;
- **Q&A Phase** - Alpha & Beta play-tests, bug fixes (or improvements), iteration & feedback;

- **Launch (Publishing):** Deployment of game to online host (e.g. [Itch.io](https://itch.io) or [Textadventures.co.uk](https://textadventures.co.uk)) and link to game's Facebook page.
- **Maintenance Phase** - Ongoing maintenance during the forecast life of the game.

8. References

Although this is NOT an academic essay, you MUST pay credit and include any references that you have used in the production of your GDD such as online tutorials, free assets or code that assisted with your digital prototype development etc.

References are to be formatted in accordance with the [APA 7th Edition Referencing Scheme](#).

Appendix

Ensure that any content added into the Appendix is referenced in the body of your GDD. You may use it to store Audience Personas, playtest feedback, concept art, diagrams, scripts etc

Audience Persona

Develop a Persona for your target audience (i.e. IDEAL gamer) by following these 4 steps:

1. List [gaming motivations](#) and [player experience goal\(s\)](#) that you will target with your game.
2. Give your player a personality i.e. illustration/photo; player type e.g. casual gamer, hard-core gamer, gender, age and family background.
3. Think about your player’s game frustrations and expectations.
4. Create a quote that SAYS something important about your gamer or their personality.

<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Replace with image to suit your persona</p> <p>Player Name</p> <p>Player Type (Casual / Core / Mid -Core/ Hard-Core)</p> </div>	<p>Demographics</p> <p>This is your player’s background and may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gender • age • location e.g. Rockhampton • current job e.g. student • ideal job e.g. vet • family type e.g. 2 parents, 1 brother • family income e.g. low • game platforms e.g. PC/Switch/Mobile
<p>Motivations</p> <p>What motivates the player? You can think of this simply in terms of their ‘likes’ e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free mobile games; • winning badges / awards - levelling up; • crafting games; • game music and audio; • social competition; • exploring gameworlds, or • feeling challenged. <p>Player Experience Goals</p> <p>What kind of gameplay experience is the player seeking? This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making meaningful choices • feeling excited • appeals to play style 	<p>Frustrations</p> <p>What frustrations does the player have with existing games? For example, your player may dislike:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expensive or pay-to-win games; • too many rules; • poorly designed controls; • too much challenge; • killing games, or • anti-social behaviour etc. <p>Needs and Expectations for New Games</p> <p>What are the player’s needs and expectations for new games? You can keep this quite general i.e. what will your player look for when choosing a new game?</p>

Quote: “Sum up your gamer with a quote”

Audience Persona - Example

 <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 20px;">Jackson</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">Mid-Core Gamer</p>	<p>Demographics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Male ● 24 year old Australian (second generation) ● Introvert / Extrovert ● Lives in Melbourne (urban) ● Lives at home ● Only child to a single mother ● Distance student at Murdoch University ● Casual job – Low income ● Dream job - Game tester ● Uses a PC and an Android Phone for games
<p>Motivations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Likes late night gaming sessions ● Sci Fi & Fantasy are favourite genres ● Likes to be challenged to upskill player abilities or collect special in-game rewards <p>Player Experience Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Socialiser-Achiever (Player Style) ● Wants to impress online friends ● Wants to be able to customise the way his avatar looks ● Enjoys collaborative activities ● Likes games with jump-scares so is open to more ‘intense’ game experiences 	<p>Frustrations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Currently locked-down due to Covid (although this means he plays more games than usual) ● Doesn’t earn much and games can be expensive, so doesn’t like pay-to-win games ● A little bit uncoordinated so struggles with complex key combinations or rapid movements <p>Needs and Expectations for New Games</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● expects to be challenged strategically when he chooses a new game ● expects that the gameworld and characters will have solid backstories that he can relate to.
<p>“Coffee, pizza and The Book of Boba Fett. Life is good!”</p>	

Player Feedback & Iteration

A good game MUST receive meaningful feedback during development, consider uploading drafts of your game to itch.io and ask for feedback from website users or students in the unit who are representative of your target audience. Use feedback to iterate and improve your game, but keep a record of this process. You don't have to action every piece of feedback, but focus on those that will improve the player experience.

Consider using FREE tools such as [SURVEY MONKEY](https://www.surveymonkey.com) to create a playtest questionnaire for playtesters to complete.

Here are some example playtest surveys created by DGTL13007 students in 2021.

- Overwork Studios - Starship Scavenger - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CBFZZMB>