

Diploma in Computing

Student Handbook

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Welcome

Congratulations on becoming a student.

The relationship that we have with our students is extremely important to us and we want to make sure that you enjoy the experience of learning with us and that we meet your educational needs in terms of your chosen career and by providing pathways of progression to maximise your learning potential.

We believe that we have developed a series of modules and a way of working that will enthuse and excite you, and develop the skills and knowledge via the flexibility offered by online learning.

As such, if there is anything that is preventing you from experiencing and benefitting from this type of learning, then please let us know, so that we can be assured that we are meeting your needs and expectations...

Academic Director

Introduction

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide you with information about your chosen programme of study and to direct you to other general information about studying with the college.

This Handbook should be read in conjunction with other guidelines available on the college website address including all referenced Annexes to this document and other supporting documentation.

The material in this Handbook is as accurate as possible at the time of production. Please forward any comments or suggestions relating to the content of this Handbook to the college Administration.

Programme Philosophy

Programme Structure

You will be studying the Level 4 and Level 5 Diploma in Computing. There are 10 modules at Level 4 and 10 modules at Level 5, which have been written for online study accredited by ATHE, who are an approved Ofqual recognised Awarding Body. Ofqual is the regulator of qualifications, examinations and assessments in England and vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland.

The modules have been designed to offer a broad range of skills and knowledge for direct application in the workplace, based on contemporary computing practices in real world settings. In addition, they are based on sound pedagogical structures to ensure that the learning is engaging and productive.

The modules can be taken on their own or in batches as Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Modules. Accessed and studied in this way will not only allow you to gain any credit values for Higher Education progressions but it will provide you with skills and knowledge that can be directly applied to the workplace or the enhancement of your career. In addition, you will receive the college Certification to demonstrate that you have completed your chosen CPD modules.

If, however you undertake all the college modules in each series undertake, and pass, their corresponding assessments, you will be granted access to apply for University Top-up degree programmes at the relevant level.

Qualifications and Progression

Understanding the qualification structure is important in terms of how ATHE/the college qualifications fit within the UK Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). The RQF is the national credit transfer system for education qualifications in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. The RQF provides a process by which qualifications can be given a value, where one Credit represents 10 hours of learning time and is prescribed by a level of difficulty from entry level to level 8 at the top.

University Pathways

To facilitate University progression to University top-up degrees, the college are an Approved ATHE Centre. ATHE are an Ofqual recognised Awarding Body. Ofqual is the regulator of qualifications, examinations and assessments in England and vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland.

ATHE provide RQF qualifications in Management, Business, Tourism and Health & Social Care. Details of the qualifications that ATHE offer can be found at www.atheuk.co.uk/

The Diploma in Computing at Level 4 = 120 credits

The Diploma in Computing at Level 5 = 120 credits

Completion of both the Computing Level 4 and Level 5 = 240 credits

Subject to status and completion of all modules and achievement (Pass) of all online summative and formative assessments will allow students to the third year of University top-up degree programmes.

For a list of available top-up routes, please go to your college website.

Recruitment and Admissions

Recruitment

Details of the available programmes and their structures can be found on the college website.

To achieve the required entry requirements for each given course, students will be expected to complete a declaration that they have the required level of knowledge and/or experience to embark on their chosen course of study.

Those who wish to progress to a relevant University top-up programme will be required to have the relevant level of English Level proficiency as prescribed by each University partner and in accordance with the National Recognition Centre for the UK (www.naric.org.uk)

Application and Registration

Applications for study should be made through the college. Those students who wish to have further guidance can speak to the college Admissions Team, where appropriate advice and guidance will be given regarding your chosen programme of study.

Induction

Before students can use the online materials, they will be required to undertake an online induction regarding how to use the materials by referring to the college website.

This will also include an orientation module, so that they can familiarise themselves with the processes and procedures that they will encounter. Students will be able to access the induction module, once they have been provided a unique username and password.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

Teaching Methodology

Delivery of learning is through online and blended learning pedagogies with underpinning learner support.

Online Pedagogy

Students will be provided with key concepts and theories, which are underpinned by a series of guided interactive and engaging activities. These have been designed using an online pedagogic approach which facilitates synthesis of knowledge, reflection, and practical application to the work-place. In doing so, real world examples and case studies are used to expose students to contemporary issues and settings.

This approach also develops the analytical skills of students, their ability to problem solve and to develop comprehensible and structured arguments. Students are also provided with access to web links, articles and recommended texts to further develop and consolidate their understanding through self-study.

Discussion Forums

In addition, students are actively encouraged to use Discussion Forums and Bulletin Boards to interact and share information relating to study courses. This is an effective way to develop an appreciation and understanding from differing perspectives, particularly as students will be from a variety of different cultures around the world.

Recommended Reading

The module format is such that if you utilise all the content and interactive activities, you will have appropriate knowledge to undertake the assessments and meet the Learning Outcomes for each module. However, each module descriptor also contains a list of recommended texts. These are included to enable you to broaden your knowledge of the subject areas presented. These texts are provided as a guide; however, you do not need to restrict yourselves to the provided texts. Students who wish to embark on University top-up programmes are encouraged to read as widely as possible to demonstrate that they have researched areas from a variety of different perspectives.

When completing assignments remember that all books and resources used must be referenced appropriately, so make a note of all references used.

Student Workload

In accordance with nationally accepted codes of practice in the UK, each credit unit represents a total of approximately 10 hours of learning, which includes Guided Study, self-study, research, revision time and assessment.

The ATHE assignments will require that you submit assignments of approximately 5,000 words and you will need to allow sufficient time to research, plan, execute and evaluate your assignments before submission. Although this a general guidance students will not be penalised if they exceed the 5,000-word limit if the content is relevant to the subject.

As such, you will need to balance the time against other commitments and adhere to the principles for effective study found in the Interim Module that you will need to undertake prior to studying with the college as part of your orientation activity.

Learning Support

Personal Tutor

Tutors

Students will be able to contact external tutors through the Student Dashboard. These tutors will be able to provide students with support during their studies. Students can contact a tutor using the 'Find a Tutor' button on the Dashboard and then sending an internal email directly to them with their query, the tutors are able to assist the student via:

- Email
- Skype
- Telephone

Please be aware that the external tutors work with the college, and as such, they will charge students for their time. The college has secured a flat rate for any 'one to one' sessions that students may need of **£15 per hour**.

Any queries that a student may have, which does not require an hour session can be emailed directly to the college, who will contact one of the tutors on their behalf in order to obtain the answer, there will be no charge for this.

Learners with Particular Requirements

Each student identified is assessed, according to requirements, in line with **Annex - Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy** and **Annex - Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy** to ensure that the assessment is fair and ensuring that where practicable all necessary support will be provided.

Building candidate confidence is an essential aspect when undertaking study by distance/flexible learning, particularly when candidates may be studying in remote locations and/or have not been in education for some considerable time.

As a result, the college ensures that candidates have the opportunity to build confidence in the following ways:

- During the advice and guidance stage of the enrolment process
- During their induction and orientation
- Using clear policies, procedures and ways of working as in the Student Handbook
- Using simple unambiguous language in all learning and assessment material
- Feedback on progress via the Tutorial process
- Social networking and peer support networks/forum

Assessment

Students will be assessed in 2 ways:

1. **Formative assessment** - ongoing feedback to monitor and improve student learning. including self-tests and self-assessment. These are designed to check and reinforce learning. Note that undertaking the Multiple-Choice assessments are **compulsory**, students will not be able to progress to the required formal assessment until they have completed and successfully passed each module.
2. **Summative assessment** – this is used to evaluate student learning and is undertaken having completed the required online modules. This includes a Multiple Choice activity, containing 30 questions, which have been mapped against the corresponding Learning Outcomes for each module and the completion of assignment, which covers the required awarding body assessment criteria derived from the Learning Outcomes. All summative assessment will be subjected to the Internal Verification procedures of and the External Verification procedures of the Awarding Body.

Note: All aspects of the college assessment are contained in **Annex - Assessment Policy**

Assignment Grading

Unit assignments are assessed as **Pass** or **Fail**. A Pass grade is achieved by meeting the requirements defined in the assessment criteria for each Module as defined by ATHE. Students who do not meet the requirements defined in the assessment criteria for each module will be deemed to have failed.

Submission of Assignments

Students will be required to submit assignments electronically. To safeguard against academic malpractice, learners will be required to submit their assignments with a Top Sheet that contains a signed declaration that it is the student's own work. This will be counter-signed by a Mentor, who is known to the student and preferably from their place of work. Refer to **Annex - SAF**

All received assignments will be dated upon receipt and will be subject to checks for plagiarism. Any incidents of malpractice will be subject to the conditions and procedures relating to **Annex - Malpractice Policy**.

Submission Format

Word Process, if possible

We expect that, unless previously agreed, students will submit assignments in typewritten or word-processed format.

Identify it

All pages must have the learner name, ID number and page number clearly shown.

Space it

We advise that students submit word-processed work at least one-and-a-half spaced, with wide margins. Similarly, hand-written material must be well spaced: often writing on every other line greatly helps clarity.

Assignment Guidelines

- 1 Read the assignment questions thoroughly and identify key words and points of issue.
- 2 Formulate a draft assignment plan featuring the main headings and sub-headings of the assignment.
- 3 Ensure you have good paragraphs of introduction and conclusion with a bibliography reflecting research sources.
- 4 Produce a contents list at the commencement of the assignment.
- 5 The assignment must be in English and preferably typed with each page numbered. Appendices may be included to feature tabulations and other specified relevant data.
- 6 The sequence of points discussed in the assignment should be logical.

- 7 The text should be a rational and analytical commentary. Assignments full of assertions and opinions will receive poor (even failing) grades. Logical and well-reasoned arguments will receive high grades. Avoid checklists and any slang language. Summary lists should be fully explained in the text. Ideally use shorter sentences rather than longer sentences. Overall the assignments should have a strategic focus. It should be professionally presented and, where appropriate, be illustrated by examples drawn from your own experiences.
- 8 All research data used should be referenced in the text and the bibliography using the Harvard convention.
- 9 The assignment must represent all your own work and not extracts without acknowledgement from research sources or colleagues/students. Assignments, which copy material from the module or textbooks without acknowledgement, will be given a Fail grade. Do **NOT** copy **any** material from a fellow students' assignment. **BOTH** assignments will be given a Fail grade so don't give your assignment to another student.
- 10 Keep to the terms of the assignment and do not introduce irrelevant information. Answer the question set not the one you wish had been set.
- 11 Ensure the assignment is completed by the date specified and has the required number of words. Diagrams are not considered as part of the word count.

Marking of Assignments

Assignments will be first marked by college staff and the feedback and grades recorded. They will be Internally Verified (IV) and assessment decisions will then be ratified by an Exam Board. External Verification (EV) will be undertaken by ATHE in accordance with their Policies and Procedures.

Resubmission of Assignments

Referral - Referrals will be given in the event of insufficient content and/or misinterpretation of assignment tasks, where all assignment questions have been answered or attempted to be answered by the student. In these instances, students will be provided with an opportunity to add content to meet the requirements of the assessment criteria following feedback with their Tutor as long as this is not deemed to be substantial or requires excessive coaching. In this instance the student will use the same assignments as the basis for amendment.

Fail - A failed piece of work will be awarded in the following instances:

- Where a piece of work is not deemed to be entirely the students own work. Refer to **Annex - Malpractice Policy**
- Where no attempt has been made to answer assignment questions
- Where an assignment has not been submitted in time (unless there are pre-agreed or extenuating circumstances. Refer to **Annex - Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy**)

In the instance of a Fail being recorded, students will be required to undertake a new assignment.

In the event of a Referral or a Fail Students will be able to re-submit on a maximum of 3 separate occasions.

Referred Assignments

Referred assignments may be resubmitted within 21 days of receipt of the Student Assignment Feedback. The first re-assessment is covered in the fees paid. **Any subsequent resubmission will be charged at the rate of £60 each, payable on application for the re-assessment.**

Student Obligations

Academic Honesty (plagiarism)

Plagiarism refers to students who cheat in examinations or present someone else's material as if it were their own

Very few students commit such offences, but the college believes that it is important that all students understand why academic honesty is a matter of such concern and why such severe penalties are imposed.

What Constitutes Plagiarism?

Some examples of plagiarism are:

- Reproducing or paraphrasing published material without acknowledging the source.
- Presenting information from electronic sources without acknowledging the source
- Passing off ideas, designs, inventions or any other creative work as your own.
- Copying the work of another student.
- Undeclared collusion with another student.
- Getting someone else to do the work for you.

