

AKKREDITERINGS- RAPPORT

Bachelor in Game Development
Noroff University College

2026



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Grad/studiepoeng	Bachelor/180 studiepoeng
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Introduction

NOKUT ensures the quality of Norwegian higher education through, among other things, supervision of institutions' systematic quality work, accreditation of new study programs, and supervision of established programs. Universities and university colleges have varying authority to establish study programs. If institutions wish to establish a program beyond their authority, they must apply to NOKUT for accreditation of the program.

The expert committee appointed by NOKUT has assessed the application from Noroff University College for accreditation of Bachelor in Game Development. The committee has compiled its assessments in this report.

About this report

NOKUT's method for accrediting study programs, as described in Appendix 2 of this report, allows the committee to revise its assessments and conclusions during the evaluation process if new information becomes available. That is the case in this report. The committee's additional assessments are presented under the relevant provisions.

Hege Brodahl
Director for Higher Education

All NOKUT's assessments are public, and this and similar reports will be electronically available on our website www.nokut.no.

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1 Information regarding the applicant institution

Noroff University College (NUC) is a private institution established in 1987. It offers a range of bachelor programmes with a strong emphasis on digital and technological fields. NUC has campuses in Oslo and Bergen, as well as extensive online education options. Together with the Swedish institution Nackademin, NUC is part of a larger Nordic partnership.

NUC is a non-accredited institution for higher education and must thus apply to NOKUT for accreditation of all education programmes. The quality assurance system of NUC was approved by NOKUT in 2024.

2 Decision

Vilkårene i forskrift til universitets- og høyskoleloven §§ 1-10 til 1-18 av 1. august 2025 er oppfylt. NOKUT akkrediterer Bachelor in Game Development (180 studiepoeng) ved Noroff University College.

Akkrediteringen er gyldig fra vedtaksdato.

3 Expert assessment

This chapter is the expert committee's assessment. The term "we" refers to the expert committee as such.

3.1 Summary

Noroff University College (NUC) has applied for accreditation of Bachelor in Game Development (bachelor i spillutvikling). This section summarizes the expert committee's evaluation.

The programme meets the provisions of the Universities and University Colleges Act regarding admission. Requirements for admission are Higher Education Entrance Qualification, alternatively older applicants with relevant work experience, and documented proficiency in the English language. We recommend that NUC requests older students to submit their portfolios for use of assessing the relevance of their former work.

Information about the programme is thorough and clearly shows its content, structure and progression, as well as opportunities for student exchanges. However, we advise adding more research-based material to the syllabus and including 'game' in the specialisation names to make them more precise. We find that the learning outcomes for the programme align with the National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning, and the programme title is appropriate for its content. We only advise some clarifications to make the learning outcomes easier to comprehend.

The programme seems academically up to date with a relevance both in relation to further studies and a professional career. However, we advise to revolve some subjects and curriculum more around scientific research to better prepare students for a master's programme. The workload of the programme appears purposeful and adequate. The applicant has provided a detailed overview of how the workload is divided between courses and activities, and we consider this to be satisfactorily accounted for.

The programme is divided into three specialisations based on needs within the game development industry. The applicant outlines an infrastructure to take care of both campus-based and remote students. We are still left with some unanswered questions in relation to the logistics between the different student groups, and there is some potential for improvement in relation to the curriculum, but all in all we find the content, structure, and infrastructure satisfactory.

We consider the learning and assessment methods chosen are appropriate to the programme's learning outcomes. It is a general focus on making students take an active role in the learning process, but we advise more reflections around organization and logistics related to teaching and assessment.

The programme has many strong connections to research and/or artistic development work and academic development work, given that many of the employees have extended experience from relevant industries and there is a high research activity among a few

members of the staff. However, we find the link to research and/or artistic development work and academic development work not satisfactory, due to these not being satisfactorily reflected in the curriculum and learning outcomes. We also find the research environment within this team too vulnerable and dependent on a few individuals. The composition, size and competence of the staff appear satisfactory, but we require the hiring of a professor who has the expertise to fill the gaps and strengthen the team and most of all the research connection to the programme.

We do not find the teaching staff's educational competence to be adequate. The staff has significant experience in teaching but no formal training in education. NUC mentions some good initiatives, but we cannot see that any of them have resulted in providing the staff documented, formal training in pedagogics, or similar.

We find that the internationalisation requirements are fulfilled as they are adapted to the programme's ambition and appropriately implemented to fit the progression and logistics of the programme. The team actively participates in national and international partnerships and networks relevant for the programme, but we advise continuously work to expand their network of contacts both when it comes to industrial and academic partners.

The teaching staff meets the quantitative requirements for a first cycle degree, both when it comes to employees with principal positions at the applicant institution and the number of staff with senior academic positions. We find the teaching staff's research and/or artistic research and academic development work not to be fulfilled, and therefore with potential for improvements. We advise getting more of the staff members involved with research projects to make these endeavors more sustainable within the team.

The expert committee does not recommend accreditation of the programme in its current state. However, we wish to grant a deferred approval on the condition that NUC fulfills all the remaining requirements.

Assessment after the institution's response to the report draft

NUC has commented on the committee's preliminary assessments and has documented several changes, both sections that were not approved in the draft and sections that were approved. We have made a new assessment based on the institution's response and additional documentation.

In its response, NUC has shown a stronger link between research and the study programme, as well as demonstrated how they will ensure that students develop critical and ethical perspectives. We have therefore changed our conclusion of this requirement. NUC has also documented the staff's educational competence better, and with a plan for further development of the overall educational competence, this requirement is also met after the response.

NUC intends to hire a professor, but until the person is hired, the requirements are not fulfilled. We ask that NUC hires a professor with expertise in 3D art and animation, who can contribute with relevant research, before the programme can be accredited.

Assessment after the institution's response to the conditional approval

NUC has promoted one of the existing staff members to professor, and the committee consider this a strengthening of the programme's academic competence. Further one other staff member has increased the working hours. Although the committee assess the academic environment and the research output to be only just within the pain threshold, the requirements are now fulfilled, and the committee recommends accreditation of the programme.

