

Year 1 (2026)- FAR Implementation Report

BA Game Design and BSc Game Programming

Departments of Digital Humanities and Computer Science

Undergraduate Programs

(reviewed 2024/25)

Recommendation #1: That the Program works to improve the academic coordination within Brock, and between Brock and Niagara College (NC).

Supporting/clarifying text: Almost all interviewees noted coordination concerns.

While travel between the institutions is inherent to the program, travel arrangements have a major impact on course scheduling and planning. In particular, different years following different travel schedules complexified course scheduling / offerings and introduced difficulties for students who fall out of the cohort due to individual course failures or for other reasons. The program may thus benefit from an effort to establish a more consistent and static schedule for student time at Brock versus NC to simplify course planning and which can more easily accommodate some variation in how students' progress through the program.

Rigidity of the program requires stronger monitoring of the impact of course content and scheduling changes. General program monitoring is present, but more formal impact assessment of changes that affect possible course content overlap or scheduling conflicts would help maintain overall program cohesion and reduce the potential for minor disruptions. Less formal efforts that encourage or facilitate cross-department or cross-institution interaction, such as through yearly social meetups of some form, may also be a means of improving communication.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration. The Committee believes that the Program, in consultation with the Deans' Offices and the Office of the Registrar and Enrolment Services (ORES), is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to move forward on this issue.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Program
Responsible for resources:	Program/Deans
Responsible for implementation:	Program/Deans
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities and Dean of Mathematics and Science to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Plan an annual meeting with representatives from Computer Science, Digital Humanities, and Niagara College to review course scheduling, cohort progression, and student travel patterns.	GAME Program Director and Committee	C		
Action #2 Develop an internal multi-year schedule outlining course sequencing across Brock and Niagara College.	GAME Program Director and Academic Advisors	C		
Action #3 Provide the cohort progression schedule to program advisors and relevant staff to support advising, particularly for students outside the standard cohort progression.	GAME Program Director	O		
Action #4 Introduce a formal review step within program governance for proposed changes to course scheduling, delivery location, or course content.	GAME Program Director and Committee	T		
Action #5 Review proposed scheduling and curricular changes for potential conflicts, content overlap, and impacts on cohort progression.	GAME Program Director and Committee Academic Advisors, and Curriculum Committees	T		
Action #6 Update the cohort progression schedule annually to reflect confirmed scheduling and Niagara College laboratory availability.	GAME Program Committee and Academic Advisors	T		
Action #7 Facilitate an annual coordination meeting or engagement involving instructors and administrators from Brock University and Niagara College.	GAME Program Director	T		
Action #8 Collect feedback from instructors, staff, and students on scheduling coordination and program delivery.	GAME Program Committee and Unit Chairs	T		
Action #9 Review coordination practices and scheduling processes through the program's governance structure.	GAME Program Director and Committee, and Unit Chairs	T		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

General Address comments

The Program recognizes that coordination across the Department of Computer Science, the Department of Digital Humanities, and Niagara College introduces logistical complexity, particularly within a cohort-based structure and shared instructional environment.

Many coordination activities, such as scheduling alignment, advising, and curriculum review, are already routinely performed by the Program Director, advisors, and administrative staff. Niagara College scheduling is generally stable; however, variations in days of delivery are required due to shared use of specialized laboratories. As a result, full alignment of weekly schedules across cohorts is not feasible.

Given these constraints, the Program's focus is on formalizing and documenting existing coordination practices, improving transparency, and strengthening support for students, rather than introducing structural changes that would require additional resources beyond the Program's control.

Comments 2026-Year 1

In Year 1, the Program focused on **formalizing existing coordination practices** across the participating units. Many coordination activities were already in place; the emphasis has been on documenting and standardizing these processes to improve consistency and transparency.

The planning and establishment of an **annual coordination meeting** (Action 1) has been completed. This formalizes ongoing collaboration among the Department of Computer Science, the Department of Digital Humanities, and Niagara College.

The development of a **multi-year cohort progression schedule** (Action 2) is substantially complete and is being treated as complete; remaining work is primarily related to formal documentation and standardization.

The use of this schedule to support advising (Action 3) is **ongoing**. Additional coordination with academic advisors, staff, and instructors is required to fully integrate the schedule into advising practices. This work is expected to be completed by Summer 2026.

The remaining actions (Actions 4–9) are dependent on the formalization and implementation of Actions 1–3. In particular, the introduction of structured review processes and the systematic collection of feedback (Actions 8 and 9) will build on these foundational elements and are planned for subsequent phases of implementation.

Year 1 progress reflects a transition from informal, practice-based coordination to a more structured and documented approach, with foundational elements now in place to support further implementation.

Recommendation #2: That the Program works to improve the administrative coordination within Brock, and between Brock and Niagara College (NC).