There are degrees of plagiarism, particularly where published work is concerned. Minor instances of plagiarism are at the discretion of the Assessor, for example;

- A student fails to reference work properly.
- A student fails to acknowledge the source of a short section of an assignment.

Where an instance of plagiarism has been treated as minor, a warning will be issued about future conduct. The assignment may receive a lower mark than might otherwise have been awarded. More serious infringements, which cannot be treated as minor, will result in a report to the Programme Manager and a record placed on the students' file. The college will penalise students who are found to have presented plagiarised work for assessment.

For full details, go to **Annex - Malpractice Policy**

Guide to Referencing

When you write your assignment, you will refer to statements and ideas of Authors you have read. As such, you need to show the marker whose ideas they are. There are a number of reasons why you need to reference:

- To acknowledge and give credit to other people's work, word and ideas
- To allow the reader/marker to be able to locate references easily
- To avoid plagiarism
- To show evidence of the breadth and depth of your reading, research and evaluative skills
- To avoid losing marks
- To be as consistent as possible in your referencing

The most commonly used referencing system is the **Harvard system**.

Referencing is a two-stage process: you need to reference in the text of the report or assignment and at the end in a reference list.

Referencing in the Text

The Harvard system uses the **author's surname and date of publication** to identify cited documents **in the text of an essay or report**. For example:

Brown (1994) notes that traditionally occupations within museums have been undertaken on perceived gender roles.

Or

Traditionally, occupations within museums have been undertaken on perceived gender roles (Brown, 1994).

When referring generally to the work of several different authors on a topic, put the authors in **alphabetical order**:

Management is the world's fastest growing industry (Jones, 1998; Pearce, 1991; Walcott, 1999)

When there are **two authors**, give both names in the order they appear on the publication:

Smith & Jones (2000) suggest that the concept of appraisal is now widely accepted in management.

When there are **more than two authors**, use the surname of the first author and '*et al*' (Latin for 'and others'):

According to Cooper *et al* (2001), management is a key construct in organisations

For **corporate authors**, for example a company report, use the company or organisation's name:

Over 35,000 volunteers worked for the National Trust in 1997 (The National Trust, 1998).

For publications with **no obvious author**, for example a government publication, give the title:

Employment Gazette (1999).

For **direct, i.e. word-for-word quotes**, put the quotation in inverted commas and give the author's surname, date, and page number from which the quote was taken:

"A sound tourism strategy will therefore seek a balance between large, tourism-orientated events and local and regional events" (Getz, 1991:128).

Or

Markwell *et al* (1997:96) note that the 'typical' historic property is small scale, with "incomes insufficient to warrant full-time professional management".

If you have several references by the **same author**, they should be put in the order of date of publication, the earliest first.

You can use a, b, c, etc., in the text to differentiate between publications by the same author, but be sure to use them in your reference list and make sure they correspond. For example:

Binning this data vector gives the fold of the operator in model-space Claerbout (1998a); and its inverse.

With the development of the helical coordinate system Claerbout (1998b), recursive inverse filtering is now practical in multi-dimensional space.

Quoting from the **Internet**:

The recently published Global Code of Ethics for Tourism state that tourism should contribute to a "mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies" (WTO, 1999:1).

How the Reference Should Look

The reference list at the end of the work should only include those sources that have been *directly* referred to in your text, i.e. all texts mentioned in the report or essay should be on your reference list, and vice versa: all the text on your reference list should be in your discussion. If you wish to include other sources that might be of interest to the reader but which you have not directly referred to you need to include a separate list called the **Bibliography**. References should be in **alphabetical order** by authors' surnames.

The following sequence ought to be followed when writing a reference for a reference list:

1. **Author**, editor, organisation, artist or corporate author.
2. **Year** of publication.
3. **Edition** as appropriate.
4. **Editor** in addition to author where appropriate.
5. **Title** – *in italics and followed by a full stop*.
6. **Translator** where appropriate.
7. **Place** of publication.
8. **Publisher**.

You **MUST** be consistent with all your references.

Common Errors

- Check that all the authors/text referred to in the text are in the reference list and vice versa.
- Reference the source of statistics, including dates in tables and figures.
- Insert the page number when using a direct quotation, and put the quote in "inverted commas".
- In your reference list, put page numbers for journal articles and book chapters.
- And remember: be consistent!

How to Reference at the End of the Text

To check that all your references contain the correct information in the appropriate format, we suggest that you use a free online tool or refer to the numerous sites that are devoted to this subject and use those as your guide.

A very good online tool, can be found at:

<http://www.harvardgenerator.com/>

To make sure that you have all the information available record the references using the generator as you use them. There is nothing worse than having finished an assignment and not being able to locate the appropriate references. Also, you need to allow sufficient time to record your references as often this will take longer than you think.

Complaints/Appeals

The college are committed to providing the highest quality of education possible within the limits imposed by the resources available, to ensure that students benefit from the academic, social and cultural experience. Where students feel that their legitimate expectations are not being met, whether it is an academic or non-academic matter, students have the right of access to **Annex - Complaints Procedure** and **Annex - Academic Appeals Policy** contained in this Handbook.

Student Feedback and Questionnaires

As part of the college's quality assurance obligations, students will be required to complete a distance learning questionnaire at the end of each module. These forms need to be administered by the college and, once completed, sent to the Programme Manager at the college for each specific module. Refer to **Annex - Distance Learning Questionnaire**.

In addition, you may be contacted via e-mail 1-2 weeks prior to the quarterly Course Committee Board meetings to give you the opportunity to raise any concerns or to highlight any positive feedback you wish for the Committee to discuss.

Study Guidelines

Introduction

To attain the optimum result and reward from time devoted to study, the following sections may prove a worthwhile aid to planning.

Managing your Study Time

We strongly advise you to 'manage' your study time carefully. You should clarify your aims, identify your strengths and weaknesses, consider the context in which you will be studying and generate a broad strategy for successfully covering the material and completing this course.

You should take a broad overview of the requirements of any particular module and unit; consider your situation, workload and home responsibilities in the relevant study-period, then develop specific and realistic plans for active study and writing.

You should bear in mind the overall aims that we suggest for each module, but you may also find it useful to formulate more personal and specific objectives for yourself. These will help you to focus your study, assess material and apply ideas.

For example, in relation to the process of studying, you might want to set yourself targets for:

- The amount of time within which you will seek to complete a task
- The quantity of work you aim to do in a particular week
- Progress through the modules and units, bearing in mind your other responsibilities and tasks
- Progress on assignments

You should plan and monitor what you do, and where necessary, act to improve the process, quantity and quality of your work. You should make decisions about the importance you will attach to tasks, the time you choose to allocate to them, and the sequence in which you will do them.

People learn in different ways. We do not expect that all students will approach the business of study in the same way, or in a way we prescribe. We advise and expect you to be able to manage your study and to be disciplined about how you do it.

Preparing to Read and Study

When you are faced with any study-task or reading, it is helpful to spend a couple of minutes making notes on what you currently know about the topic, or think about the question. This will bring your own ideas and experience into focus. It could remind you of previous relevant information from the course. It will prepare you to respond critically to what you read and to integrate whatever you learn into your current knowledge and practice.

Brainstorming is sometimes a useful way to start such notes and to ensure that you generate a comprehensive range of points. By this we mean the rapid gathering of ideas, which seem relevant to a particular topic or problem, within a brief time limit and without judgement. You can then reflect on each idea, develop and analyse the material as a whole, and make connections. Brainstorming is a technique you can use on your own, as well as in groups.

Effective Reading

There are various styles of reading, which are appropriate for different purposes. For studying in depth, learning and remembering, you should not necessarily start at the beginning and finish at the end of something you plan to read.

First, look briefly at the whole item to see what is there. Look at headings and tables. Read any introduction or introductory paragraphs, any summary, and any concluding section. You will already be developing an understanding of what is said, without any detailed reading. Skim read each section to amplify your understanding. Finally, read the text in detail. Using these styles of reading, you gradually build up your understanding.

Evaluating Ideas, Action and Learning

People generally seem to find it easier to focus on weaknesses and negative points when they are evaluating propositions, people and projects. However, evaluation should cover positive points and strengths, too. To counteract this tendency, and to explore a range of factors relevant to analysis, it is useful at the beginning of a period of evaluative thought to brainstorm (say for a minute each) first the positives, then the negatives and then the interesting things about the matter in question. This approach will bring key ideas to the surface before you consider them in more depth. Of course, the same idea may fall under more than one category however, at this stage that does not matter as you are simply examining ideas. This process is a tool and a technique to support a certain type of thinking, which you will find helpful throughout this course.

Note: There is further guidance on Study Skills and additional resources available as part of the Online Induction Module

Consolidate your Learning

It is important to “consolidate” periods of reading and study to gain maximum benefit from them. At stages along the way, summarise key things you have learned, both about the topic under discussion, and the process of thinking and learning. It is easy to forget new ideas. New tools, methods and skills require practice. To aid your memory, you should review your notes regularly to help develop your skills.

Course Structure

Module Descriptors

The following section provides detailed module descriptors for each of the modules to be delivered in support of the Level 4/5 Diploma in Computing.

LEVEL 4 COMPUTING MODULES

Module: IT and Society

Level: L4

Credits 12

Aims

- To understand ethical, legal and regulatory issues relating to IT and the impact of IT on society

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand how IT has changed the way people live and work
2. Understand IT issues in society
3. Understand current legal, ethical and regulatory issues in IT

Indicative Content

- Computers and society: explaining digital citizenship, community and the information age, gender, age, culture
- Impact of IT in society: understanding the environment, explaining the impact of the information age on social groups
- IT induced changes for individuals: everyday life, at home, at school, the workplace
- Social issues: government role in information handling, cultural diversity as a success factor for IT, regional and national perceptions of IT
- Professional issues: code of ethics, IT professional culture
- Shaping the future developments: Internet penetration in everyday life, smart devices, social networks, managing data and information
- Legal issues: IT related liabilities, legislation relating to IT, impact of legislation on systems development
- Ethical issues: dealing with personal data, ethical systems design and development
- Risks: computer threats, digital crime, privacy, security, impact of e-everything (e.g. e-marketing, e-banking)

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Bott, F. (2014) *Professional Issues in Information Technology Paperback*. BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT

Leigh, D and Harding, L (2010) *Wikileaks: inside Julian Assange's war on secrecy*. Guardian Books
Communication are Changing Our Lives. OUP Oxford

Levy, S (2010) *In the Plex: how Google thinks, works and shapes our lives*. Simon and Schuster

Turban, E., Volonino, L. & McLean, E. (2009) *Information Technology for Management: Transforming Organizations in the Digital Economy*. John Wiley & Sons. 7th ed.

Module: Computer Systems and Software

Level: L4

Credits: 12

Aims

- To develop learners' understanding of the integration of hardware and software components
- To explore how hardware serves specific computer processing functions
- To investigate the use of various software applications

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand components of computer systems
2. Understand computer software

Indicative Content

- Computer components: defining a computer system, system component types
- Networking infrastructures: system connectivity, network types, hardware infrastructure, networking software
- Component functionality: processing, memory, system interfaces (input/output)
- Peripheral devices: limitations of computer systems, designing expandable systems, device types
- Operating systems: the role of an operating system, OS types
- Software applications: the role of software applications, functionality and services supported by software, application types
- Web applications: the impact of the World Wide Web, architecture of web applications, web application types, web services
- Mobile applications: the role of mobile applications, interface issues, mobility issues, connectivity issues, security issues

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

- Bryant, R. & O'Hallaron, D. (2013) *Computer Systems: A Programmer's Perspective*. Pearson. 2nd ed.
- Petzold, C. (2000) *Code: The Hidden Language of Computer Hardware and Software*. Microsoft Press
- White, R & Downs, T. (2014) *How Computers Work*. QUE. 10th ed.