3.2 Basic prerequisites for accreditation

3.2.1 Demands expressed in the Universities and College Act

Regulations on Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Section 3-1 (4) It is a condition for accreditation being granted that the requirements of the Universities and University Colleges Act are met. Regulations adopted under the authority of Section 3-2 of the Universities and University Colleges Act shall form the basis for the accreditation.

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-1 (1) The requirements of the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges and its corresponding regulations must be met.

Assessment

The requirements for governance, regulations, appeals committee, learning environment committee, and quality assurance system have not been assessed at this time as the institution is an accredited college. Only relevant requirements in the Regulations on Admission to Higher Education, Diplomas, and Diploma Supplement have been assessed in the section.

The Diploma and Diploma Supplement are produced using the national template provided by the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (Universitets- og høyskolerådet). The committee has no comments regarding this.

The programme adheres to the regulations on admission to higher education. For general admission, as per the admission requirements on NUC's website¹, the applicant must have Higher Education Entrance Qualification and be able to document proficiency in the English language according to requirements by Samordna Opptak. The programme also allows admission based on prior learning and work experience. In this case, a written application is needed for evaluation as well as an English language requirement and an age requirement whereby applicants must be 25 years of age in the year of admission. We believe that previous employment and age will not always be sufficient to judge interest and suitability

¹ <https://www.noroff.no/en/admission/admission-requirements>

and therefore recommend also requiring work samples for this applicant group. As this programme presumably will not be part of the IT programmes at NUC, no additional mathematical requirement applies.

Different recruitment paths can create a diversity that can enrich the learning environment which is a strength of the application. At the same time, this can challenge the goal to offer the same learning outcomes to all students, since their prior knowledge, experience and age may differ greatly. It may therefore be appropriate to consider group-based, customized onboarding strategies at the beginning to reconcile their starting points.

Although there is pressure from the government to strengthen Norwegian as a professional language in higher education, it seems relevant that this programme runs in English, given that the Norwegian gaming industry is small, and it may therefore be relevant for more students to apply for positions internationally.

Conclusion

The requirements are fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- consider requiring work samples from industrial experience to support the written application in cases of admission without Higher Education Entrance Qualification

3.2.2 Information about the programme

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-1 (2) Information provided about the programme must be correct and show the programme's content, structure and progression, as well as opportunities for student exchanges.

Assessment

The structure and content of the programme are clearly stated in the course handbook. Learning outcomes, teaching methods and forms of assessment are explained. The course descriptions seem thoughtful and relevant to equip students for a professional career. At the same time, the reading lists are dominated by textbooks and less scientific research within the field and a focus on the games industry. This weakens the academic aspect of the programme and can make the step towards a possible future master's degree more difficult.

In relation to mobility, the programme offers a semester abroad at either Teesside University (UK) or Deakin University (Australia). Although flexibility is offered, exchange is primarily reserved for the fifth semester, which we find appropriate in relation to achieving a predictable learning outcome throughout the bachelor's programme. The timing is also adequate as it gives students enough time to enrol and settle at their home institution.

The programme offers three different elective specialisations, Environment Art, Technical Art, and Systems Design. This appears to be a natural division in relation to equipping students for specialized roles within the industry, which the applicant has confirmed in communication with the game studio Krillbite. To make the connection to Game Development explicit, we suggest updating these to Environment Game Art, Technical Game Art, and Game Systems Design (or Systems Design for Games) respectively which would strengthen the identity of the programme. With the specialisations consisting of mandatory courses only, the possibilities of student exchange might be limited to those universities with a very similar curriculum.

This is also noted in our assessment under 3.3.4 but we advise outlining a strategy for adapting the learning activities to whether the students are online or campus-based to ensure an alignment of their respective learning outcomes.

The institution is advised to:

- include Game in the specialisation names
- strengthen the syllabus by including more research-based material

Assessment after the institution's response to the report draft

In their response to the committee's preliminary assessments, NUC refers more clearly to research in the updated course syllabus, which seems promising for the emphasis on research in future study program delivery. They have also adjusted the title of the various educational specialisations, and that is positive for identifying which professions and industries the programme is aimed at. The committee has decided to withdraw the points of advice.

Conclusion

The requirement is fulfilled.

3.3 Demands to the educational provision

3.3.1 Learning outcome and title of programme

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (1) The learning outcomes for the programme must be in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning, and the programme must have an appropriate title.

Assessment

The overall learning outcomes of the programme follow the structure and (in most cases) the wording of the National Qualification Framework (NQF). Close reading of the overarching programme learning outcomes and the specialisation specific learning outcomes could have been made easier with a comprehensive table for each of the

specialisations, in which overarching goals and the underlying specialisation goals are included rather than as separate tables and connect all learning outcomes to the NQF formulation, see e.g. the table below listing the first knowledge learning outcome as stated in the application.

NQF	Noroff
has knowledge of important topics, theories, problems, processes, tools and methods in the subject area	has broad knowledge of industry standard techniques, processes, and tools within the game development industry, AND has broad knowledge of game development theories, methods, and current issues within the games development industry AND has broad knowledge of important topics, theories, issues, processes, tools and methods that are used in environment art for games OR has broad knowledge of important topics, theories, issues, processes, tools and methods that are used within technical art in game development OR has broad knowledge of important topics, theories, issues, processes, tools and methods that are used within systems design for games

Regarding the shared programme learning outcome, the formulation of K3 "current, and emerging research" could be simplified to just "current". A similar simplification might be relevant for G1, "social, psychological, and ethical responsibilities related to game development." to just "ethical" given the course descriptions available. S1 on the other hand narrows the NQF formulation of "can apply academic knowledge to practical and theoretical problems and explain his/her choices" to practical problems only as seen in the NUC formulation "can apply academic knowledge and their results from research and development work to practical projects and make justified, well-informed, decisions and choices to improve their work." This is too narrow. K3 and G3 in Environmental Art specialisation are examples of very specific learning outcomes in the specialisations. The letters referring to "Knowledge", "Skills" and "General Competence" and the mentioned section.

