

Graduation - 1314

Course name: Graduation

Course Code: GRP

Academic year: 2013 - 2014

Lecturers: All

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Coordinator VA: Ronny Franken – franken.r@nhtv.nl

Coordinator D&P: Mata Haggis – haggis.m@nhtv.nl

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Relation to other courses and industry:

The Demand Based Learning (DBL) stage covers the last one and a half years of your education at IGAD. During it you will achieve level three of learning:

The student is able to apply knowledge and skills for the competency on a level that is required within the game industry as a starting professional, with the ability to advance quickly. While reaching this level, the student has to develop a self-guided learning competency. A graduated student will have reached this level for at least one competency.

The DBL stage is designed to satisfy the demands of the three interested parties: Industry, education and student (career). To satisfy industry, a competency (ies) must be addressed; to fulfill educational needs, the 'Dublin descriptors' must be covered; and to further a student's chosen career, the assignment must tackle contemporary issues within their field of interest.

The above is accomplished by empowering the students with the task of writing their own briefs/assignments and selecting/finding their own placements; all with the help and guidance of experienced staff.

The DBL stage has three phases: the Specialization, the Placement and the Graduation respectively.

Course description:

During the graduation students can continue working on their specialization topic in order to deliver a final polished, well founded, industry standard product at the end of graduation. They can also go more in-depth and continue research on the same topic as their specialization or start research on a new self-chosen or school provided topic.

In order to formalize as well as structure the project, students need to write a plan. The plan is your 'guide' and 'learning contract'. As a 'guide' it should assign time restrictions to your tasks and activities in a manageable and achievable manner; signposting deadlines and deliverables. As a 'learning contract' it must set out definite 'objectives' that you promise to fulfill, it is against these objectives that you'll be assessed.

There are three options for your Graduation project:

- A. Thesis, approximately 10.000 words (100% of the grade).
- B. Dissertation, approximately 5.000 words (50%) and practical product (50%).
- C. Practical product (80%) and 2,000 words essay (20%) describing your method.

The above options range from academic research (A) written on a single topic, which is usually phrased as a research question, to a proof of concept (B) supported by literature and studies related to the project, to delivering a final polished product (C) including a short description of used method.

Special cases:

Next to choosing your own topic there are a few special cases, please contact the corresponding contact person for additional info in case you're interested:

- IGAD research topics – A list with projects that link to IGAD's research program, as well as teacher initiated topics and projects will be available on N@tschool (variation coordinator).

- Placement – Students have the opportunity to continue their placement and work on a research oriented project within the company. The project needs to meet the student's learning objectives/competencies and may not incorporate normal operation or day to day work (variation coordinator).
- Business plan – For entrepreneurial students that have the intention of starting their own company or already started, graduation with your own company is the ideal way of combining study and doing business. By choosing this option you get the opportunity to work on your professional business plan as part of your specialization and/or graduation. You will be supported by the Starterslift foundation (Gerben Beijneveld, beijneveld.g@nhtv.nl).

Competencies:

The nature of the Demand Based Learning stage requires the student to select the competency (ies) he/she wants to specialize in and deepen their knowledge about. It's highly recommended to limit your scope and only select one competency, with a maximum of three.

For an overview of the available competencies refer to the Competency Objectives forms available on N@tschool. These templates need to be used in the plan to define how the competency (ies) will be addressed.

Course learning objectives:

Within the Graduation Phase the student is given the opportunity to acquire a competency's particular combination of skills, attitudes and knowledge. As well as acquiring these qualities the student will learn to recognize when and where they should use them.

Grading criteria:

The assignment objectives are written by students and need to be carefully formulated and justified in the plan. Students need to be aware they will be assessed against their own objectives. The intended standard and level of quality should be defined in the plan.