Module: Computer Programming

Level: L4

Credits: 12

Aims

- To understand the use of different tools and techniques to design, implement and test programs, following the system life cycle
- To use an appropriate programming language and learn about the principles of good programming to create computer programs

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand principles of computer programming
2. Be able to develop a computer program to a client brief
3. Be able to evaluate a computer program

Indicative Content

- Application Programming Interface (API) evaluation: the need for API, API technologies, API evaluation criteria (security, functionality, usability)
- Software Development Life Cycle: SDLC importance, SDLC and programming
- Programming paradigms: procedural programming, functional programming, object-oriented programming
- Programming language constructs: variables, constants, operators, loops, conditional statements
- Designing a computer programme: using data models, the role of conceptual modelling, algorithms, pseudocode
- Developing a computer programme: structuring a simple program
- Testing a program: testing programming practices, testing data structures, testing algorithm
- Analysing test results: test reports, verification, validation
- Evaluating feedback: user evaluation, the role of software documentation, dealing with integration, installation, deployment, updates
- Improving a program: change requests, scalability, maintenance, support

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Bell, T. (2014) *Programming for Everyday Life: Introductory Coding for Beginners*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

Wang, W. (2011) *Beginning Programming For Dummies. For Dummies. 4th ed.*

Module: Relational Database Systems

Level: L4

Credits: 12

Aims

- To understand database systems and data analysis and modelling
- To understand how normalisation and functional dependency theory is used to design a relational database and how the client-server model is used

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand database management systems
2. Understand database design
3. Be able to design a database system

Indicative Content

- DBMS: DBMS overview, DBMS types
- Database architectures: data models, data schemas, DBMS levels
- Big data: big data explained, big data management, applications of big data
- Transaction processing: concepts, transaction processing systems, OLTP, OLAP
- Data integrity: data quality management, quality control in DBMS, data integrity explained, data security
- Database relationships: relationships, joins, keys
- Integrity constraints: referential integrity, domain integrity, entity integrity, foreign key integrity
- Functional dependencies: schema normalisation, normal forms
- Database administration: the role of the DBA, DBA skills and responsibilities
- Relational database design: design fundamentals, logical vs. physical design
- Database documentation: stakeholders for database documentation, documentation types
- Database evaluation: performance evaluation benchmarks, verification, validation

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Connolly, T. & Begg, C. (2014) *Database Systems: A Practical Approach to Design, Implementation, and Management*. Pearson. 6th ed.

Garcia-Molina, H., Ullman, J. & Widom, J. (2013) *Database Systems: The Complete Book*. Pearson. 2nd ed.

Module: Software Engineering

Level: L4

Credits: 12

Aims

- To gain an understanding of the need for software engineering and the use of different methods and techniques

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand the software engineering approach to the design and development of software
2. Understand key aspects of software engineering
3. Be able to apply a software engineering approach to software and systems development

Indicative Content

- Software engineering principles, software development process, software development management
- Traditional software development approaches, software process modelling, agile software development
- Software modelling, system interaction, system structure, system behaviour
- Analysis tasks, design tasks, Implementation tasks
- Software development and business information, organisational aspects of system development
- Programming teams, software engineering roles, software engineering tasks
- Project management for software development, project planning, business process reengineering
- Data modelling, object oriented analysis and design, behavioural models
- Data verification, data validation

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Foster, E. (2014) *Software Engineering: A Methodical Approach*. Apress.

Pressman, R. (2009) *Software Engineering: A Practitioner's Approach*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education. 7th ed.

Sommerville, I. (2010) *Software Engineering*. Pearson. 9th ed.

Module: System Analysis and Design

Level: L4

Credits: 12

Aims

- To understand the systems development life cycle and the role of systems methodologies within it
- To learn different fact-finding and problem-solving techniques and use these to analyse an existing system
- To recommend improvements and plan to implement them for a client

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand systems analysis and design
2. Be able to use systems analysis and design techniques to recommend improvements to an existing system
3. Be able to develop a solution to improve an existing system

Indicative Content

- Systems development lifecycle: waterfall, V-shape, spiral
- Systems development methods: SSADM, DSDM, agile, prototyping
- Systems analysis: requirements elicitation, stakeholder analysis, systems design process
- Information gathering techniques: interviews, observation, documentation investigation, surveys, focus groups
- Business requirements: using client briefs, feasibility study, analysis of system components
- Design processes: process specification, data flow diagrams, entity relationship diagrams, using UML
- Present solution: feasibility plan, requirements elicitation
- Design specification: process specification, data flow diagram, entity relationship diagram
- Proposed solution: implementation plan, deployment plan, post-implementation planning

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Dennis, A. & Wixom, B. (2009) *Systems Analysis and Design*. John Wiley & Sons. 4th ed.

Kendall, K. & Kendall, J. (2013) *Systems Analysis and Design*. Pearson. 9th ed.

Module: E-Commerce Applications

Level: L4

Credits: 12

Aims

- To learn about different e-commerce models and applications and how they can be used to develop e-commerce in a small business
- To understand the stages involved in setting up e-commerce and use e-commerce applications to meet a client brief

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand principles of e-commerce
2. Understand why small businesses use e-commerce
3. Understand e-commerce models used in small businesses
4. Understand e-commerce applications
5. Be able create an e-commerce site using e-commerce applications

Indicative Content

- Stages: understanding e-commerce concepts, overview of the role of the Internet in commerce, issues relating to the creation of e-commerce applications
- Differences between ecommerce and e-business: e-business defined, overview of e-business models, benefits of e-commerce for businesses, e-commerce versus e-business
- Opportunities and benefits: impact of e-commerce on organisations, SMEs and e-commerce, the global marketplace
- Threats: identifying e-commerce threats, risk assessment in e-commerce, dealing with Internet threats, infrastructure practices techniques and tools for dealing with e-commerce threats
- E-commerce strategies: developing an e-commerce strategy, assessing e-commerce readiness, measuring effectiveness of e-commerce solutions
- E-commerce models: modelling e-commerce transactions, importance of e-commerce transaction models, overview of e-commerce transaction models
- E-commerce revenue models: creating online revenue, historical evolution of e-commerce transactions, current and future e-commerce revenue models
- E-marketing techniques: the role of the e- prefix in business sectors, e-marketing strategies, e-marketing models, e-marketing techniques and tools
- E-commerce applications – implementation strategies for e-commerce applications, identifying e-commerce application requirements, designing an e-commerce solution
- Create online presence: defining an organisation's e-commerce offerings, identifying target audience for e-commerce solutions, implementing an e-commerce application design against a given client brief
- Feedback: evaluating e-commerce model, evaluating e-commerce application solution, evaluating e-commerce application use
- Present solution – deployment of e-commerce solutions, integration with legacy systems, maintenance and support of e-commerce applications, catering for multiple platforms and different users

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Chaffey, D. (2014) *Digital Business and E-Commerce Management*. Pearson. 6th ed.

Mennecke, B. & Strader, T. (2012) *Mobile Commerce: Technology, Theory, and Applications*. Information Science Reference

Module: Human Computer Interaction

Level: L4

Credits: 12

Aims

- To develop understanding of principles and models of Human Computer Interaction (HCI)
- To evaluate existing HCI design and principles and use this to help plan a prototype user interface
- To formulate design documentation to plan an interface for a product
- To implement a plan to create a prototype and review and amend the prototype based on user feedback

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand principles of Human Computer Interaction (HCI)
2. Be able to plan an interface for a specified application
3. Be able to create a prototype using HCI principles

Indicative Content

- Cognitive and perceptual principles/laws: HCI origins, perception and attention, Norman's theory of interaction, Hyck-Hyman response-selection law, Fitts' law
- User interface design rules: designing universal user interfaces, interfaces that support collaboration, supporting different interaction styles, complex interfaces, Schneiderman's eight golden rules, Nielsen's heuristics
- Interaction: HCI interaction styles, the interaction design process, user analysis, evaluating interfaces against requirements
- Plan: storyboards, navigation, screen content
- Apply: task-centred user interface evaluation, usability evaluation, methods for evaluating user interfaces
- Justify: user interface specification, user interface fundamental principles, the role of user interface prototypes, user interface development process
- Conclude: user interface design basics, best practices and principles in user interface design, techniques for designing user interfaces
- Generate: identifying application requirements for user interface design, selecting success criteria for user interface design, aligning user interface components to user functionality
- Critique: performing a usability evaluation of user interfaces, testing visual components, assessing interface structure and layout, testing alternative navigation designs, evaluating interface accessibility
- Revise: performing cooperative evaluation of interface designs, obtaining user feedback, assessing interface design success

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Kim, G.J. (2015) *Human-Computer Interaction: Fundamentals and Practice*. Auerbach Publications

Rogers, Y., Sharp, H. & Preece, J. (2011) *Interaction Design: Beyond Human-Computer Interaction*. John Wiley & Sons. 3rd ed.

Module: Systems Theory and Practice

Level: L4

Credits: 12

Aims

- To understand the benefits of using information systems to plan a project
- To use an information system to plan and implement an information systems project

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand information systems used in organisations
2. Be able to plan the development of an information system
3. Be able to implement an information systems project

Indicative Content

- Comparing information systems: IS scope, IS structure, IS functionality
- Evaluating information systems: IS success criteria, IS integration, IS deployment, IS use
- Information system's needs: user needs analysis, task needs analysis
- Project plan: project management techniques, planning IS projects
- Feasibility planning: feasibility study, feasibility report
- Requirements elicitation: requirements capture, requirements analysis, requirements specification, requirements report
- Implementing an IS project: project management stages
- Developing an information system: design, coding, testing, deployment
- Evaluating an information system: user evaluation, feedback mechanisms, testing
- Improving an information system: change requests, scalability, bug fixing, planned maintenance, support

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Beynon-Davies, P. (2013) *Business Information Systems*. Palgrave Macmillan. 2nd ed.

Bocij, P., Greasley, A. & Hickie, S. (2014) *Business Information Systems: Technology, Development and Management for the E-Business*. Pearson. 5th ed.

Whiteley, D. (2013) *An Introduction to Information Systems*. Palgrave Macmillan

Module: Management Information Systems

Level: L4

Credits: 12

Aims

- To investigate different management information systems and evaluate the common features
- To analyse an existing information system in use by an organisation
- To review records, observe performance and understand the legal and organisational requirements that apply to an information system

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand management information systems in organisations
2. Be able to evaluate a management information system in an organisation
3. Be able to plan improvements to a management information system

Indicative Content

- Different types of information: routine, exception, summary
- Features of information system: common features information system, how support information system, common features computer systems, systems and application software, digital systems/applications
- Data security including storage: backup, archive, hack, ethical use of information, DPA, etc
- IS for competitive advantage: enterprise systems, supply chain management, customer relationship management, knowledge management systems
- MIS and performance: managing assets and operations (equipment, software, networks, individuals, procedures, resources)
- MIS effectiveness: impact of MIS, principles for effective information management
- MIS improvements: studying people, studying technology, studying organisations
- MIS extensions: process identification, process selection, assessment of current processes, process plan, process changes

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Laudon, K. & Laudon, J. (2013) *Management Information Systems*. Pearson. 13th ed.

O'Brien, J. & Marakas, G. (2011) *Management Information Systems*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education. 10th ed.

LEVEL 5 COMPUTING MODULES

Module: Cyber Security

Level: L5

Credits: 12

Aims

- To develop an understanding of the importance of cyber security to organisations
- To understand industry standards of cyber security and be able to recommend improvements in security to a client's network

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand the impact of cyber security threats to organisations
2. Understand industry standards of cyber security
3. Be able to recommend improvements to secure a network for a client against cyber attacks

Indicative Content

- Cyber security risks: authentication, educating staff, software and hardware vulnerabilities
- Network vulnerabilities: network vulnerability analysis, network exposures, conducting network vulnerability scans, vulnerability verification and reporting
- Impact of cyber security: network security concepts, network security threats, security attacks
- Cyber security management: cyber risk management, reducing cyber risks, information risk management regimes
- Cyber security strategies: identifying security objectives, assessing network security threats, dealing with security challenges, tackling cyber crime
- Network security improvements: network monitoring, security controls, network boundaries, security configuration, user privileges, incident handling
- Training in network security: user awareness, network security training, prevention mechanisms

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Singer, P. & Friedman, A. (2014) *Cybersecurity and Cyberwar: What Everyone Needs to Know*. OUP USA

Trim, P. & Lee, Y-I. (2014) *Cyber Security Management*. Gower

Module: Database Design and Development

Level: L5

Credits: 12

Aims

- To extend understanding of database design and development
- To research database management systems
- To design and implement a complex database

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand database management systems
2. Be able to design a relational database in line with a client brief
3. Be able to implement a database design
4. Be able to review the process of design and implementation of a database

Indicative Content

- Developing databases for organisations: organisational structures, data elements, data sets, forms and reports
- Database design: entities, relationships, attributes, keys, data types, normalisation
- Database connectivity: connecting databases to applications, relational database connectivity, ODBC, JDBC
- Database management systems
- Planning relational database design: database requirements, ERD, DFD, data dictionary, decomposition, functional dependencies
- Database design: designing database table, creating database indexes and constraints, designing SQL queries, forms, macros, security
- Normalisation: identifying insufficiency of normal forms, comparing normal forms, 1NF, 2NF and 3NF, de-normalisation
- Database construction: advanced SQL queries, user actions
- Implementing database features: database security features, database links (LAMP, WAMP), graphical user interfaces (GUI)
- Database testing: testing plans, database components, extreme data, error handling
- Database documentation, database architecture, database documentation components
- Database development review: design review, code inspection, security inspection, post implementation review

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Chao, L. (2006) *Database Development and Management*. Addison Wesley. 4th ed.

