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THEME OF THE MONTH
MAY 2023

E-SPORTS

What is E-sports?

E-sports, or electronic sports, is a form of competitive gaming that has been rapidly growing in popularity in recent years. Players from all over the world compete in various video games, with some tournaments offering large cash prizes. In this booklet, we'll explore the world of e-sports, from its history to the games and tournaments that make up the scene.
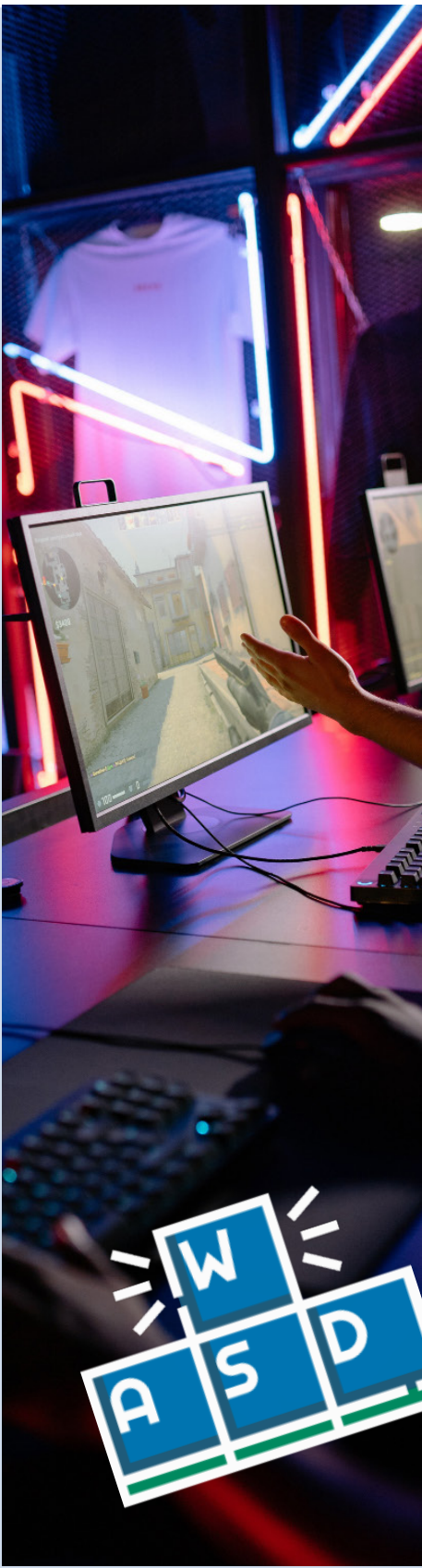
History of E-sports

The history of e-sports in the UK can be traced back to the early 1980s, when competitive gaming events started to emerge in arcades and at home on personal computers. However, it was not until the 2000s that e-sports began to gain significant popularity in the UK.

In the early 2000s, the UK hosted several notable e-sports events, including the World Cyber Games, the Electronic Sports World Cup, and the Intel Extreme Masters. These events helped to establish the UK as a major player in the global e-sports scene and helped to attract more players and fans to the country.

One of the earliest e-sports organizations in the UK was the Cyberathlete Professional League (CPL), which held its first UK event in 2002. The CPL was one of the first organizations to offer cash prizes to e-sports players and helped to establish a professional e-sports scene in the UK.

The establishment of the British e-sports Association in 2016 helped to further promote the development of e-sports in the country and provide support for UK players and teams.

Today, the UK is home to several notable e-sports organizations and teams, including Fnatic, Excel Esports, and Team Endpoint. The country also hosts several major e-sports events each year, such as the Insomnia Gaming Festival and the ESL One Birmingham tournament.

