



Experienced Game Designer

About PikPok

We're PikPok, New Zealand's longest-standing game developer, and we strive to make great game experiences for our players. We want to bring success and joy by working together to entertain the world.

Over the years, we have built lots of games for all sorts of platforms, most recently titles like *Into the Dead 2*, *Rival Stars Horse Racing*, *Agent Intercept* and *My Cat Club*. Our teams are small, and everyone involved can contribute to the decisions that shape the products.

We're always working to build and maintain an inclusive, safe and fun studio culture. We are based in Wellington, NZ and we have an amazing group of designers, artists, programmers and support staff from all over the globe. Now, we're looking to add a new **Experienced Game Designer** to the team.

About the Role

To us, game development is about creating amazing play experiences that engage and entertain.

As an **Experienced Game Designer**, your role is to help us create those play experiences through a combination of level building, balancing, system design, thematics and whatever else is required.

Experienced Game Designer is an intermediate level position. You will be expected to have a certain level of autonomy, and ability to guide others. Over time, as you gain experience and take more responsibility, you will likely move up to become a Senior Game Designer.

All Game Designers are part of the Design Division, but work closely with all other disciplines.

The purpose of the Design Division is to improve company revenue through designing highly engaging, entertaining and retaining games with systems that maximise the monetisation potential in the target audience.

Your Deliverables

In your role you may work on many different aspects of game design, and on multiple projects. As such it is unlikely that you will be working on ALL of the below elements at any given time, but may work on all of them throughout your time in the role.

1. Live the PikPok Company Values

- **Be Curious** - Be interested in everything. Ask questions often. Seek to understand our players, their motivations and behaviours. Frequently challenge your own ideas and positions. Understand that everyone has something to teach and learn. Bring a level of enthusiasm and passion to your work.
- **Take Ownership** - Don't procrastinate. Be willing to make a commitment and own any subsequent successes and failures. Have the maturity to learn from mistakes and be hungry for feedback. Understand that quality is everyone's business and push yourself and others to own the delivery of quality. Be reliable, with a willingness to take a feature (or similar) and own it, including driving it, ensuring it is completed, looping in others, updating artifacts, and more.
- **Collaborate Well** - Have a willingness to collaborate with others and think beyond yourself. Have the ability and willingness to actively listen to others and see their side of the issue. Be willing to take advice without being defensive and to separate work critique from personal critique. Understand the common purpose, support and nurture colleagues. Work toward the benefit of the company and project. Be respectful. Be understanding. Be kind.

2. Games Industry Knowledge

Learn, use, and share appropriate industry knowledge and experience, including but not limited to:

- Game development cycle
- Nuances and needs of different platforms
- Relevant market knowledge, such as detailed understanding of systems in leading games (both made within PikPok and in the wider industry)
- Best practices related to systems, economies, player motivations, and progression
- Intuition of future trends and opportunities

3. Communication

Design is all about communication, both to the user through the game and to the team through your work. As such, communication skills, including but not limited to the below, are vital:

- Be able to speak with confidence and clarity, even to authority
- Stay positive in challenging situations, and work with people to find a path forward
- Be able to persuade others and sell an idea or vision, without bullying

- Take feedback and input from others constructively and non-defensively
- Speak and present to wide groups in a clear and enthusiastic manner, engaging the audience
- Create documents and artifacts (including presentations, mockups, wireframes, flowcharts, etc.) in a clear, concise and timely manner
- Present to external parties as required, reliably representing both PikPok and the design discipline without compromising confidentiality

4. Organisation and Quality-Based Practices

- Demonstrate a good sense of prioritisation, including being able to express why you made the choices you made
- Show initiative in finding appropriate work if none is assigned.
- Work on multiple projects at the same time, as required
- Work well with different teams
- Follow appropriate design and industry practices
- Be able to pivot ideas and behaviours to match new directions
- Have a good sense when additional refinement is required, while also knowing when enough is enough
- Use game data to inform decision making. Ask the right questions and make reasoned arguments based on results
- Show a smart sense of scope (such as designing in a well organised and layered approach)
- Have a positive attitude to both QA and User testing
- Assist others, as required, to ensure goals are met and quality is paramount

5. Hold and Drive the Project Vision

- Be able to develop a vision for a game or feature from concept through execution
- Be able to hold others on the team to that vision if proposed changes (or opinions) don't match it
- Be able to enthuse others, and get them on board
- Participate in brainstorming and vision development, including engaging and encouraging cooperation and input from others, as required

6. Work Ethic & Leadership Skills

- Demonstrate enthusiasm for your work, the project, the work of others, and PikPok as a whole

- Demonstrate good self management skills, while still being able to follow the team plan
- Show good self motivation, with an ability to push through the tough times
- Demonstrate the efficiency to do what's necessary, while not relying on overtime as a solution
- Be decisive, without being dictatorial or aggressive. Be able to clearly explain why you made the decisions you did
- Show courage and clarity in advocating for your project / team / dept. / PikPok
- Demonstrate a smart sense of scope, and the ability to design in layers"
- Show ability (and enthusiasm) to mentor others
- When teaching, do so in a clear patient way, with an understanding of the learner's needs

7. Creative Problem Solving

- Work with lead and team to come up with creative solutions to a problem that consider the project and business goals as well as the users' needs
- Iterate, brainstorm, and incorporate the best ideas from all sources
- Use intuition as appropriate
- Use data and research to validate solutions, where available. Seek data when it is not

8. User-Focused Design

The Design Division is focussed on creating the best entertainment experience for our users while still delivering on business goals. As such, being user-focused in our decision making is a core responsibility of design.

