Digital & Technology Solutions Professional Integrated Degree Apprenticeship 2025-26

Ada, the National College for Digital Skills

STUDENT HANDBOOK

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1. Welcome & Introduction

Dear Apprentice,

Welcome to Ada! Congratulations on being accepted onto your apprenticeship programme. The next 36 months as you study for you Degree Apprenticeship with Ada and complete your initial employment will be a stretching and testing rollercoaster in which we look forward to pushing you to excel and learn not only to be a highly competent technical expert, but also a rounded, reflective professional well prepared to blaze a trail through your organisation as a digital pioneer.

At Ada we focus on five values: **Rigour, Resilience, Creativity, Curiosity and Collaboration**. We strive to ensure all our staff, students and apprentices embody these values as well as the employers and other organisations that we work with. Coupled with the mind-sets and skillsets you will learn on your course, we believe that if you can embody these values in your work that you will differentiate yourself as a leader.

I hope you rise to the challenge of helping us shape apprenticeship programmes for future cohorts - only your feedback can help ensure this is the case so please share it with us, even if it is not what you think we want to hear. You are also part of a national cohort, with the opportunity to make connections outside your region and build a broader perspective on this exciting and constantly evolving sector. Again, I know you will seize the opportunity, just as you will in the future years of your career when you take on more responsibility – I hope you can find time to share your experiences and insights with students and staff as you progress.

Good luck with your studies. This handbook should provide a useful point of reference throughout. Finally, please remember, 'We are not here to be ordinary, we are here to be awesome.'

Mark Smith, CEO

2. Academic Calendar

Link to academic calendar on the Apprentice Microsite

Dates may be subject to change. Please see the latest information from the Ada team to confirm dates for each subsequent year.

3. List of programme directors & academic staff

- Mark Smith, CEO of Ada – mark@ada.ac.uk
- Tom Fogden, Dean of Ada – tom@ada.ac.uk
- Dr. Geoff Stevenson, Director of Degree Apprenticeships – geoff@ada.ac.uk
- Dr. Farhad Keissarian, Head of Degree Programmes - farhad@ada.ac.uk
- Tina Götschi - Director of Curriculum Quality & Lecturer (Software) - tina@ada.ac.uk
- Steve Rich, Lecturer – steve@ada.ac.uk
- Josh Dowie, Associate Lecturer - joshua@ada.ac.uk
- Daniel Fowke, Associate Lecturer - daniel@ada.ac.uk
- Dr. Roja Ahmadi, Lecturer – roja@ada.ac.uk
- Dr. Anand Veeraswamy - Lecturer - anand@ada.ac.uk

4. List of support staff [technical & administrative]

- Sukvinder Kathuria, Head of Faculty - sukvinder@ada.ac.uk
- Vacant role, Head of Apprenticeship Operations - tbc.
- Jim Flower, Lead Technical Skills Coach – Jim@ada.ac.uk
- Jess Heaney, Skills Coach Regional Lead (Manchester) - Jessica@ada.ac.uk
- Poujha Singh, Technical Skills Coach – poujha@ada.ac.uk
- Wayne Diamond, Technical Skills Coach – wayne@ada.ac.uk
- Aneesh Alidina, Technical Skills Coach – aneesh@ada.ac.uk
- Sabah Khalid, Technical Skills Coach - sabah@ada.ac.uk
- Evie Scholes, Technical Skills Coach - evie@ada.ac.uk
- Yasmin Lee, Technical Skills Coach - yasmin@ada.ac.uk
- Will Berry-Crawford, Technical Skills Coach - will@ada.ac.uk
- Linsey O'Donnell, Technical Skills Coach - linsey@ada.ac.uk
- Brooke Shadrake, Apprenticeship Delivery Manager – brooke@ada.ac.uk
- Lucy Fowler, Apprenticeship Experience Officer - lucy@ada.ac.uk
- Beth Robinson, Apprenticeship Delivery Administrator - bethany@ada.ac.uk

5. Name, position and institution of the external examiner(s) involved in the Programme

Dr Mariana Lilley
University of Hertfordshire
School of Physics, Engineering and Computer Science
College Lane
Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL10 9AB
Email: *M.Lilley@herts.ac.uk*

6. Introduction to the Programme

This programme is a BSc Degree Apprenticeship and combines academic study with professional practice. The programme is designed for employers and their employees (the students) providing the opportunity to combine academic study with professional practice in the digital and technology sector. Students will be employed as an apprentice in a digital and technology role throughout their studies and thus be able to apply their discipline knowledge to professional and industrial practice as they progress through the programme.

The aim of the programme is to produce highly motivated, technically competent individuals who have the awareness, understanding and the necessary flexibility to work effectively in a variety of IT roles within their workplace. The programme also aims to develop students' critical abilities, general problem-solving skills and lay a foundation for continued self-improvement and life-long learning, essential for today's IT professional. Importantly, much of the student development throughout the degree will take place in their workplace, where context and real life situations provide deep learning opportunities.

The curriculum is designed with input from employers to ensure its relevance to industry and fulfils both the educational requirements for an Open University Degree and the BSc Digital & Technology Solutions Degree Apprenticeship Standard, part of the government's initiative to develop apprenticeships at higher skill levels. With four streams, Cyber Security, Data Analyst, Software Engineer, Tech Consultant, as well as flexibility to incorporate work-based projects, the programme develops the skills and knowledge required for a wide range of computing-related career paths. Each

stream is defined in terms of core outcomes that are common to all streams and a set of knowledge and skills specific to that stream.

The programme has three levels (level 4 to level 6), each equivalent to a normal academic year. The programme is 50 weeks' duration per year with 80% of work-based learning and 20% of college study. Apprentices studying on this degree will study at Ada College for 10-11 weeks a year for a duration of three years. This pattern of study is designed to fit around full-time employment and uses a blended learning approach, which mixes work-based study and attendance at college study weeks. This approach allows students to be both productive employees, learning relevant skills on the job, and participants in a learning community of students who are broadening and deepening their professional knowledge together.

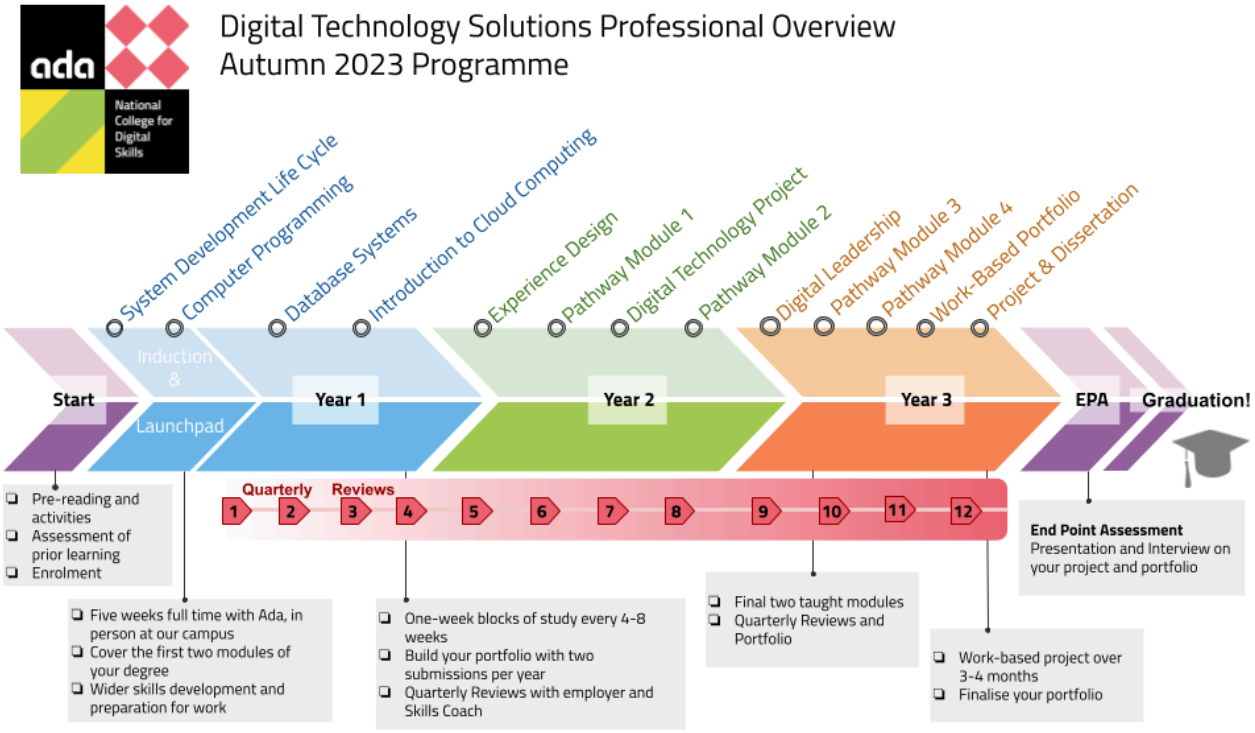
The first five weeks of the programme at level 4 is delivered as "Launch-pad" at the college. The Launch pad will provide an opportunity for students to consolidate their learning, receive academic tutorial support, allow revision time and introduce the next unit in the schedule.