Name of the programme

The name of the programme is simple and descriptive. What the name lacks in complexity is compensated by the names of the specialisations, as they provide more insight into the

thematic coverage. Especially if the suggestion to add “Game” to the specialisation name is followed, which was discussed in 3.2.2.

Finally, the name “Game Development” also creates expectations of the history of (digital) game design which seems to be embedded in some courses but together with the connection to research would strengthen the programme vis-à-vis reflection and critical thinking. The link to research is further discussed in 3.3.6. This is clearly related to NQF learning outcome 4 in the group “knowledge” (The candidate is familiar with the subject area’s history, traditions, distinctive nature and place in society). NUC refers to websites² showing examples of such an inclusion of the history of games and game development.

The institution is advised to:

- review the wording of the learning outcomes and clarify how the general and specialisation specific learning outcomes relate to each other and to the NQF learning outcomes
- ensure that the programme relates to theoretical and practical aspects of the subject

Assessment after the institution’s response to the report draft

The updated list of learning outcomes clarified the connections between the general and specialisation specific learning outcomes. Moreover, the theoretical aspects of the subject have been clarified and the general learning outcomes are now in a better balance, in particular via the updated reading lists. The committee has decided to withdraw the points of advice.

Conclusion

The requirement is fulfilled.

3.3.2 The programme’s academic update and professional relevance

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (2) The programme must be academically up-to-date and have clear academic relevance for further studies and/or employment.

Assessment

The programme offers three specialisation areas which appear appropriate and relevant to game development. Even though the Norwegian game industry is still nascent compared to other countries, it is growing and professionals within these fields will likely be in demand in the years to come. Not least since interactivity and real-time graphics is increasingly

² <https://online.lindenwood.edu/programs/bachelors-game-design/>
https://catalog.andersonuniversity.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=24&poid=2633

being implemented outside the game industry in the media industry, simulation, training, and visualization amongst others.

Although the technology is rapidly changing, the programme's core elements (design, narrative, visual communication and interaction) hold timeless qualities which are relevant and transferrable across multiple evolving fields. NUC describes several concurrent circumstances the game industry needs to adapt to, such as microtransactions and AI, without this being reflected in the learning outcomes.

NUC lists a handful of master's programmes the students can apply to after graduating. Apparently, some alumni students from NUC's current bachelor's programme have since enrolled in these very master's programmes, and NUC argues that its proposed Bachelor in Game Development could be an even better fit for admission to these master's. However, we advise a deeper connection to the Scandinavian / European context, given the size of the Norwegian game industry. As preparation for second cycle studies, the programme also needs to strengthen its connection to research other than its practice-oriented pillar, and must use an updated reading lists for its courses. A slightly less detailed list of learning outcomes at the specialisation level will enable the applicant to update themes and practices in a dynamic way.

It is important that the courses and their curricula are constantly updated to maintain relevance in a rapidly developing field. Overly specific learning outcomes are a barrier. More up to date literature and more scientific research material will improve preparation for master level studies, as will an extended network in the Scandinavian / European context.

The institution is advised to:

- adjust courses and curriculum to better prepare students for a master's programme

Assessment after the institution's response to the report draft

The updated program and course descriptions, including the learning outcomes and reading list, indicate an improved preparation for master level studies. The explicit connection of specific master programs to the different specialisations also supports this. The committee has decided to withdraw the points of advice.

Conclusion

The requirement is fulfilled.

3.3.3 The programme's workload

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (3) The total workload of the programme must be between 1,500 and 1,800 hours per year for full-time students.

Assessment

Students with campus-based attendance are estimated to spend 40 hours per week, over three academic years (each of 10 months duration), giving a total of 180 credits for the full bachelor's degree.

Part-time students have their workload reduced to 20 hours per week, which is stretched over six academic years to achieve the same number of credits. The applicant has provided a detailed overview of how the workload is divided between courses and activities, and we consider this to be satisfactorily accounted for.

Conclusion

The requirement is fulfilled.

3.3.4 The programme's content, structure and infrastructure

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (4) The programme's content, structure and infrastructure must be adapted to the programme's learning outcomes.

Assessment

The content and structure of the study programme

The choice of the specialisations is rooted in needs within the game development industry, confirmed NUC's contacts in the game studio Krillbite. Since these three specialisations are essential within the industry, we consider it a wise way to structure the programme.

However, we also feel that just one small game studio is a limited base for curriculum design and advise NUC to extend its network, in both Norway, Scandinavia and Europe.

The application contains thorough descriptions of learning outcomes both for the shared courses and the three specialisations. Some themes that could also have been considered for the shared learning outcomes are entrepreneurship and funding/financing. The Norwegian games industry is still quite small, and some graduates might need to establish their own companies rather than being recruited into larger studios.

After a shared first year, specialisation courses and shared courses alternate, in principle all in 10 ECTS packages apart from the 30 ECTS bachelor thesis. Starting with joint courses, then moving onto more specialist courses, and finally culminating in a joint bachelor's project seems like a reasonable progression for the students. NUC should, however, look at the specific order of subjects. For example, for the specialisation in Technical Art the course Shaders and Style should come early, as specific styles would influence the course Rigging and Animation.

There are some works in the reading list that are old and cover media other than game industry, such as McKee's Story. Although a classic, there are more recent publications which covers storytelling in more spatial and/or interactive media which would be more

appropriate for this programme, such as recent works in interactive narration as produced by the European COST network in the last few years.

NUC should list examples of scientific journal articles covering more than the practical aspects, e.g., about ethics which is described in the overarching learning outcomes. In general, the connection between the programme and academic research is weak and the amount of peer-reviewed research articles is sparse. This might not be of much significance for producing games but could weaken the development of critical thinking and reflection, as well as the transition to a possible more theoretical master's programme later.

