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**Course: Computer Games  
Production**

**Unit: Computer Games Production –  
Group Project**

**Unit Code: GMC2002**

**Assignment Number: 6**

**Unit Lecturer: Phill Richardson**

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## **Group Project – Games Production.**

### **Introduction:**

For this unit, we were asked to design, and implement an artefact for the purpose of training and education, using the Half Life 2 game engine, and other available resources.

To this end we concluded that we would produce a modification, which would simulate an open day at the University of Lincoln. This would be targeted at prospective technology students, the key features would be:

The user would be able to explore the relevant technology facilities situation around the university, to get a feel for its layout. By implementing key tasks, the product would encourage the user to explore, introducing them to key locations, members of staff etc, and rewarding them for their progression as an incentive to continue.

### **Contributions:**

Assignments were evenly distributed throughout the year, with each member, including myself contributing a good amount of work, contribution is reflected in the subsequent mark percentages assigned for each assignment. See Appendix 2 for contributions. (Evidenced in Appendix 3, minutes [ 1 ], [ 4 ], [ 5 ] and [ 12])

We were each assigned with the task of creating specific artefacts, my tasks were to map areas of the university, and to help code the more complex features of our mod with another group member, Toby Arnold (Evidenced in Appendix 3 - minutes [ 4 ]). Unfortunately the coding was incomplete so a more basic system was implemented using logic, and triggers. Basic mapping of the key areas was complete and integrated to form the game world in which the player would interact and explore. However due to the lack of artefacts (textures and models) produced by other members of the group we were unable to give the product a polished feel. Below are some screenshots of my created maps, more information on these can be found in Appendix 1:



Figure 1 “This shows the recreation of Comp Lab A, which was part of my map”



Figure 2 “This shows the faculty office, again created by me for our map”

Over the course of the unit, I and other members of the group revised the design of the game in order to attempt completion, for example using software features, instead of coding to complete the deliverable.

Due to time management issues, we also had to refine our Gantt chart, splitting up tasks further between group members, unfortunately this was still not enough to ensure that all required artefacts were produced. The Gantt chart can be seen in past assignments.

7		<b>Production Phase</b>	<b>60 days?</b>	<b>Mon 07/01/08</b>	<b>Fri 28/03/08</b>	<b>Toby,Stuart,Jason,William,Mitch,Ken</b>
8		Create Engine / Coding	27 days	Wed 13/02/08	Thu 20/03/08	Jason,Toby
9		Implement VGUI Coding	14 days?	Tue 11/03/08	Fri 28/03/08	Jason,Toby
10		<b>Create Specified "Levels" (BASE)</b>	<b>23 days</b>	<b>Mon 21/01/08</b>	<b>Wed 20/02/08</b>	<b>William,Toby,Stuart,Jason</b>
11		Create Atrium Map	23 days	Mon 21/01/08	Wed 20/02/08	Toby
12		Create Sports Hall Map	22.5 days	Mon 21/01/08	Wed 20/02/08	Jason
13		Create "Quad" Map (portal)	23 days	Mon 21/01/08	Wed 20/02/08	Toby
14		Create MHAC Building Map	23 days	Mon 21/01/08	Wed 20/02/08	Jason
15		<b>Create Model Artefacts</b>	<b>15 days</b>	<b>Mon 21/01/08</b>	<b>Fri 08/02/08</b>	<b>Ken,Toby,Mitch,Jason</b>
16		Model Props for Quad and Atrium	15 days	Mon 21/01/08	Fri 08/02/08	Ken,Toby
17		Model Props for MHAC and Sports Hall	15 days	Mon 21/01/08	Fri 08/02/08	Mitch,Jason
18		<b>Create Audio Artefacts</b>	<b>14 days</b>	<b>Mon 07/01/08</b>	<b>Thu 24/01/08</b>	<b>Ken</b>
19		Record Necessary Voices	14 days	Mon 07/01/08	Thu 24/01/08	Ken
20		Record Sound Effects/Ambience	14 days	Mon 07/01/08	Thu 24/01/08	Ken
21		<b>Texturing Work</b>	<b>44 days</b>	<b>Mon 07/01/08</b>	<b>Thu 06/03/08</b>	<b>Stuart,Toby,Mitch</b>
22		Develop Color Palette for final map	7 days	Mon 07/01/08	Tue 15/01/08	Stuart
23		Develop Map Textures using scheme	37 days	Wed 16/01/08	Thu 06/03/08	Stuart
24		Implement Artefacts into Maps	24 days?	Tue 19/02/08	Fri 21/03/08	Everyone

