INTRODUCING A NEW DOFE SKILLS SECTION ACTIVITY

# Information sheet about esports

What is esports?

Esports (electronic sports) is competitive video gaming where players play against each other in teams. Esports can take place purely online or at spectator events in indoor arenas. In the UK, esports is classified as a game, along with activities such as chess and bridge; however, it has features in common with sports, such as tournaments in arenas, teams with merchandise and fans, and the general culture surrounding it.

Esports is an inclusive activity, open to all regardless of gender or physical ability, and can be played on any device with internet connection. Esports involves humans (rather than computers) competing against one another, and strategic thinking is key to success.

How big is esports?

The esports industry is growing at a considerable rate; analysts have estimated based on year-on-year growth from 2016 that in 2020 it will have become a $1.5 billion industry. This industry links directly to a wide range of careers and future opportunities for young people, and ties into the DofE aim of preparing young people for adult life.
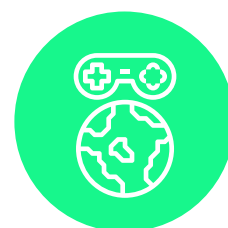
2020 saw Pearson Education launch BTEC qualifications in esports, requiring learners to complete a range of units developing proficiency in play and strategy, as well as learning about the wider esports industry and gaining practical experience. Higher Education qualifications in esports are also available at universities within the UK and overseas.

In the UK the British Esports Association (BEA) was established as a not-for-profit national body to "promote esports in the UK, increase its level of awareness, improve standards and inspire future talent". It promotes esports at a grassroots level and advocates for its recognition as a credible activity to promote teamwork, communication and support the growing development of the esports industry.

Why are we introducing esports as a Skills section activity?

Historically the DofE has not recognised playing computer games as a Skills section activity. However, the landscape of gaming has changed dramatically since this guidance was originally written, and now incorporates an organised and competitive scene that directly links to the aims and outcomes of the Skills section.
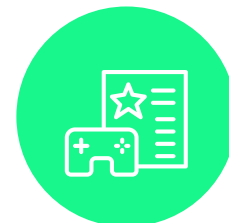
We have been exploring esports over the last 12 months as part of our commitment to ensuring that we maintain and enhance our relevance to young people. During this time, we have scoped out the skills and opportunities within the esports sector, consulted with the British Esports Association and identified where we have links with centres that already engage in esports activity. Following a successful pilot with eight DofE centres, 70% of young people told us that playing esports helps them learn to set and rise to challenges, and 75% told us that playing esports helps them to develop their social skills.

What are the benefits of esports?

Pearson Education identified clear and tangible benefits linked to participating in esports as part of their BTEC launch, all of which reflect the desired outcomes of the DofE Skills section:

● Promotes leadership skills and teamwork
● Boosts social and communication skills
● Develops problem solving, decision-making and multitasking abilities
● Improves cyber, digital and other transferable skills
● Develops friendships and communities
● Improves reaction times, dexterity and concentration
● Increases perceptual and cognitive skills
● Improves resilience through winning and losing
● Can act as a motivator to improve attendance and behaviour
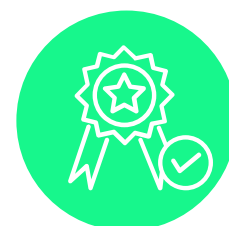
How would a DofE participant do esports as a Skills section activity?

To count as a Skills section activity, participants should take part in esports through an organised and structured adult-led group, such as a school or college esports enrichment club. Esports is typically organised into tournament-style play with clearly defined time periods, and with players utilising strategy and expertise to achieve clear objectives. Participants could play a range of different titles during the activity, either cooperatively in teams or playing as individuals against other competitors. Participants may play remotely with each other, so long as the activity has been organised through a setting as described above.

Participants may not count playing esports titles at home, if they are doing so independently and in isolation of an organised group.

The activity should be assessed by an adult organising and supervising the esports club. Assessment should consider the personal goals of the young person and may revolve around proficiency and development of strategy and playstyles. It could also reflect on social development of participants and their ability to interact with peers and teammates.

As esports is played on devices such as computers and consoles, accessing such a device is required for a participant to choose esports as a Skills section activity – much like needing access to an instrument, if music is the chosen activity. Young people will often already have access to these devices; if not, they may be able to access them through education providers, community groups, or commercial providers.

E-safety

As with all DofE activities, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that any esports activity is appropriately managed and insured unless the activity is being directly managed or organised by their DofE group, centre or Licensed Organisation.
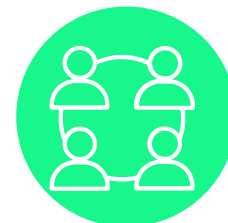
Further support and guidance around esports and e-safety is available from:

The British Esports Association: https://britishesports.org/advice-and-information/
NSPCC: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-games/
Internet Matters: https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/a-guide-to-esports/

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Roles in esports

- Professional Player
- Coach
- Shoutcaster
- Host
- Analyst
- Journalist, Observer
- Admin (referee)
- Broadcast Production
- Streamer
- Influencer
- Video Editor
- Photographer
- Community/Social Media Manager
- Team or Player Management & Operations

Related academic subjects

- Computer Science
- ICT
- Sciences
- Technology
- Engineering
- Mathematics
- Creative Media
- Business Studies
- Entrepreneurship
- Games Development
- Sport

Related careers

- Cyber Security
- Software Development
- Big Data & Analytics
- Cloud Solutions
- Network Engineering
- Mobile Technologies
- Digital Engineering
- Artificial Intelligence
- Network Management
- Virtual Reality
- Software Engineering
- Marketing
- Sales
- Advertising
- PR
- Branding
- Merchandising
- Media
- Event Management
- Social Media
- Design
- Business Development