

Ideas for new course content and management of knowledge levels for each year of study.

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### Explanatory Notes

5 strands or streams of knowledge:

1. Images and Design
2. Web Applications
3. Video and Audio
4. Motion Graphics, Flash, 3D and Animation Techniques
5. Development and Employability [aka *commercial aspects & employability*]

The idea is to base all modules on the applicable stream of knowledge in the matrix. This way we can make sure students cover a predetermined set of overall learning achievements each year, progressing on to the next year, and makes sure we don't duplicate or continuously keep everyone at a beginner level of knowledge for the sake of a few stragglers.

We can encourage more elective choices of our modules by making them more interesting, modern and challenging. We don't need to rewrite the module specifications, just reinvent the content. We do not need to require formal pre-requisites from students in order to enroll on our modules, only levels of demonstrable knowledge or skills. The importance of student portfolios, whether developed within a university setting or not could be enough to gain entry to modules, arguably even 1<sup>st</sup> year students attending 2<sup>nd</sup> year modules, if this is allowed.

Making a comprehensive and updated record of all staff skills and specialisms is essential to placing the right tutor in the right setting. This will utilize staff resources most effectively and avoid the student accusation of staff being ill fitted to teach a given module. This is very important to the success of any technical course.

**(NB, a list of skills has already been attempted once, however, it is felt that a much more in depth and accurate picture of software, hardware and soft skills should be put together, for timetabling and module content development purposes.)**

Teaching soft skills is becoming an increasingly important part of preparing graduates for the job marketplace. Alan Stuart has stressed many times how important they are, and the WoW Agency continues to develop ways of teaching students and graduates more soft skills, to meet the needs of the clients using WoW. We can lead in this area, with our present levels of (work experience) expertise and if we update and expand these commercial aspects to include modern client expectations of multimedia developers.

## Proposed Knowledge Matrix

	Images and Design	Web Applications	Video and Audio	Motion graphics, Flash, 3D & Animation	Development and Employability
<b>Y E A R 1</b>	Intro to Photoshop Intro to Illustrator Formats/ Compressing and resizing PSDs, AI, EPS, PS <i>authoring files</i> Typography #1 Design principles #1  Drawing without drawing	HTML 4.01 CSS 2.1 intro: (fonts, colours and headings, basic box model) Validating pages Javascript beginner  Basic Usability and Accessibility	<b>Video:</b> Shorts (2 min) Embed for the web Simple transitions Simple titling Video formats <b>Audio:</b> Free audio software Editing audio intro Using audio in apps intro Audio formats	Intro to Flash Drawing and tweening etc in Flash AS3 intro  Intro to After Effects  3D/ Maya intro	Basics: using word, PowerPoint, acrobat, excel, publisher Zip files, burning CDs & naming conventions  CV online, PDF, what to input to job websites (search set up)  Portfolios #1: what to have, how to present, what to include, digital formats
<b>Y E A R 2</b>	Designing in Illustrator to export to Flash Icons, headers, Footers, rails, tags and tiles Logo design Typography #2 Design principles #2 Photoshop #2: Brushes, Patterns, FX Plug ins etc Illustrator #2: isometrics, embedding fonts, making PDFs and banners etc	(X)HTML Transitional CSS 2.1 intermediate: more complex box models, using images, styling forms, CSS navigation Intro to PHP & PHP/MYSQL Javascript intermediate Intro to XML  Triple A standards WAI	<b>Video:</b> Corporate video (5 min) Proper titles and subtitles Cutaways, more complex composition and editing <b>Audio:</b> Recording & Processing sound with Soundbooth or other Mixing and EQ Applying sound effects to apps Intro to electronic music	Flash Intermediate drawing and visual effects  Gaming with AS 3 <b>OR</b> Database driven Flash application  After Effects mini project 1  3D/ Maya work intermediate level	Soft skills #1: Presentations, team building and working, planning and researching application dev, pitches, proposals, time & project management  Portfolio #2  Digital marketing #1: Marketing with different new media. Email and Viral campaigns
<b>Y E A R 3</b>	Using 'In Design' PDFs for print, embedding fonts, authorship and other metadata Print Ready Tiffs for Mac and PC  Design Campaigns: Flyers, Websites, Games, Email  Typography #3 Design Principles #3 : Project/Artefact	(X)HTML Strict CSS 3 PHP/MySQL large project using CSS 3 Template design and DB data  Implementation of OS CMS or other apps. Ajax J Query  Intro to XSL  XML Intermediate	<b>Video:</b> Documentary, Fictional or Educational 10 min DVD video  <b>Audio:</b> Recording an audio event <b>OR</b> Make a 10 min radio show  Using XMP data Embedding metadata	Flash Advanced use  Gaming Online with AS 3 <b>OR</b> Database driven live results in real time with XML and or php/mysql  <b>OR</b> Animation with effects and multiple asset types  After Effects project 2  3D/ Maya work Advanced level	Soft skills #2: Verbal and written communication 'Who am I in the team?' Crisis management  Portfolio #3:  Digital marketing #2: manage an email or viral marketing campaign to achieve a predetermined set of goals