Figure 3 “This shows the division of tasks between group members from Gantt chart”

During the year I played the role of “Asset Creation” (Evidenced In Appendix 3 – Minutes [ 4 ]) I was in charge of mapping certain areas, working with Mitchell Williams, and Kenneth Gorton who were to produce artefacts for each map, models etc this is evidenced in Figure 3. I also played the role of Second Chair for meetings, and had the roll of co-liasing with our supervisor, talked about in the next section. This is proved in the weekly notes taken by said supervisor which were submitted with the previous assignment.

### Interactions:

During the year I attended weekly liaisons with our supervisor, initially Duncan Rowland, and then Matthew Langner (See Appendix 3 – Minutes [ 10 ]), this was to give feedback on how the project was progressing, to discuss any problems we were facing, and to attain advice on how to continue. These meetings were attended by both myself and Toby Arnold.

As well as these meetings, myself and Toby were chair for each additional group meeting, it was our task to contact members with regards to when meetings were to be, find out why they had not turned up, etc. Because of this we seemed to take on a guidance role to the group, informing people of what they should be doing according to the Gantt chart, managing each meeting etc. It was suggested half way through the year that other members of the group take over our roles, however while agreed to, myself and Toby still continued as the change over did not come into fruition.

Over the course of the year I have learned that lack of communication leads to project failure. Meetings had very quite poor attendance rates (Evidenced in Appendix 3 – Minutes [ 1 ], [ 2 ], [ 3 ], [ 6 ] and [ 9 ]), generally with no more than four members. This resulted in difficulty relaying the same information to all members, while additional weekly meetings were set up, this was still the case. Towards the end of the project we were holding 3 meetings per week, and seeing no improvement.

Communication via email was attempted, but in general failed, due to technical errors, amongst other problems. This led to the project as a whole being incomplete, while certain items of work were completed, key items from some members which would lead to the progression of others were not present, this having been said a working deliverable was still produced. Sadly with a very unfinished feel, maps having only basic textures, unlike the cell-shaded ones that should have been produced, and custom models not completed etc.

It is essential for all members of a group to attend meetings, unless absolutely impossible. This leads to everyone knowing what needs to be done, how each member is progressing etc, and in general allows a more successful artefact to be produced. It is also critical for each member to produce their part in order for the project as a whole to be completed.

File management was also none existent while it was initially planned ( See Appendix 3 – Minutes [ 4 ], the use of an incremental online system was never implemented. This resulted in files only being exchanged at weekly meetings, and due to lack of attendance this meant that required files were not received for days, or even weeks, halting further progression of development. One example of this is that the three custom models that were completed were not received until the final artefact submission deadline. This resulted in us being able to include the files for submission, but not implement them into the final deliverable.

### **Reflections:**

As outlined above, there were many problems involving communication within our project. These problems were mentioned periodically at meetings with our supervisor. Emails were also sent regularly to none-attending members. A three strike rule was also implemented, mentioned in my submission of assignment 2. Sadly none of the above had any effect. If I were to do this project again, or in future projects, I would push for more severe action to be taken against reoccurring none attendance, in order to ensure that members would be more willing to contribute to the overall project, knowing that they would be reprimanded if they did not.

