

WELCOME TO GAME DEVELOPMENT: WRITING AT FALMOUTH.

Dear [NAME]

Welcome to Game Development: Writing at Falmouth.

We're getting in touch with some important information about your course as you prepare to join us. At the end of this letter, you will also find information about how you can make sure your skills and knowledge are of a standard whereby you will be able to hit the ground running from day one.

At the back of this letter there is also a list of equipment that you should bring with you, as well as any other costs that you might incur throughout your course.

Your academic experience will be predominantly in person with some courses using a small amount of digital resources to support your learning. To engage in the digital learning activity, although you will be able to access IT suites on campus, you will benefit from a laptop to access the platforms and tools we use. You will be provided with free access to the Microsoft Office suite, (including Word, Excel and PowerPoint) while you study at Falmouth.

If you are eligible for a loan from Student Finance and have not yet applied, please do so immediately to ensure the loan is approved before you enrol. Once you enrol you are liable for the tuition fees. You can find more information from the Student Loans Company at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/student-loans-company> . Advice on managing your finances whilst studying can be found on the University's website here: <https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/study/student-funding/how-much-does-it-cost>

While you are doing your projects at university, you can engage with our community online. Join our Discord and introduce yourself: <link.falmouth.games/discord>

Over the summer, you can join our Step into Falmouth Sessions. These online workshops are designed to provide advice and guidance on settling into university life. They are scheduled to take place across three weeks in July and August. Some of them will also be recorded so you can watch them back at a time that suits you. More information can be found at <https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/experience/new-students/step-into-falmouth>

Over the summer, if you have any questions, you can join the Student Mentor team on Discord to talk about the course, living in Cornwall and what to expect at Falmouth. Our mentors are already studying on your course, so ask them anything you like. Find them at <https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/experience/new-students/mentoring> . Alternatively, email your name and your course to: studentmentors@falmouth.ac.uk and they will be in touch.

Over the next few weeks, we'll email you more important information about your course and life at Falmouth. If you're going to be away or out of contact, make sure you ask someone to check your emails and reply on your behalf.

We know there is a lot to think about before you start at university. So, we're here to help. If you have any questions, just get in touch with Applicant Services on +44(0)1326 213730, use LiveChat on our website or email applicantsservices@falmouth.ac.uk

Finally, we wish you an enjoyable summer and we're looking forward to welcoming you to Falmouth in September.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B McDonald', written in a cursive style.

Brian McDonald

Head of Games, **Games Academy**
Brian.McDonald@falmouth.ac.uk

Getting started

Your offer

If you have a conditional offer, your place is subject to meeting those conditions. This means we're waiting to receive your results or some more information before your place can be finalised. You can see these conditions on your UCAS Hub

<https://accounts.ucas.com/account/login>

If you need to ask us anything about your offer, get in touch with our Applicant Services team on +44(0)1326 213730, use LiveChat on our website or

email applicantsservices@falmouth.ac.uk

Enrolment and Student Terms & Conditions

You'll get an email two weeks before the start of term telling you how to enrol online. You'll need to enrol before the first day of term to officially register as a student of Falmouth University and receive your undergraduate student loan.

When you enrol, you'll need to agree to and comply with the University's Student Terms & Conditions. These Terms & Conditions are important, and we encourage you to read them carefully, before enrolling. You can find them under 'Student Terms & Conditions' on our website www.falmouth.ac.uk/student-regulations

Tuition fees (per year)

2023-2024 full-time UK: £9,250

2023-2024 full-time International: £17,460

Term dates

You can find our term dates on the website at falmouth.ac.uk/experience/term-dates/term-dates-2023-24

Study Block 1 starts on Monday 18 September.

Teaching and assessment will be throughout the full 15 weeks of the study blocks.

Your timetable

Your academic timetable shows all scheduled learning activities and your course timetable. It will be published in early September. After you've enrolled, you can view it via the Student Portal at falmouth.myday.cloud/ or the Falmouth University App. You can download the app by searching the Google Play Store or Apple Store.

Welcome Week

Your timetable will show you where you need to go and when on Monday 18 September and throughout the week.