Supporting/clarifying text: A 3-year, rotating appointment of the program chair limits the ability to form a long-term, consistent vision of program direction. We recognize that there are constraints on the duration of the formal appointment of program chairs; informal agreement to multiple terms, better aligning selection with sabbatical/leave constraints, or establishment and careful documentation of a long-term continuity plan may nevertheless improve this. Frequency of meetings could be increased to balance and improve offerings across partner programs at both institutions. The addition of working groups with clear mandates across faculty to address specific issues would enable continuous program improvements. The intent is to increase porosity between programs in a more agile manner than is currently possible to continue to trouble-shoot, develop new shared curriculum, build joint program culture, etc. Financial imbalance represents a long-term threat to program viability. Re-examining the financial agreement in order to ensure both Brock and NC both benefit from offering the program may be necessary.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC acknowledges that the recommendation to improve the administrative coordination of the programs is worthy of consideration; however, the allocation of resources lies outside the jurisdiction of the Committee. ARC advises the Program, in consultation with the Deans' Offices, to develop strategies to move forward on this issue.

No Implementation Plan required.

Note: The Program is still encouraged to report on any activity annually.

Comments 2026:

The Program recognizes the importance of sustained administrative coordination within Brock University and with Niagara College, given the multi-institutional nature of the GAME programs. Certain aspects of this recommendation are governed by institutional policies beyond the Program's control. In particular, the appointment of the Program Director is defined by the Collective Agreement as a three-year term. To support continuity, the current Director has renewed their appointment for an additional term, enabling continued progress on coordination and program development.

Administrative coordination activities, such as scheduling alignment and curriculum planning, are already carried out on an ongoing basis. The Program will continue to strengthen communication and collaboration among participating units where feasible.

Financial arrangements between Brock and Niagara College are managed at the institutional level. The Program will continue to communicate its needs through appropriate administrative channels to support ongoing program sustainability.

Recommendation #3: That the Program pursues greater program flexibility and opportunities to improve intra-cohort synchronization to improve student experience.

Supporting/clarifying text: The BSc program has a longer on-ramp toward the game-development objective than the BA. Preparatory courses or a foundational year might be useful to build the necessary core background prior to formal entry into the program to better align the BA and BSc students. This may also allow for the inclusion of more electives or topics-courses that would give students greater breadth and reduce problems with program rigidity. Upper year special topics electives could help build towards rapidly evolving areas and thematics, building flexibility into program development.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee expects that the program will work with the Dean's Office, Faculty of Mathematics and Science, to determine appropriate strategies to move forward on this issue.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:

Program

Responsible for resources:

Program/Dean FMS

Responsible for implementation:

Program/Dean FMS

Timeline:

Dean of Humanities and Dean of Mathematics and Science to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Review the BA (GAME Design) and BSc (GAME Programming) curricula to identify opportunities to improve flexibility while maintaining the cohort-based structure.	GAME Program Director and Academic Advisors	C		
Action #2 Identify opportunities to introduce or expand upper-year special topics courses in emerging areas of game development.	GAME Program Director and Academic Advisors	O		
Action #3 Assess options to incorporate elective or topics-based courses within the existing curriculum, where feasible.	GAME Program Director, Unit Chairs, Curriculum Committees	O		
Action #4 Review alignment of early-year courses across BA and BSc streams to support better synchronization of foundational knowledge.	GAME Program Director, Academic Advisors, and Curriculum Committees	T		
Action #5 Implement selected special topics or elective courses, subject to resource availability and approval processes.	GAME Program Committee, Unit Chairs, and Curriculum Committees	T		
Action #6 Monitor the impact of curriculum changes on student progression, cohort synchronization, and student experience.	GAME Program Director and Committee, and Academic Advisors	T		
Action #7 Review outcomes of implemented changes and identify further opportunities to improve program flexibility.	GAME Program Director and Committee, and Academic Advisors	T		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

General Address comments

The Program recognizes the importance of increasing flexibility and improving synchronization between the BA and BSc streams. At the same time, the cohort-based structure and the integration of courses across three units impose constraints on the extent and pace of curricular changes.

The introduction of preparatory courses or a foundational year has been considered; however, this would extend program duration, particularly for the BSc (GAME Programming), and would disrupt the cohort model that underpins the program structure.

Within these constraints, the Program is actively pursuing **incremental and carefully managed curriculum adjustments** to improve flexibility and alignment, while maintaining program integrity and progression requirements.

Comments 2026-Year 1

Action 1 has been **substantially completed**, particularly for the BSc (GAME Programming), where the curriculum has been reviewed and identified as relatively rigid due to its structure and multi-unit dependencies.

Actions 2 and 3 are **ongoing** and closely linked. Opportunities for special topics and elective courses are being explored and evaluated to ensure that any additions maintain academic coherence and do not disrupt existing learning outcomes. Changes are being approached incrementally to ensure compatibility with the current curriculum.

Action 4 is **planned for Year 2**, as early-year alignment has already been developed and refined over time; further adjustments will build on this foundation.