I would also implement a contingency plan, this would allow for each member to complete their specific objectives, without having their project halted by the lack of required artefacts from other members. Sadly this was not implemented during this project, which resulted in a partially incomplete artefact being created.

I would also constantly update the Gantt chart, while it was updated several times over the course of the year, it did not reflect our progress enough. If something slipped for example it would not be instantly updated, when it should have been.

It was important for this project to understand that we were unable to pick our own groups, for reasons such as the inability to do so in a working environment. However having members who did not contribute sufficient amounts of work, or who did not understand what they were meant to be doing due to lack of attendance led to the artefact being incomplete. Due to this I would suggest that in future I would ensure that all members of the group were committed, in a working environment this would be the case, as they would be paid for their work, and if they did not contribute they would lose their job. But in the university environment, group members can still pass even if they contribute nothing.

I am pleased with the map I produced for the final artefact, shown in Figures 1 and 2. It has been created based on concept designs, and reflects the real MHAC building quite well, navigating around both should be a very similar experience. However there were flaws with it, for example a floor was missing from the final map. Due to previously mentioned time management problems certain aspects of the map had to be rushed, for example the elevator which was removed due to it not being 100% functional. It also has an unpolished feel due to the lack of artefacts from other group members, for example textures for outside backgrounds would have added to the map, but were not created.

Overall I would ensure that I am able to complete my own work, even if I am unable to obtain needed resources from other group members.

### **Conclusions:**

In summery, I have learnt much from working as a part of a group. Each member is an integral cog in the machine, if one is not working correctly the whole group, and project is affected in turn. Communication is vital when it comes to group work, unless all members understand fully what is going on then the project is much more likely to fail.

In future projects, as previously mentioned, I will ensure that all members of the group are dedicated to the projects completion. I will also ensure that I am able to complete my artefacts, via the use of a contingency plan. I will use better time management to ensure that the project is fully completed for the set deadline.

I have both enjoyed, and loathed working in a group. It allows for a large project to be undertaken with great potential, and if done right can yield great results, however sadly in this case an unfinished artefact was produced. I have learnt many lessons from this project, which I will take with me and use in future projects, hopefully resulting in more successful outcomes.

**Bibliography:**

The University Of Lincoln Blackboard

# Appendix 1:

Map Creation

I was tasked with recreating specific sections of the MHAC building, so that the map could be used in the final deliverable. I did this by first obtaining the plans of the building from the university, and then creating a concept layout design based upon them.

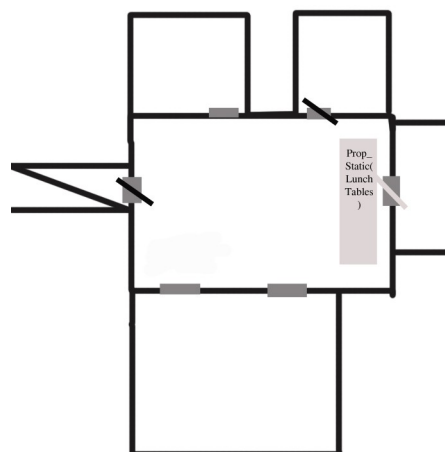
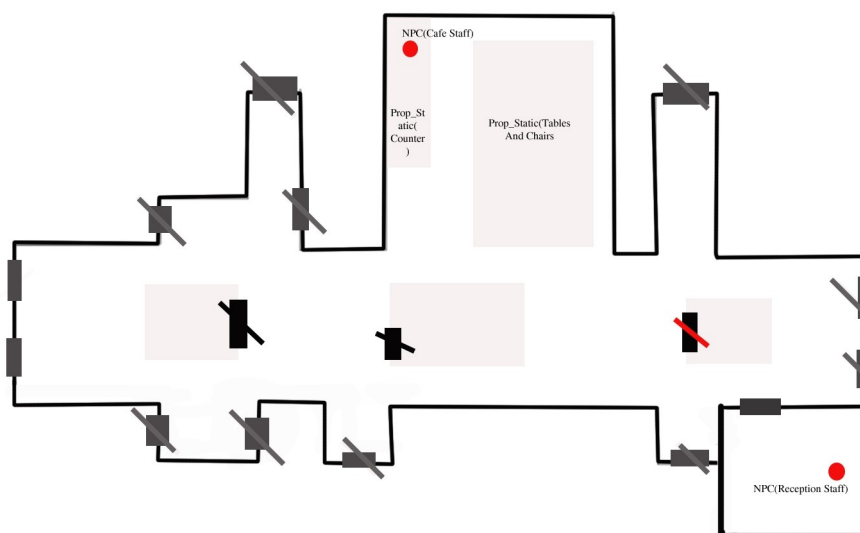
I then moved these plans into the Source SDK program and began to use Hammer to reproduce the building. I finished this and it was incorporated into the deliverable.

