



MMCC3029

Critical Games Studies

Session 2, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2026

School of Communication, Society and Culture

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Rowan Tulloch

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

130cp at 1000 level or above including (20cp in MMCC units at 2000 level)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit will provide students with the key concepts and methodologies in the study of video gaming. Building upon new media theory and game studies' approaches students will critically engage with the cultural, political, artistic, and technological dimensions of this increasingly important media form. This course explores the crucial theoretical issues in gaming, from rules and interactive narrative, to gender and power. Students will learn to analyse video games through a range of conceptual approaches that recognize the specificities of this form while acknowledging games as part of the broader media-scape. The unit is designed to offer those interested in designing, writing, analyzing, writing about, or even just playing video games, a deeper understanding of the role and context of video game play in contemporary culture. It will provide students with the conceptual frameworks needed to theorize the past, present, and future of this complex and crucial medium.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: contextualise video games within a history of play practices.

ULO2: analyse and evaluate the medium of video gaming in context of broader cultural and technological processes.

ULO3: evaluate specific video games through game design methodologies.

ULO4: synthesise a range of academic approaches to video gaming to produce various

works.

ULO5: identify and appraise key ideas and methodologies underpinning the video game studies discipline.

General Assessment Information

Late Penalties

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue. This late penalty will apply to written reports and recordings only. Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs) will be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special Consideration application.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Theoretical engagement task	30%	No	25/10/2026	Individual	No	Open
Online Quiz	20%	No	01/11/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
Conceptual Engagement	50%	No	08/11/2026	Individual	Yes	Open

Theoretical engagement task

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 40 hours

Due: **25/10/2026**

Weighting: **30%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Open

Students will demonstrate knowledge of, and ability to apply, concepts from unit readings and lecture material.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- contextualise video games within a history of play practices.
- synthesise a range of academic approaches to video gaming to produce various works.
- identify and appraise key ideas and methodologies underpinning the video game studies

discipline.

Online Quiz

Assessment Type ¹: Problem-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **01/11/2026**

Weighting: **20%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

Students must undertake a multiple choice online quiz. The questions for this quiz will be selected from the weekly questions students submit as part of their Theoretical Engagement task. The quiz will be open book and must be taken individually.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- contextualise video games within a history of play practices.
- analyse and evaluate the medium of video gaming in context of broader cultural and technological processes.
- identify and appraise key ideas and methodologies underpinning the video game studies discipline.

Conceptual Engagement

Assessment Type ¹: Written Submission

Indicative Time on Task ²: 42 hours

Due: **08/11/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

Students will produce a conceptual engagement task that explores and analyses the cultural, political and technological contexts of a specific video game or gaming community. Students can either produce a traditional essay style analysis that makes a clear theoretical argument about their game of choice. Or they can produce a game design document that details a game of their own creation that engages with theory by enacting it within the game design. Both options must be theoretically rigorous and use unit readings and academic material from the student's own research. Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- contextualise video games within a history of play practices.
- analyse and evaluate the medium of video gaming in context of broader cultural and

technological processes.

- evaluate specific video games through game design methodologies.
- synthesise a range of academic approaches to video gaming to produce various works.
- identify and appraise key ideas and methodologies underpinning the video game studies discipline.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- [Academic Success](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation.

³ An automatic short extension is available for some assessments. Apply through the [Service Connect Portal](#).

Delivery and Resources

Lectures: MMCC3029 does not have live lectures. The lectures for MMCC3029 are video-recordings available online through iLearn. Students are expected to engage with lectures and to actively relate lecture content to tutorial discussions and assessments.

Tutorials: Tutorials are on-campus only. Please see the timetable for further information.

Participation in tutorial activities and in-class exercises form an integral part of MMCC3029. Students are expected to arrive punctually and actively participate in class work. A roll will be taken at the beginning of each class. If students arrive over 15 minutes late for a tutorial, they will be deemed absent for that class.

Tutorials begin in Week 2

Required and recommended texts and/or materials: The readings for this unit will be accessible through iLearn.

Technologies used: The iLearn site for MMCC3029 is accessible at: <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au/>. A computer and Internet access are required to complete assessments in MMCC3029.

Assessment Submission: All assignments for MMCC3029 will be completed/submitted online, via iLearn. Further details on submission will be explained in tutorials.

Return of marked work: Marked work will be returned to students through iLearn.

Consultation: By appointment only

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#) (<https://policycentral.mq.edu.au/>)

[s.mq.edu.au](https://students.mq.edu.au)). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies\)](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit [http://students.mq.edu.au/support/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/)

Academic Success

[Academic Success](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Ask a Study Coach](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the [Service Connect Portal](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/technology/service-desk>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Unit information based on version 2026.03 of the [Handbook](#)