Popular E-sports Games

There are many different video games that make up the e-sports scene, each with its own unique community and competitive scene. Some of the most popular e-sports games include:

- League of Legends
- Dota 2
- Counter-Strike: Global Offensive
- Fortnite
- Overwatch
- Call of Duty
- Rainbow Six Siege

E-sports facts:

- The UK is the fourth-largest e-sports market in the world, with revenues of £111.5 million in 2020.
- The British e-sports Association was founded in 2016 to represent the UK e-sports community and promote the development of e-sports in the country.
- The biggest e-sports tournament held in the UK is the ESL One Birmingham, which takes place annually and features teams from around the world competing in the game Dota 2.
- In 2019, the UK government recognized e-sports players as professional athletes, making it easier for them to obtain visas and compete in international tournaments.
- The University of Roehampton in London offers the UK's first e-sports degree program, which covers topics such as gaming culture, e-sports management, and game design.

What are the disadvantages of E-sports?

E-sports has become a popular form of entertainment and competition, attracting players from all over the world. However, there are also several disadvantages associated with e-sports that are important to consider. Here are some of the negative aspects of e-sports and how they can impact individuals and society as a whole.

Physical Health Risks

One of the most significant disadvantages of e-sports is the impact it can have on physical health. Long hours spent sitting in front of a computer screen can lead to a range of health problems, including obesity, back pain, and carpal tunnel syndrome. Additionally, many e-sports players do not get enough exercise or fresh air, which can negatively affect their overall health and wellbeing.

Mental Health Risks

E-sports can also have negative effects on mental health. The intense pressure of competition and the need to constantly perform at a high level can lead to stress, anxiety, and depression. In addition, many players spend long hours isolated in front of a computer screen, which can lead to feelings of loneliness and social isolation.

Addiction

Like any form of entertainment, e-sports can be addictive. Some players may become so engrossed in their games that they neglect other important aspects of their lives, such as school, work, and relationships. In extreme cases, e-sports addiction can lead to financial problems, poor health, and social isolation.

Lack of diversity and inclusion

E-sports has been criticized for its lack of diversity and inclusion. Many e-sports players are male, and there are relatively few opportunities for women, people of colour, and LGBTQ+ individuals. This lack of diversity can create a culture of exclusion and contribute to a sense of elitism within the e-sports community.

Problems with E-sports betting

E-sports has become a popular form of entertainment and competition, and with it has come a rise in e-sports betting. While betting on e-sports can add excitement to the gaming experience, it also poses several risks and challenges. We will explore the problems associated with e-sports betting and the potential consequences for individuals and society:

Lack of Regulation: E-sports betting is a relatively new industry and is not yet subject to the same level of regulation as traditional sports betting. This lack of regulation can create an environment in which unethical operators can take advantage of players and fans.

Underage Gambling: E-sports betting can be especially appealing to younger audiences, who may be more familiar with the games and the players. However, underage gambling is a serious concern, and without proper safeguards, minors may be able to access e-sports betting sites and place bets.

Match Fixing and Cheating: E-sports betting can also lead to match fixing and cheating. Players may be tempted to manipulate the outcome of a game to win a bet, and gamblers may offer incentives for players to do so. This can damage the integrity of the e-sports industry and erode trust among fans and players.

Addiction: As with any form of gambling, e-sports betting can be addictive. Some individuals may become so engrossed in betting on e-sports that they neglect other important aspects of their lives, such as school, work, and relationships. In extreme cases, e-sports betting addiction can lead to financial problems, poor health, and social isolation.

Financial Risks: E-sports betting carries financial risks, as with any form of gambling. Individuals who engage in e-sports betting may lose large sums of money and may struggle with debt and financial instability as a result.

Women in E-sports

Women in e-sports have faced various challenges, such as gender discrimination, harassment, and lack of representation. However, there have also been significant advancements in recent years towards greater gender equality and inclusivity in e-sports.

One of the main issues facing women e-sports players is discrimination and harassment. This can take many forms, such as sexist comments and threats, exclusion from team tryouts or tournaments, and being underestimated or undervalued by teammates and opponents. Female players have also reported incidents of sexual harassment and abuse within the e-sports community.

Another challenge for women e-sports players is the lack of representation in the industry. They are underrepresented in professional teams and tournaments, and there are few women commentators, analysts, and other positions in the e-sports industry. This lack of representation can lead to feelings of isolation and exclusion and make it harder for them to build careers in e-sports.