This is the week when you'll meet your course mates, course tutors and University staff. There will be important inductions to both your course and the wider University facilities and services, in addition to social activities organised by the University and Students' Union.

Pre-course preparation Project

At this stage many students want to know what we'd recommend they do to be properly prepared for the course in September. The primary tool we will be using for game-making in the first term is Unity. The version we are using in the coming session, can be downloaded below:

https://download.unity3d.com/download_unity/d74737c6db50/Windows64EditorInstaller/UnitySetup64-2022.3.2f1.exe

Please begin to familiarise yourself with this software as soon as you can. It's free and the tutorials are located at <https://learn.unity.com/tutorials>

We'll be expecting students to have undertaken several of the beginner level Unity tutorials, in order to hit the ground running with the software in September. The more familiar you are with this software, the easier you will find the course. Developing and keeping up to date with the software is something we never stop expecting students to do.

Do not neglect learning Unity. The 'Fungus' unity plugin can help you familiarise yourself with the engine while also allowing you to produce narrative games with little coding experience.

You should also download text-based game engine 'Twine' (free) - <https://twinery.org/>, you can create interactive stories which have similar challenges as creating narrative in video games.

Pre-course preparation Writing - Delve into as many story-based games as you can. Try to read and play broadly. Try AAA games like *The Last of Us* (approximately £15), looking at the differences between the structural delivery of heavily authored linear and non-linear games; to narrative indie games like *Firewatch*, (approximately £7 to £14). Also look at *The Stanley Parable* (approximately £2 to £10) and the *Beginner's Guide* (£3 to £7), to understand how writing can be used to effect within smaller budgets. Play games that champion visual storytelling practices without using text, such as *Journey* (approximately £12 to £20). Play text-based games, like *A Dark Room* (approximately £0.79) to see how literary practices can inform games writing craft.

Materials and equipment list and costs**Essential****Laptop and Desktop Advice**

The latest advice about which computers we recommend you buy for your course is available here:

link.falmouth.games/computer-advice

Global supply chain issues are having an impact on the prices of computers, due to the availability of computer chips, which means you don't get as much for your money at the

moment than would usually be the case. However, you will have access to machines with a very high specification in our studios where you'll be expected to do most of your work.

Headset with Microphone

You will need a headset with a microphone for some classes. We recommend purchasing a high-quality headset for your comfort. Manufacturers such as *Sennheiser*, *Razer*, *HyperX* and *Corsair* are rated highly by our current students. These can cost between £30 - £150.

Webcam

You will need a webcam in some teaching. Manufacturers such as *Logitech*, *Microsoft*, and *Razer* are rated highly by our current students. These can cost between £25 - £100.

Internet Access

It is important that you secure sufficient access to the Internet as some materials are made available to you through our virtual learning environment. We recommend a fibre broadband connection if available, but a minimum of at least 5Mbps will be suitable for livestreaming content.

If you have further questions, need more detailed advice or would like us to check the suitability of a particular model, then please email games.support@falmouth.ac.uk

Reading list and costs

All routes

Optional

Since we'll be studying games and the theory of games studies as well as making them, these books are relevant:

King, G. and Krzywinska, T., 2005. *Tomb raiders and space invaders*. IB Taurus. RRP £19.00.

Suits, B., 1978. *The Grasshopper: games, life and utopia*. Broadview Press. RRP £15. (Get the 2005 edition with the green cover if you can, it has lovely illustrations)

Salen, K. and Zimmerman, E., 2003. *Rules of play: game design fundamentals*. MIT Press. RRP £30.00

Macklin, C. and J. Sharp., 2016. *Games, Design and Play: A Detailed Approach to Iterative Game Design*. RRP £30.00

Keith, Clinton., 2010. *Agile Game Development with SCRUM*. RRP £42.99

We recommend familiarising yourself with these websites, often used in the wider game development world:

Gamesindustry.biz: www.gamesindustry.biz/
 Well Played Journal: <http://press.etc.cmu.edu/wellplayed>
 Game Developer: <https://www.gamedeveloper.com>
 GDC Vault: www.gdcvault.com/