Sciore, E. (2008) *Database Design and Implementation*. John Wiley

Taylor, A. (2011) *Database Development for Dummies*. For Dummies

Module: Web-Based Development

Level: L5

Credits: 12

Aims

- To develop an understanding of web-based development and research different technologies that can be used to create dynamic and interactive websites
- To investigate e-marketing and SEO techniques to promote websites and suggest appropriate techniques to solve a business problem
- To create a back-end database to allow the database to interact with the website and to critically review the web-based solution against client requirements

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand client side and server side technologies
2. Understand e-marketing techniques to promote business online
3. Be able to create a web-based solution to a business problem
4. Be able to review a web-based solution

Indicative Content

- Client server technologies: client server architecture, client side development explained, server side development explained
- Web services: introduction to web services, data exchange, WSDL, SOAP, RDF, XML
- Web applications: websites development, database design, three-tiered architecture, interface design
- E-marketing techniques: e-marketing strategies, e-marketing channels, social media, SEO
- Issues relating to e-marketing deployment: legislation, ethics, social acceptance
- Web-based solutions: web page development, web interface design, accessibility issues, usability issues
- E-marketing development: identifying suitable SEO strategies, SEO techniques, e-marketing techniques and tools
- Back-end design: server side development, WAMP, PHP, SQL
- Multimedia techniques: integrating multimedia to web interfaces, multimedia techniques (e.g. virtual light box, wow slider)
- Web services: web service specification, publishing web services, using web services
- Review implemented technologies and their appropriateness to solve business problem: server side versus client side development, explaining the importance of layered architectures for web development
- Evaluate: evaluating web services, mapping web services to user needs, the role of web services in web application development
- Justify: reviewing SEO practices, success criteria for SEO techniques, assessing SEO practices and their suitability for specific web applications
- Reflect: web application development methods, web application deployment, web application maintenance, skills for web application development

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Grove, R. (2009) *Web-Based Application Development*. Jones & Bartlett

Module: Network Design

Level: L5

Credits: 12

Aims

- To understand IT network design fundamentals
- To design a network for a client in accordance with a design brief

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand networking fundamentals
2. Be able to design an IT network in accordance with a design brief
3. Be able to build a network to meet a client brief

Indicative Content

- Network protocols: the role of a network protocol, protocol types, network protocol examples
- Network hardware and software: networking devices, networking applications, network operating systems
- Wireless networks: wireless network types, wireless network devices, uses of wireless networks
- Network management: network monitoring, device management, network management systems
- Network requirements: bandwidth, availability, application connectivity
- Networking evaluation: evaluation methodologies, assessing network objectives, evaluation results
- Network design: topology, forecasting networking needs, network traffic
- Networking solutions: client devices, access points, network unification, network management
- Network architecture: types of networks, topologies, physical infrastructure
- Network testing: identifying testing objectives, testing criteria, testing results
- Network performance: selecting performance criteria, measuring network performance
- Network security: network auditing, dealing with network threats, security measures, security policy

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Boney, J, (2005), *CISCO IOS in a nutshell: a desktop quick reference for IOS on IP networks*. O'Reilly 2nd ed.

Hummel, S. (2013) *Network Design Fundamentals*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

White, R. & Donohue, D. (2014) *The Art of Network Architecture: Business Driven Design*. Cisco Press

Module:	Ethical, Legal and Regulatory Issues and Professional Responsibilities in IT
Level:	L5
Credits:	12

Aims

- To develop understanding of ethical, legal, regulatory issues and professional responsibilities relating to working in IT

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand ethical issues in IT
2. Understand legal and regulatory issues relating to the use of IT in organisations
3. Understand professional responsibilities relating to working in IT

Indicative Content

- Ethics and IT: ethics explained, codes of conduct, corporate credo
- Ethical practices: confidentiality, integrity, relationships
- Ethical data mining: data marketing, data gathering techniques, manipulating personal data
- Ethical good practice: IT role responsibilities, responsibilities against others, responsibilities against the society
- Ethics in organisations: privacy, accuracy, security
- Legal issues in IT: legislation overview, IT specific legislation
- Regulatory issues in IT: standards and regulations, policies (access control, electronic messaging, monitoring, remote access, server security)
- IT contracts: employment contracts, development agreements, confidentiality agreements, collaborative agreements, intellectual property
- Impact of legislation in HCI design: functionality, usability, reliability, efficiency, maintainability, portability
- IT professional standards: ITPS disciplines
- Competencies required for IT professionals: technology awareness, management, communication
- Skills required for IT professionals: analytical, design, development

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Baase, S. (2009) *A Gift of Fire: Social, Legal and Ethical Issues for Computing and the Internet*. Pearson. 4th ed.

Duquenoy, P. (2007) *Ethical, Legal and Professional Issues in Computing*. Thomson Learning

Professional standards – BCS code of conduct

Module: Strategic Management Information Systems

Level: L5

Credits: 12

Aims

- To understand the importance of integrating organisational strategy with information systems and the tools and techniques that can be used to analyse strategy
- To analyse business processes and recommend improvements

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should be able to:

1. Understand links between information systems and organisational strategy
2. Be able to analyse the links between strategy and information systems within an organisation
3. Be able to formulate an information systems strategy for an organisation
4. Be able to plan the implementation of an information systems strategy

Indicative Content

- Information Systems explained: data versus information, information needs, system functionality
- Organisational strategy: structure, capabilities, corporate culture, performance criteria, operations
- Integrating IS: strategy support, data processing, decision support, communication support, resource management
- The role of IS in organisations: market awareness, organisational responsiveness, supply chain management
- Strategic management tools and techniques – Porter's forces, BCG matrix, SWOT analysis, marketing mix, Ansoff matrix, PESTLE analysis, Maslow's hierarchy, 7S method
- IS integration – understanding legacy systems, vertical integration, horizontal integration, star integration
- IS organisational needs – planning organisational level analysis, job analysis, task analysis, needs analysis
- IS strategy – scope, planning, identifying IT needs, decision making, implementing the strategy
- IT strategy implementation – stakeholder analysis, mapping current situation, justifying decisions, scheduling the implementation, developing an IT policy
- IT risks – financial, technical, information related, user related, corporate culture

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Clarke, C. (2012) *Information Systems Strategic Management: An Integrated Approach*. Routledge. 2nd ed.

Pearlson, K. & Saunders, C. (2012) *Strategic Management of Information Systems*. John Wiley. 5th ed.

Robson, W. (2010) *Strategic Management and Information Systems: An Integrated Approach*

Module: Innovative Technologies in Computing

Level: L5

Credits: 12

Aims

- To understand innovative developments in technology and their impact on the computer industry

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand innovative developments in technology
2. Understand impacts of technological innovations on the computer industry

Indicative Content

- Innovative technologies – current developments: big data exploration, cloud system deployment, ubiquitous computing
- Technology innovation and society: knowledge society, social media, technology enhanced innovation processes
- Evaluating technology innovation: methods for evaluating innovation, technology evaluation, impact of technology innovation (success and failure)
- Dependencies between technology and its environment: technology and environment, technology sustainability, sustainable development
- Technological innovation and ethics: new ethical dilemmas, privacy, security
- Technological innovation and legislation: IPR, patents, copyright

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Sobh, T. & Elleithy, K. (2010) *Innovations in Computer Science and Software Engineering*. Springer

Module: Computer Research Methods

Level: L5

Credits: 12

Aims

- To understand different computer-based research methods
- To plan research and carry out a research project based on an area of interest within computer science

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand computer-based research techniques
2. Be able to plan a computer-based research project on a topic within computer science
3. Be able to carry out research on a topic within computer science

Indicative Content

- Research techniques: desk research, ethnography, focus groups, interviews, online communities, mobile research, surveys
- Sampling techniques: probability-based, selective, convenience-based, ethnographic methods
- Ethics and research: ethical standards, ethics principles, ethics approval
- Data analysis techniques: qualitative methods, quantitative methods, data analysis tools
- Research proposal structure: focus, relevant literature, method, ethics, decisions, schedule, resources, references
- Data collection methods: exploratory, descriptive, analytical/explanatory, predictive
- Research proposal feasibility: scope, topic selection, structure, managing time, managing data collection
- Data collection: primary data, secondary data
- Data analysis: scientific rigor, deductive, inductive
- Reporting: research outline, research foundation, research methodology, research results, research evaluation, research process reflection

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Cohen, L., Manaion, L. & Morrison, K. (2011) *Research Methods in Education*. Routledge. 7th ed.

Zobel, (2004) *Writing for Computer Science*. Springer. 2nd ed.

Module: Managing a Computer Project

Level: L5

Credits: 12

Aims

- To understand different project management tools and techniques that can be used when managing a computing project
- To use tools and techniques to plan, implement and review a computing project

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand how to manage a computing project
2. Be able to manage a computing project
3. Be able to review a computing project

Indicative Content

- Project planning methods: project specification, project plan structure, performance criteria
- Project team structure: project roles, team structure, managing and motivating members
- Project management tools: brainstorming, fishbone Diagrams, Critical Path Analysis flow diagrams, Gantt Charts
- Project quality explained: defining quality, quality characteristics, quality assurance, quality control
- Project plan structure: work breakdown structure, logic network
- Managing project risks: understanding risks, risk factors, risk assessment risk management strategies
- Monitoring project progress: measuring progress, schedule plans, dealing with problems, PRINCE2
- Project evaluation: evaluation plan, interpreting data, communicating results
- Post completion report: deliverable assessment, maintenance needs, project impact

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Hughes, R. & Ireland, R. (2012) *Project Management for IT-Related Projects*. BCS - The Chartered Institute for IT. 2nd ed.

Phillips, J. (2010) *IT Project Management: On Track from Start to Finish*. McGraw-Hill Osborne. 3rd ed.

Module: Software Development Technologies

Level: L5

Credits: 12

Aims

- To learn about software development methodologies used to develop an information system

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module, the student should:

1. Understand the role of methodologies in software development
2. Be able to design an information system using a software development methodology

Indicative Content

- Systems lifecycle: information systems development, the lifecycle approach, software development lifecycle
- Approaches in software development: data, processes, people, organisations, project management techniques
- Software development methods: process oriented, object oriented, rapid development, people oriented, organisational oriented
- Methodology selection: heavy versus lightweight, waterfall, RUP, Spiral models
- Agile methods: Scrum, Extreme Programming
- Evaluating methodologies: identifying evaluation criteria, frameworks for methodology evaluation

Bibliography

The on-line learning material with associated links to websites and journal articles will provide the student with the material necessary to achieve the module learning outcomes. Those requiring further background can refer to the following references:

References

Narayan, R. (2012) *Software Development Methodology*. Lambert Academic Publishing

Purba, S. & Sawh, D. (2000) *How To Manage A Successful Software Project: Methodologies*. Wiley. 2nd ed.

Annexes

Equal opportunities and Diversity

Academic Appeals

Assessment Policy

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

SAF Form

Distance Learning Questionnaire

Malpractice Policy (Relating to Learners).

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1.0 Introduction

The college are committed to ensuring the establishment of a culture and environment in which learners, staff and visitors understand and embrace the principles and practices of equality and diversity.

The college seek to ensure that all individuals are able to maximise their potential and do not face any unfair barriers, as such, the college will not tolerate any discriminatory behaviour with respect to any of the following protected characteristics of Equity Law.

- Age
- Race
- Gender reassignment
- Religion or belief
- Marital status
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Pregnancy and Maternity

2.0 Aims

The college will continually develop strategies and procedures to tackle varying forms of discrimination, unfair treatment and barriers which may occur.

These will broadly fit into the following categories:

1. Direct discrimination – where a person is not treated equally due to any of the categories listed above.
2. Indirect discrimination – where a requirement, situation or condition, which is applied for all groups, has an adverse effect on one or more groups.
3. Harassment – where someone is subjected to unwanted conduct, i.e. unwelcome sexual attention or racial harassment.
4. Victimisation – where someone is treated less favourable due to action taken against others.
5. Segregation – where someone is segregated due to his or her beliefs, attitudes or opinions.

3.0 Roles and responsibilities

It is the duty of all individuals and groups associated with the college to avoid discriminatory practices themselves to condone and discourage discriminatory practices from others.

