

# A Peer-Review Process for Games, Software & Simulations

Dr Bride Mallon



# Aim

- Proposing a peer-review process for games, software and simulations produced in academic contexts



# Problem

- “I spent three years working on a simulation and three weeks on a paper, yet I got more credit from my institution for the paper than the simulation.”

- Dr Allen Partridge, ISAGA 2006



# Problem

- Insufficient career “credits” from academic institutions for producing games, simulations and software





# Constraint

## ■ Accreditation Process





# UOA 37 Library and Information Management Research outputs sub-panel statement

- “Recognises that work may be submitted in other forms [other than articles, books, chapters in books and monographs (including research reports)] and will not regard any type of output as being intrinsically of higher quality than another.”

UK's *Research Assessment Exercise* site, Section 14, P. 48,  
<http://www.rae.ac.uk/pubs/2006/01/docs/i37.pdf>

# Key Questions

- Does the artefact actually constitute or contribute to scientific research or advancement?
- Does it offer something new, or make some contribution to research, conceptually or practically?





## Is the contribution

- In the context or new application area of the simulation or game?
- Does it answer some problem or need?
- A technical innovation?





## Is the contribution

- A new interaction strategy adopted?
- Theory testing?
- In going further toward achieving the same goals than other products?



# Is the contribution

- An increment?
- An innovation?
- An evolution?

# Contribution

- **Without a specification of originality or contribution, some relevance or added value — inadequate justification for including an artefact in an academic peer-review — because the latter is traditionally premised on the notion that the work should advance science**





## Benefits of a peer-review process for software, games and simulations

- Credit for these ‘publications’ may be sought by academics
- Clarifying standards
- Providing publication outlets serving as repositories for knowledge



# Operationization

## ■ Electronic Journal

- Space for publication of the full artefact or demonstration / exemplar of the artefact



# Operationization

- Partial publication or demo - influenced by such considerations
  - Software size
  - Delivery medium
  - Copyright issues
- The journal provides facilities to distribute the full artifact to reviewers by alternative means



# Operationization

- Accompanying documentation containing
  - A. A categorisation of the game or simulations e.g.
- Subject content: Language processing> Natural language processing> Kind: Software
- Subject content: Business> Management Training>Leadership Training> Kind: Face-to-face game



# Operationization

- B. A specification of the contribution of the artefact to research
- C. A specification of whether and the extent to which the artefact satisfies any additional criteria supplied by the particular journal





# Operationization

- Different foci and specialisms by publishers - management training, financial modelling, language learning, language translation, driving training, personal financial management etc





# Operationization

- On completion of the review process, the journal outlet will publish the artefact in full or as a demonstration or exemplar.
- The artefact or demonstration will be accompanied by the written documentation (modified in accordance with the reviewers critiques).





Advantages of scaffolding artefact review upon the back of existing paper review journal outlets

- Established processes
  - Reducing marketing requirements
  - Easing acceptance of the artefacts as accredited ‘publications’
- 
- 
- 