Actions 5-7 are **dependent on the outcomes of Actions 1-3**. Implementation of new offerings, along with monitoring and further refinement, is expected to begin in Year 2 following the initial evaluation phase.

Year 1 progress reflects a careful and phased approach to improving program flexibility within the structural constraints of the cohort model and multi-institutional delivery.

Recommendation #4: That the Program review space and resource constraints, that are limiting program capacity and make recommendations through normal channels of advocacy with the Dean.

Supporting/clarifying text: The program has growth potential but is strongly limited by lab-size. Increasing lab sizes would be a long-term solution, but allowing for student laptop use (BYOD) and reducing the dependency on synchronized lab-instruction is a more feasible and short-term route to mitigating these constraints.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC acknowledges the importance of this recommendation. Although the allocation of resources lies outside the jurisdiction of the Committee, ARC advises the Program to review constraints and continue to advocate through available channels as appropriate.

No Implementation Plan required.

Note: The Program is still encouraged to report on any activity annually.

Comments 2026:

The Program acknowledges the importance of adequate resources in supporting a high-quality student experience. Current resources are sufficient to support the existing cohort size; however, any increase in student intake would require corresponding adjustments to the resource allocation and operational agreements with Niagara College, particularly given the space constraints of specialized game development laboratories.

These constraints are largely governed at the institutional level and depend on broader planning, capacity, and resource commitments across both institutions. The Program Director, faculty, and staff have consistently communicated program needs and capacity considerations to the relevant Deans and administrative units at both Brock University and Niagara College, particularly in situations where enrollment pressures arise.

Alternative approaches, such as a bring-your-own-device (BYOD) model, have been previously explored but were not viable due to variability in student hardware capabilities, which negatively impacted the consistency of the learning experience.

The Program recognizes that long-term improvements in student experience are closely tied to sustained resource investment and will continue to communicate these needs through appropriate institutional channels.

Recommendation #5: That the Program pursue opportunities to improve the low female representation, particularly in the BSc stream.

Supporting/clarifying text: A low female to male proportion is largely a function of the lower number of female applicants, but improvements may be possible by emphasizing diversity in the acceptance criteria and exploring the potential for high-school outreach to improve the intake ratio. The long work of building equitable representation is well documented and involves reaching out to target communities to ensure their meaningful involvement. Brock administration wanted a push towards gender parity in the program; a solid example regarding this is Harvey Mudd College (<https://www.hmc.edu/about/>).

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee believes the Program, in consultation with the Deans' Offices and ORES, is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to move forward on this issue.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Program
Responsible for resources:	Program/Deans
Responsible for implementation:	Program/Deans
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities and Dean of Mathematics and Science to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Review current recruitment and outreach activities to identify opportunities to better promote the GAME programs to prospective female students.	GAME Program Director	C		
Action #2 Work with Brock recruitment staff to increase participation in high-school outreach and initiatives targeting underrepresented groups in technology.	GAME Program Director and Committee, and Brock Recruitment Office	O		
Action #3 Expand participation in STEM and creative technology outreach events, including robotics competitions and activities involving secondary-school students.	GAME Program Faculty and Recruitment Partners	O		
Action #4 Review and update recruitment materials and presentations to better reflect diversity and highlight inclusive career pathways in game development.	GAME Program Committee in collaboration with Brock Recruitment	T		
Action #5 Monitor applicant and enrollment data in the BA and BSc streams, with attention to gender representation.	GAME Program Committee	T		
Action #6 Evaluate the effectiveness of recruitment and outreach activities and identify areas for improvement.	GAME Program Committee	T		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

General Address comments

The Program recognizes the importance of improving gender representation, particularly within the BSc (GAME Programming) stream. This imbalance reflects broader trends in computing-related disciplines, where female participation remains comparatively low.

The Program is actively engaged in institutional recruitment activities, including Fall Preview Day, Open House, and the Ontario Universities' Fair, and is working to expand outreach efforts to better reach underrepresented groups. These efforts focus on strengthening the recruitment pipeline through increased visibility, targeted engagement, and improved representation in program materials.

Comments 2026-Year 1

Action 1 has been **completed**, with the Program reviewing its outreach activities and identifying direct engagement through established university recruitment channels as the primary approach.

Action 2 is **ongoing**. Program members have engaged with Brock recruitment staff and are working to expand participation in high-school outreach activities. Further progress depends on alignment with existing university recruitment plans and available resources.

Action 3 is **ongoing** and has been strengthened through increased participation in outreach initiatives, including robotics events and competitions involving secondary-school students. These activities broaden engagement with prospective students interested in technology and interactive

media.

Action 4 is **on target**, with updates to recruitment materials underway to better reflect diversity and inclusivity within the field.

Actions 5 and 6 are **planned for subsequent phases** and depend on the continued implementation of outreach and recruitment efforts established in Actions 1-4.

Overall, Year 1 progress reflects an expansion and formalization of outreach efforts, with a focus on building a stronger and more inclusive recruitment pipeline.