The college will encourage those who wish to report instances of discrimination and provide a confidential process by which all discriminatory matters can be dealt with by means of the **formal Grievance Procedures**.

A designated college senior manager who will be responsible for Equality and Diversity monitoring and the point of contact for those who may wish to discuss any discriminatory practice informally in the first instance.

The college will communicate Equality and Diversity in a variety of forms to all staff, learners, potential applicants (staff and learners), contractors and collaborative partners.

The college will take action against anyone who is in breach of the Equality and Diversity Policy.

4.0 Learners

The college will offer equity for access to all its courses and will encourage the recruitment of students from the widest possible audience both nationally and internationally. The college will also offer flexibility of access to the curriculum by enabling students to enrol for both units of programmes and full awards. This will be reinforced by:

- Marketing literature which is produced for all courses
- An admissions process which is sensitive and supportive to the needs of all students which includes
- An enrolment process, which provides for assessment of learning support for those students who may have special needs.

Regarding the curriculum, student progress and achievement will be monitored by the course review process to ensure that equality of opportunity has taken place.

All students will be made aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy via the induction process and its inclusion in the **Student Handbook**, which will be produced for each course.

All materials used for distance learning study and assessment will be subject to evaluation prior to issue to make sure that they do not contain anything which could be considered discriminatory or offensive to individual students or groups.

5.0 Statistical Analysis

Equal opportunities statistical information will be provided to focus primarily on equal opportunities statistics of those who register for the college courses.

6.0 Documentation relevant to Equality and Diversity

- Admissions Procedures
- Induction Procedures
- Assessment Policy

- Grievance Procedure
- Complaints Procedure
- Staff Development Policy
- Accreditation to Prior Learning (APL) Procedures
- Unit Evaluation Forms
- Academic Appeals Policy

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS POLICY

1.0 Introduction

This Policy sets out the steps to be followed to implement reasonable adjustments and special considerations. The college recognise that:

- Reasonable adjustments may be required, particularly in assessment situations, so that assessments are a fair test of learner's knowledge and what they are capable of.
- The usual format of assessment may not be suitable.
- Our assessments are fair without being prejudicial or advantageous to those who require reasonable adjustments and special considerations to be made.
- All Study Centres should have a Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy

2.0 Reasonable Adjustments

This refers to any activity that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation, such as:

- Allowing learners extra time to complete the assessment activity
- Adapting assessment materials
- Providing facilitators
- Changes to the learning environment

3.0 Special Considerations

Special considerations can be applied after an assessment if there is a substantive reason (supported by documented evidence) to believe that the learner has been disadvantaged by the assessment. Reasons for special considerations may include:

- Temporary illness
- Injury
- Bereavement
- Family issues
- Personal issues

Learners cannot enter a plea for special considerations for assessments based solely the grounds of disability. Learners must declare any grounds for special

consideration prior to the assessment in time allow the college to make reasonable adjustments.

Where an assessment required that a criterion is met it may not be appropriate to apply special consideration, in which case an opportunity to re-take the assessment may be allowed.

4.0 Making Reasonable Adjustments

When making decisions regarding reasonable adjustments, the college will take into consideration the following:

- That learners must be able to cope with the level and content of assessment
- That set standards of competence (as laid down by the Awarding Body cannot be altered.
- That learners will not gain an advantage or disadvantage from any adjustment
- Any adjustment will be based on the individual needs of the learner.
- Each adjustment and the circumstances thereof will be considered on an individual basis.
- That any adjustment will not affect the learners' normal way of working, providing that this does not affect what is being assessed in any way.

5.0 Recruitment of Learners

The college will ensure that:

- Learners are given the appropriate advice and guidance at the outset of their programme of study and that their needs will be met.
- Each learner will be assessed on their potential to achieve any qualifications. In doing, support, where appropriate will be identified and made know to the learner.
- In the event that a learner is identified as not being able to meet the requirements for attainment of a particular assessment or parts thereof, this will be communicated to the learner, so that appropriate study decisions can be made.
- All learners will be made aware of study options available and adjustments that may be necessary and any restrictions on progression routes from learners not achieving certain outcomes.

6.0 External Verification

The college will ensure that all details relating to any reasonable adjustments given will be made available to the External Verifier during any relevant centre visit pertaining to the following:

- Services for learners with learning difficulties

- Services for learners with hearing impairments
- Services for learners with visual impairment
- Services for learners who have a permanent physical impairment
- Services for learners who have a medical condition or temporary injury
- Services for learners whose first language is not English

In the event that the college needs additional advice and guidance they will contact the Awarding Body to seek clarification before making any decision in accordance with their rules for application.

ASSESSMENT POLICY

ASSESSMENT POLICY

1.0 Underpinning Values of Assessment

- All assessments will be designed to ensure both equity and consistency for students and will be monitored as part of the quality assurance and monitoring process.
- The culture of assessment will be communicated and embraced by all staff and students who are involved with academic/vocational programmes of study.
- All assessments will be fair test of the learners' knowledge and what they are able to do. However, for some students, the college recognise that the usual assessment format may not be suitable. As such, we ensure that our assessments do not disadvantage anyone and ensure that we have steps in place to ensure equity of access.
- The requirements of all awarding bodies will be adhered within the Assessment Policy.
- All assessment is based upon the achievement of the Learning Outcomes at standards stated by the Assessment Criteria.
- Study Centres will be required to have their own Assessment Policy that is fair and does not disadvantage learners in any way.
- Assessment will be carried out taking into account the **Conflicts of Interest Policy**

2.0 Student Focused Principles of Assessment

- The Assessment Policy and procedures relating to specific programmes will be made available to all students prior to the commencement of their course and reinforced throughout their programmes of study to ensure that:
 - They understand the reason for assessment as a means to confirm that learning and understanding has taken place matched against the learning outcomes/assessment objectives laid down by the Awarding Body.
- Assessment opportunities will be based on good practice and will comprise the following elements:
 - Assessment planning (Refer to **Curriculum Plan**)
 - Common and agreed assessment procedures amongst course teams
 - Interesting, challenging and realistic assessments
 - Comprehensive feedback mechanisms

- Clear and accurate recording of grades
 - Quality assurance via internal verification and moderation
 - Continual monitoring of candidate performance
- Students will be assessed in 2 ways:
 2. Formative assessment - ongoing feedback to monitor and improve student learning. Typically, these will be facilitated via the college online learning modules and the associated activities, therein, including self-tests and self-assessment.
 3. Summative assessment – this is used to evaluate student learning and is undertaken having completed the required the college online modules. This includes a Multiple-Choice activity and the completion of assignment, which covers the required awarding body assessment criteria derived from the Learning Outcomes. All summative assessment will be subjected to the Internal Verification procedures of the college and the External Verification procedures of the Awarding Body.
 - Support mechanisms will give student’s equality of opportunity for assessment. This will be enabled by:
 - Provision of appropriate resources to enhance learning.
 - Appropriately qualified staff to carry out and monitor assessment.
 - Provision of appropriate resources for students with special learning needs
 - Provision of appropriate resources to take into account differing cultural and linguistic needs.
 - Provision of appropriate quality assurance measures related to the assessment process (Refer to **Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy**)
 - All students will be entitled to the following:
 - Advice and guidance on assessment given by specialist tutors appropriate to their programme of study.
 - Access to the Assessment Policy as part of their induction process
 - where appropriate student’s will be encouraged to self-assess their own work
 - All assessments will be planned by subject tutors to avoid bunching of assessments. This will be given to students prior to the commencement of the programme.
 - The opportunity to have prior knowledge and experience assessed by **Accreditation to Prior Learning (RPL) Policy**.
 - Written and where appropriate oral feedback will be given on the outcome of all assignments.
 - A copy of the **Academic Appeals Procedure** which is given to all student’s as part of the induction process.
 - All documents relating to assessment will be contained within the **Student Handbook**.

3.0 Assessment Decisions

- Students will receive a Pass or Fail for all summative assessments. In the event of a summative assessment being deemed as a referral or a fail, the following will apply:

Referrals will be given in the event of insufficient content and/or misinterpretation of assignment tasks, where all assignment questions have been answered or attempted to be answered by the student. In these instances, students will be provided with an opportunity to add content to meet the requirements of the assessment criteria following feedback with their Tutor as long as this is not deemed to be substantial or requires excessive coaching. In this instance the student will use the same assignments as the basis for amendment.

A failed piece of work will be awarded in the following instances:

- Where a piece of work is not deemed to be entirely the students own work. Refer to **Annex - Malpractice Policy**
- Where no attempt has been made to answer assignment questions
- Where an assignment has not been submitted in time (unless there are pre-agreed or extenuating circumstances. Refer to **Annex - Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy**)

In the instance of a Fail being recorded, students will be required to undertake a new assignment.

In the event of a Referral or a Fail Students will be able to re-submit on a maximum of 3 separate occasions and will have up to 21 days from each receipt of summative feedback (following marking) to make a re-submission.

- Assessment decisions will be recorded on the Student database, which will be used for the tracking and monitoring of grades.
- Assessment decisions and feedback will be recorded using **Annex - Form SAF**

4.0 Review of Assessment

- In addition to being able to communicate assessment issues with subject tutors, students will also have the opportunity to make comment via the course review questionnaires.
- Course team and Examination Boards will also provide further evidence of the quality of assessment.

5.0 Evaluation of Assessment

- Assessment quality will be monitored by analysing:
 - Grades across subject areas
 - Grades across programme areas
 - Entry level qualifications and final achievements
- This will be carried out by subject tutors and course teams as part of the annual review process.
- The findings of the above will be presented to the Programme Manager for comment and if necessary assessment strategies will be changed and/or adapted to meet student needs.

Associated Policies and Procedures:

Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy
RPL Policy
Academic Appeals Policy
Curriculum Plan
Malpractice Policy
Complaints Policy
Conflicts of Interests Policy
Internal Verification Policy

Student Submission and Feedback Form

1. PROGRAMME DETAILS

Name:		ID No.		Enrolment date:	
Programme Title:		Subject tutor:			
Course Title:		Assignment No.		Due date:	

Student Declaration:

I declare that the work submitted is my own work:

Signed:

Mentor Declaration:

I declare that the above student is known to me in my capacity as Mentor and that this is the work of that student:

Signed:

Designation:

2. ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK (Reference must be made to the suggested evidence provided for each assignment)

Activity Title	
LO	Feedback/evidence
AC	
LO	Feedback/evidence
AC	
LO	Feedback/evidence
AC	
LO	Feedback/evidence
AC	
LO	Feedback/evidence
AC	

Grade Awarded: Pass/Fail/Referral (please circle)

General Comments:

Hand in date:		Date returned:		Signed tutor:	
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MALPRACTICE POLICY

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Summary of the college timelines when reviewing reports of suspected or actual cases of Malpractice.

1 Scope of the policy

This policy is aimed at all the college learners and key stakeholders namely Study Centres, (termed 'Centres'), their staff and learners and the college associates and staff, within and outside the UK, who are using any the college products and services and who are involved in suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration.

The policy sets out how centres, learners or other personnel should work with us to deal with such cases and the steps which must be followed when reporting suspected or actual cases of malpractice and maladministration. It also identifies the college's responsibilities in dealing with such cases and the steps that will be followed when reviewing such cases.

2 Definitions of Malpractice

For the purposes of this policy 'Malpractice' is defined as
"Any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process and/or the validity of certificates"

For the purposes of this policy it also includes some forms of misconduct and forms of unnecessary discrimination or bias towards certain groups or groups of learners.

Malpractice may include a range of issues from failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates

3. Examples of actions that may constitute malpractice

Examples of centre and learner malpractice are provided below. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive.

Examples of centre malpractice

- Failure to meet the college centre recognition and qualification approval requirements as stated in the centre contract and the college policies. Examples of this would include:
 - failure to continually meet the college centre recognition and qualification approval requirements e.g. failure to advise the college of centre changes related to the delivery of the college qualifications; external verifier action plans repeatedly not implemented within agreed timescales;
 - repeated short-notice cancellation of External Verifier visits by a centre
 - continued failure to meet the college requirements for assessment, internal verification
 - failure to keep learners' portfolios of evidence secure
 - providing deliberate erroneous advice to learners
- Failure by the centre to implement the agreed internal Malpractice policy relating to staff and learners

- Examples of this would include
 - improper assistance to learners over and beyond normal levels of supervision such as to put in doubt learner ownership of work
 - inventing or changing judgements for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) without following agreed internal policies and processes
 - repeated incidences of insufficient evidence of the learners' achievements to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made (fraudulent claims for certificates)
 - inappropriate retention of certificates
 - fraudulent use of the college logo and/or claiming to offer the college qualifications without formal recognition as a college centre.
 - Failure to deal appropriately with learner malpractice such as:
 - plagiarism of any nature
 - collusion with others
 - copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying)
 - deliberate destruction of another's work
 - false declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework
 - impersonation
- Failure to meet the requirements of the regulations for the conduct of timed assessments or other forms of assessment under controlled conditions including:
 - non-adherence to any arrangements agreed with the college for such assessments
 - amendments to assessment materials without permission
 - failure to provide access arrangements for assessment in accordance with the college requirements.