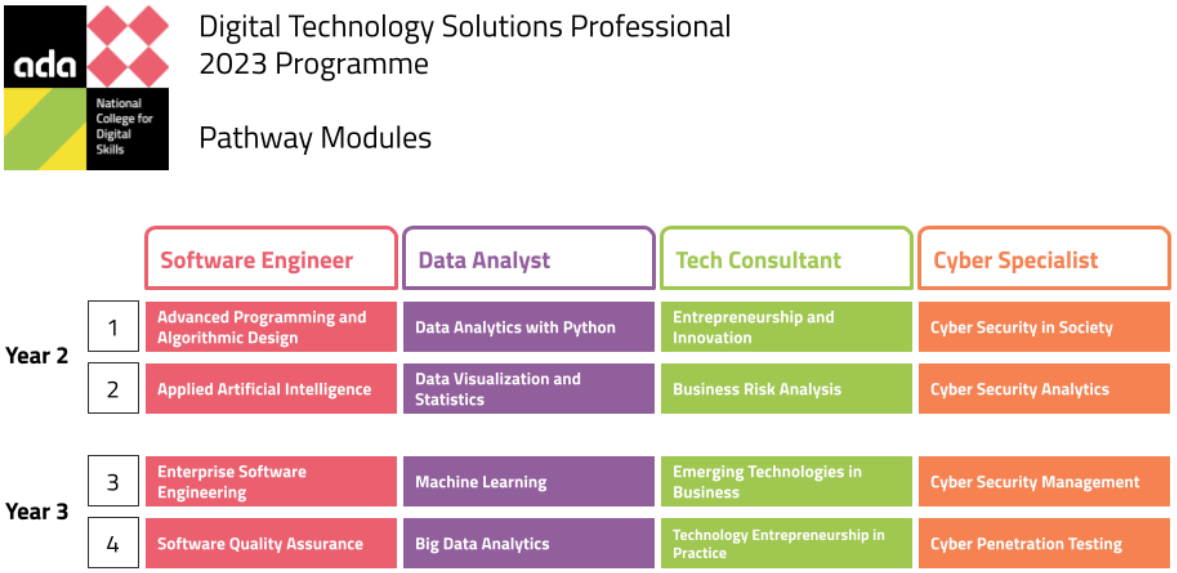
To enable students to link theory and practice in the workplace the programme includes a workplace-based module in year three, allowing the student to focus on their degree specialism. The 'Work-based Dissertation' in year three is the module grounded in the student's degree specialism and addresses pertinent challenges identified by the student/employer.

A core part of this degree is the requirement for apprentices to develop a portfolio. The intention is that this portfolio will provide a record of the specific skills and knowledge they have developed and used in the workplace and provide an opportunity to reflect on their personal development. The portfolio will be developed over all three years but be formally assessed at the end of the degree.

7. Programme Specification

The full programme specification.





8. Module Specifications

Full Programme Specification on the Ada website
Individual Module Descriptors on the Apprentice Microsite

9. Student support, Guidance and Advice

9.1. Induction Arrangements

After enrolling and at the beginning of the first session students will complete an induction. The student induction will be arranged with a teaching member of staff.

Student induction will include:

- An overview of training facilities
- Discussion of student handbook content
- Introduction to relevant instructors
- Discussion of course outline
- Outline of assessment requirements for the course/training program
- Supply of reading lists/text book references as appropriate

Induction is an important part of commencing a program of study. Students should take this opportunity to satisfy any questions related to the program, student facilities, and access to support services or any other information required.
If you miss the induction for some reason, please speak with your personal tutor to arrange a time to discuss the issues covered.

9.2. Skills Coaching

The skills coaching system provides every student with one skills coach who gets to know them as an individual, who keeps an eye on their overall academic progress and who is concerned for their general welfare. On one hand, the pastoral side of the role can often be simply a friendly conversation at the start of the meeting. On the other hand, the academic/developmental aspect of the role offers the chance for students to discuss their development beyond their formal studies. Tutorials can be used by students to sound out their thoughts, ideas and concerns with an experienced professional, who can guide them in the right direction, personally, professionally and academically.

The intention behind the Skills Coaching Strategy is that all students:

- are given the opportunity to reflect on their learning and academic progress and to discuss and formulate appropriate strategies to fulfil their potential during their studies at the College;
- are equipped with a lifelong approach to learning enabling continuing personal and intellectual growth;
- are provided with pastoral support which is tailored to their needs, enabling them to take full advantage of their time at the college to develop and maintain a healthy and happy outlook on life;
- develop an awareness of the need for professional and career development and receive guidance on the planning and recording of skills development throughout their studies in order to realise their career aspirations;
- experience the benefits of working with peers and academic tutors within a supportive atmosphere.

9.3. Role of a Skills Coach

At the beginning of your programme, you will be allocated a Skills Coach to act as your adviser throughout your studies; the Skills Coach is responsible for facilitating a student's overall development. She/he will meet you on a quarterly basis to see how you're getting on and to encourage your academic development. Meetings may be face-to-face or over the internet and your Skills Coach will keep a record of what is discussed.

- Arrange a minimum of 3 formal meetings with their tutees, of which 2 must be one-to-one, with further opportunities for them to drop in
- Take an interest in all their tutees and their activities;
- Be well informed on their academic and workplace progress;
- Agree a timetable for seeing each of their tutees on a regular basis;
- Set aside times when their tutees can consult them;
- Provide clear directions for appropriate points of contact in an emergency;
- Ensure that students know the contingency arrangements when skills coaches are absent from College for any length of time.

