CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

CAPE® ANIMATION AND GAME DESIGN UNIT 2

Subject Report

May–June 2025

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION®

MAY–JUNE 2025

ANIMATION AND GAME DESIGN
UNIT 2

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INTRODUCTION

This guide has been compiled using candidates' responses from the May–June 2025 CAPE Animation and Game Design examination.

In 2025, entries for Unit 2 declined significantly from 144 in 2024 to 65. However, despite the decrease in entries, there was an improvement in performance, with 93.21 per cent of candidates earning acceptable Grades I–V, compared with 90.84 per cent in 2024 and 89.23 per cent in 2023.

The examination comprised the following papers.

- Paper 01 — Multiple Choice
- Paper 02 — Structured Essay Questions
- Paper 031 — School-Based Assessment (SBA)
- Paper 032 — Alternative to School-Based Assessment (Private Candidates)

Candidates' performance increased on Papers 02 and 03, while a slight decline was recorded on Paper 01. There was consistency in the percentage of candidates earning acceptable grades on Module 1, with increases noted on Modules 2 and 3. For Unit 2, the means for Modules 1 and 2 were comparable to those recorded in 2024, while the mean for Module 3 showed improvement.

PAPER 01 — MULTIPLE CHOICE

This paper will consist of 45 multiple-choice items assessing achievement in all three modules. The mean score was 26.97 out of 45 (59.93 per cent) and the standard deviation 8.55. The highest mark obtained was 38 out of 45.

PAPER 02 — STRUCTURED ESSAY QUESTIONS

This paper is a structured essay examination assessing candidates' achievement across all three modules. Candidates are required to demonstrate both theoretical knowledge and design skills. The highest score obtained was 61 out of 75 marks and the mean score was 41.53.

Overall, candidates responded well to the questions on Paper 02. Each of the three questions on the paper is marked out of a total of 25. For Unit 2, the mean scores for Questions 1, 2 and 3 were 13.9, 11.5 and 16.1 respectively. Across all questions, the distribution of scores indicated that a satisfactory number of higher-performing candidates were able to earn more than 20 marks.

Question 1

Part (a)

In Part (a) (i), most candidates correctly identified virtual reality as a *digitally generated three-dimensional space when viewed through a headset or goggles*. However, some candidates did not mention the device through which VR is engaged, which limited the marks awarded.

For Part (a) (ii), candidates were able to accurately identify two potential difficulties or constraints that a designer may encounter when implementing virtual reality into his or her projects. Weaker candidates, however, focused on world building challenges or realistic portrayal of characters objects or environments etc.

Part (b)

In Part (b) (i), candidates generally demonstrated the ability to correctly identify three interactive game design principles. However, less proficient candidates often confused design elements and general principles with interactive game design principles, which negatively impacted their performance and overall scores.

For Part (b) (ii), candidates who were unable to correctly identify interactive game design principles either incorrectly expanded on their initial mistake or did not respond to this part.

Part (c)

Candidates accurately identified the most suitable target audience — *teens*, while weaker candidates identified either a general audience or younger audiences, perhaps forgetting the technology associated with the game.

Part (d)

Most candidates were generally able to accurately draw a wireframe for the UI of the EcoVenture game. Weaker candidates either drew a representation of a game's landing page or did not respond.

Part (e)

Candidates responded to the prompts for storyboard panels with varying levels of success. While many of them included appropriate storyboard elements, weaker candidates tended to either use content more aligned with comic book layouts and conventions or provided drawings that did not adhere to standard storyboard formatting and techniques.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered to help strengthen student performance in this area.

- To support student learning, it would be helpful to reinforce the differences between key design concepts using visual aids and simple comparison activities.
- Targeted practice tasks focusing on VR terminology and the function of VR hardware would also be beneficial, as this remains an area where many students experience difficulty.
- Using real-world examples or case studies can help make interactive game design principles and VR-related constraints more relatable and easier for students to understand.
- Providing clear, structured feedback on wireframe and storyboard tasks will assist students in strengthening their technical drawing and layout skills over time.

Question 2

Part (a)

Candidates generally demonstrated the ability to identify two tools used to design the VR game. However, weaker candidates incorrectly identified tools that were not appropriate for VR development, which negatively impacted their scores.

Part (b)

In Part (b) (i), only a small number of candidates were able to accurately identify elements of game environmental design. Weaker candidates often confused these elements with general design principles, resulting in responses that did not meet the requirements of the prompt.

For Part (b) (ii), candidates provided accurate descriptions of the game's tone based on the trailer's tone (sinister darkness), genre and colours. Weaker candidates either partially responded or submitted no response.

Part (c)

For Part (c) (i), most candidates accurately identified three assets in the clip. Weaker candidates tended to provide genre-specific terms or references to user experience (UX) elements etc.

In Part (c) (ii), candidates correctly identified the career most suited to creating the assets in the clip, that is *3D modeler*. Weaker candidates incorrectly wrote 'game designer' as the career or used terminologies such as 'game developer' or even 'system designer'.

Part (d)

For this part, most candidates were able to correctly identify the camera angle used in the game.

Part (e)

Most candidates responded to this prompt by accurately identifying the most suitable story type for that kind of game. Weaker candidates confused it as either a three-act story structure or a genre-specific story format.

Part (f)

Candidates successfully identified the difference between User Experience (UX) and User Interface (UI). Weaker candidates partially identified the differences in their responses.