The infrastructure of the study programme

The students are offered three types of participation: online, online plus (with partial access to campus) and campus-based. It would be helpful to provide a more detailed explanation of how equal participation opportunities are ensured, especially for fully online students, beyond just remote access to online facilities. It is for instance not clear if all practical work can be carried out online without any hindrance or if the online students must obtain advanced equipment and software themselves. Neither is it clear how collaboration in projects will work. If NUC has previous experiences with the three participation types, it could have been described and clarified in the application. Game engines and development software usually requires a gaming computer or similar quality. The requirements for a computer should be specified for online students. For example, these are the requirements from Høgskolen Kristiania³: Windows 7/10, 64-bit, Quad-core Intel or AMD processor, 2.5 GHz or faster, NVIDIA GeForce 470 GTX or AMD Radeon 6870 HD graphics card or better, 8 GB RAM or better.

The institution is advised to:

- review and consider changing the specific order of courses
- thoroughly describe how online participation is supported
- specify how different modes of student participation are guaranteed a same level of quality of learning environment and fulfilment of the learning outcomes
- specify computer requirements for online students

Assessment after the institution's response to the report draft

In response to the committee's preliminary assessments, NUC has clearly outlined the characteristics for equipment and software requirements. Consequently, the committee has withdrawn one of its advises.

Conclusion

The requirement is fulfilled.

³ <https://www.kristiania.no/aktuelt/2017/10/spilldesign--programvare/>

The institution is advised to:

- review and consider changing the specific order of courses
- thoroughly describe how online participation is supported
- specify how different modes of student participation are guaranteed a same level of quality of learning environment and fulfilment of the learning outcomes

3.3.5 Teaching, learning and assessment methods

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (5) The teaching, learning and assessment methods must be adapted to the programme's learning outcomes. The programme must facilitate students taking an active role in the learning process.

Assessment

Teaching will revolve around Brigg's concept of constructive alignment with focus on students' own efforts and performance. Involving students in relevant activities to facilitate learning is relevant to the practical focus of this programme. The learning outcomes for the courses are clear and NUC describes in detail (with several attachments) for the implementation of constructive alignment, which naturally needs adaptations within each individual course. NUC does not mention any teaching methods that could be unifying for campus-based and online students. Individual activities are carefully described, such as lectures and presentations. What is missing is how these find their places in the framework of the programme for optimising learning. It should be stated in the course handbook what educational approaches are considered. What is needed is an explicit description of the pedagogical method used (e.g. blended learning, flipped classroom, etc) and if there is a difference between the method for campus and online students, this should also be indicated. This will ensure that the method chosen fits the teaching mode (campus or online) and the activities in the specific course

The different courses require specific considerations. For instance, courses with lab activities such as programming, prototyping, etc. have considerations that differ from discussion seminars, teacher-led lectures etc. NUC states its intent to use different strategies but with the underlying goal of providing a "guided, active process of learning and development". NUC explains the different approaches such as Teacher-Led Activities (TLA), Teacher-Supported Work (TSW) and Self-Study (SST). Again, we return to the division of campus-based and online students. Although TLA could conceivably work simultaneously for both student groups, we are more unsure about the satisfactory implementation of TSW and SST. Even though technology, such as screensharing for example, makes remote communication easier, there is a significant difference between physical and digital TSW. This also entails logistical considerations since it will require some extra resources in terms of time to take care of both student groups. When it comes to SST, this will require much more from the students in terms of intrinsic motivation and self-discipline. In order to unite

the students' collaborative activities could have been considered, e.g. activities or interaction via tools such as Miro and Discord.

Conclusion

The requirement is fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- make reflections more on how to organize teaching
- make reflections on how to organize logistics

3.3.6 Links to research and/or artistic development work and academic development work

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (6) The programme must have relevant links to research and academic development work and/or artistic research.

Assessment

Given the employees' previous experience in the games industry and related fields, the programme's connection to artistic development is good. Several of the employees have extensive relevant industry experience and some have a high level of artistic and practical activity that is communicated through presentations and exhibitions at an international level. However, there is a weaker output when it comes to peer-reviewed research among employees. Especially two of the staff have a high research output, but the majority do not, which makes the teaching staff vulnerable in relation to academic research. This could eventually be improved if the right person is hired planned professor position, but we cannot see that a sustainable environment for academic research currently exists. We expect the teaching staff to keep abreast of the latest research developments in their fields, and cannot see that this is reflected in the course descriptions, where the reading lists mainly consist of textbooks on practical and artistic topics. This in itself can be valuable and relevant to the programme but should also be supplemented with material that can stimulate critical thinking and analytical skills in the students. In the Ludic Studies courses, we would have expected this to be more prominent. In our opinion, these courses could include looking at games from perspectives other than purely artistic and practical development, by for example including play theory, game analysis, psychology, sociology and ethics related to games.

The connection to academic research is weak, especially for specialisations that are less artistic-oriented, this implies the overall learning outcomes are not sufficiently fulfilled. NUC must assure that all specialisations fulfil the general requirements of having either a clear scientific research base or an art-oriented base (and preferably both for good master's level preparations).

The institution is required to:

- clearly show that the programme will provide students with critical and ethical perspectives
- implement more scientific theory to give the students an overview of the impact and function of games and play
- link the programme to current research in the field in a clear manner

Assessment after the institution's response to the report draft

In response to the committee's preliminary assessments, NUC has detailed their plans to situate students within the social, psychological, ethical, historical, and other contextual circumstances surrounding game development. NUC's articulation of this awareness has satisfied the assessment criteria for this part. Additionally, the response better integrates research into the course descriptions, and NUC is encouraged to continue incorporating the latest research developments. The requirements have been met.

Conclusion

The requirement is fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- further focus on developing research in general, so that the connection between updated research and the study program becomes clearer

3.3.7 The programme's internationalisation arrangements

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (7) The programme must have internationalisation arrangements adapted to the programme's level, scope and other characteristics.

Assessment

Preparing students for the international industry appears as a clear ambition throughout the application. NUC is involved with international institutions on research initiatives and related activities, as well as exchanging guest lecturers. An organized student exchange is also in place with established collaboration with two partner institutions (as covered in the next section). Several staff members have an international background, which might serve this point good.