Unfortunately there were very few custom textures, and no custom models produced for this map leaving it feeling somewhat different from its real life counterpart.

My map files can be obtained at:

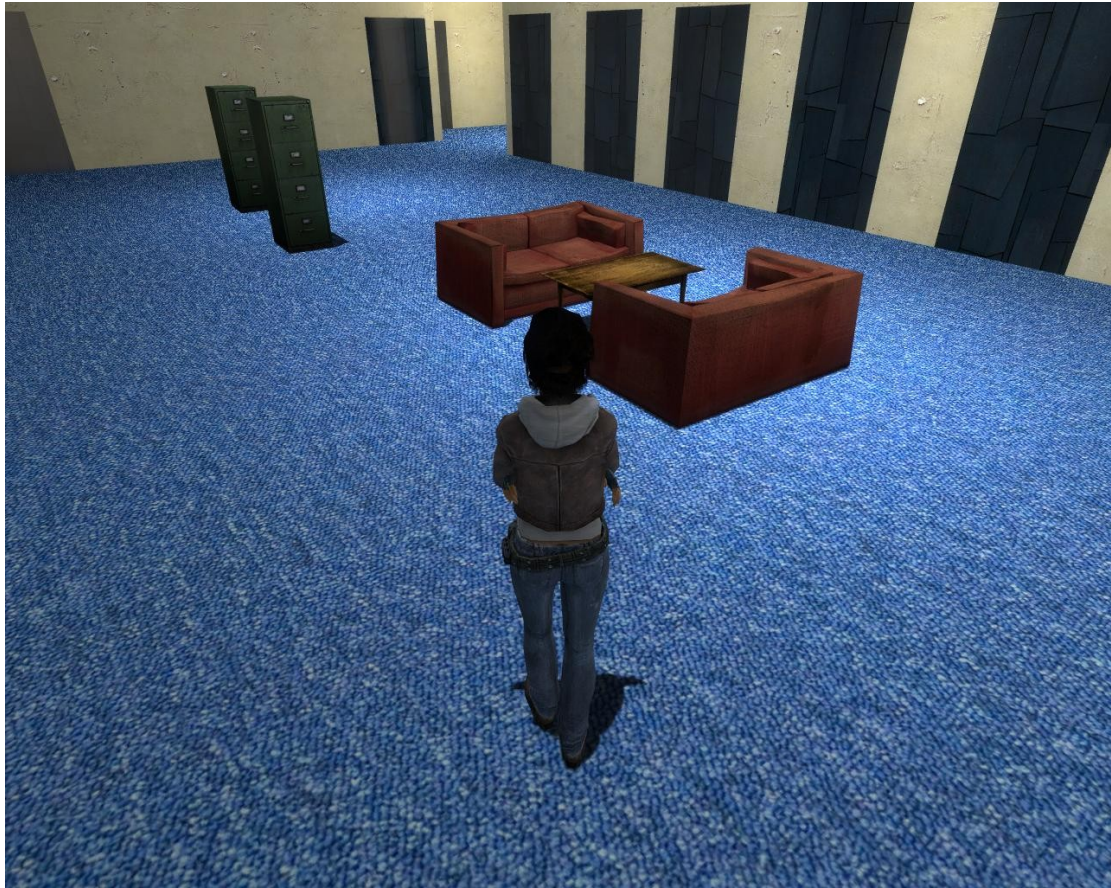
<http://www.jcb33.co.uk/host/Uni/Group%20-%20Map/Group%20-%20Map.rar>