- Understand player motivations and behaviors, and how to apply that knowledge to designs that match the needs of the player.
- Understand player psychology and how it relates to the design decisions
- As appropriate, design to deliver specific emotions, including relevant changes to drama/flow over time, and providing the player with interesting choices.
- Have an overall focus on make something that is inherently "fun"

9. Core Mechanics Design

- As required, design core gameplay (aka Toy) mechanics that engage players, and provide a foundation for expanding features
- As required, create well-scoped digital or physical prototypes to feel, prove and iterate game concepts

10. System Design

- As directed, use appropriate tools to design and manage potentially complex game systems
- Understand the cause and effect of changes to parts of the system
- Be able to conceptualize and model systems, and explain them clearly

11. Monetisation Design

- As required, design, maintain and optimise systems that drive high LTV and deliver to PikPok's business needs
- Design such systems in an efficient way, with good ROI while still meeting the needs of the user
- Use maths and modeling techniques and appropriate tools as required

12. Content Design & Creation

- As directed, use appropriate tools and editors to create engaging levels, missions, and similar elements for games
- Develop and show a core understanding of what makes levels or player- tasks fun, engaging and full of flow

13. Balancing & Economy

Many of our games are Free-to-play, and as such have a strong requirement for a strong, well-integrated and engaging economy.

- Responsively (& responsibly) tune game variables to improve a game's engagement, difficulty, pace, as well as economy and progression
- Use math (and associated tools) to develop models of economies and progressions
- Be able and willing to use data to drive balancing
- Communicate reasonings clearly
- Drive the testing of all changes (utilising QA and other resources) to minimise the risk of mistakes being released to the public
- Be available to, and responsive in, resolving any issues - liaising with community services and the wider company as required

14. Creative Writing & Theming

Having an engaging world, with appropriate theming for mechanics, is often a necessity.

- Be able to imagine and describe consistent and creative story worlds

- Contribute to the development of characters, names, dialog, etc. for the appropriate audience, as required
- Ensure that whenever you develop content it is with the appropriate theme and tone, to maintain engagement and consistency
- Understand how narrative elements can be communicated outside of writing/dialog, and design appropriately

15. Work within PikPok's Agile Framework

- Attend and contribute to teams' relevant rituals
- Acknowledge that priorities and requirements frequently change
- Be a cooperative, collaborative and willing team player
- Acknowledge that PikPok's Agile framework is itself adaptable as required

16. Help Deliver the Goals of the Design Division

- Actively communicate any problems, or needs to your manager, so that they can be appropriately addressed
- Help promote the needs and goals of the Design Division to the greater company
- Help improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the division through your attitude, day-to-day work and forward-thinking strategies

17. Actively Support Health and Safety Initiatives in the Studio

- Promote and encourage process improvement opportunities to further improve health and safety
- Health and safety procedures are understood and adhered to
- All identified hazards are reported to HR@pikpok.com within five working days
- Report all accidents, incidents or near misses to HR@pikpok.com within two working days
- Participate in Health & Safety training as required
- Take responsibility for personal Health & Safety behaviour in the workplace
- Complete any requests to support H&S correction activity in and for the Studio

Your Key Interactions

- You will work directly with your game development team and lead(s) as applicable. A degree of autonomy, while maintaining vision and purpose, is expected
- You will liaise with other departments, including but not limited to: QA, Games User Research, Marketing and Analytics

- You will report directly to your assigned Design Manager

Your Background

1. Skills & Experience

- 2+ Year professional game design experience
- Skilled in Unity
- Skilled in MS Office Suite or Google Suite, particularly Excel or Sheets
- Good understanding of game development process.
- Familiar with the Agile framework.
- Technology proficiency, specifically in mobile hardware and software, as well as reporting and graphs.
- Superior written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail.

2. Attributes

- Proactive and enthusiastic in all communications.
- Strong desire to learn.
- Creatively minded, with a good understanding of the needs of the player.
- Analytical & results driven with a strong drive to find out the why's and the how's
- Good knowledge of video games and interactive media, especially the mobile F2P market.
- Good ability to communicate patiently, enthusiastically and effectively with a range of people and disciplines.
- Good ability to pick up new tools and skills
- A strong drive to achieve quality outcomes in a dynamic and fast-paced environment.
- An approachable, empathetic and encouraging personality.