In order to acquire a bachelor's degree, the student must prove certain high, internationally recognized standards. These standards are known as Dublin Descriptors (in abridged form):

- Knowledge and Understanding – (Is) supported by advanced text books (with) some aspects informed by knowledge at the forefront of their field of study.
- Applying Knowledge and Understanding – (Through) devising and sustaining arguments.
- Making Judgments – (Involves) gathering and interpreting relevant data.
- Communication – (Of) information, ideas, problems and solutions.
- Learning Skills – Have developed those skills needed to study further with a high level of autonomy.

Assessors will use a uniform template for assessment which can be found on N@tschool.

Assessment


The graduation will be assessed by your supervisor and a second reader from within the academy, their grades will be averaged. In addition to this an external examiner, someone from industry related to the topic, will share his/her neutral opinion on the project and how it relates to industry standards.

Grading standards:

- 10 – High Professional Standard
- 8+ – Professional Standard
- 6+ – Satisfactory Standard
- 5+ – Poor Standard
- 3+ – Incomplete
- 1+ – Seriously incomplete.

Timeline, milestones and deadlines:

The Graduation phase can be started at the start of each Block, in total 2 blocks are assigned to Graduation following the schedule below. Please make sure to check the overview carefully and meet the deadlines as mentioned. The most important features are explained in the next chapters.

Time Table for Graduation Phase				
	Important actions			
	Event	Action	Deadline/Date	
1st Block	Week 1	Start of Graduation Phase	Writing Proposal	Friday 17:00, send proposal to coordinator by e-mail
	Week 2	Coordinator: Proposal approval and supervisor ass.	Writing Plan, meet with supervisor to discuss plan	
	Week 3		Sending Plan	Friday 17:00, send plan to supervisor by e-mail
	Week 4	Supervisor: Final plan approval		
	Week 5		Update Learning Journal and documentation	Friday 17:00, send (e-mail) documentation to supervisor
	Week 6	Progress check with Supervisor	Plan and prepare progress check with supervisor	
	Week 7			
	Exam	Comeback Day	Update Learning Journal and documentation / prepare Comeback Day	Friday 17:00, send (e-mail) documentation to supervisor / Comeback Day, TBA
2nd Block	Week 1			
	Week 2	Progress check with Supervisor	Plan and prepare progress check with supervisor	
	Week 3		Update Learning Journal and documentation	Friday 17:00, send (e-mail) documentation to supervisor
	Week 4	"Graduation Submission Form"	Fill in/complete "Graduation Submission Form"	Friday 17:00
	Week 5	Progress check with Supervisor	Plan and prepare progress check with supervisor	
	Week 6			
	Week 7	Final delivery	Update Learning Journal and documentation / prepare deliverables for hand in	Please check table below for exact deadlines per Block.
	Plus 5 weeks	Oral Exam	Prepare Oral Exam presentation and videoreel (if applicable)	To be announced

Timetable for graduation, important features are explained below.

Proposal

At the start of your graduation you'll need to write a one page proposal according to the template that can be found on N@tschool. The proposal will be used by the coordinator for initial approval of your project as well as to assign a supervisor.

Make sure to follow the instructions on the template and make sure to limit this document to only one page, keeping it to the point. Also make sure to indicate the graduation option you've chosen (A, B or C) as explained at the beginning of this document.

Make sure to e-mail the proposal at the end of week 1 to the coordinator of your variation:

- Programming: Robert Grigg – grigg.r@nhtv.nl
- Visual Arts: Ronny Franken – franken.r@nhtv.nl
- Design & Production: Mata Haggis – haggis.m@nhtv.nl
- Independent Game Development: Nils Deslé – desle.n@nhtv.nl

Please be aware that your graduation starts in week 1. Besides preparing your proposal and plan you are expected to make a start with research and project right away.

Plan

After the proposal has been approved and a supervisor has been assigned, you will write a plan according to the template available on N@tschool. Please make sure to write the plan with special care, as it will act as a contract and will define your final deliverables as well as the objectives it will be assessed against.

Please make an appointment with your supervisor after he/she has been assigned to discuss your project and plan. Your supervisor will have important input that needs to be reflected in your plan.

To prove that your self-written learning objectives directly address a competency you are required to complete the relevant objective form and insert it into the plan. The objective form templates can be found on N@tschool. Each competency has its own generic template.