9.4. Study Skills

Good study skills enable you to be better organised, read and take notes effectively, research and produce essays, and be better prepared for exams. In order to help you develop effective study skills,

the College offers a wide range of services, including one-to-one support, and the Study Skills Packs. On the VLE, you'll find a series of packs which cover a variety of topics as follows:

Academic Reading and Writing

- Proofreading
- Reading and note-taking
- Writing your assignment
- Scientific report writing
- Business style reports
- Writing your research proposal
- Formatting & writing your dissertation

Research & Referencing

- Harvard referencing
- Critical analysis of a journal article
- Reviewing literature and paraphrasing

Group Work and Presenting

- Working in groups
- Presentation Skills
- IT Skills
- Assessment and Exams
- E-Submission
- Making the most of feedback
- Revision
- Approaching exams
- Time management

9.5. Careers Advice

You may have a very clear idea of the career you want to follow once you graduate. Alternatively, your programme of study may offer a wide range of career options and you haven't made your choice yet. You might not know all the options open to you. The College's Careers Adviser can help you understand your options and offers many ways of helping you to be more successful in landing that graduate job once you've made your choice. The comprehensive package of help the team can offer you includes:

- Careers advice
- Information on job-hunting
- Guidance on creating or improving your CV
- Application and interview skills training
- Regular careers fairs introducing you to local, regional, national and international employers
- Advice and support on paid and unpaid work placements
- Volunteering opportunities
- Self-employment and entrepreneurship support

The Apprentice Microsite also has Career Resources

9.6. Counselling and Student Welfare

Student welfare provides personal and individual learning and welfare support to all students throughout their time at the College. If a student is unhappy or worried, there is always someone who will listen and give support. We aim to ensure that our students' years at the College are happy, fulfilling and successful.

Our counselling service provides confidential counselling for any student who has personal problems affecting their work or well-being. If you have problems of a personal nature, a member of the counselling team will see you so you can talk about whatever is bothering you. It doesn't matter how small or large you think the problem is - the counselling service is there to help you find ways of dealing with it. Everything that is discussed is kept completely confidential. We want you to enjoy your time studying and if at any time you feel that you cannot talk to friends, family or staff concerned with your course, then maybe the counselling service can help you. The counsellor is not able to offer a magic solution, but will listen carefully and help you to arrive at a better understanding of the situation. The process of exploring thoughts, feelings and behaviour will often bring some relief and may enable you to make changes for yourselves.

The College's counsellor service can be contacted by completing the Counsellor Form.

- London based apprentices please fill out this form
- Manchester based apprentices please fill out this form

9.7. Disability Support

Teaching and Learning

The College will endeavour to meet your academic support needs, wherever possible, and has procedures and resources in place to serve this purpose. We aim to provide a high quality service for disabled students and are committed to making all possible reasonable adjustments to prevent disabled students from being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

The College may not always be able to meet every individual's needs in every instance, therefore early contact with a learning support adviser is recommended. In summary we can provide advice or make arrangements in the following areas:

- Study related assessment of needs
- Assistive technology and training in the use of this technology
- Exams
- Liaison with the personal tutor and module leader

Learning Support – Disclosure of a Disability

The College is committed to supporting all its students and to taking all reasonable steps to adjust practices, procedures and circumstances that adversely affect students with disabilities. It seeks to foster an inclusive community and to prevent anyone from being marginalised or unable to realise their potential. To this end, it has in place a number of ways to ensure that students with disabilities are not disadvantaged. Often, these meet students' needs as a matter of course (for example, the standard provision of audio aids in the classrooms or the advance posting of course material on VLE). However, while the College attempts to fulfil its duty to anticipate students' needs, there are occasions when the right support and necessary changes can be arranged only if the College is aware of a student's particular situation. For this reason, students are encouraged to disclose any disability to the College. This can be done either:

- by contacting the learning support adviser who will arrange a confidential one-to-one meeting to discuss the issues and possible adjustments to College practices or arrangements. If the student then decides that they would rather keep their circumstances private, the matter will go no further, except that a confidential note will be made that the matter was discussed.

or:

- if a student prefers, they may speak to any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable. If the student then decides that formal disclosure is in their best interest, a confidential meeting with the learning support adviser will be arranged to discuss the issues.

10. Opportunities for Personal Development Planning

Personal Development Planning (PDP) is 'a structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and / or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development '(Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), 2009a, p.2).

PDP at Ada, National College for Digital Skills is an inclusive process, open to all learners at all levels. Effective PDP improves the capacity of individuals to review, plan and take responsibility for their own learning and to understand what they learn and how they learn it. Engaging in the process of PDP helps learners to articulate their learning and achievement more explicitly and supports learning as a lifelong and life-wide activity (QAA, 2009a).

The primary objective for PDP is to improve the capacity of individuals to understand what and how they are learning, and to review, plan and take responsibility for their own learning and to enhance their knowledge of what they learn and how they learn it.

PDP is:

- Concerned with learning in a holistic sense (in academic, personal and professional contexts)
- Based on reflection and planning skills which are integral to knowing how to learn in different contexts and knowing how to apply learning in different contexts.
- Something that an individual does with guidance and support. Support decreases as personal capability is developed so that the process of PDP becomes self-sustaining.
- Intended to improve the capacity of individuals to communicate their learning to others (for example, academic staff and potential employers).
- A process that involves self-reflection; the creation of personal records; and planning and monitoring progress towards the achievement of personal objectives. (QAA, 2009a)

The process of PDP involves students reflecting on learning and achievements in their academic, personal, and work life and making plans for their educational, personal and career development. Engaging in the process of PDP enables students to:

- Become more effective, independent and confident self-directed learners;
- Understand how they are learning and relate their learning to a wider context;

- Improve their general skills for study and career management;
- Articulate personal goals and evaluate progress towards their achievement;
- Develop a positive attitude to learning throughout life.

The introduction of PDP will make it explicit that dialogue between tutor and tutee supports not only the student's deepening understanding of their subject, but also the student's growing ability to think critically about their own performance and how to improve it. This is already made explicit within the curriculum, where modes of study or assessment involve challenging students as individuals to develop a piece of work over time and/or to undertake a process within which progress is reviewed continually. Examples include:

- Formative assessments Independent research projects
- Group projects
- Assessed seminar presentations
- Reflective commentaries/ logs
- Portfolio-based assessment

A comprehensive guide for PDP is provided on the college's VLE. Use these resources to help you develop as a professional and access the career you want.
The materials available are designed to help you:

- Link your work placement and academic study
- Be aware of skills gained through specific study activities, and how they are relevant elsewhere Improve planning, problem-solving and presentation skills
- Think actively about your personal and academic development, in relation to your future as a professional in computing
- Record concrete examples you can use in applications for jobs, placements or further study
- Gain experience in applying these skills in different situations, through paid or placement opportunities
- Broaden your career options by providing information, case studies, contacts and resources

The PDP resources/materials include the following tasks/activities:

- Charting your progress so far
- Subject-based Skills: Computing
- Your work-based learning - seeing its value
- Project and assignment planning
- Problem-solving and decision-making
- Presenting your work and results to others
- Critical reflection on events

- Collecting your personal evidence - to demonstrate your strengths and skills
- Drafting and Refining your CV
- Researching and evaluating possible career options
- Listening to the experience of working graduates
- Gathering inside information on graduate opportunities

11. Facilities & Services

Ada, The National College for Digital Skills provides a range of learning and information services that include e-learning content, electronic diagnostic tools as well as books, e-books and e-journals. All students receive a Facilities, Library, E-library and IT induction upon enrolling at the College.

11.1. Library Resources

Ada's collection of collated online material is accessed through the Google Apps for Education VLE. All HE students will have access to our growing collection of quality online resources that are handpicked by course lecturers, skills coaches and other relevant members of staff.
These include:

- Full text academic journals
- Subject specific databases
- Electronic books
- Databases of images, maps, datasets, statistics and other resources

a) Github
All students will create a new Ada specific Github account during their digital skills course. Millions of developers use GitHub to build personal projects, support their businesses, and work together on open source technologies. Github is a vital online repository for Ada students and a source of inspiration as well as collaboration.

b) Physical Resources
The College commits to providing adequate copies of core textbook and supporting material as specified in its degree programme specification to support students to learn onsite at the College, using physical resources as well as e-resources. In addition the College, as it matures and grows, will provide an ever-growing bank of physical resources related to its programmes of study. These will include books, magazines and journals.

c) Proximity to the British Library/Manchester Central Library

Given the College's physical proximity to the British Library, all London-based students will be encouraged to join the British Library and access its vast collection of physical and electronic resources and to consider it as a place of study beyond the College.
Given the College's physical proximity to the Manchester Central Library all Manchester-based students will be encouraged to join the Manchester Library and access its collection of physical and electronic resources and to consider it as a place of study beyond the College.

d) IEEE

IEEE is the world's largest technical professional organisation, leading the way in fields like electrical engineering, AI, telecom, computing, and more. With over 450,000 members globally, IEEE is at the forefront of advancing technology for humanity.