4. Definition of Maladministration

For the purposes of this policy this is defined as:

'any activity, neglect, default or other practice that results in the centre or candidate not complying with the specified requirements for delivery of the qualifications as set out in the relevant regulatory and awarding organisation requirements'.

For the purposes of this policy it also includes persistent mistakes or poor administration within a centre

5. Examples of Maladministration

Examples of actions that may constitute maladministration are listed below. These are exemplars and the college reserves the right to consider as maladministration other actions not listed but falling under the general definition of maladministration.

- Delay in issuing certificates
- Unreasonable delay in responding to requests for information or other communications from the college
- Inaccurate claims for certificates

- Incorrect action or failure to take any action when requested to by the college
- Failure to provide information when reasonably requested to do so
- Inadequate record-keeping for example in relation to assessment of learners
- Failure to investigate
- Misleading or inaccurate statements

6. Dealing with Malpractice or Maladministration

In accordance with the requirements of the regulatory authority, all allegations of malpractice or maladministration must be investigated. The nature of the investigation, and of the actions taken if malpractice or maladministration is proven, will be commensurate with the nature and the gravity of the malpractice or maladministration. The college regards all allegations and suspicions of malpractice or maladministration as potentially serious issues, and as such all must be investigated and recorded formally, no matter how trivial they may at first appear.

7. Academic Malpractice

This section identifies the steps that the college will take in detecting and dealing with academic malpractice. As such it is applicable to its own operations and those of its Centres.

Definition:

Academic malpractice is any activity – intentional or otherwise - that is likely to undermine the integrity essential to scholarship and research. It includes;

- plagiarism,
- collusion,
- fabrication or falsification of results,
- anything else that could result in unearned or undeserved credit for those committing it.

Academic malpractice can result from a deliberate act of cheating or may be committed unintentionally. Whether intended or not, all incidents of academic malpractice will be treated seriously by the college

Safeguards:

- Wherever practicable assessment tasks and topics will vary from year to year.
- Assessment will focus on demonstration of the understanding of knowledge rather than the relatively straightforward repetition of such knowledge.
- Students will be asked to submit a draft or outline of major pieces of work; this allows useful formative feedback, affords you the opportunity to spot possible plagiarism, and helps to combat plagiarism from the Web.

- All assignments issued to Distance Learning students will require that they sign a declaration that it is the student's own work. This will be countersigned by a designated Mentor using **Form SAF**.
- Wherever practicable assignments will be submitted for electronic scrutiny using the plagiarism detection systems (usually 'Turnitin') to check for passages found elsewhere on the web, in books and journals or in work submitted previously. The college will inform students of this procedure as required.
- The college will give students clear guidance on the appropriate styles of referencing, the need for bibliographies and their layout, etc.
- Students working in groups or teams will be given specific guidance on how assignments arising from their legitimate collaboration are to be assessed and to what extent 'shared' material may be appropriate in individual assignments submitted for assessment.
- A single instance of the copying or close paraphrasing of two or three sentences of perhaps no more than 50 words in total of someone else's material, without direct acknowledgement, or the reproduction of a single unacknowledged diagram should not necessarily be regarded as plagiarism. These might better be described as 'poor academic practice', rather than malpractice. In such cases, students should be informed why they fall below the standards required, and should then be penalized accordingly through appropriate assessment criteria, which explicitly mention the need for the use of quotation marks, referencing and the provision of a full bibliography.
- Before reporting suspected instances of collusion, the college will check with the students concerned, at the earliest opportunity, that they have properly understood what is required of them in terms of the submission or presentation of assignments. In cases where misunderstandings have apparently occurred, a request for resubmission or re-presentation would probably be the most appropriate form of action.
- The college appreciate that international students, who come from different academic cultures that may have different practices and expectations, should be treated with special consideration. Appropriate induction arrangements will be put in place for in order to clarify the conventions that are considered important within the UK system of HE, but once these conventions have been shared with these groups of students, they will be enforced in the same way as with all other students.

8. Copies of the policy

Copies of the policy can be downloaded from our website.

9. Responsibility of Study Centres

It is important that all personnel involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of the college qualifications are fully aware of the contents of this policy. Staff in the college centres and learners studying for the college qualifications

must be clear that the college will take action in all cases of alleged malpractice. When a centre is seeking recognition, it will need to confirm that they have read and understood the college Malpractice and Maladministration Policy. In addition, the centre must have robust internal policies in place to combat malpractice and maladministration and this will be checked by the college. Centres must ensure these policies are fully implemented and that staff and learners strictly adhere to the procedures stated in this documentation.

A failure by a centre to report suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration, or a failure to have in place effective arrangements to prevent such cases, may lead to sanctions being imposed on the centre. Details of sanctions that may be imposed are set out below.

A centre that requires guidance or advice on how to prevent, investigate and deal with malpractice and maladministration should contact the college which will provide such advice and/or guidance.

A centre's compliance with this policy and how it takes reasonable steps to prevent and/or investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration in the institution will be reviewed by the college periodically through the centre monitoring arrangements. On their centre visits, External Verifiers will check not only that centres have received this policy but have also prepared internal malpractice policies which are being implemented and that all relevant colleagues and learners are aware of the contents and purposes of both documents.

10. Monitoring and Review

An annual report on any cases of malpractice or maladministration including those found not proven will be made to the college Management Board.

The college will review this policy annually as part of its annual self-evaluation arrangements, the college will take into account the operation of the policy in the previous time period, feedback from stakeholders, or changes brought about by external agencies and regulatory authorities. The review will ensure that procedures continue to be consistent with the Ofqual Conditions of Recognition and are applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.

Part B

Procedures to be followed in cases of alleged or suspected malpractice or maladministration

2. Terminology

In all cases, to avoid prejudicial language, until an investigation has been completed and the allegation or suspicion proved, centres and the college will use the terms 'alleged malpractice or maladministration' or 'suspected malpractice or maladministration', as appropriate to the circumstances, in relation to the case in question.

2. Allegations of malpractice or maladministration

Allegations may be made by any person having knowledge of the assessment process, including learners, assessors, centre employees, the college employees or associates and members of the public. Allegations should normally be made in writing. Where an allegation is made orally, the receiver of the allegation should attempt to obtain written confirmation from the person making the allegation, but if this is not possible he/she should make a written record. In such cases, care will need to be taken in noting accurately the details of the allegation.

Allegations may be made to centres, centre employees, or the college staff or associates. Allegations may also be made indirectly via a third party (for example, the police or the regulatory authority).

Cases of alleged malpractice in centres will initially be dealt with by applying the centre malpractice policy. There will however be cases where suspected cases of alleged malpractice or maladministration are notified directly to the college. In such cases allegations, should normally be put in writing (which may include email) and enclose appropriate supporting evidence. Such allegations should normally be reported to the college within 5 working days of the discovery of the alleged malpractice.

All allegations should include (where possible):

- centre's name, address and number
- learner's name and the college registration number (where relevant)
- centre or the college person's details (name, job role) if they are involved in the case
- details of the college course or qualification affected or nature of the Service affected
- nature of the suspected or actual malpractice and associated dates
- details and outcome of any initial investigation carried out by the centre or anybody else involved in the case, including any mitigating circumstances

In all cases of suspected malpractice and maladministration reported to the college it will protect the identity of the 'informant' in accordance with its duty of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty.

3. Anonymous allegations

An anonymous allegation should normally only be acted upon if there is sufficient supporting evidence, but may require investigation without such evidence depending on the nature of the allegation. While the college is prepared to investigate issues which are reported anonymously and/or by whistle-blowers it will always try to confirm an allegation by means of a separate investigation before taking up the matter with those persons about whom the complaint or allegation relates.

Sometimes a person making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration may wish to remain anonymous. Although it is always preferable for 'informants' to reveal their identity and contact details to the college, the person may be concerned about possible adverse consequences and request the college not to divulge their identity to third parties. If it helps to reassure the 'informant' on this point, the college should confirm that it is not obliged (as recommended by Ofqual) to disclose information if to do so would be a breach of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty.

4. Suspected malpractice or maladministration

Suspicion of malpractice or maladministration may arise when assessing a learner's work, but may also arise under other circumstances, for example, when analysing assessment records.

5. Application of these procedures

These procedures are designed to cover a wide range of circumstances in relation to: the subject of the allegation or suspicion; the person making the allegation or developing the suspicion; the person or organisation receiving the allegation; the nature and gravity of the alleged malpractice or maladministration. Examples of malpractice or maladministration may arise where these procedures are not wholly appropriate and they may therefore need to be adapted in some cases to suit the actual circumstances. In cases where there is an allegation or suspicion of centre malpractice, the college will immediately inform the regulatory authority irrespective of whether the investigation has been completed.

6. Sanctions and Penalties

The college reserves the right in suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration, both during the period of the investigation and when the outcome is known, to apply sanctions. Sanctions/penalties may only be imposed based on the evidence presented and must be justifiable and reasonable and consistent in their application. Examples of sanctions include:

- Suspending individual learner or group registrations
- Withholding results
- Withdrawing approval for any assessor/internal verifier implicated in Malpractice

- De-registering the centre, recognising a duty of care to learners

7. Alleged or suspected malpractice by learners

7.1 Initial response

Where a centre discovers any irregularity in internally assessed work, they do not need to report this to the college. Centres will be expected to have robust policies in place and reference the actions they will take should malpractice in learner work be identified for example a refusal to accept learner work for assessment purposes.

The college external verifiers who discover or suspect malpractice in assessments when visiting centres, or when sampling learner evidence record their findings, including supporting evidence in full in their report. The centre is given initial oral feedback on the findings and the contents of the report. The centre is also informed that the report will be sent to the Head of Quality and Assessment at the college for final checking and approval. In such cases the college will formally write to the Head of Centre and request information so that an investigation into the malpractice and appropriate action can be undertaken.

7.2 Centre investigation

The regulatory authority explicitly requires the college as the awarding organisation to conduct a full investigation or instigate a centre led investigation of all instances of alleged or suspected malpractice.

The college reserves the right to issue advice to the centre on the conduct of any preliminary investigation, or to require the involvement of the college staff in the investigation, or to conduct the investigation itself should the circumstances appear to it to warrant such a course of action, for example, where the alleged malpractice has been brought to its attention by an external verifier, where the suspected or alleged offence is serious, or has potentially wider consequences, (for example, implicates a group or groups of learners).

7.3 Procedures

If a centre conducts a preliminary investigation prior to formally notifying the college, the centre should ensure that staff involved in the initial investigation are competent and have no personal interest in the outcome of the investigation. However, it is important to note that in all instances the centre must immediately notify the college if it suspects that learner malpractice has occurred as the college has a responsibility to the regulatory authorities to ensure that all investigations are carried out rigorously and effectively.

In conducting any preliminary investigation the centre must follow the procedures stated in their internal policy. This will normally include the following actions:

- Inform the learner in writing at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged or suspected malpractice, of the procedures that will be followed, and the possible penalties if malpractice is proved
- Undertake an investigation of the allegation or suspicion

- Provide the learner with an opportunity to contest or refute the allegation or suspicion, either in writing, or at a hearing, or both
- Allow the learner to be accompanied by a friend at any hearing
- Make a decision based on the investigation and hearing
- Ensure that the person or persons conducting the investigation, any hearing, and making any decision:
 - are not the same as the person making the allegation or raising the suspicion
 - have sufficient professional standing and authority, and, if necessary have appropriate subject knowledge.
- Inform the college if it is unable to meet either of the above requirements (for example, if it has a small number of employees), which will advise the centre on how to meet the requirements, if necessary by the involvement of persons external to the centre
- Inform the learner of the outcome in writing
- Where malpractice is proved, immediately inform the college in writing
- Keep a full case record (see below) and make available such a record to the college on request
- Ensure that the assessed work is included in any sample of work considered by the Internal Verifier
- Ensure that the work is included in any sample of work provided to the college authorised person (External Verifier) so that he/she can view the evidence and report the findings to the college.