Although NUC is involved with other institutions, it could preferably have expanded its portfolio to cooperate with other institutions closer to Norway, as that is often more relevant for the students in terms of collaborations and future careers. NUC could also benefit from collaboration with European game studios, such as Epic Games/Unreal Engine, who in turn has many academic partners all over the world, such as EA Dice (Sweden) or Ubisoft (Spain, France, Finland etc.). These companies usually offer internships for students.

The study programme and learning outcomes are adapted to the international industry and prepare students for a potential international career. The teaching will be in English, thus requiring good command of the English language and all course literature to be in English.

Conclusion

The requirement is fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- collaborate with a variety of international institutions and organisations

3.3.8 The programme's arrangements for international student exchange

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (8) Programmes that lead to a degree must have arrangements for international student exchanges. The content of the exchange programme must be academically relevant.

Assessment

NUC has exchange agreements with Teesside University (UK) and Deakin University (Australia) for student exchange. Their programmes are relevant for NUC students, and a logistics and implementation plan has been created that fits well with the programme and learning outcomes. Nevertheless, it would be advantageous for NUC to affiliate itself with several partner institutions geographical proximity. An exchange in Europe is more practical in terms of future collaboration and career opportunities for the students.

We recommend connecting with more institutions, e.g. Sweden (University of Skövde or Uppsala University) and the Netherlands (Utrecht Art College or Breda University of Applied Sciences) which have strong bachelor and master programmes in game development. Given the composition and background of the teaching staff, increased cooperation with French universities seems like an accessible addition as well.

Conclusion

The requirement is fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- expand its network of contacts in relevant European educational institutions

3.3.9 Supervised professional training

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (9) Programmes that include supervised professional training must have formal agreements between the institution and the host for the supervised professional training.

Assessment

Not applicable for this application.

3.4 Academic environment

3.4.1 The academic environment's composition, size and competence

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (1) The academic environment for each programme must be of a size proportionate to the number of students and the programme's characteristics, be stable over time in terms of competence and have a composition that covers the programme's topics and subjects.

Assessment

The teaching staff consists of eight people, with an additional professor expected to be hired in the future. They have relevant background, and although more people would make logistics more robust the amount of people could be sufficient for running a bachelor's programme.

We consider that the themes in the programme can be well covered within the outlined courses. Nevertheless, we are concerned at the level of academic expertise. Currently, there are only three staff members with senior academic positions, which could be too little for a sustainable research environment. The application relies on the presence of a professor with a background in 3D art and animation. However, it seems the professor is not yet employed. When employed, this professor could nurture research activity within the faculty.

Additionally, we recommend NUC to facilitate other employees striving for a promotion to senior academic positions. This would enhance the teaching staff and also benefit international cooperations.

Some of the staff members have background in programming, but it not easy to discern as it is not clearly visible in their CVs and perhaps stems from work experience a way back in time. We find no apparent connection to programming as an area of research. NUC must either clarify the programming competence among the existing teaching staff or hire a person with first competence qualification in programming.

We recommend employing a professor with a fitting background to cover all topics currently not well covered and also increase the research connection. Given the current staff composition, the professor should have a strong publication record and not be a professor mainly active in art-based work.

The institution is required to:

- hire a professor with relevant competence in 3D art and animation

- ensure the competence in programming

Assessment after the institution's response to the report draft

As a response to the committee's preliminary assessments, NUC has planned to hire a professor and has attached a letter of intent. The committee can assess the requirement only when NUC can present an employment contract and a CV for a professor with expertise in 3D art and animation.

NUC has also hired two new employees with programming skills for the applied program and therefore considers the requirement to strengthen competence in this area as fulfilled.

The institution is required to:

- complete the hiring of a professor with relevant competence in 3D art and animation

Assessment after the institution's response to the conditional approval

The committee acknowledges the measures the institution has implemented to strengthen the academic environment, including the promotion of one employee to professor and the increase in the employment percentage for another employee. A future appointment to a newly created post is also envisaged, but as this has not yet been finalised, it cannot be taken into account at this stage.

In the previous assessment, the committee expressed concern about the level of academic expertise within the program, and in particular the absence of a professor with a sufficiently relevant academic background to support and further develop the program's research activities.

The promotion of a staff member to professor may give the faculty greater strategic flexibility as well as institutional prestige. The faculty could become a more attractive partner in applications for external funding, which in turn would stimulate research activity and expand the faculty's network of contacts. It may also make the faculty more attractive in terms of external supervision, committee work and collaboration on external projects, whether with industry or academia (writing articles, research work, etc.).

The committee notes that the employee in question has now been assessed and formally approved for promotion to professor by an expert committee. The committee accepts this assessment and considers that the institution has thereby met the previously noted requirement regarding the professor's qualifications. The increase in the employment percentage for another employee also contributes positively to the overall capacity of the academic environment.

With regard to previous feedback concerning the disproportionate ratio between the number of students and the specific characteristics of the programme on the one hand, and the number of staff on the other, this remains a concern that must be taken seriously.

With one member of staff promoted and another's working hours have been modestly raised, it will reduce the pressure on the programme's academic staff in running such a

resource-intensive course. Nevertheless, the committee recommends that NUC fill the newly created post to ensure that the study programme can be delivered and sustained over time.

Although the committee remains aware that the academic staff is relatively small in relation to the number of students, it considers that the institution has implemented sufficient measures to meet the relevant criteria. On this basis, the committee concludes that the requirements regarding the composition, size, and competence of the academic environment are now met.

Conclusion

The requirement is fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- fill the newly created post

3.4.2 The academic environment's educational competence

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (2) The academic environment must have relevant educational competence.

Assessment

NUC states that it offers pedagogical training for the employees, but it is not apparent from the application who has actually attended such training. It is also mentioned that the seniors train the junior staff in "pedagogical methodologies" without accounting for what formal competence these seniors have in this regard.

NUC has since 2022 developed a non-credit pedagogy course in collaboration with an external professor. This is an excellent initiative but unfortunately it seems none of the staff so far has participated in this.

Looking through the staff CV's, one employee has a 20 credit "E-pedagogy" course. Most of the staff has extensive experience with teaching but judged by their CV's, no formal training within this field. In general, the staff seems to lack documented, formal training in teaching and pedagogy.

