THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

There are six main stages in the development process. These include Ideation, pre-production, production, testing, beta and submission/release.

1. **Ideation**

This is the stage where you and your team draft your first ideas. Think about your brief and how you'd like to incorporate it into your game. For example, consider some of the games you've played and enjoyed if the brief asks for a mini-game. Games like 'Mario Party', tasks in 'Among Us', and the mini-games dotted around 'It Takes Two'. Try and keep these first ideas as simple as possible; you can always add more features if you have time. It's a good idea to use this stage to understand your roles within the team and how you all can help one another. Don't be too proud here and be ready to let go of some of the ideas you think are brilliant - it's a team effort, and everyone needs to agree on what the team is building, so sometimes ideas have to be 'killed' at this stage. Don't worry; keep these ideas close; maybe note them down in a sketchbook; they might come helpful later. **At the end of this stage, you'll have to pitch your game to Unseen Galaxy.** Tell us why you think we're going to love your game and why it should be published, and, if it fits our guidelines, you're ready to go. This is called the *GREEN LIGHT PITCH* you can find a template and example HERE. This is a great chance to get advice from the Unseen Galaxy team and your tutors!

2. **Pre-production**

Pre-production is where you'll start putting together the basics to make a working prototype. Game Designers and Producers will want to put together a plan or 'Game Design Document' (GDD) at this stage so that everyone involved knows what they're working towards. The prototype should be the kind of thing you can use to see if your concept will work. Don't worry if it doesn't work the first time. Pre-production is the most straightforward stage to return to the drawing board and rethink how to approach your brief. If your prototype works and your team is happy to move on, it's on to production! Whilst your game might not look pretty at this stage, you are on the right track if it feels like fun.

3. **Production**

Production is the longest stage of game development. During this time, you should look at taking your game from prototype to an (almost) complete game. Production is where the whole team will work towards the first version of their game. Bug fixes and testing will come later, so it doesn't matter if your game isn't perfect. Use this time to work together with your team. A good studio will help each other out whether it's their job or not.

4.   Testing

Most testing usually comes towards the end of the production cycle. This is where the Quality Assurance (QA) tester will play the game to see if there are any issues. All games will have some problems; that's normal; that's what this part of development is for. They are responsible for reporting what issues they find and where. Then the rest of the team will fix any bugs before returning to testing to ensure the bug fix works and hasn't affected anything else in the code.

5.   Beta

Beta testing is similar to the testing done by your own QA, although a third party in the industry often does this. 'Overwatch 2' is an excellent example of a AAA title using beta testing. Playtesting gives you a chance to understand what it is people like about your game, as well as what they might change. The Beta stage is an excellent time for a marketing manager to get feedback directly from their audience and understand how to market their games.

6.   Submission & Release

Your first published game will soon be available for everyone to play. We all wish we could just fix that one thing, or finish that little extra add-on, so don't worry about feeling like it's not 100% perfect when you submit.

Make sure your build is complete and that everyone is credited in the game. Complete your marketing plan and prepare all the assets you need to submit the game to Unseen Galaxy. At this point you will need to present the finished game and assets to Unseen Galaxy in your PUBLISHING PITCH (find a template [HERE](#)). **This is the final pitch and will be to Unseen Galaxy and industry people. If your game does not pass this pitch, it will not be published.** But once the game is Greenlighted you will need to prepare and finalise your metadata, code etc and submit via the [Unseen Galaxy submission form](#).

At this point, your marketing manager will be pushing messages on Twitter and other social channels to get people to click on the itch.io link to your game and download it. You can help here in spreading the word, so share the news and help them amplify the message (and get people playing your game).

Things to remember
- You're making a game as a team, and you will succeed as a team, so be collaborative, help others if you can, and work towards a team goal of making a great game.
- You won't need to test from day one, so if you are a QA person, find another way to help your team.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help or offer help if there is nothing for you to do.
- Making a game can be gruelling, and you will need to work hard with people you might not know that well, but it will be an invaluable experience for a career in games.

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