

Access to HE Diploma Specification & Assessment Framework

Diploma Title: Computing

Learning Aim:	4001566X
Approved:	16 May 2024
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Date of next review:	September 2028

Purpose and aim of the Access to HE Diploma

The Access to HE Diploma is intended to prepare people without traditional entry qualifications for degree level study at university. It may also be used by people wishing to make a career change or who have been out of formal education for a significant time to gain the skills and confidence required for direct progression to employment or further study. The Access to HE Diploma is regulated by QAA and widely recognised as a progression route by universities across the UK.

Target Group

The Access Diploma is open to all learners but is designed to be accessible for individuals who, because of their socio-economic or personal circumstances, may not have been able to consider progression to degree level study. The Access Diploma therefore provides a second chance for individuals who, for whatever reason, were not able to take full advantage of their formal secondary education.

About the qualification

The Diploma Specification for Computing enables centres to choose from a variety of units within the computing module, this can be supplemented with suitable complementary subjects.

The progression routes¹ from this Diploma could include, but are not limited to, degrees in a variety of BSc computing courses, IT networking and security, computing and systems development, computer science, software engineering, artificial intelligence, digital media development, games development/design, information technology, management for business, information systems, etc.

Specification Rules

All LASER Diplomas are made up of 45 graded credits (sections A, B, C below) and 15 ungraded credits (section D). The policy for the LASER Access to HE Diploma Specification & Assessment Framework is available at [Validated Diploma Specifications](#) or by contacting the Access Office.

Section	Credits	Graded/Ungraded	Modules	Notes
A	Min 24	Graded	Computing	
B	Max 21	Graded	Additional units from group A or creative computing, esports or selected business or maths	Number of credits dependent on choice of graded or ungraded IAS
C	6	Graded or Ungraded	IAS Computing	MANDATORY UNIT
D	9 or 15	Ungraded	Study Skills units or selected ungraded options from sections A and/or B	Study Skills units can be at level 2 or 3 Number of credits dependent on choice of graded or ungraded IAS

¹ Suggested progression routes have been taken from provider feedback and HE consultation, they may be subject to change and further review and do not indicate any guarantee of progression in these fields. LASER would always recommend students ensure the diploma they wish to enrol on is appropriate for their future progression.

Unit Choices: SUBJECT GROUP A

Minimum 24 graded credits to be selected from the module below, these units are chosen as specific to the subject of the named Diploma and are all at level 3.

Please note: QAA regulations state - *the maximum number of credits that can be made up from 6 or 9-credit units is 30 credits. Graded and ungraded 6 and 9-credit units will count towards the maximum.* As the Independent Academic Study is a mandatory graded or ungraded unit of 6 credits (Unit Group C), this means that **no more than four other 6-credit units (24 credits)** can be registered across Unit Groups A, B and D.

Computing	
Credits	Title
3	Applied Digital Forensics
3	Computer Architecture
6	Computer Networks and Data Communications
3	Creating Dynamic Responsive Websites
3	Data Representation for IT
6	Designing and Building a Multiple Page Website
6	Designing and Building and IT Software Solution
6	Human Computer Interaction (HCI) Ideals and User Experience (UX)
3	Impact of IT Systems on Society
6	Implementation of Programming Projects
6	Introduction to Programming
3	IT Business Solutions
3	IT Systems Security
3	Operating Systems and System Tools
3	Programming Fundamentals
3	Querying Data in a Database Application and Producing Reports
3	Setting up and populating tables in a Database Application
6	Systems Analysis and Design Methodology

Unit Choices: SUBJECT GROUP B

Up to 21 graded credits (depending on choice of graded or ungraded IAS unit from Group C) to be selected from either the modules listed in Group A and/or from the additional modules offered below, these units are related to the subject of the named Diploma or will complement learning. These units are all at level 3.

Creative Computing	
Credits	Title
6	3D Modelling
3	Computer Game Creation and Design
3	Creating a Virtual Reality (VR) Demo/Prototype
3	Creating Video Streaming Content
3	Creation of a 3D Animation Scene
3	Developing a Professional Portfolio in Creative Media
3	Digital Art in Media
3	Game Production using a Game Engine
3	Storytelling for a Creative Computing Project
3	Traditional Animation Techniques in the Modern Age
3	Understanding Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR)
Esports	
Credits	Title
3	Ethics and Legislation in Esports
3	Looking after the Health of Esports Players
3	Planning an Esports Event
3	Shoutcasting in Esports
3	The Origins of Esports and Careers in the Industry
3	Understanding Esports Strategies
3	Using Social Media to Market Esports
Business	
Credits	Title
3	Branding and Self Promotion
3	Business Communication
3	Developing a Business Plan
3	Financial Planning in Business
3	Leadership and Management Skills
3	Setting Up a New Small Business
3	The Nature and Context of Business

Maths

Credits	Title
3	Algebra
3	Arithmetic
3	Calculus
3	General Mathematics
3	Statistics
3	Trigonometry
3	The Nature and Applications of Statistics
3	Collecting, Presenting and Using Statistics

Independent Academic Study: IAS GROUP C

6 credits are achieved from the appropriate Independent Academic Study unit (IAS) for the Diploma title. This unit is at level 3 and can be offered as graded or ungraded (but not both) within a centre's Rules of Combination.