Despite these challenges, there have been positive developments towards greater gender equality in e-sports. Women-only tournaments have been established to provide female players with more opportunities to compete and gain recognition, and several e-sports organisations and companies have implemented diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Many female e-sports players have also become role models and advocates for greater gender equality in the industry.

For example, Stephanie Harvey, a professional Counter-Strike player, has spoken out against harassment and discrimination and has advocated for greater representation of women in e-sports. Similarly, Sasha "Scarlett" Hostyn, a professional StarCraft player, has been a vocal advocate for gender equality and has encouraged more women to pursue careers in e-sports.

Types of E-sports

There are many different types of e-sports, each with its own unique gameplay mechanics, rules, and strategies. Some of the most popular types of e-sports games include:

- **League of Legends:** a multiplayer online battle arena game where players work together to destroy the enemy team's base
- **Dota 2:** a similar game to League of Legends, where players control heroes and work together to destroy the enemy team's ancient
- **Counter-Strike: Global Offensive:** a first-person shooter game where players compete in rounds to complete objectives or eliminate the enemy team
- **Overwatch:** a team-based first-person shooter game where players work together to complete objectives and defend or attack locations
- **Fortnite:** a battle royale game where players compete against each other to be the last person standing

Each e-sports game has its own unique community and culture, with players developing their own strategies and tactics to gain an advantage over their opponents.

Leading E-sports teams

Here are some of the best e-sport teams:

- Team Liquid
- OG
- Cloud9
- Evil Geniuses
- Fnatic
- FaZe Clan
- Team Vitality
- Team SoloMid
- 100 Thieves
- Team Secret
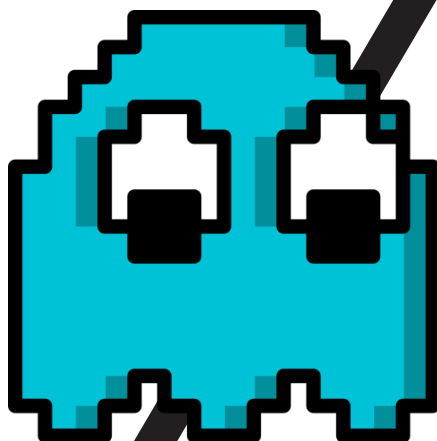
The E-sports Industry

The e-sports industry has grown rapidly in recent years, with revenues projected to reach $1.08 billion in 2021. Major players in the industry include game developers, teams and organizations, sponsors and advertisers, and streaming platforms.

Game developers such as Riot Games, Valve Corporation, and Activision Blizzard are responsible for creating and maintaining the most popular e-sports games. They also organize and run major tournaments and events, and provide support for professional players and teams.

E-sports teams and organisations are responsible for managing and supporting professional players and competing in major tournaments and events. Many of these teams have significant fan followings and are sponsored by major brands and companies.

Sponsors and advertisers play a key role in the e-sports industry, providing funding and support for tournaments, teams, and events. Major brands such as Coca-Cola, Intel, and Red Bull have invested heavily in e-sports, recognizing its potential as a lucrative marketing opportunity.

Streaming platforms such as Twitch and YouTube Gaming have become the primary way that e-sports events and tournaments are broadcast to audiences around the world. These platforms have helped to make e-sports more accessible and have played a major role in the growth of the industry.

What is an E-sports player?

An e-sports player competes professionally in organized video game tournaments or matches. They play their respective games in front of live audiences or online viewers, either as individuals or as part of a team. E-sports players often specialize in a specific game or genre and may have a unique role within their team, such as a support player, carry, or tank.

In addition to playing the game, e-sports players are responsible for practicing and refining their skills and strategies, communicating effectively with their teammates, and staying up-to-date on the latest developments and updates in the game. They may also participate in promotional events or endorse products related to gaming or technology.

E-sports players often have sponsors or contracts with e-sports organizations or teams, which may include providing support for their training, travel, and other expenses. They may also earn income from prize winnings, streaming their gameplay on platforms like Twitch, or through partnerships with brands or advertisers.