Concept design examples, The Atrium and The Quad:



Images from the map, in order – Building Entrance – Comp Lab C – Faculty Office:





# Appendix 2:

Documentation Contributions

**Assignment 1 – Contribution:**

043315026	Toby Arnold	19%
06039966	Jason Gunn	20%
052429198	Stuart Horwood	12%
06045447	Kenny Gorton	12%
06032396	Mitchell Williams	20%
05004268	William Davies	17%

**Assignment 3 – Contribution:**

043315026	Toby Arnold	19%
06039966	Jason Gunn	19%
052429198	Stuart Horwood	15%
06045447	Kenny Gorton	16%
06032396	Mitchell Williams	16%
05004268	William Davies	15%

**Assignment 4 – Contribution:**

043315026	Toby Arnold	20%
06039966	Jason Gunn	17%
052429198	Stuart Horwood	11%
06045447	Kenny Gorton	14%
06032396	Mitchell Williams	19%
05004268	William Davies	19%

**Assignment 5 – Contribution:**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Number:</b>	<b>Mark:</b>
Stuart Horwood	052429198	25%
Jason Gunn	06039966	30%
Ken Gorton	06045447	10%
William Davies	05004268	10%
Mitchell Williams	06032396	0%
Toby Arnold	04315026	25%

# Appendix 3:

Minutes

These are minutes from the held meetings, taken by William Davies, they are to evidence specific things within this assignment.

[ 1 ]

**Minutes Summary for the weeks of 21/11/07 – 28/11/07**

Attendance issues experienced with much of the group. Will, Ken, Mitch and Stuart sporadically appear.

Some basic preliminary speculative discussion concerning the forthcoming Group Design Document assessment.

[ 2 ]

**Minutes Summary for the weeks of 21/11/07 – 28/11/07**

Attendance issues experienced with much of the group. Will, Ken, Mitch and Stuart sporadically appear.

Some basic preliminary speculative discussion concerning the forthcoming Group Design Document assessment.

[ 3 ]

**Minutes Summary for the weeks of 07/11/07 – 14/11/07**

Very little activity during meetings for this period.

Group members primarily concerned with the individual submission due in the week commencing on the twelfth of November.

Consequently attendance quite low.

[ 4 ]

**Minutes for the week of 31/10/07**

Final touches put to Requirements Analysis assignment.

Final document collated from individual segments formed and then tweaked to integrate the separately produced elements.

Toby completes Gantt chart.

Mitch to complete the hand-in itself due to the unavoidable absence of other group members later in the week.

[ 5 ]

**Minutes for the week of 12/12/07****Roles assigned.**

Stuart and Will will volunteer dialogue script duties. Decided by coin toss. Stuart – tails. Will – heads. Heads wins.

Ken assigned to audio work. Voice recording, sound effects and stuff.

Stuart assigned as art director. Some level design.

Mitch suggested assigning small teams to each space. Two people: a mapper and a modeller assigned to two spaces out of four.

Toby and Jason assigned to mapping.

Jason assigned to MHAC and Sports Hall on Toby's suggestion.

Toby assigned to Atrium and Quad

Testing to be run by everyone, with builds distributed every so often with everyone writing error reports.

**Design document**

Will doing justification for assigned tasks.

Toby and Jason on design overview.

Ken doing quality plan.

Stuart doing changes and design overview

Mitch doing configuration management

Deadline set for individual contributions as Thursday night or Saturday morning.

**Work to be done and order done in**

Levels should be first.

Sports hall does not need to be fully modelled since the player camera can be "hijacked" and severely limited so we don't have to construct the entire whole building.