7.4 The college action

Once the centre has gathered all the information, completed their investigation and forwarded all the documentation to the college, the college will confirm the outcome and recommend the appropriate penalty. The recommendation will be considered and confirmed by the college Director of Operations. Where the nature or gravity of the malpractice appears to warrant it, and the proposed penalty is severe, the case may be referred to Chair of the Quality and Standards Committee as appropriate for independent advice. The outcome of the investigation will be sent to the centre within 10 working days of receipt of all the relevant documentation relating to the investigation.

7.5 Penalties: learner malpractice

The following penalties may be imposed, depending on the nature and gravity of the malpractice:

- A written warning
- Loss of credit in the unit concerned
- Loss of credit in all units in the qualification concerned
- Disqualification from the qualification concerned
- Learner is barred from registering for qualifications for a set period of time
- A combination of two or more of the above
- Other actions

Where the malpractice appears to involve a criminal offence, it may, after advice from the college, be appropriate to report the case to the police

7.6 Case records: learner malpractice

Case records for learner malpractice should include:

- A statement of facts
- A detailed account of the circumstances
- Names of all persons involved and their roles in the case
- Copies of any written statements by learners and staff
- Details of the investigation carried out by the centre
- A record of any hearing
- Copies of any learner's work that is the subject of the allegation or suspicion of malpractice
- A record of the decision
- Copies of the centre's procedures for informing learners of assessment regulations including those relating to malpractice
- A record of the proposed penalty imposed if the allegation or suspicion is upheld (and a record of the confirmed penalty once this is agreed)

7.7 Appeals

Where a learner wishes to appeal against the decision, he/she should use the procedures as described in the colleges Academic Appeals policy and procedures.

8. Alleged or suspected malpractice or maladministration by centre employees

8.1 Initial response

Where a centre employee is suspected of malpractice, or maladministration or is alleged (whether by another employee of the centre, a learner or a member of the public) to have committed malpractice or maladministration, the centre must immediately inform the college in writing. Where a member of staff of a centre is suspected by the college of malpractice or maladministration, or the college receives an allegation of malpractice or maladministration by an employee of a centre, the college Director of Operations will immediately inform the centre (normally the Principal or some other senior member of staff nominated by the centre) in writing.

8.2 Centre investigation

Upon receipt of an allegation or suspicion, it is the responsibility of the centre as the employer of the employee concerned:

- to conduct an investigation;
- to determine the outcome;
- to determine the appropriate penalty;
- to comply with the centre's own employment and disciplinary procedures;
- to comply with appropriate employment legislation.

In conducting the investigation, the centre should seek the advice of the college, and should consider any evidence that the college may provide. Subject to agreement between the centre and the college it may be considered appropriate for a college member of staff to give evidence at any hearing called as part of the investigation.

Where the malpractice or maladministration appears to involve a criminal offence, the centre and the college should consult about whether it is appropriate for the centre to report the case to the police.

Notwithstanding the outcome of the investigation by the centre into the actions of its employee, the college reserves the right to undertake an investigation of the centre, as the employer of the person concerned, in order fully to discharge its responsibilities to the regulatory authorities. This investigation will be undertaken following the procedures in section 9 below.

9. Alleged or suspected malpractice or Maladministration by Centres

9.1 Initial response

Where a centre is suspected by the college of malpractice or maladministration, or the college receives an allegation from a learner, an employee or a member of the public of malpractice or maladministration by a centre, or where the investigation by the centre into alleged malpractice or maladministration by one of its employees is not considered sufficient, the college will initiate an investigation. All notifications of suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration received by the college will be passed to the Programmes Manager who will acknowledge receipt, as appropriate, to external parties within three working days.

9.2 Responsibility

The college Programme Director will be responsible for ensuring the investigation is carried out in a prompt and effective manner and in accordance with the procedures in this policy and will allocate a relevant member of staff to lead the investigation and establish whether or not the malpractice or maladministration has occurred, and review any supporting evidence received or gathered by the college. Throughout the investigation the college Programme Director will be responsible for overseeing the work of the investigation staff to ensure that due process is being followed, appropriate evidence has been gathered and reviewed and for liaising with and keeping informed relevant external parties.

At all times the college will ensure that personnel assigned to the investigation have the appropriate level of training and competence and they have had no previous involvement or personal interest in the matter.

9.4 Notification

In all cases of suspected or actual malpractice, the college will notify the centre (normally the Head of the Centre) involved in the allegation that the college will be investigating the matter – in doing so it may withhold details of the person making the allegation if to do so would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty.

Where applicable, the college will inform the appropriate regulatory authorities if there is reason to believe that there has been an incident of malpractice or maladministration which could either invalidate the award of a qualification or if it could affect another awarding organisation, and may be required to act on any advice received.

Where the allegation may affect another awarding organisation and their provision the college will also inform them in accordance with the regulatory requirements and obligations imposed on the college by Ofqual.

9.5 Investigation timescales and procedures

The college aims normally to complete all stages of the investigation within 10 working days of receipt of the allegation and no more than 20 working days. In some cases the investigation may take longer; for example, if a centre visit is required. In such instances, the college will advise all parties concerned of the likely revised timescale.

The fundamental principle of all investigations is to conduct them in a fair, reasonable and lawful manner, ensuring that all relevant evidence is considered without bias. In doing so investigations will be based around the following broad objectives:

- To establish the facts relating to the allegation, suspicion or complaint in order to determine whether any irregularities have occurred
- To identify the cause of the irregularities and those involved.
- To establish the scale of the irregularities
- To evaluate any action already taken by the centre
- To determine whether remedial action is required to reduce the risk to current registered learners and to preserve the integrity of the qualification
- To ascertain whether any action is required in respect of certificates already issued
- To obtain clear evidence to support any sanctions to be applied to the centre, and/or to members of staff, in accordance with the college Sanctions Policy
- To identify any adverse patterns or trends.

The investigation may involve a request for further information from relevant parties and/or interviews with personnel involved in the investigation. Therefore, the college will:

- Ensure all material collected as part of an investigation is kept secure. All records and original documentation concerning a completed investigation that ultimately leads to sanctions against a centre will be retained for a period of

not less than five years. If an investigation leads to invalidation of certificates, or criminal or civil prosecution, all records and original documentation relating to the case will be retained until the case and any appeals have been heard and for five years thereafter.

- Expect all parties, who are either directly or indirectly involved in the investigation, to fully co-operate with us.

Either at the time of notification of a suspected or actual case of malpractice or maladministration and/or at any time during the investigation, the college reserves the right to impose sanctions on the centre in accordance with its Sanctions Policy in order to protect the interests of learners and the integrity of the qualifications.

The college also reserves the right to withhold a learner's, and/or cohort of learners' results for all the college course/qualifications and/or units they are studying at the time of the notification or investigation of suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration.

Where the college finds that the complexity of a case or a lack of cooperation from a centre means that it is unable to complete an investigation, it will consult the relevant regulatory authority in order to determine how best to progress the matter.

9.6 Investigation report

After an investigation, the college will produce a draft report for the parties concerned to check the factual accuracy. Any subsequent amendments will be agreed between the parties concerned and the college. The college will make the final report available to the parties concerned and to the regulatory authorities and other external agencies as required. In cases where the original notification of the suspected or actual case of malpractice came from a person or organisation external to the college (or its centres and learners) it will also inform them of the outcome – normally within 10 working days of making the decision - in doing so it may withhold some details if to disclose such information would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty. In cases where the investigation is internal into a member of the college staff the report will be agreed by the CEO with the relevant the college manager and appropriate internal disciplinary procedures will be implemented.

9.7 Investigation outcomes

If the investigation confirms that malpractice or maladministration has taken place the college will:

- impose appropriate actions in relation to the centre with specified deadlines in order to address the instance of malpractice or maladministration and to prevent it from recurring
- impose appropriate sanctions on the centre – if so these will be communicated to the centre in accordance with the Sanctions identified above along with the rationale for the sanction(s) selected.
- in cases where certificates are deemed to be invalid:

- inform the centre concerned and the regulatory authorities of the reasons why they are invalid and any action to be taken for reassessment and/or for the withdrawal of the certificates
- ask the centre to inform the affected learners of the action the college is taking and that their original certificates are invalid and ask the centre – where possible – to return the invalid certificates to the college
- amend its database so that duplicates of the invalid certificates cannot be issued
- expect the centre to amend its records to show that the original awards are invalid.
- amend as appropriate aspects of its qualification development, delivery and awarding arrangements and assessment and/or monitoring arrangements and associated guidance to prevent the issue from recurring.
- inform relevant third parties of its findings in case they need to take relevant action in relation to the centre
- inform the appropriate regulatory authority(s)

In proven cases of malpractice and/or maladministration by a centre the college reserves the right to charge the centre for any reissuing of certificates and/or additional external verifier visits. The fees for these will be the college prices current for such activities at the time of the investigation.

In addition, to the above the Director of Operations will record any lessons learnt from the investigation and pass these onto relevant colleagues within the college to help prevent the same instance of maladministration or malpractice from recurring.

If the relevant party (ies) wish to appeal against the decision to impose sanctions, the college Appeals Policy and Procedures should be used.

10. Alleged or suspected malpractice or maladministration by the college employees

10.1 The college investigation

Where an employee of the college is suspected of malpractice or maladministration, or is alleged (whether by another employee of the college, a learner or a member of the public) to have committed malpractice or maladministration, it is the responsibility of the college as the employer of the member of staff concerned:

- to conduct an investigation;
- to determine the outcome;
- to determine the appropriate penalty;
- to comply with the college's own employment and disciplinary procedures;
- to comply with appropriate employment legislation.

In conducting the investigation, the college may seek the advice of the Regulatory Authority. Where the malpractice or maladministration appears to involve a criminal offence, it may be appropriate to report the case to the police.

During the investigation the employee may be suspended or moved to other duties until the investigation is complete.

10.2 Investigation outcomes

If the investigation confirms that malpractice or maladministration has taken place the college will take such actions as are necessary and relevant to the case in order

- to safeguard the integrity, validity or reliability of any assessment process and/or the validity of any certificates
- to protect the interests of learners
- to maintain public confidence in the college
- to maintain the college's status as a awarding organisation

These actions may include:

- in cases where certificates issued are deemed to be invalid:
- inform the centre(s) concerned and the regulatory authorities of the reasons why they are invalid and any action to be taken for reassessment and/or for the withdrawal of the certificates
- ask the centre(s) to inform the affected learners of the action the college is taking and that their original certificates are invalid and ask the centre – where possible – to return the invalid certificates to the college
- amend its database so that duplicates of the invalid certificates cannot be issued
- amend as appropriate aspects of its qualification development, delivery and awarding arrangements, assessment and/or monitoring arrangements and associated guidance, internal operational procedures, staff recruitment and training, to prevent the issue from recurring.
- inform relevant third parties of its findings in case they need to take relevant action
- inform the relevant regulatory authority(s)

In addition, to the above the Programme Manager will record any lessons learnt from the investigation and pass these onto relevant colleagues within the college to help prevent the same instance of maladministration or malpractice from recurring.

Summary of the college time lines when reviewing reports of suspected or actual cases of malpractice

Report from centre alleging malpractice or maladministration	Acknowledge within 3 working days of receipt
The college investigation into malpractice or maladministration	Action and resolve all investigations normally within 10 working days and no more than 20 working days unless a centre visit is required in which case the investigation will be completed as soon as possible
The college decision on sanctions/penalties following centre investigation into alleged malpractice	Inform centre of decision within 5 working days from completion of the investigation

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

COMPLAINTS POLICY

1.0 Overview

The college seeks to always provide the highest possible levels of service but also recognises that in doing so, there may be times when this falls short of student's expectations. In these instances, the focus is on finding an acceptable outcome. All complaints are taken seriously and will be investigated according to the procedures laid down.

Any student who makes a complaint shall not be disadvantaged in any way and the complaint will be undertaken by the college impartially and without bias. Privacy and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process and each case will be considered on its own merits taking into account:

- The seriousness of the issue raised
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of confirming the issue from attributable sources.