Make sure to e-mail the plan at the end of week 3 to your supervisor for final approval.

Learning Journal

Part of the official deliverables of your graduation is a Learning Journal, which tracks your progress through the Graduation phase. Please make sure to use the template available on N@tschool. With intervals of about 4 weeks you'll need to provide an overview of the state of affairs, activities carried out and general progress.

You will have to e-mail the updated Learning Journal to your supervisor according to the deadlines mentioned in the timeline above. Make sure to deliver the finished Learning Journal at the end as part of the final deliverables.

Progress checks

During your graduation you're expected to have progress meetings with your supervisor. During these meetings you'll get feedback from your supervisor on the progress you've made. In case needed he/she will help you looking for the right information or provide you with different angles to approach your project.

It's recommended to keep notes or minutes of your meeting on the things discussed and decisions made and send them to your supervisor afterwards. Also make sure to set a following appointment.

Please make sure to schedule these meetings, for instance according to the timeline above.

Comeback Day

In between the 2 blocks of your graduation we will organize a Comeback Day. During this meeting you get the opportunity to show your project to your supervisor as well as other relevant teachers. It will also give you an insight of what other students are doing and how your work compares.

The Comeback Day will be scheduled each Block and is to be announced.

“Graduation Submission Form”

During the second block of your graduation the ADE Secretary will send you a link to the “Graduation Submission Form”. This form needs to be filled in and completed to enroll you in the final graduation procedure of which part is coordinated by the ADE Secretary.

From this point on you'll get additional info via the ADE Secretary regarding final delivery, scheduling of the Oral Exam and other important dates and actions. Please make sure to check your NHTV e-mail at all times.

Final delivery and deadline

Make sure to deliver 5 bound and digital copies of the items below (if not complete the project will not be graded):

- Graduation proposal
- Graduation plan
- Learning Journal
- Final deliverable(s) as defined in the plan

The graduation needs to be handed in according to the deadlines below before 12:00 at the ADE Secretary at the Hopmansstraat (NOT your supervisor).

Deadlines:

- End of Block A - Friday October 25, before 12:00
- End of Block B - Monday January 6, before 12:00
- End of Block C - Friday March 28, before 12:00
- End of Block D - Tuesday June 10, before 12:00

Oral Exam

After the project has been handed in it will be distributed to your supervisor, a second reader and an external examiner, they do a preliminary assessment. This preliminary assessment will decide if the student is invited to the Oral Exam, for which the student will be notified during a phone call typically one week before. If a student fails to be allowed into the Oral Exam, it will be scheduled as an official feedback session with all parties involved including the external examiner.

Please be aware that right after handing in your project you are expected to work on your Oral Exam presentation and prepare a graduation video reel (if applicable). You are allowed to improve your project in between handing in and the Oral Exam, but please be aware that the preliminary assessment will be based upon your final delivery in week 7.

After the Oral Exam you will hear if you graduated and your final grade right away.

Retake

In case a retake is needed the project can be extended with another Block. In case the student wants to start over, with a new subject and/or supervisor the Graduation phase will start over again including proposal and plan from the start of the next Block.

Please be aware there are only 2 opportunities to deliver and get graded for a graduation project per Academic Year.

Teaching Method:

The 3 phases of the DBL-stage are supported by staff through supervision, but mostly they are self-driven, independent studies.

Number of Hours:

For each phase of the Demand Based Learning stage 2 blocks are scheduled. Graduation is a full-time job including the weeks between the first and second block of your graduation.

Attendance policy:

No classes are assigned to graduation, it's however mandatory to schedule individual meetings with your supervisor (also see timeline above) to discuss your progress. Also the Comeback Day in between the first and second block (date, time and location will be announced) is mandatory.

Literature:

Students are expected to look for relevant literature themselves to support their assignment.

Materials needed:

Templates (available on N@tschool):

- Graduation proposal
- Graduation plan
- Competency Objectives forms
- Learning Journal