Given the intention to mix campus students with online participating students, the need for concrete pedagogical skills and knowledge is of essence, especially on the challenges of online education and the advantages and disadvantages of hybrid teaching.

The institution is required to:

- ensure more employees have documented relevant formal educational competence

Assessment after the institution's response to the report draft

In response to the committee's preliminary assessments, NUC has provided documentation showing that three employees have completed the NUC-PED course, and that the remaining employees are scheduled to complete it in 2025/2026.

Conclusion

The requirement is fulfilled.

3.4.3 Academic leadership

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (3) The programme must have a clear academic leadership with defined responsibilities for quality assurance and the development of the study programme.

Assessment

The programme has a clear delegation of management responsibility, where individual courses are coordinated by course leaders and the programme as a whole by the Study Programme leader. The Study Programme leader is a senior academic with extensive experience relevant to the programme's content. NUC outlines the hierarchy of leadership, which is structured with the NUC Board and Director at top, then following the Rector, Academic Council, Head of Administration, Head of Subject, and down to the Study Programme Leader, Course Leaders, and so on. In addition to academic leadership, the administration handles non-academic matters to assist the academic staff. This arrangement seems satisfactory for running a bachelor's programme.

In terms of expanding their research activities (and perhaps eventually promoting more employees to senior academic positions), it could be an idea to establish a research group led by an experienced and productive researcher, such as the full-time Associate Professor, or the to-be-hired professor.

The institution is advised to:

- assign leadership to research activities to increase this endeavour

Assessment after the institution's response to the report draft

In response to the committee's preliminary assessments, NUC has provided a mentoring plan, and the committee has withdrawn the advise.

Conclusion

The requirement is fulfilled.

3.4.4 Staff with primary employment

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (4) At least 50 per cent of the academic full-time equivalents affiliated to the programme must be staff with their primary employment at the institution. Of these, academic staff with at least associate professor qualifications must be represented among those who teach the core elements of the programme. In addition, the following requirements apply to the academic environment's level of competence:

- a) For first-cycle programmes, at least 20 per cent of the members of the academic environment must have at least associate professor qualifications.
- b) For second-cycle programmes, at least 50 per cent of the members of the academic environment must have at least associate professor qualifications. Within this 50 per cent, at least 10 per cent must have professor or docent qualifications.
- c) For third-cycle programmes, the academic environment must consist of academic staff with at least associate professor qualifications. At least 50 per cent must have professor qualifications.

Assessment

The teaching staff currently consists of eight academic members, spread over 7.7 full-time equivalents, all of whom have NUC as their primary employer. One more position is planned (professor), making the total number of full-time equivalents 8.7 when this is in place. Of the eight academic employees, three have senior academic qualifications, spread over 2.7 FTEs. For first cycle programmes an additional demand is that at least 20 per cent of the members of the teaching staff must have at least associate professor qualifications. The three senior academics (one *førstelektor* and two *førsteamanuensis*) represent 35 per cent of the team. At least 50 per cent of the academic full-time equivalents affiliated to the programme are staff with their primary employment at the institution. The academic environment thus meets the quantitative requirements.

The application states that the core elements of the programme are design, narrative, and visual communication and interaction. The academic background of the staff is adequate for these core elements, and they are permanent full-time employees. They fulfill the requirements that at least associate professor qualifications must be represented among those who teach the core elements of the programme.

Conclusion

The requirements are fulfilled.

3.4.5 The academic environment's research and/or artistic research and academic development work

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (5) The academic environment must be actively engaged in research and academic development work and/or artistic research, and be able to demonstrate documented results with a satisfactory quality and scope in relation to the programme's content and level.

Assessment

NUC lists a production of 9 publications during the last 5 years, as well as a few other forms of public dissemination, such as conferences etc. The overall output involves both artistic research projects and peer-reviewed academic articles. The publications are relevant but only feature two of the staff members as authors (a third employee is also co-credited once). Involving the other staff members in research activities would improve the general level of research production as well as improve the balance between practice-oriented and research-based course content. It would also make the research output less vulnerable by not being dependent on just two individuals. With the planned hiring of a professor, the research activity will significantly increase.

The institution is required to:

- hire a professor with relevant academic background and active research output

The institution is advised to:

- include more employees in projects, research groups, or similar
- support the staff with career development plans to increase their participation in research

Assessment after the institution's response to the report draft

As a response to the committee's preliminary assessments, NUC has planned to hire a professor and has attached a letter of intent. The committee can assess the requirement only when NUC can present an employment contract, a CV and publication details for a professor with relevant academic background and active research output.

The institution is required to:

- complete the hiring of a professor with relevant academic background and active research output

The institution is advised to:

- include more employees in projects, research groups, or similar
- support the staff with career development plans to increase their participation in research

Assessment after the institution's response to the conditional approval

The committee notes that the institution's research and artistic-practical development activities have remained largely unchanged since the previous evaluation. As previously mentioned, the scholarly publications by the academic staff are relevant to the degree program. However, research activities remain concentrated among a relatively small number of employees.

As described in 3.4.1, NUC has promoted a member of the existing staff to professor. Promotion to professor allows for more time to be devoted to research. Although the proportion has not increased significantly at present, the appointment of more staff (as is currently planned) could free up even more time for such activities and thereby strengthen the faculty and its study programme and make them more sustainable.

The committee places the trust in the expert committee's assessment of the promoted professor and notes that the publications and previous work are more relevant than previously assessed. The committee nevertheless consider it crucial that the promotion does not become a mere formality aimed at securing accreditation. There should be scope for a certain level of research activity and more outward-facing initiatives to ensure that the study programme remains relevant and is continuously enhanced.

The committee therefore reiterates its previous recommendation that the institution should continue to strengthen its research activities, seek a more balanced relationship between research and artistic-practical development work, and encourage broader participation in research among the academic staff. Increasing the number of staff members actively engaged in research will also reduce the vulnerability associated with research activities being dependent on just a few individuals.

With the assessment and the following promotion to professor, the committee consider the content and level of research and development for a Bachelor programme to be satisfactorily fulfilled.