Through IEEE Xplore, you'll have access to a vast digital library filled with cutting-edge research, including over 6 million documents, top-cited journals, conference papers, and e-learning materials across a wide range of topics. Whether you're diving into AI, telecommunications, or sustainability, Xplore has the resources you need to fuel your learning and spark innovation.

11.2. Computing Facilities

- All students will be provided with a unique user login and free wifi access.
- All students will have volume-defined printing permissions.
- All students will have access to a 2016 desktop computer for their labs based classes and seminars. These include a high-powered graphics card for more complex activities, particularly those using dynamic VFX.
- All students will have the ability to BYOD and connect to the College's network using a secure password.

SmoothWall will monitor all students' internet access. Where concerns are raised about a student's online activity the College will be able to view the individual's recent browsing history to check for unusual behaviour. If any such behaviour is identified then it will be referred using the appropriate channels to relevant SafeGuarding and prevent Agenda designated officers.

11.3. Technical Support and Helpdesk

The College offers a technical support helpline to its IT support engineer ithelpdesk@ada.ac.uk.

They will provide high quality, on-going remote support. This is complemented by the support of an on-site technician once-a-week. This is further complemented by an emergency response service should there be a network or administrator issue that interrupts student and staff connectivity for more than 2 hours. Students will receive an IT induction upon their enrolment at the College.
For **non technical support queries** our students should contact our in-hours helpdesk on helpdesk@ada.ac.uk

11.4. Catering Services

The College offers a kitchen area for the preparation of hot and cold food with fridges and cupboards for storage purposes and a sink for the washing of dishes and food preparation. A boiling water tap as well as a water cooler is provided. Students are able to access a wide variety of cafes, supermarkets and convenience stores within 5 to 10 minutes walk of the College building.

11.5. Multimedia

The College has a BOYD policy that allows students to gain wifi access on any enabled device free of charge. Every classroom contains a TV screen that can be easily connected to using an HDMI cable. There are also a number of moveable screens capable for use in a range of settings. The main collaboration space for the College has a projector, screen and sound system to allow for presentations and other large group activities The College also has a large number of fixed TV screens around the building to make students aware of key messages and opportunities for them along with noticeboards.

11.6. Accommodation available to support the programme

As outlined previously, students will have access to high specification desktops and laptops for their work that has sufficient capacity to handle all the course content of the degree programme. These are provided in dedicated HE learning labs.

11.7. Equipment required to be provided by the student

Students are able to BYOD should they wish. However, there is no need for this as the College can provide both desktops and laptops for study on site at the College. Should a student wish to continue their studies away from the College campus then they will need to do so on their own device.

Should the student not be able to access a device they can approach the College for additional support. The College commits to consider each student's case on an individual basis and may award discretionary allocation of laptops to students based on their personal circumstances if deemed necessary to be successful on their course of study.

12. Assessment & Progress Regulations

12.1. Assessment

Throughout your programme of study you will be required to complete assessments to demonstrate your learning of subject knowledge and transferable key skills. You will experience a range of different types of assessment during your programme which will include some of the following:

- Written examinations
- Presentations
- Coursework projects
- Practical assessments
- Group work
- Computer programming
- Reports

The forms of assessment and its weighting and timing, and the ways in which the learning outcomes are to be demonstrated through assessment, are set out in the module and programme specifications.

12.2. Submission of Assessed Work

Assessments are normally submitted online through VLE. Exceptionally, due to the nature of the assessment, it may be necessary for your work to be submitted offline. Your module leader will inform you what method you must use to submit your work for assessment. Instructions for submitting work via Turnitin are available on College's VLE. In case of an off-line submission, students are required to provide the module leader with the softcopy of the assessment (e.g.; report, code-listing, etc.) within seven working days following the submission date for plagiarism check purposes. If you are in any doubt about the requirements for assessment submission, you should consult the relevant module leader.

The deadline for any assessment submission is 12.00pm (UK time) on the specified day. Whether online or offline, it is your responsibility to ensure that work is submitted successfully and that the

correct version has been submitted. Once work has been submitted, whether online or offline, it cannot be amended or resubmitted. In the case of online submission, you must ensure that work is submitted to the correct Turnitin folder or equivalent. You should take particular care to ensure that you do not upload the final version of your assessment into a draft submission folder.

12.3. Assessment Scores

All assessments are awarded a mark on a percentage scale of 0-100%. The pass mark is set at 40% and the scale score is:

% Scale Score	Performance Standard
70+	First Class
60-69	Second Class - Division I
50-59	Second Class- Division II
40-49	Third Class
0-39	Fail

The final grade for an individual assessment component will be determined after completion of a quality assurance process (e.g. moderation, remarking). Where the result of the assessment calculation creates a mark of 0.5% or greater this will be rounded up to the next full percentage point (e.g. 69.5% is rounded to 70; 59.5% to 60%; and so on). Where the calculation creates a mark below 0.5% this will be rounded down to the next full percentage point (e.g. 69.4% is rounded to 69%; 59.4% to 59%; and so on). For the purposes of rounding up or down, only the first decimal place is used

12.4. Rules governing extension to submission deadlines

If you have a good reason for not submitting work or not attending an assessment you should use the Personal Mitigating Circumstances (PMC) procedure to make a claim to have these circumstances considered. As a result, you may be granted a replacement assessment opportunity. If you do not submit/attend an assessment in your final year, this may mean that you will not be able to graduate as the rest of your cohort, even if you have an accepted PMC claim. There is further information about Personal Mitigating Circumstances (PMC) later in this handbook.

12.5. Penalties for late submission or non-submission of work

You should always aim to submit your assessments on the published submission date. Where coursework is submitted after 12.00pm on the specified deadline day, and there are no accepted personal mitigating circumstances, it will be penalised in line with the following tariff:

Submission within 6 working days: a 10% reduction for each working day late down to the 40% passes mark and no further. Submission that is late by 7 or more working days: submission refused, mark of 0. The consequences of non-submission may be significant. If you do not submit a piece of assessed work or do not attend a timetabled assessment such as an examination, you will fail that assessment and you may not be entitled to compensation for a failed module.

12.6. Re-sits & Compensation

Where a student fails a module, the following may apply in the first instance:

1) Re-sit: a second attempt at an assessment component following a failure at first attempt.

2) Compensation: the award of credit by the Board of Examiners for a failed module(s) on account of good performance in other modules at the same credit level where the learning outcomes have been met.

12.7. Re-sits & provision

Re-sit provision is subject to all the following conditions:

(a) A student may re-sit the failed assessment components of a module only once. Where there are extenuating circumstances, the Board of Examiners has discretion to decide whether a further assessment opportunity shall be permitted.

(b) A student who does not complete the re-sit by the date specified shall not progress on the programme, except in cases where the process for allowing extenuating circumstances has been followed.

(c) Resits can only take place after the meeting of the Board of Examiners or following agreement by the Chair and the External Examiner of the Board.

(d) A student who successfully completes any required re-sits within a module shall be awarded the credit for the module and the result capped at the minimum pass mark for the module.

12.8. Progress Regulations

The degree programme consists of two stages, namely level 4 and level 5. In order to complete and pass a stage of a programme, a student must acquire a total of 120 credits at each level for the award. Progression between levels takes place at the end of first academic year. In order to graduate with a Foundation degree, you must accumulate 240 credits over the whole programme.