Sports hall needs to be noisy. Busy place sounds recorded from somewhere.

Art style should have a retro futuristic edge to it. Features of buildings should be exaggerated as well as those of people.

Easter eggs should be put into the levels.

Floor plans of the buildings need to be attained.

Set up of forum or ftp suggested again as a platform for remote collaboration.

Individual folder structure suggested. Individual registers of files, changes and backup locations also suggested.

MSN contacts shared in order to facilitate remote communication:

ken gorton - [iowa15uk@hotmail.com](mailto:iowa15uk@hotmail.com)

Stuart - [mangledchicken1@hotmail.com](mailto:mangledchicken1@hotmail.com)

Will Davies - [telek\\_ancnt@hotmail.com](mailto:telek_ancnt@hotmail.com)

Toby - [guardianac00@hotmail.com](mailto:guardianac00@hotmail.com)

Jason - [06039966@students.lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:06039966@students.lincoln.ac.uk)

Mitch Williams - [mitchwilliams1@hotmail.com](mailto:mitchwilliams1@hotmail.com)

[ 6 ]

### **Minutes for the week of 09/01/08**

Preparation for the presentation assignment commences.

The presentation has two basic sections to it: The requirements and the design.

It is decided to attempt to divide the work up evenly with each group member producing and presenting the slides to which they are assigned.

Later in the week many of the group members express concern over the actual presentation itself as information filters back from other groups that their verbal feedback has been quite harsh.

[ 7 ]

### **Minutes summary for the weeks of 23/01/08 – 6/02/08**

While work on the mod itself gets underway attendance issues continue.

The effectiveness of the group suffers as Toby and Jason often find themselves the only attendees at meetings.

Duncan the group supervisor sends out emails and eventually it is decided that perhaps if all group members were to attend the Monday morning supervisor meeting then things might improve.

[ 8 ]

### **Minutes for the week of 13/02/08**

Stuart not in attendance. Despite his claims to the contrary we have yet to see a sufficient contribution. Action to be taken.

Modified gantt chart states that maps are to be completed by the end of the month. Schematics need to be obtained to ensure proper scaling and layouts as opposed to approximations.

Mitch has taken photographic references of things in the atrium.

Coding to commence in march.

Friday meeting 10am in comp lab A to discuss progress during the week.

No other business.

[ 9 ]

### **Minutes for the week of 20/02/08**

Basic demo map produced by Toby for demonstration to group supervisor.

Stuart produces head model for same demonstration.

Still some issues with attendance. Will absent.

Quality assurance and testing of final product discussed.

Most testing will be performed as the mod is made, since it is small and comparatively uncomplicated this shouldn't present a problem.

Also small scale user study to be performed. Most likely using the members of the group who are not working on the maps themselves.

[ 10 ]

### **Minutes summary for the weeks of 27/02/08 – 05/03/08**

Work continues on final product in the run up to the Easter break.

Not a great deal to discuss as people go about their assigned tasks.

Attendance continues to be an issue but is somewhat improving. Still the usual suspects.

[ 11 ]

### **Minutes for the week of 12/03/08**

This week: - Last meeting with Duncan Rowland. First meeting with new group supervisor Matt Lagner.

Preperation for final group submission commences prior to two week Easter holiday.

[ 12 ]

**Minutes for the week of 2/4/08**

First scheduled meeting with Matt Lagner, the new group supervisor, this week.

Work for the final group submission commences.

Toby and Jason begin to wrap up their maps.

Stuart to collect existing concept art for the appendix, also to embellish the existing material with new art for features that were not included in the final mod either due to time or resource constraints.

[ 13 ]

**Minutes for the week of 9/4/08**

Work continues on the final group submission.

Toby and Jason put the finishing touches to their maps.

Will assigned to produce the first part of the write up. Also the collection and editing of the minutes of the group meetings.

Toby and Jason produce the second part of the write up.