Conclusion

The requirement fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- include more employees in projects, research groups, or similar
- support the staff with career development plans to increase their participation in research

3.4.6 The academic environment's external participation

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (6) The academic environment for programmes that lead to a degree must actively participate in national and international partnerships and networks that are relevant for the programme.

Assessment

NUC has Krillbite Studio as an industrial partner. A connection with a game studio is beneficial to ensure teaching and learning outcomes stay relevant for the industry. However, it may be wise to connect with more industry partners to contribute to a diverse view of the industry and make the connection less vulnerable. When it comes to academic institutions, NUC has ongoing collaborations with University of South Wales, Teesside University, and Deakin University. The publication lists of the staff also show frequent participation in international conferences etc. Additionally, NUC is involved with other relevant partners, such as museums.

We find that NUC could benefit from industrial and academic partners, especially in a Scandinavian / European context, to increase the employability of the students given the size of the Norwegian game industry. See 3.3.7 for concrete suggestions of academic partners.

Conclusion

The requirement is fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- consider more industrial and academic partnerships

3.4.7 Supervision of professional training

Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (7) For programmes involving mandatory supervised professional training, the members of the academic environment must have relevant and updated knowledge from the field of the professional training. The institution must ensure that professional training supervisors have relevant competence and experience in the field of the professional training.

Assessment

Not applicable for this application.

4 Conclusion

Based on the written application and the attached documentation, the expert committee concludes the following:

The committee recommend accreditation of the Bachelor in Game Development at Noroff University College.

5 Documentation

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 23/01092-1 | Noroff University College as – søknad om akkreditering av bachelor i spillutvikling |
| 23/01092-9 | Oppdatering av søknad – bachelor i spillutvikling – søknad om akkreditering |
| 23/01092-14 | Svar på innsending av revidert dokumentasjon – BA i spillutvikling |
| 23/01092-17 | Komplettering – Oversendelse av utkast til rapport – Bachelor in Game Development |
| 26/00573-3 | Svar – Tilsagn om akkreditering – søknad om akkreditering av Bachelor in Game Development – Noroff University College – 180 studiepoeng sendt fra Nasjonalt Organ for Kvalitet i utdanningen |
| 26/00573-6 | Supplering av søknad – Fagmiljøtabell – Bachelor in Game Development |
| 26/00573-8 | Tilbakemelding - Supplering av søknad – Fagmiljøtabell – Bachelor in Game Development |

6 Appendix

Learning outcome of the programme

Environment Art for Games

Knowledge

The candidate

1. has broad knowledge of industry standard techniques, processes, and tools within the game development industry.
2. has broad knowledge of game development theories, methods, and current issues within the games development industry.
3. is familiar with current research and development work in game related technologies and industries.
4. can update their knowledge of game development workflows and practices through academic study, research, and professional development.
5. has knowledge of the history and development of the games industry, its role, cultural significance, and impact on society.
6. has broad knowledge of important topics, theories, issues, processes, tools and methods that are used in environment art for games.
7. is familiar with environmental storytelling, visual communication and player psychology principles in games.

Skills

The candidate

1. can apply academic knowledge and their results from research and development work to practical projects and make justified, well-informed, decisions to improve their work.
2. can reflect upon their own work and identify areas for improvement and adjust their work under supervision and provided feedback.
3. can find, evaluate, and reference relevant academic information and subject-specific content and present this to highlight a problem, or the resolution to a problem.
4. masters industry-standard tools, techniques, and methodologies that are used for developing games.
5. can apply knowledge of spatial and interaction design and processes to develop games.
6. can iterate upon designs utilising player feedback and critical analysis to enhance game experiences.
7. masters relevant tools, techniques and processes for developing environment art in games.

General Competence

The candidate

1. has insight into the social, psychological, and ethical responsibilities related to game development.
2. can plan, execute, and manage their game development projects over time, alone or as part of a collaborative team, and in accordance with ethical requirements and principles within the industry.
3. can communicate effectively using appropriate forms of communication, digitally, orally, and written, to present game development related problems, solutions, theories, and academic arguments in a professional manner.
4. can exchange opinions, experiences, and ideas with their peers and others with a background and/or experience in game development, thereby contributing to the development of good practices within the game development industry.
5. is familiar with current and emerging trends and technologies within the game development industry.
6. can plan and carry out assignments and projects over time as an environment artist within game development.
7. can plan and carry out optimisation of assets and digital content appropriate to hardware and/or software deployment specifications.
8. is familiar with modular workflows and procedural techniques for generating game assets.

Technical Art for Games

Knowledge

The candidate

1. has broad knowledge of industry standard techniques, processes, and tools within the game development industry.
2. has broad knowledge of game development theories, methods, and current issues within the games development industry.
3. is familiar with current research and development work in game related technologies and industries.
4. can update their knowledge of game development workflows and practices through academic study, research, and professional development.
5. has knowledge of the history and development of the games industry, its role, cultural significance, and impact on society.
6. has broad knowledge of important topics, theories, issues, processes, tools and methods that are used within technical art in game development.

7. is familiar with visual communication and mechanics within relevant research and games.
8. has knowledge of the history and impact of visual effects and player communication in games.

Skills

The candidate

1. can apply academic knowledge and their results from research and development work to practical projects and make justified, well-informed, decisions to improve their work.
2. can reflect upon their own work and identify areas for improvement and adjust their work under supervision and provided feedback.
3. can find, evaluate, and reference relevant academic information and subject-specific content and present this to highlight a problem, or the resolution to a problem.
4. masters industry-standard tools, techniques, and methodologies that are used for developing games.
5. can apply knowledge of visual styles to explain their meaning and enhance communication within game design.
6. can find, evaluate and refer to information to provide solutions for complex technical and stylistic challenges in game development.
7. masters relevant tools, techniques and processes for technical art direction in games.