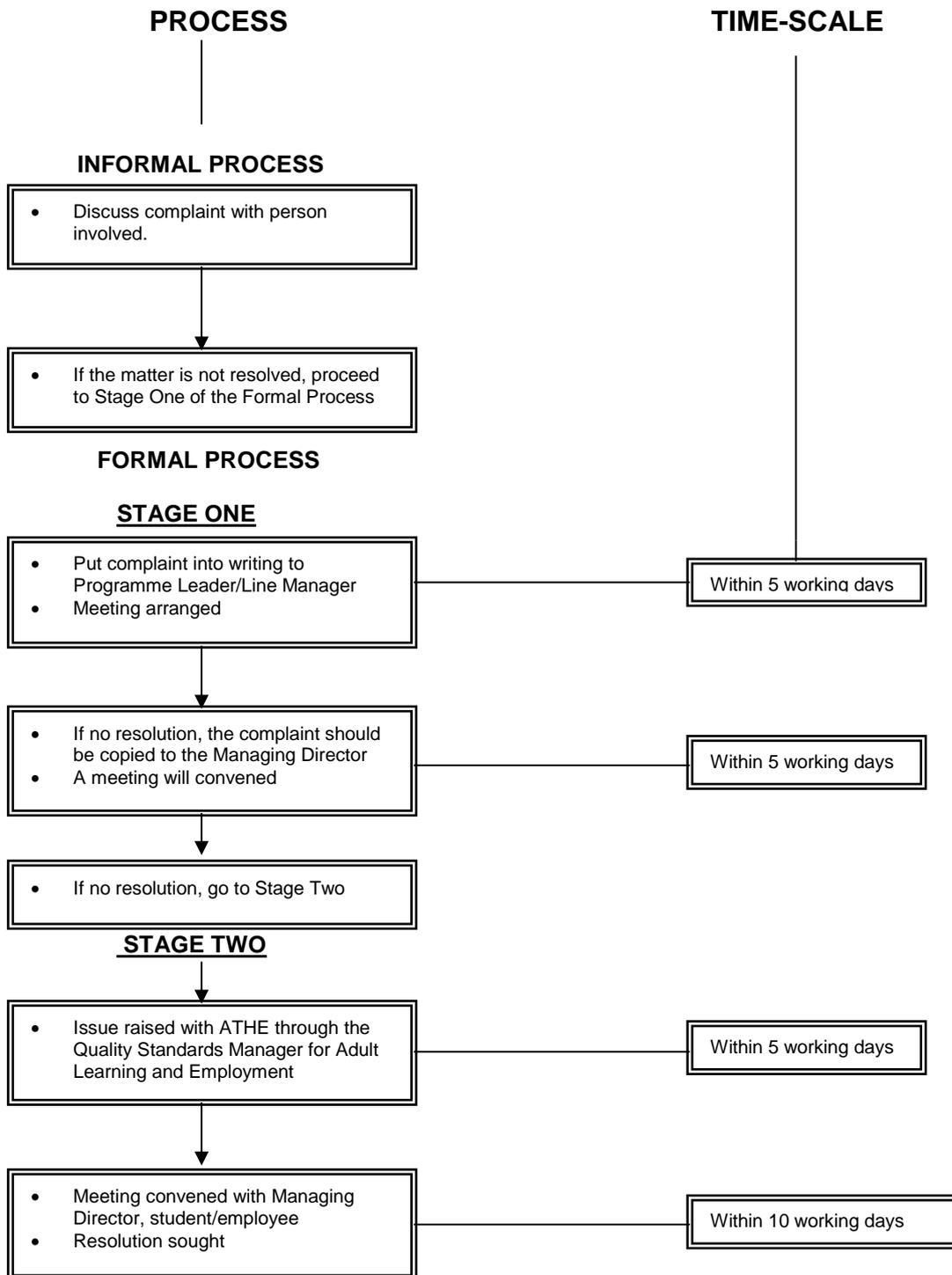
2.0 Aims

The college are committed to the following in terms of the complaints procedure for learners:

- Making the process open and transparent
- Placing the emphasis on prompt resolution
- Not apportioning blame
- Taking forward all reasonable complaints made
- Ensuring that complaints are quickly rectified
- Ensuring that learners are supported during the complaints procedure
- To collect equality data on complaints for monitoring purposes (through confidential means)

3.0 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

(using Form SCP)



Notes:

1. Student has the right to be accompanied by other.
2. This Policy relates to specific issues not covered by the Appeals Procedure

STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Student Name: _____

Enrolment No: _____

Course of Study: _____

Year of Course: _____

Course Tutor: _____

Programme Leader: _____

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES – STAGE 1

Reason for Complaint:

Response:

Agreed:

Signed Programme Leader : _____

Signed Student: _____

Date: _____

=====

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE – STAGE 2

Response:

Agreed:

Managing Director: _____ Signed Student _____

Date: _____

ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY

ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY

1.0 Role of the college

As a provider of learning for students, the college is duty bound to provide a means by which students are able to appeal against assessment decisions. The aim of this document is therefore to detail the mechanism by which appeals against assessments can be made.

2.0 Right to Appeal

The Appeals Process is available to all the college students. Students have the right to appeal in the following circumstances:

- Any grade awarded for any piece of work that contributes to the final grade
- Any grade awarded which may affect a student's transfer/progression opportunities between courses or years of courses
- A final year/course grade

3.0 Mechanism for Appeal

3.1 Grounds for Appeal

As part of the quality monitoring of college courses, students can appeal against any aspect of an assessment decision outlined in 2.0 above. However, it is expected that students would normally appeal against the following:

- That parts of the documented procedures have not been applied and in doing so has disadvantaged the student to a degree which has materially affected the decision/recommendation made, rendering it unsound. (Refer to **Annex - Assessment Policy**)
- The lack of opportunity to show examples of competency against the assessment criteria/and or national academic standards.
- That the decision-making body took a **decision which no reasonable person would find comprehensible**. Disagreement with the decision does not make it manifestly unreasonable. To apply this ground, students must provide substantive argumentation as to why no reasonable person could have arrived at the decision that was made.
- The prejudice or bias of an assessor, which can be proven.

3.2 Invalid Grounds for Appeal

The following circumstances will not be considered grounds for appeal:

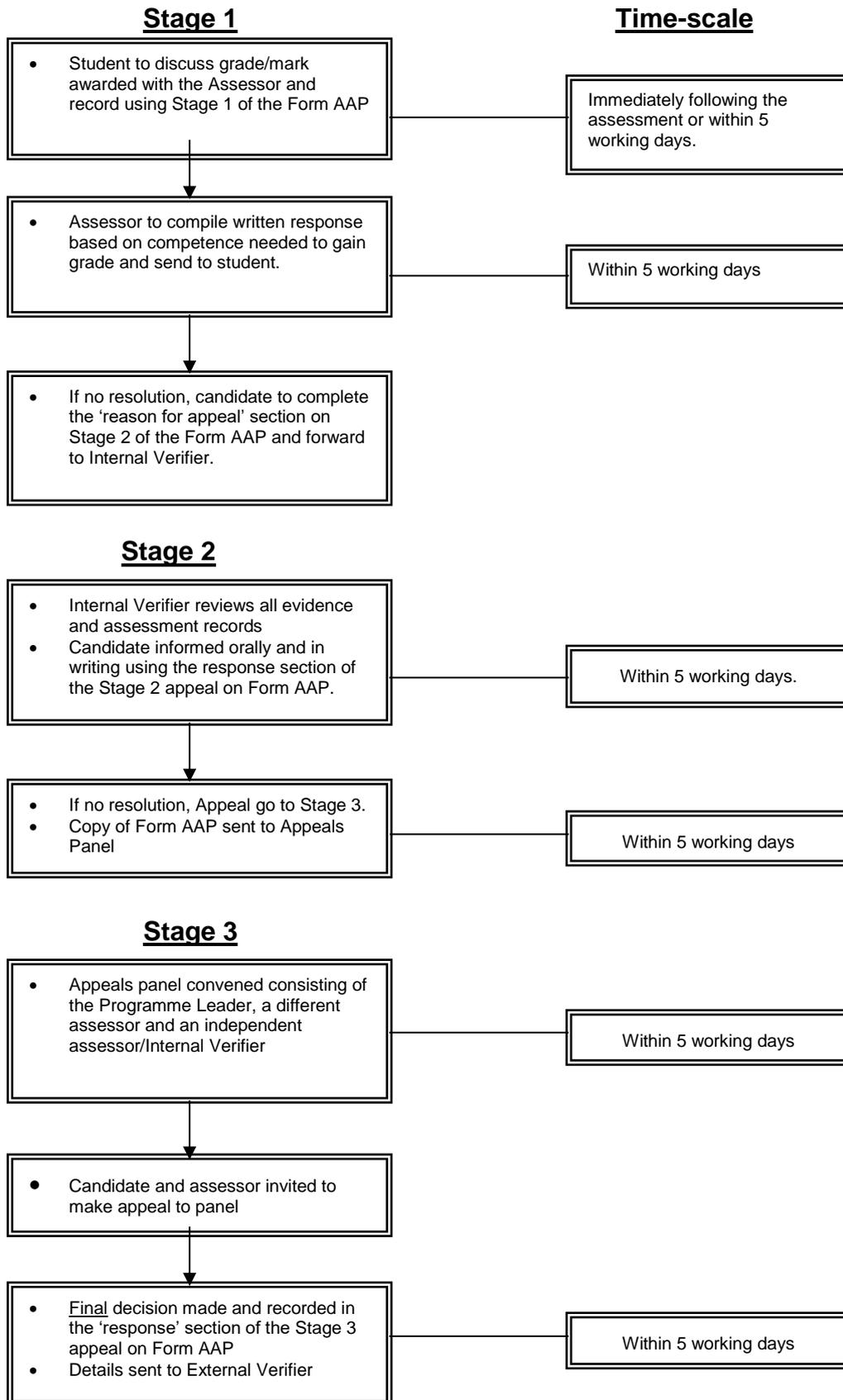
- Perceived past shortcomings in tuition, supervision or support not previously raised with the college cannot be considered as grounds for appeal. Concerns relating to the quality of teaching or supervision, or other circumstances that relate to the delivery of a programme of study before the point of assessment should be raised under the Student Complaints Policy as they arise.
- An Appeal may not be made to question the academic judgment of the Assessment Board. The student's feeling that the result unfairly reflects the merit of their work or their ability is not a ground of appeal.
- An Appeal may not be made against the actual mark awarded for a piece of assessed work, which is a matter of academic judgement, except where the case rests on a claim of procedural irregularity.
- Errors in calculating or recording marks on the basis of which the original decision was made cannot be submitted as grounds for appeal, unless these errors have been identified by the student and brought to the attention of the college.

3.3 Submission of Appeals

- Appeals will only be accepted if submitted within one calendar month of the student receiving notification of the decision they wish to appeal against (or publication of results in the case of classification appeals).
- Only written cases, made using the Appeal form and presented clearly and comprehensibly, in accordance with the requirements set out in the Appeals Procedure, will be accepted.
- There may be times when a student submits an appeal, the subject of which is actually a complaint, or vice versa. In these cases, the college may decide to reclassify the appeal or complaint, at whatever stage of the procedure that has been reached, and the college will inform the student of this.

3.4 Academic Appeals Procedure

- The procedure for Academic Appeals is shown on **Form AAP**
- The Academic Appeals procedure is split into 3 stages, which represent the process of acceleration, the internal and external personnel and the time scales involved.
- The mechanism for recording the process is shown by **Form AAP**



ACADEMIC APPEAL – STAGE 2

Reason for Appeal:

Response:

Agreed:

Signed Internal Verifier: _____

Signed Student: _____

Signed Assessor: _____

Date: _____

ACADEMIC APPEAL – STAGE 3

Response:

Signed Chair of Appeals Panel: _____

Date: _____

Distance Learning Questionnaire

As part of our quality monitoring process we would like to know what you thought about the Module that you have just completed. This will help us to make any changes which will enhance the quality of your course.

Please circle the number which best corresponds to the statements given below:

- (4) if you strongly agree with the statement
- (3) If you agree with the statement
- (2) If you disagree with the statement
- (1) If you strongly disagree with the statement

Course Name:

Module Title:.....

(Please circle)

Course Content				
I found this module valuable in terms of its application to my role in the workplace	4	3	2	1
The module content met my expectations	4	3	2	1
There were opportunities during this module to utilise my experience of work	4	3	2	1
Activities presented were relevant and challenging	4	3	2	1
The materials provided for the module are of a good quality	4	3	2	1
Course Support Mechanisms				
I received the appropriate level of support from [INSERT COLLEGE NAME]	4	3	2	1
My subject tutor responded to my enquiries within the agreed time scale	4	3	2	1
I found my subject tutor to be approachable and helpful	4	3	2	1
I found the webinars useful in helping me to complete the module	4	3	2	1
Learning				
I was not subjected to any discrimination whilst on the course	4	3	2	1
This module was enjoyable and interesting and extended my skills and knowledge	4	3	2	1
There were opportunities for me to utilise the student forum	4	3	2	1

Please add any further comments:

Thank you for your co-operation. Please return this form to your Course Tutor.