

Reviewers rave for 'Hogwarts Legacy' video game despite backlash

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The 'Harry Potter' universe is still growing, with the release of the 'Hogwarts Legacy' video game in February 2023.

The highly anticipated video game "Hogwarts Legacy" was met with

largely positive reviews after its release Friday, despite some gameplay quibbles and the controversy that has dogged the Wizarding World's original creator.

In the [game](#), developed by Avalanche Software and edited by Warner Bros' Portkey Games, players virtually explore the "Harry Potter" universe as a student attending the magical Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in the 1800s.

The so-called open world format allows characters to roam around inside the fictional Scottish castle, attending magic classes and casting spells as they compete in quests.

Even before its release, "Hogwarts Legacy" elicited strong opinions online, as "Harry Potter" author JK Rowling has faced accusations of transphobia for putting an emphasis on biological sex over [gender identity](#).

Still, review aggregator site Metacritic awarded the release a score of 85 out of 100, based on more than 60 different critics' opinions.

Specialty video game site IGN gave the title a nine out of 10, saying it "absolutely nails the vibe of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry" and calling the adventure sequences "stupefyingly good," though it took away a point for plot holes and graphics glitches.

And despite the universe's decades of back material to draw on, the site Gaming Age said the game "doesn't just bathe in the reflected warm glow of nostalgia," but also offers new contributions.

The site Digital Trends, however, gave "Hogwarts Legacy" 2.5 stars out of five, panning a "cold and clinical" undertaking with a design that "lacks imagination."

Some gamers and streamers have publicized their decision to boycott the game in protest of Rowling's views on [transgender rights](#), though the official "Hogwarts Legacy" website says the author was not directly involved in its creation.

Writing at tech website Wired, game reviewer Jaina Grey, who is a transgender woman and former "Potter" fan, called the gameplay "dated" and "lifeless."

But Grey said her real issue with the game is the "hurt" she feels from Rowling's comments about trans women.

"There are places we can't return to. Places like Hogwarts," Grey said.

Despite the friction surrounding its debut, "Hogwarts Legacy" has already logged an impressive opening, topping the charts on the Steam download platform Friday.

It is available on PlayStation 5, Xbox Series and PCs, and is set for release on Nintendo Switch later this year.

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