Part (g)

Candidates generally provided accurate responses, identifying two constraints on the game design that developers of the game may have encountered — *budget, time, and audience* — along with relevant explanations. Weaker candidates either offered partial responses or incorrectly identified challenges such as 'the creation of 3D assets', 'user experience', 'UI elements' or 'game mechanics'.

Recommendations

- To enhance student understanding and engagement, teachers are encouraged to integrate multimedia prompts such as trailers and gameplay clips into lessons to help contextualize learning within real-world examples.
- It is also important to clearly explain the distinct roles within the game production pipeline to avoid confusion between related professions such as game designers, developers and 3D modelers. Incorporating hands-on demonstrations of industry-standard tools, along with guided asset creation exercises, can provide valuable practical experience.
- Additionally, teachers should place emphasis on distinguishing between design elements, design principles and narrative structures, as these are often conflated by students.
- Finally, including structured group discussions and reflective activities around game design constraints will help students develop a deeper and more applied understanding of the challenges faced in game development.

Question 3

Part (a)

Several candidates mentioned tools that are not traditionally used for compositing but stated other software that have compositing capabilities, like Krita and Photoshop.

Part (b)

Most candidates drew assets that were suitable for the game environment described.

Part (c)

Most candidates correctly identified the bones and joints necessary to ensure smooth and believable character movement, demonstrating a clear understanding of rigging.

Part (d)

While some candidates were able to correctly outline two constraints a 3D rigger may experience, several responses were vague or appeared to be guesses rather than informed explanations.

Part (e)

Most candidates successfully listed the four processes completed after rigging. Some candidates provided explanations instead of naming the processes, but these responses were accepted when they reflected accurate understanding.

Part (f)

There was a wide variation in the quality of drawings produced. Some drawings were very basic and some very detailed; however, most depicted a character suitable for the game. Candidates' responses were assessed using the principles of appeal, for example, shape, language, silhouette, proportions, exaggeration. Those candidates who produced drawings with stronger detail and clearer application of these principles scored higher.

Recommendations

Overall, candidates performed well on this question. Teachers should continue to encourage students to provide complete and well-developed responses, using the mark allocation as a guide to the level of detail required. Responses should be sufficiently fulsome to address all requirements of the question. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to make consistent use of the syllabus and specimen papers to identify appropriate resources and to model the standard and structure of responses required for success on this examination.

PAPER 031 — SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT

The CAPE Animation and Game Design School-Based Assessment accounts for 60 per cent of the overall grade, and all submissions must include the date of production. For Part A, students are required to produce a showreel of no more than 90 seconds demonstrating achievement across all three modules and showing evidence of 3D asset development. Part B requires students to design and develop a single-player interactive 2D educational or entertainment game, allowing them to demonstrate creativity, innovation, and applied skills in animation and game design. The completed game should not exceed ten minutes of gameplay, and students must also deliver a project presentation comprised of a pitch and demo lasting no more than five minutes.

Overall performance on the SBA was strong, with the highest score recorded at 170.85 out of 180 marks and a mean score of 135.40.

Overall Comments

Many students demonstrated a strong grasp of what was expected in the showreel, exhibiting solid craftsmanship, creative use of animation tools and thoughtful design and composition. There was clear effort in producing original and engaging content that aligned well with the SBA requirements.

For other students, understanding the requirements varied a bit. In some cases, the structure of the showreel or the demonstration of the tools and processes used in interactive game development was not clear. A few students included general portfolio pieces rather than the specific elements requested, such as, concept art, final versions of at least two characters, background designs, 3D assets and 2D animations directly related to the interactive game.

Overall, students showed a good level of understanding of the interactive game development process through their pitches, presentations, demos and final games, though the depth and execution varied across submissions. Some students could have strengthened their work by focusing more on clearly communicating their game concept during the pitch stage. In several cases, the demo lacked key elements or required additional refinement. Improvements can also be made by applying design and composition principles to the user interface (UI), and making sure the game is easy and intuitive to navigate. For example, including clear ways to pause, resume or exit the game would make the game more user-friendly.

A few games experienced technical issues; they were either missing sound cues or experienced crashes which affected the overall playability. These are all part of the learning curve and with a bit more attention to detail and user experience, these projects have great potential to become much more refined and engaging.

Recommendations

Showreel

- To ensure greater consistency across all submissions, it is recommended that teachers place additional emphasis on helping students understand both the structure and purpose of the showreel. Students should be guided to include all required components such as
  - concept art
  - final versions of at least two characters
  - background designs
  - 3D assets
  - 2D animations directly related to the interactive game.

- Encourage students to avoid including general portfolio pieces that are not directly relevant to the project's brief. Where possible, reinforce the connection between process and outcome by having students annotate or briefly explain how each piece supports their interactive game. This can improve clarity and coherence while helping students reflect critically on their creative decisions.

- Structured check-ins, detailed rubrics and sample showreels that meet expectations can also support students in aligning their work more effectively with SBA goals.

The interactive game

- To support students in achieving more refined and cohesive outcomes, several recommendations can be made to teachers and instructors. First, it would be beneficial to reinforce the specific SBA requirements through clear checklists or rubrics, helping students stay aligned with what is expected. Additionally, placing greater emphasis on communication skills during the pitch and development stages can help students better articulate their ideas and creative processes.
- Instruction on UI and UX design principles should be further integrated into the curriculum to guide students in creating intuitive and user-friendly interfaces. It is also recommended that time be allocated for thorough testing and debugging, ideally through peer feedback, to catch and resolve technical issues before submission.
- Finally, sharing strong examples of past student work and providing templates or structured guidelines could offer useful reference points and support students in organizing and presenting their assets more effectively.