Unit Title: **Drawing Concept Art for Computer Games**

Unit Credit Value: **10**

Unit Level: **Three**

Unit Guided Learning Hours: **60**

Ofqual Unit Reference Number: **A/502/5675**

Unit Review Date: **31/12/2016**

Unit Sector: **9.3 Media and Communication**

Unit Summary

The aim of this unit is to develop learners' practical skills in drawing game concept art. Learners will examine how concept art is used within computer games and will use a variety of drawing media to develop skills in observational drawing. Learners will use these skills to visualise imagined characters, objects and locations for a game concept and will reflect on the quality of their work.

This unit will provide learners with opportunities to explore visual responses to ideas and environments. Learners will have opportunities to develop practical skills and an understanding of the relationship between their work and that of artists and designers in the games industry. Learners will develop awareness of historical, cultural and social contexts and their relevance to the development of ideas and research.

In this unit learners will use a variety of media to develop their skills and ability in observational drawing. The process of observational work includes the ability to analyse, measure, dissect and accurately describe. To achieve this, the learner will have opportunities to explore, understand and communicate what they are observing, while incorporating formal elements into their drawings to show the use of line, shape, form, colour, pattern and texture.

The unit provides an opportunity to develop skills in visual communication through drawing of game concept art to match an intended brief. It will also develop the learner's ability to reflect critically on their own work, as they will need this professional skill in any future career.

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Unit Information

It is expected that before the unit is delivered, the tutor will have read the Qualification Specification to ensure all conditions regarding Rules of Combination, delivery, assessment and internal quality assurance are fulfilled. Additional guidance is available below as Assessment Guidance for Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria in **bold**.

This unit has 4 learning outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The learner will:	**The learner can:**
1. Understand the **purpose of concept art for computer games**	1.1. Describe the purpose of concept art for games with some appropriate use of subject terminology
2. Be able to **explore the potential of drawing media**	2.1. Apply different drawing media and techniques to produce alternative representations, working within appropriate conventions and with some assistance
3. Be able to **draw anatomy, environment and object concept art for computer games**	3.1. Draw anatomy, environment and object concept artwork for computer games showing a basic standard of drawing skill, working within appropriate conventions and with some assistance
4. Be able to **present concept artwork for computer games**	4.1. Lay out concept artwork for computer games to a basic standards with some assistance

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Assessment Guidance

Learning Outcome 1

Learners will give accurate and reasonably substantial descriptions of the purpose of game concept art in general terms, though these descriptions will be basic and conventional and might lack formal terminology. When describing concept art, a learner might write, 'Concept art is a kind of drawing used to give designers an idea of what the character or object should look like.' Evidence will show a basic understanding of technical terminology but learners will generally be unsure about this vocabulary and will make fairly frequent mistakes when they do use it.

Purpose of concept art for computer games:
Examples: game publishers' websites; textbooks; journals and magazines.

Purpose: visualisation of concepts; visual communication of ideas, e.g. visual elements, style, mood, look, feel, colour schemes; storyboards.

Learning Outcome 2

Learners will demonstrate basic drawing skills, though they will have made repetitive use of the same materials and drawings will lack physical characteristics. For example, a basic line drawing will have no form or texture. Annotations will be brief and lack appreciation of limitation or best use. A learner might write, 'This is a pencil drawing of my house.'

Explore the potential of drawing media:

Explore: experimental drawings; annotation (characteristics, effects, limitations, creative potential).

Drawing media: pencils; charcoal; pastel; wax crayon; pen and ink; marker pens; other mark-making implements.

Drawings: life drawing (physical characteristics); natural form (pattern, texture, form); architectural drawing (exterior and interior perspectives, plans and elevations).

Learning Outcome 3

Learners will typically produce a series of unrelated studies which show limited progression of drawing skill and little appreciation of physical properties. Learners will have achieved something which will not fully realise what was intended, but the activity that led to it will have been purposeful and the outcome will have some shape, some sense of design, or the deliberate application of some technique behind it.

Draw anatomy, environment and object concept art for computer games:

Intended purpose: for reference visualisation; for visual communication of ideas.

Constraints: original intellectual property (IP), franchised IP, client brief, target audience; ethical issues, e.g. representation (race, gender, religion, sexuality), decency.

Sources of ideas: e.g. direct observation, narrative, photographic, cinematic, explorative research.

Drawing styles: direct observation; stylised form, e.g. cartoon, manga.

Anatomy concept art: anatomy, e.g. characters, creatures; development study drawings; final piece.

Environment concept art: environment, e.g. plants, buildings, terrain; development study drawings; final piece.

Object concept art: objects, e.g. machines, vehicles, weapons; development study drawings; final piece.

Learning Outcome 4

Presentation layout will be unimaginative and lack significant developmental evidence. Sketchpad work should be extracted and combined to form the poster montages. Each poster should include annotated development and research studies leading to drawing of the final work. Learners will make brief self-reflective comments on their own drawing work discussing fitness for purpose (considering client brief or target audience) and will write about their choices in selecting materials and techniques, commenting briefly on how they have developed their initial ideas to create concept art that satisfies the brief. Some suitable correct terminology must be evidenced. The learner might write, 'I drew my character using pencil line drawing technique. I think my drawing could be used for a storyboard. I got my initial idea from internet research.'