Determining module outcomes

The credit value of each module contributing to a stage determines its weighting in the aggregation of credit for a stage. The overall module mark or grade shall be determined as set out in the assessment strategy detailed in the module specification. A student who passes a module shall be awarded the credit for that module. Modules may include more than one component of assessment and your overall module mark is calculated from the component marks. Sometimes these assessments contribute equally to your overall module mark, sometimes one assessment is worth more than the other.

12.9. Safeguards for Fair & Consistence Marking of Assessments

The College uses a number of different safeguards to ensure that your work is marked fairly and consistently. All written examinations are marked anonymously. All work is moderated internally. This means that samples of marked work are checked by someone else, to ensure work has been assessed fairly and in accordance with the agreed criteria. In addition independent external examiners are appointed to the programme. It is their responsibility to check that assessment processes are fair. They also sample assessed work to ensure that internal marking has been carried out fairly and consistently and is of an appropriate standard in line with national academic standards and expectations for that subject discipline.

12.10. Getting Feedback on Student's Work

You are entitled to have feedback on all your assessed work - that includes written examinations, coursework assignments, performance and practical assessments. The purpose of the feedback is to enhance your learning and help you to improve. Feedback on assessed work should be provided to you through Google Classroom within 15 working days of the published submission deadline (i.e. normally three weeks, not counting days when the College is closed).

In the case of written examinations and larger pieces of assessed work feedback should, as a minimum, constitute an individual unratified mark or grade and an opportunity for you to view your

annotated examination script/dissertation/project and/or electronic feedback sheet. An unratified mark is one which has yet to be confirmed by a Module Board of Examiners and could therefore be changed. For more information, please refer to the policy on Assessment and Feedback for the Degree programme on the college's website: If you are entitled to collect any pieces of assessed work from the College, it is your responsibility to ensure that you collect them at the time you are informed they will be available. Student work will not be kept indefinitely.

12.11. Referencing

Referencing your assessments properly is a requirement and good practice in referencing reduces the risk of committing academic misconduct. The Harvard (APA 6th) style for referencing is used and a comprehensive guide to using Harvard (APA 6th) style referencing is available in the study skills package.

12.12. Personal Mitigating Circumstances

The College recognises that students may suffer from a sudden illness, or other serious and unforeseen event or set of circumstances, which adversely affects their ability to complete an assessment, or the results they obtain for an assessment.

Personal Mitigating Circumstances are situations or circumstances of a serious nature (i.e. not day-to-day minor illnesses or circumstances you could have easily avoided through prior planning). If you believe that they have adversely affected your ability to submit coursework on time or to submit it at all or to attend an exam, then you may wish to bring them to the attention of the examiners. The circumstances might include serious illness, bereavement or any personal issue that has affected you for a significant period of time during your studies and/or during the examination period and has had a recognisable effect on your studies and assessments.

PMC requests can only be submitted for:

- Late submission
- Non-submission
- Non-attendance at an exam or similar type of assessment

Normally PMC requests cannot be submitted because you feel that your mitigating circumstances have affected the standard of work you have already submitted or your performance in an exam you have already sat.

In the normal course of your studies you should talk to your personal tutor about problems that are affecting your studies and/or your life at home. You may wish the College to take account of these circumstances in a formal way when a Board of Examiners is making decisions about your progression or award. If so, it is your responsibility to complete a Personal Mitigating Circumstances (PMC) form to explain the nature of your circumstances and how these have affected your assessments.

You must submit a PMC form together with relevant evidence (Medical evidence submitted in support of a claim for extenuating circumstances should be provided by a qualified medical practitioner) before the published deadline for the assessment submission or the date of the examination within 7 calendar days, whichever is sooner. If a student fails, without good cause, to provide the College with information about mitigating circumstances within the timescales specified above, the College has authority to reject the request on those grounds. Before submitting a PMC form, please make sure you understand the procedure properly. Guidance notes are available on the PMC form.

PMC requests are considered by the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee (TLAC) who will verify the authenticity of any evidence submitted and decide whether your PMC will be accepted or rejected. The TLAC will then make recommendations to the Academic Board, which in turn, will then decide what action to take.

Upon receipt of recommendations from the TLAC for investigating mitigating circumstances, the Academic Board will decide whether to:

a) provide a student with the opportunity to take the affected assessment(s) as if for the first time i.e. a 'sit' or 'submit', allowing them to be given the full marks achieved for the examination or assessment, rather than imposing a cap;
b) waive late submission penalties;
c) determine that there is sufficient evidence of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes from other pieces of assessment in the module(s) for an overall mark to be derived;
d) note the accepted extenuation for the module(s) and recommend that it is considered at the point of award and classification.

PMC Procedure is available on the VLE

12.13. Academic Appeals

As a student of the College, you have the right to appeal against any decision made by the Academic Board. As a consequence of a successful appeal there may be a change to a decision taken by the Academic Board.

Appeals will be considered under the procedures described below. If an appeal is deemed to be a complaint, the College may then deal with it under appropriate complaints procedures.

You can only appeal about your entitlement:

- To undertake further assessment,
- To progress to another stage of the academic programme
- To remain registered as a student of the College.

<u>Grounds for Appeal</u>

The only grounds for appeal that will be considered are that:

i. The decision was unreasonable because it did not adequately consider all the factors affecting the student's performance,

ii. The decision was procedurally incorrect, or

iii. The decision has been taken in the absence of all the relevant information (for example, the existence of a medical condition).

Appeals will not be considered on grounds that academic performance was adversely affected by factors such as ill-health if there is no independent, medical or other evidence to support the application. The evidence must cover the time period you say your performance was affected. You may only appeal on the grounds set out above.

You may not use the appeal procedure simply to dispute the academic judgement of examiners and you may not appeal against marks awarded for individual modules or individual pieces of work (although you may raise any queries about marks with your module leader in the first instance if you wish). If you decide to appeal against the decision of the Academic Board, you should complete the Appeal Form (available on VLE) and submit it by the relevant deadline. You must also attach any relevant supporting evidence.

12.14. Academic Misconduct

The College takes a serious view of all acts of academic misconduct. Such acts are considered dishonest and as attempts to gain unfair advantage. Acts of academic misconduct can take many forms.

They are likely to fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Plagiarism - taking the work of another person or source and using it as if it were one's own
- Self-plagiarism (or double submission) - resubmitting previously submitted work on one or more occasions (without proper acknowledgement) including work submitted for credits at a previous institution
- Collusion - working with others on tasks that should be carried out on an individual basis
- Falsifying experimental or other investigative results
- Taking unauthorised material (including electronic devices) into an examination
- Contracting another person to produce a piece of assessed work
- Producing a piece of assessed work for another person
- Copying from, or communicating with, another examination candidate during an examination

As a student of the College, you should ensure that you know and understand what is meant by academic misconduct and the requirements for referencing and citation. Your personal tutor will provide you with detailed advice and training about good academic practice (i.e. how to avoid academic misconduct) at the start of the academic year and during modules. In addition, you can seek further guidance about what constitutes good academic practice from your module tutors. Study skills information about academic misconduct and referencing are available on this handbook as well as the College website.

When submitting each assignment, you will be required to complete a declaration confirming that the work submitted is your own, with all sources duly acknowledged. Where assessments are submitted electronically, this declaration is completed online. If academic misconduct is suspected, the College may use facilities such as the Turnitin originality report as part of their investigations.

If you are found guilty of academic misconduct, the College will impose a penalty as described in the Academic Misconduct Procedure, available on the 1/LE.-The College has based its penalties for academic misconduct on the work undertaken by plagiarismadvice.org and the AMBeR project. Penalties relate to a points-based tariff system to ensure consistency and fairness in the handling of academic misconduct.