Here are some well-known e-sports players and their earnings:

Dota 2:

- Johan "N0tail" Sundstein - $7.4 million
- Peter "ppd" Dager - $2.7 million
- Sumail "SumaiL" Hassan - $3.6 million
- Kuro "KuroKy" Salehi Takhasomi - $5.1 million

Overwatch:

- Jay "sinatraa" Won - $810,948
- Matthew "Super" DeLisi - $758,744
- Hyo-Jong "Haksal" Kim - $725,024
- Joon-yeong "Profit" Park - $704,695

Call of Duty:

- Damon "Karma" Barlow - $1.9 million
- Ian "Crimsix" Porter - $1.5 million
- Jordan "JKap" Kaplan - $1.1 million
- Seth "Scump" Abner - $934,498

More information

If you are interested in e-sports you can find out more on how to get involved [here](#).

Here are some helpful links should you need any further support:

[Childline - Gaming](#)

[YoungMinds - Gaming and mental health](#)

[GamCare - Gambling support](#)

[UKAT - Gaming addiction](#)

LSP's Safeguarding & Mental Health First Aider Teams

If you have any concerns at all, please don't hesitate to contact a member of our Safeguarding or Mental Health teams:

Safeguarding Lead: Andy Hamer
andy.hamer@learningskillspartnership.com
07526 168286

Safeguarding Officer: Anika Anwari
anika.anwari@learningskillspartnership.com
07432 840511

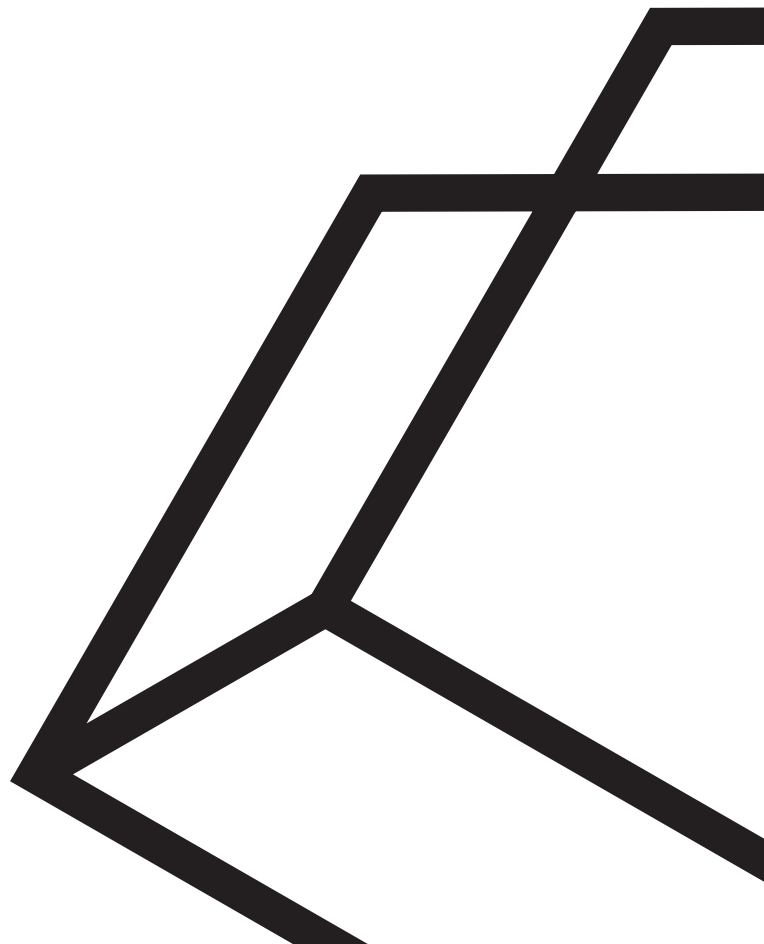**Safeguarding Officer: Fiona Sharples**
fiona.sharples@learningskillspartnership.com
07447 799328

Safeguarding Officer: Yvonne Cogzell
yvonne.cogzell@learningskillspartnership.com
07710 70562

Mental Health First Aider: Fiona Sharples
fiona.sharples@learningskillspartnership.com
07447 799328

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www.learningskillspartnership.com
info@learningskillspartnership.com