Present concept artwork for computer games:

Layout: poster size, e.g. to suit purpose; layout, e.g. symmetry, format.

Annotation to drawings: purpose; idea sources; reflective comment (compared with original intentions, fitness for purpose, aesthetic qualities).

Poster montage: development studies; final piece; annotations.

Delivery

This unit provides opportunities to experiment with a range of drawing techniques using a variety of equipment, materials, technologies and methods. Although the majority of learners' work will be carried out in a studio or workshop environment, it would be very helpful to include discussions, study of graphic novels and visits to game development studios. The unit presents opportunities for practical drawing activity both in the studio and out-of-doors. Research using the internet and library resources will form an essential part of the learning programme. Teaching should stimulate, motivate, educate and inspire the learner. It should be planned to help learners develop knowledge and understanding of working with a variety of mark-making media and materials and their associated techniques and processes.

It is suggested that teaching follows the order of the Learning Outcomes, starting with study of purpose and following that with development of the learners' skills in using drawing media, which can be demonstrated in the production of concept art.

Study of the purpose of game concept art is likely to be taught through demonstration and studio discussion. Centres are strongly encouraged to seek a close relationship with at least

one organisation in the game industry (publisher, design studio, distributor etc.) which could be approached to provide exemplar concept art from past game titles.

Learners should undertake observational studies and work directly from primary sources in order to develop their drawing skills. Primary sources should include the natural world and the constructed world, both of which offer a huge range of subjects. These might include, from the natural world, the human form, animals, insects, plant forms and structures, landscapes and seascapes, and from the constructed world, built environments, architecture, townscapes, machinery, engineering, products, artefacts or objects. In developing drawing skills through observational work, learners will need to develop their use of visual language including line, tone, colour, texture, shape, form, scale, proportion, structure and perspective. Direct observational work may be undertaken in 2D, 3D or 4D formats.

Mark-making and drawing development should not be restricted to pencil and paper work. Learners should experience a variety of different approaches to explore ways in which mark-making skills can be used to express ideas and feelings, especially for character concept art. Learners should be challenged to take risks, push ideas beyond preconceived notions and develop their understanding of drawing beyond a narrow and superficial definition. Learners must be encouraged to break away from orthodox thinking to produce original concept images which match client brief or IP and are commercially viable. Learners will need to practise how to evaluate, refine, adapt and modify their results to meet their creative intentions. They will also need to plan and produce preliminary results for evaluation and keep records of their thinking and conclusions.

Learners will also need to develop the ability to critically analyse the examples using appropriate technical language in terms of aesthetic qualities and fitness for purpose.

Evidence Requirements
Evidence of practical ability must be demonstrated.

Resources
Equipment
For this unit learners will need to have access to a range of mark-making materials. Centres are strongly encouraged to seek a close relationship with at least one organisation in the game industry (publisher, design studio, distributor etc.) which could be approached to provide exemplar concept art from past game titles, and possibly provide a visiting speaker.

Books
Ames L J — **Draw 50 Flowers, Trees and Other Plants** (Kingfisher Books, 2004)

Barber B — **The Fundamentals of Drawing: A Complete Professional Course** (Arcturus Foulsham, 2003)

Edwards B — **The New Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain** (Harper Collins Publishers, 2001)

Gray P — **The Complete Guide to Drawing and Illustration** (Arcturus Foulsham, 2006)

Hamm J — **Drawing Scenery: Landscapes and Seascapes** (G P Putnam's Sons (Reissue), 2001)

Mattesi M — **Force: Character Design from Life Drawing** (Focal Press 2008)

Rines FM — **How to Draw Trees** (Dover Publications, 2007)

Thompson K — **50 Fantasy Vehicles to Draw and Paint: Create Awe- Inspiring Crafts for Comic Books, Computer Games and Graphic Novels** (David & Charles PLC, 2007)

Thompson K — **50 Robots to Draw and Paint: Create Fantastic Robot Characters for Comics, Computer Games and Graphic Novels** (David & Charles PLC, 2006)

Woods J — **Draw and Sketch Buildings: Sketch with Confidence in 6 Steps or Less** (North Light Books, 2002)

Websites

http://conceptart.org — community site with forums and showcasing concept art

http://conceptartworld.com/ — community site offering concept art directory and blog

www.cgsociety.org — Computer Games Society website for digital artists: articles, workshops (short online courses), portfolios, gallery

www.drawingboard.org — forum and blogs of concept art

www.eatpoo.com — concept art gallery and forum

www.igda.org — home site of the International Game Developers' Association – all things game

www.skillset.org/games — Skillset is the Sector Skills Council for the creative media sector; website contains descriptions of concept artist job role and computer games developer art department

AIM Awards