12.15. Provisions for students with special needs

If you are a disabled student and you have an extension to your deadline recommended in your student support plan, you will be entitled to use this if you need it. If you are struggling to meet a deadline or to submit your work within an extended deadline if you have one, and this is for disability-related reasons, please
contact student learning support adviser at least three days before your work is due. An adviser will discuss your options. Extensions to deadlines for students with a student support plan do not apply to resubmitted work.

You must request an extension before the original submission date. You cannot submit assessed work after the expiry of your extension and you will not be permitted to submit a PMC for late submission. If you have mitigating circumstances which affect you during this stage of your programme, you may submit a PMC form for non-submission, which, if accepted, would give a new deadline for submission of your work.

13. Work-based Dissertation

The work-based dissertation is a part of the degree, which contributes to the final mark (i.e. classification) of the degree. The details of the assessment are contained in the respective module descriptor as well as the student handbook. The dissertation is a substantial work-based project to be undertaken at level 6, during the final year of the degree.

The project must bring together elements of learning from different parts of the programme and show evidence of accumulated knowledge and understanding of management, and the application of these within their organisation. The project must meet the standard and demonstrate the approach taken to the planning and completion of the project.

Because of the significance of the project, the employer and college must work together with the apprentice to agree a project that is achievable within the employer's business constraints whilst meeting the needs of the Standard. The project should be conducted as part of the apprentice's normal work. The employer should make allowances, in terms of time and resource, for the project to be undertaken. Any elements, which need to be undertaken outside of normal work, should be agreed between the employer, apprentice and Provider so that apprentices are not disadvantaged in any way from performing their job and meeting the requirements of the project.

The process starts by apprentices submitting a proposal. Apprentices are strongly advised to consult with their line managers when preparing the proposal, to discuss /consider issues such as ethics, IP, data protection, confidentiality, etc. The proposal requires approvals of both the college (academic standards) and
the employer (workplace standards). This will be finalised through discussion between Ada, the employer and the student. (In some cases, the proposal is returned to the apprentice for minor/major changes based on the College/Employer feedback). Upon the approval of the proposal, apprentices will settle on their project, in conjunction with the employer and the academic team.
The requirements for the delivery of the work-based project are shown below:

Design

- A specification must be developed to show what has to be delivered on completion of the project; this must include the outputs, project plans etc.
- Terms of reference must be developed by the apprentice and agreed by the college and employer
- early in the project.
- The college must provide clear project assessment criteria including those for the terms of reference, approach to the problem, solution design and implementation, the final report and presentation.
- Apprentices must document their assumptions and highlight the consequences of these assumptions
  - enabling them to demonstrate their understanding of commercial pressures and the application of their thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Agreement must be made between the apprentice, employer and college on what systems, tools and platforms will be required (if any) to complete the tasks and how these will be made available.

Delivery

- The College will work with the employer and apprentice to agree the project title and support
- arrangements required to enable the project to be undertaken.
- The project should normally be based on an agreed business problem that forms part of the
- apprentice's role.
- The employer for the apprentice to plan, undertake and write up their project should set suitable time aside.
- The apprentice must first work out what is required and present terms of reference and an initial plan for agreement with the employer and provider.

- The project should typically be undertaken at the employer's premises.
- The employer and the College must ensure that the apprentice has access to the tools and systems required to complete the tasks within the project.
- The apprentice must provide a signed statement to confirm the project is his or her own work.
- The project will be set and completed during the second year of the degree

Project Environment

- A suitable project environment should be provided ensuring access to all required tools and systems. This will be the apprentices' normal place of work.
- Someone responsible for managing the project from the employer perspective must be identified.
- The link tutor from the College must oversee and provide support to the apprentice.
- The work-based project will contribute towards the achievement of the degree.

14. Determination of Results

14.1. Rules for determining the degree classification

Classification of the degree will be based on the average mark across all modules. The class of degree is determined by the programme mark as shown below.

Mark	**Class of degree**
70% -100%	First Class
60% -69%	Second Class - Division I
40% -59%	Second Class - Division II
40-49%	Third Class

14.2. How results are communicated

Examination results and final degree classifications will be made available on your online student records page as soon as is feasible after the meetings of the Boards of Examiners.

14.3. The Role of External Examiners

External examining is the main mechanism used to demonstrate that academic standards in the UK are met. External examiners are independent of the College and are appointed by The Open University. The External Examiner is an independent evaluator of the quality of processes of Teaching, Learning and Assessment, but also provides direct input into and feedback on its performance and provides evidence based feedback. They are also suitably qualified and experienced in the subject, or specialism within that subject, that they are appointed to examine. External examiners play a role in the following:

- approval of assessment briefs through the verification process. This process seeks to ensure that the assessment is appropriate, instructions to complete it are clear and the marking criteria to be used is suitable;
- moderating samples of student work to ensure that marking has been undertaken correctly and consistently;
- ratifying module marks at the module exam board. Your marks are not confirmed until they have been through this process and may be subject to change until ratification has taken place
- confirming that College regulations are appropriately applied in relation to progression and award decisions which are made at the programme exam board;
- writing an annual report to confirm that assessment processes are rigorous, have been conducted according to the College's policies and procedures, and that standards are comparable with other UK institutions.
- meeting students to determine academic standards and the quality of the student experience. If you are required to meet with the external examiner you will be given clear guidance as to the scope and purpose of this meeting.
- providing comments to programme teams throughout the year on proposed amendments to programmes and modules.

External examiners' reports are an integral part of the college's quality assurance processes and will be available to all students for the purpose of assuring the quality of the degree programme. The name, position and home academic institution of the external examiner appointed by the OU can be found on VLE.

15. Other Institutional Policies or Regulations

15.1. Procedures for Appeals and Complaints

General

An appeal is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on student progression, assessment and awards. A complaint is different, and arises from a specific concern about the adequacy or quality of the provision of a programme of study or related academic service. The College believes that students should be able to raise matters of concern without fear of disadvantage and in the knowledge that their privacy and confidentiality will be respected as will that of members of staff.

How to make an appeal

You are strongly encouraged to discuss any matters leading you to consider appealing with your personal tutor before submitting a formal appeal. Depending on the circumstances, your personal tutor may be able to help you resolve your concerns in consultation with the Board of Examiners without the need for you to make a formal appeal. If you decide to appeal, you may wish to seek advice on completing the appeal form with your personal tutor.

Timescale for appeals

Your appeal must be submitted in writing to the CEO's Office within one calendar month of the date of the letter notifying you of the decision against which the appeal is directed. The College aims to deal with appeals as quickly as possible. However, you should be aware that it may take some time before your appeal is resolved. You may be asked to provide further information before your appeal can be considered

Action following appeal procedures

The student will be sent a written statement setting out the decision that has been made and the reasons for reaching that decision, together with any actions required by the student or the College to follow up and implement that decision. The outcome will be either to:

- rescind the original decision, or
- vary the original decision, or
- reject the appeal.

The written statement will also include details of any further right of appeal available to the student if they remain dissatisfied with the final outcome of the College's procedures. This will include, where applicable, the right to appeal to The Open University.

Complaints Handling Procedure

The College is committed to providing all its users with high quality services and we aim to do so fairly and efficiently. However there may be times where a student feels that his/her expectations have not been met. Where this happens, our procedures aim to make it as easy as possible for users to submit a complaint. The procedures and guides listed describe our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. You can complain about things like:

- The quality and standard of any service we provide or fail to provide
- The quality of our facilities and learning resources
- The quality and standards of academic services and personal support services available to you
- Failure of the College to follow an appropriate administrative processes
- Unfair treatment or inappropriate behaviour by a student or staff member.