**Staff Skills Management/Software:** Name.....

SKILL	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	CAN TEACH	CAN MODULE LEAD/DEVELOP
PHOTOSHOP					
ILLUSTRATOR					
IN DESIGN					
FIREWORKS					
PREMIER PRO					
FINAL CUT PRO					
MOTION					
AFTER EFFECTS					
FUSION					
AVID					
PINNACLE					
SONY VEGAS					
I-MOVIE					
MOVIE MAKER					
QUICKTIME PRO					
FLASH					
FLEX					
AIR					
PAPERVISION					
SOUNDBOOTH					
PRO TOOLS					
LOGIC					
CUBASE					
ABLETON LIVE					
REASON					
FRUITY LOOPS					
AUDACITY					
SOUNDFORGE					
CINEMA 4D					
MAYA					
3D STUDIO MAX					
VECTOR WORKS					
DREAMWEAVER					
WEB TEXT EDITORS					

Add other software as necessary

**Staff Skills Management/Code & Apps:** Name.....

SKILL	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	CAN TEACH	CAN MODULE LEAD/DEVELOP
HTML 4.01					
XHTML 1.0					
JAVASCRIPT					
CSS					
XSL					
XML					
RSS 2.0					
PHP 4/5					
ASP					
AJAX					
JQUERY					
ACTIONSSCRIPT 2					
ACTIONSSCRIPT 3					
MYSQL					
SQLITE					
ORACLE					
ACCESS					
MOBILE APPS DEVEL					
DESKTOP APPS DEVEL					
GAME DESIGN					
FLASH WEBSITES					
BLOGS					
WIKIS					
VIRTUAL WORLDS					
CMS					
CRM					
OPEN SOURCE WEB APPS					
WEB 2.0 UTILITIES					
DOMAINS & EMAILS					
STREAMING MEDIA					
HOSTING SOLUTIONS					
SERVER CONFIGURATION					

**Staff Skills Management/Soft Skills & Employability:** Name.....

SKILL	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	CAN TEACH	CAN MODULE LEAD/DEVELOP
POWERPOINT					
EXCEL					
WORD					
ACROBAT					
PUBLISHER					
CD BURNING					
Nero					
Toast					
DVD BURNING					
Encore					
ZIP, RAR etc & STUFFIT					
CV PREPARATION					
PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT					
Online portfolio					
Disc portfolio					
Paper based portfolio					
Writing for the web					
Proposal writing					
Client facing skills					
Negotiation and pricing					
Team development					
Project Management					
Design Patterns					
MARKETING WITH DIGITAL					
Email					
Viral					
Microsite					
Youtube					
Facebook					
MySpace					
LinkedIn					
Twitter					
Tumblr					
Del.icio.us					
Technorati					
iGoogle					

## ***Points of Interest***

- Commercial orientation of subjects and topics taught will help to sell the course
- Using up to date terminology on website material will help search engines bring us possible students
- Wording module content in factual easily understood language will help potential students know if the course is right for them
- Modernizing every possible aspect of course and module content will help to re-establish the course as a choice for excellence

## **Questions we could/should be asking (ourselves and students):**

- What is a CD Rom?
- What is a DVD Rom?
- What is an email campaign?
- What is a microsite?
- What are websites for?
- What does your client want?
- What do you want to give your client?
- What is viral marketing?
- How do we utilize digital products for our clients?

AND

- Who am I in the team?
- Whose fault is it when things go wrong?
- Where do my responsibilities begin and end?
- What is expected of me?

AND

- What do I dislike most about the course?
- What would I hate to teach/learn?
- If I could change one thing, what would it be?
- What am I worst at?
- What am I best at?
- What am I most bored thinking about?

## ***Other ideas:***

Placements: 1 day, 1 week, 1 month etc. Each student should maybe have experienced 10 places of employment by the time they graduate.

Always develop artifacts that have relevance to the commercial real world, reflect actual industry examples

Teach up to date design principles

Teach how to make the RIGHT product and assets for a client

Make the course FUN and be passionate about digital *stuff*, it makes all the difference. We are not teaching history.

/Pen Lister May 2009