General Competence

The candidate

1. has insight into the social, psychological, and ethical responsibilities related to game development.
2. can plan, execute, and manage their game development projects over time, alone or as part of a collaborative team, and in accordance with ethical requirements and principles within the industry.
3. can communicate effectively using appropriate forms of communication, digitally, orally, and written, to present game development related problems, solutions, theories, and academic arguments in a professional manner.
4. can exchange opinions, experiences, and ideas with their peers and others with a background and/or experience in game development, thereby contributing to the development of good practices within the game development industry.
5. is familiar with current and emerging trends and technologies within the game development industry.
6. can plan and carry out assignments and projects over time as a technical artist within game development.

7. can plan, manage and carry out appropriate scope to technical art assets in a game development project pipeline.
8. is familiar with User Interface and User Experience player conventions and innovations within the game development industry.

Game Systems Design

Knowledge

The candidate

1. has broad knowledge of industry standard techniques, processes, and tools within the game development industry.
2. has broad knowledge of game development theories, methods, and current issues within the games development industry.
3. is familiar with current research and development work in game related technologies and industries.
4. can update their knowledge of game development workflows and practices through academic study, research, and professional development.
5. has knowledge of the history and development of the games industry, its role, cultural significance, and impact on society.
6. has broad knowledge of important topics, theories, issues, processes, tools and methods that are used within systems design for games.
7. is familiar with game engines, scripting languages, mechanics, systems and architectures within game development.
8. has knowledge of best practices in system design, testing, and balancing games during development.

Skills

The candidate

1. can apply academic knowledge and their results from research and development work to practical projects and make justified, well-informed, decisions to improve their work.
2. can reflect upon their own work and identify areas for improvement and adjust their work under supervision and provided feedback.
3. can find, evaluate, and reference relevant academic information and subject-specific content and present this to highlight a problem, or the resolution to a problem.
4. masters industry-standard tools, techniques, and methodologies that are used for developing games.
5. can apply knowledge of system design and conceptual deconstruction to find problems and implement necessary measures for mitigation and prevention.

6. can apply knowledge of constructing interactive systems in an industry standard game engine.
7. can apply knowledge of project management, testing, and user experience analysis to track and enhance game development projects.
8. masters relevant tools, techniques, and processes to build robust game system designs according to project specifications and industry standards.

General Competence

The candidate

1. has insight into the social, psychological, and ethical responsibilities related to game development.
2. can plan, execute, and manage their game development projects over time, alone or as part of a collaborative team, and in accordance with ethical requirements and principles within the industry.
3. can communicate effectively using appropriate forms of communication, digitally, orally, and written, to present game development related problems, solutions, theories, and academic arguments in a professional manner.
4. can exchange opinions, experiences, and ideas with their peers and others with a background and/or experience in game development, thereby contributing to the development of good practices within the game development industry.
5. is familiar with current and emerging trends and technologies within the game development industry.
6. can plan and carry out assignments and projects over time as a systems designer within game development.
7. can plan and carry out mechanics for games that meet intended player experiences.

The accreditation process

NOKUT makes an administrative assessment to ensure that the application and documentation is suitable for external expert review. For applications that have been approved administratively, NOKUT appoints external experts for the evaluation of the application. The external experts have declared that they are legally competent to perform an independent evaluation, and carry out their assignment in accordance with the mandate for expert assessment passed by NOKUT's board, and in accordance with the requirements for educational quality as determined by the Academic Supervision Regulations and Regulations on Quality Assurance in Higher Education. The institution is given the opportunity to comment on the committee's composition.

NOKUT is responsible for the training and guidance of the experts during the entire process. Based on the documentation the expert committee writes their assessment. The expert committee conclude either with a yes or no, as to whether the quality of the educational provision complies with the requirements the Academic Supervision Regulations and Regulations on Quality Assurance in Higher Education. NOKUT also requests that the expert committee advise on further improvements of the programme. All criteria must be satisfactorily met before NOKUT accredits a programme.

If the expert committee recommends accreditation of the programme, the report is sent to the applicant institution, which is then given one week to comment on factual errors. If the committee do not recommend accreditation of the programme, the applicant institution is given three weeks to comment and make smaller adjustments to the programme. The committee receives the institutions comments and submits a revised assessment. The Director of Quality Assurance and Legal Affairs then reaches a final decision about accreditation.

Presentation of the expert committee

Associate professor Ole Christoffer Haga, University of Inland Norway

Ole Christoffer Haga has a long career in the animation industry and is still involved in projects via the studios Trollfilm, Løv Film and Teddy TV. Since 2016, he has been employed full-time at University of Inland Norway (INN) as a senior lecturer and course coordinator. At the same time, he is taking a PhD at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), which is expected to be completed in the fall of 2026, and which has already published two articles. He has also taken on various tasks such as chairing and participating in committees for external evaluation of study programs, promotion applications and scholarship grants, as well as being a union representative.

Professor Henricus «Harko» Verhagen, Stockholm University

Henricus «Harko» Verhagen has after his master's degree in sociology (Amsterdam University) and his PhD in computer and systems sciences (Stockholm University) been employed as a senior lecturer at the department of Computer and Systems Sciences of Stockholm University (docent since 2007). He has published over 130 peer-reviewed conference papers, journal papers and book chapters as well as co-edit several books and conference proceedings. His main research areas include agent-based simulation and computer games. He has also been part of curriculum development in Erasmus+ and Tempus projects, amongst others in the SAGE project supporting the development of a one-year serious games specialisation for computer science programs at universities in Palestine and Tunisia and was an expert reviewer for NOKUT regarding an application for a master programme on game design and interactive simulation. He currently serves as president of the European Social Simulation Association (ESSA).

Student Inger-Marie Ask, Nord University

Inger-Marie Ask is a student in the bachelor's programme in Games and Entertainment Technology in Levanger. Ask has been a class representative for three semesters. She is the vice-chair/secretary of the student organization InDevelopment. InDevelopment organizes Gamejams and other student social activities with focus on collaboration. She is also a board member of Excited, a center for excellent IT teaching. Excited aims to bring Norway to the forefront of innovative IT education through student summer jobs and learning workshops. Inger-Marie has also previously analyzed voter turnout for Drammen kommune, an analysis that was presented to the executive committee, and participated in Holbergprisen at school.



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