15.2. Equality & Diversity

The College is committed to and strives for equality of opportunity for all its students and staff (existing and prospective) and will recognise and celebrate their diversity. In practice this means that we:

- are committed to providing an environment where all people are respected and treated fairly regardless of irrelevant characteristics or distinctions such as: gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, age, disability, socio-economic group / background, religious belief / faith, political belief or affiliation, marital status, family responsibilities and sexual orientation;
- will develop a culture in which diversity is celebrated;
- will not discriminate unfairly or illegally against anyone and will take positive action to
- promote equality and diversity;
- embed equality and diversity at the heart of our mission and values, including action against individuals who behave in a discriminatory manner.

15.3. Data Protection Policy for Students

The Data Protection Act 1998 sets out rules for processing personal information, and it applies to some paper records as well as those recorded digitally. The Act gives individuals certain rights, and also imposes obligations on those who record and use personal information to be open about how

information is used and to follow eight data protection principles. Personal data must be processed following these principles so that data are:

- processed fairly and lawfully and only if certain conditions are met
- obtained for specified and lawful purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate and where necessary kept up-to-date
- not be kept for longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the subject's rights
- kept secure
- not transferred abroad without adequate protection

Your rights

You are entitled to have access to information held about you, except where releasing that information would breach another person's privacy. You also have rights to prevent data processing likely to cause unwarranted damage to distress, and to prevent processing for the purpose of direct marketing.

Your responsibilities

Any personal data must be collected, processed and held according to the data protection principles, whether this is on your own behalf or as part of your research or studies. The University and College are responsible for the data collected for their own proper purposes, and if you have access to this information you must follow relevant policy and procedure. If you process data on your own behalf, you are responsible for compliance with the law.

How your data is used by the University and College

Information is shared between the University and College, and is used for a full range of student administration including education, research, support services, statutory returns, alumni relations, accounts, public relations, security and crime prevention. Full details on the University and College notifications with the Information Commissioner are available at: http://www.dpr.gov.uk/search.html

15.4. Health & Safety

The College recognises and accepts its responsibility to ensure the health and safety of its students whilst at the College, as well as its obligations to employees, contractors and visitors. The College's Health and Safety Policy Statement, along with procedures, guidance and forms are available on the website.

16. Student Participation & Feedback

The College aims to ensure that students have a voice at all stages of the decision-making process, that they have direct input in formulating learning and teaching policy and practice, and that their views are the primary evidence on which the quality of learning and teaching is assessed.

We seek to maintain and improve the quality of our teaching wherever possible by obtaining feedback from students about individual modules and also an annual apprentice survey about the degree programme as a whole.

16.1. Module Evaluation Questionnaires

The College has a standard set of core questions in module evaluation questionnaires which will ensure an effective process for obtaining student feedback on modules. Comments from you help us improve our practice. To make sure that we get the greatest benefit from your experience of our modules, module evaluation questionnaires are made available (either in hard copy or on VLE) at the end of each module. We take your feedback very seriously - it is considered by the Module Leader, the Staff-Student Consultative Committee and our Learning and Teaching Committee. We thank you for taking the time to complete these questionnaires.

16.2. Student/Staff Liaison (SSLC)

The Student/Staff Liaison Committee provides an important forum for students and staff to jointly discuss problems that arise during a module, and to consider future changes in module content and structure.

Students may volunteer to represent the views of your class. The Committee meets twice during the semester and once at the beginning of the semester to review the previous modules. Before each meeting, student representatives will often have the opportunity at the start or end of a lecture to speak to fellow students. A similar opportunity will be available after the meeting for the representatives to feed back any information from the meeting.

It is a good idea to mention any difficulties to the Module Leader before the meeting so that issues can be thought through carefully. If problems are resolved at the SSLC meeting, they will be referred to the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee or discussed at a Staff meeting.

16.3. Learning and Teaching Review

The Learning and Teaching Review process engages with the Student: Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) as a method of obtaining student feedback. The student members of the SSLC are invited to contribute to the review process by producing a document detailing any issues of which they would wish the Review Panel to be aware. The form in which this is presented is for the SSLC to decide, but might be, for example, a list of bullet-points or a Minute of the discussion of such issues at the SSCC. The Panel meets with student representatives during the Learning and Teaching Review. A student is also included as a full member of the Review Panel for the Learning and Teaching Review.

17. End Point Assessment

All students must undertake an independent end-point assessment (EPA) which is a synoptic assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that have been learnt throughout the apprenticeship. The purpose of the assessment is to make sure the student meets the Apprenticeship standard and is fully competent in the occupation. Students at the very end of the programme take it when their employer and the College is satisfied that they have met the "gateway" criteria to undertake the assessment. End-point assessments are graded and an apprenticeship certificate is only awarded after end-point assessment is successfully completed.

This is an integrated Bachelor's degree level apprenticeship, which incorporates on-programme academic and workplace learning and assessment with an independent end-point assessment to test the knowledge, skills and behaviours detailed in the standard. The degree programme maps the individual modules to the outcomes in the standard and individual modules will contribute to the on-programme assessment of knowledge, skills and behaviour outcomes en-route to the final synoptic end assessment.

As this is an integrated apprenticeship, the EPA will be delivered by College. The College has developed and will deliver the EPA as defined in the EPA plan (please see Annex). The programme consists of 360 credits that will typically take three years to complete, with 320 delivered on-programme and 40 through the EPA, which is taken in the last six months. The 40-credit EPA is achieved through a 40-credit synoptic project & dissertation. Performance in the EPA will count towards the overall degree classification and apprentices cannot successfully complete the Bachelor's degree without passing the EPA.

The EPA uses the following assessment methods and should be undertaken in this order:

- A project dissertation
- A project presentation to a panel, based on the project dissertation above
- A technical interview, conducted by the same panel as the project presentation, based on the evidence portfolio

For more details on the EPA process please read the EPA BSc Guidance for Apprentices and Employers

The employer (in consultation with the college), will put the apprentice forward for the end-point assessment when they believe they are ready. This is known as Gateway and the apprentice needs to have met the requirements of the degree in order to satisfy the Gateway process. The degree will be classified in accordance with the Open University degree regulations. The EPA will represent 60 credits towards the final degree classification. Where an apprentice fails the EPA, they will not be awarded a BSc Degree.

18. Work-based Learning

18.1. Committee Representation

Work-based learning (WBL) is an integral part of the programme and enables you to take on appropriate role(s) within the workplace, giving the opportunity to learn and apply the skills and knowledge you have acquired as an integrated element of the programme. It is a two-way process, where the learning in one
environment is applied in the other. Work-based Learning and engagement with employers have been embraced accordingly in this programme through a number of modules but principally in the Level 6 Work Based Dissertation. WBL operates a blended learning and teaching approach in line with the College's Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy.

The following methods are offered to enable you to develop your knowledge and understanding:

- Induction workshops
- Formative feedback on work from the student's workplace mentor
- Tutor-led face to face and online discussion/meeting
- Student-led interaction via online discussion forums
- Student-led interaction with workplace colleagues
- Self-directed learning facilitated by programme handbook and other learning materials

18.2. Academic Support

- Ada College, will appoint a link tutor to oversee the delivery of the programme and training delivered within the workplace.
- Similarly, the employer will appoint a supervisor, who will work closely with the skill coach, to oversee delivery and evidencing of relevant training delivered in the workplace via a learning log, in agreement with the College.
- The College provides extensive support to help students develop their academic learning skills. Study skills are embedded within taught modules; however, students can also make use of a wide range of one-to-one, group and elearning resources on topics such as; reading and writing, IT and digital skills, referencing, group work and presentations research skills, assessment, revision and exam support.

18.3. Support in your Workplace

- At your workplace, you will be supported by your employer. Exact arrangements and terminology are the responsibility of the employer, but typically, you will be supported as follows, where the roles may be combined in one person;
- A Mentor/Supervisor designated by the employer to provide vocational and pastoral support for
- individual students, who may or may not be your line manager. In particular support will be provided for work-based learning assignments and the final year project.
- The College and the employer are bound by contract to work together to support you as an apprentice.
- This will include quarterly meetings between the College, the student, and the employer.
- You will also be allocated a Skills Coach. Your skills coach will manage the relationship between each employer, the students working for that employer, and the College.
- If you or the workplace mentor have any questions concerning the programme relating to the work based competencies, then they should be initially addressed to the Apprenticeship Link team.

18.4. Roles and Responsibilities

Students are required to :

- Engage fully during planned Work-based Learning program in order to achieve the stipulated learning outcomes;
- Inform the Link Tutor or of any issue which is likely to affect the achievement of the agreed learning outcome for the WBL programme;
- Conform to the regulations and policies of the placement organisation;
- Maintain the confidentiality of any sensitive information concerning the organisation and its business;
- To notify the mentor of the placement organisation and University, in advance where possible, of any absences or lateness from scheduled work hours in line with the University protocol;
- To complete the WBL portfolio and evaluation form following completion of the placement experience;
- To submit the portfolio within the specified deadline;
- To be an ambassador of the University when gaining the WBL experience;

The employer is required to :

- Define clearly the types and nature of placement learning opportunities available in the organisation;
- Induct, support and provide learning opportunities to meet the WBL needs of the students;
- Review and assess the students' progress during the placement learning episode;
- Provide relevant and organisation specific information on regulations, health & safety policies and the nature of the business;
- Enable the student to gain a fair, safe and equitable WBL opportunities;
- Advise the Skills Coach of any issues which may affect the students' experience and outcome during a planned WBL Practice;
- Conduct the WBL assessment in line with the agreed assessment process and criteria;
- Assist and guide the student in the development and completion of the WBL e-Portfolio in accordance with the stipulated guidelines;
- Work in partnership with the College in the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the WBL opportunities;

The Skills Coaches are required to:

- Visit the students (apprentices) at the placement setting and monitor achievement of learning outcomes, compilation of evidence and completion of stipulated learning outcomes;
- Provide guidance and support on request and act as the initial university contact for students experiencing difficulties during WBL;

- Respond to student queries/concerns related to the WBL experience and assessment process;
- Provide feedback to link areas on student evaluations of their experience;
- Ensure that mentors return all assessment forms in due time;

18.5. Commitment Statement

The apprentice shall :

- Attend training sessions, either on- or off-the-job, as and when required;
- Liaise with the link tutor and the employer, as applicable, in relation to any reviews, monitoring, or audits required for the apprenticeship, including providing information for, and access to, all documentation relevant to the apprenticeship on request;

The employer shall :

- Provide a safe and supportive environment for the work-based elements of the apprenticeship;
- Ensure that the apprentice's roles at work allow him/her to gain the wider employment experience required by the programme and the apprenticeship framework;
- Ensure that the apprentice is given sufficient time to enable him/her to complete all elements of the work-based learning elements of the programme within his/her contracted working hours;
- Allow the apprentice to attend all agreed off-the-job learning and shall continue to pay the apprentice during such time, where it falls within normal working hours;

The College shall :

- Deliver the academic learning elements of the programme and establish and/or deliver on- and off-the-job learning to meet the needs of the apprenticeship, the apprentice and the employer;
- Monitor the apprentice's progress in liaison with the employer, and the link tutor shall keep the employer informed of the apprentice's progress, including any disciplinary issues;
- Monitor the quality of learning delivery to ensure that it meets the required standards, including liaising with both the employer and the apprentice.

20. Vendor Certification

Vendor certifications are an invaluable addition to BTEC qualifications, as they give learners the skills they need to progress as an IT professional. Employers often regard vendor certifications as the industry standard, and they're much sought after by learners seeking employment and by professionals already working in IT and telecoms. Vendor certifications are offered by major technology vendors or trade associations such as Microsoft, Cisco, VMWare, CompTIA, Oracle and Linux Professional Institute. A list of such certifications is provided below:

Microsoft Certified: Azure Fundamentals
https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/certifications/azure-fundamentals/

Microsoft Certified: Azure Developer Associate
https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/certifications/azure-developer/

MTA: Introduction to Programming Using JavaScript
https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/certifications/exams/98-382

MTA: Introduction to Programming Using HTML and CSS
https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/certifications/mta-introduction-to-programming-using-html-and-css/

MTA: Software Development Fundamentals
https:/ /learn.microsoft.com/en-us/certifications/exams/98-361

AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner
https://aws.amazon.com/certification/certified-cloud-practitioner/

Cisco Certified Support Technician (CCST) Cybersecurity
https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/training-events/training-certifications/exams/current-list/ccst-cybersecurity-exam.html

Cisco CyberOps Associate
https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/training-events/training-certifications/certifications/associate/cyberops-associate.html

Cisco Certified Support Technician (CCST) Networking

https://learningnetwork.cisco.com/s/ccst-certifications

CCNA
https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/training-events/training-certifications/certifications/associate/ccna.html

CompTia Security+
https://www.comptia.org/certifications/security

ServiceNow Certified Application Specialist
https://www.servicenow.com/uk/services/training-and-certification/certified-application.html

ITIL
https://www.peoplecert.org/browse-certifications/it-governance-and-service-management/ITIL-1

21. General Reading List

Books

1. **Database systems: a practical approach to design, implementation and management** (5th edition) Connolly, Thomas M. and Carolyn E. Begg 9780321523068 Addison-Wesley 2009

2. **Human-computer interaction** (3rd edition) Dix, Alan et al. 0130461091 Prentice Hall 2004

3. **Introduction to algorithms** (3rd edition) Cormen, Thomas L. et al. 9780262533058 MIT Press 2009

4. **Data structures and problem solving using Java** (4th edition) Weiss, Mark Allen 9780321546227 Pearson 2008

5. **Distributed systems: concepts and design** (5th edition) Coulouris, George et al. 9780273760597 Addison-Wesley 2011

6. **Growing Object-Oriented software, guided by tests** Freeman, Steve and Nat Pryce 0321503627 Addison Wesley 2009

7. **Software engineering: a practitioner's approach** (7th edition) Pressman, Roger S. 9780071267823 McGraw-Hill 2010

8. **Computer Science: An Overview** by J. Glenn Brookshear (ninth edition, Addison Wesley, 2006)

9. **Structured Computer Organisation** by Andrew Tanenbaum (fifth edition, Prentice Hall, 2005)

Journals

1. **Journal of Computer and System Sciences,** ISSN : 0022-0000 – Bimonthly, Elsevier http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/journaldescription.cws_home/622867/

2. **Software Quality Journal,** ISSN : 0963-9314 – Quarterly, Springer http://www.springer.com/computer+science/swe/journal/11219

3. **Software - Practice and Experience,** ISSN : 0038-0644 – Monthly, Wiley http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/1752/home

4. **Computer Standards and Interfaces,** ISSN : 0920-5489 – Bimonthly, Elsevier http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/journaldescription.cws_home/505607/

5. **IT Professional**, ISSN : 1520-9202 – Bimonthly, IEEE http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/xpl/

6. **SIAM Journal on Computing**, ISSN : 0097-5397 – Bimonthly, SIAM http://www.siam.org/journals/sicomp.php

7. **ACM Journal on Emerging Technologies in Computing Systems**, ISSN : 1550-4832 – Quarterly, ACM http://www.cse.psu.edu/~mdl/jetc/

8. **Journal of software: Evolution and Process**, ISSN : 2047-7473 – Monthly, Wiley http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/

9. **International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction**, ISSN :– Monthly, Taylor
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/