Independent Academic Study

Credits	Title
6	Independent Academic Study (Computing)

Ungraded Units: GROUP D

15 or 9 ungraded credits (depending on choice of graded or ungraded IAS unit from Group C) are selected from the modules listed in Group D. These units are generally at level 3 but some study skills units may be available at level 2.

Applied Study Skills		
Level	Credits	Title
3	3	Academic Communication Skills
3	3	Critical Thinking
3	3	Data Analysis using IT
3	3	Essential Digital Skills for Students
3	3	Giving a Presentation to an Audience
3	3	Note Taking and Note Making
3	3	Preparing for and Taking Written Exams
2 or 3	3	Skills for Study: Essay Writing
2 or 3	3	Skills for Study: Research
2 or 3	3	Skills for Study: Writing
2 or 3	3	Using ICT for Study
Personal Reflection & Development		
Level	Credits	Title
3	3	Citizenship: Rights and Responsibilities for UK Professions
3	3	Cultural Diversity and Professional Practice
3	3	Mental Health and Self-Care Whilst Studying
3	3	Personal Organisation and Time Management
3	3	Reviewing and Planning for the Future
General English		
Level	Credits	Title
2	3	English Language Skills
3	3	Studying Literature
3	3	Communication – Reading and Writing
3	3	Communication – Speaking and Listening
General Maths		
Level	Credits	Title
2	3	Understanding Maths
3	3	Application of Number - Calculation
3	3	Application of Number – Data Interpretation
3	6	Introductory Mathematics for HE

Ungraded Academic Subject Content (all at level 3)

Units cannot be included within a centre's Rules of Combination as both graded and ungraded, but centres can choose to offer some academic subject units as ungraded versions. These must be identified as part of the course approval and will apply to all cohorts on this diploma title within a centre. If a centre wishes to include other units in Groups A or B as ungraded content, this will need to be requested for consideration by the AVA, giving valid reasons for inclusion, as part of course approval.

Credits	Title
Ungraded Computing	
3	Computer Architecture
6	Computer Networks and Data Communications
3	Data Representation for IT
3	Impact of IT Systems on Society
3	IT Business Solutions
3	Operating Systems and System Tools
Ungraded Maths	
3	Algebra
3	Arithmetic
3	Calculus
3	Collecting, Presenting and Using Statistics
3	General Mathematics
3	Statistics
3	The Nature and Applications of Statistics
3	Trigonometry

Diploma Assessment Framework

All LASER validated Access to HE programmes must include a **Diploma Assessment Plan** as a part of their validation/revalidation process and the plans will be required to be updated and available for review as part of the yearly External Quality Assurance cycle. In identifying assessment models, practitioners should also give due consideration to the requirements of the LASER [Guidance on the Use of AI](#) to ensure the veracity of assessments as measures of student achievement.

The policy for the LASER Access to HE Diploma Specification & Assessment Framework is available via [Validated Diploma Specifications](#) or by contacting the Access Office.

Required Assessment Models:

Assessment Model ²	Suggested Weighted Frequency of Use	Comments
Examination	High / Moderate / Low	<i>Required by LASER Examination Policy and identified as a commonly used assessment model within HE.</i> The LASER Examination Policy requires all LASER validated Diploma Titles to contain at least three opportunities for students to experience appropriate forms of ‘summative’ examination which contribute to the final assessment and grade of the unit. Unless there is a compelling reason, no diploma should contain more than six examinations . The full policy can be viewed here: Access Policies .
Data analysis	High / Moderate / Low	<i>Essential in a computing context and will inform reports</i>
Report	High / Moderate / Low	<i>Essential in a business/computing context</i>
Presentation	High / Moderate / Low	<i>Skills required in business e.g. presentations to different stakeholders</i>
Project	High / Moderate / Low	<i>Often required in a computing context</i>

² Definitions of the meanings of given **Assessment Models** are contained within Annex One of the LASER Access to HE Diploma Specification & Assessment Framework.

Recommended Assessment Models:

Recommended Assessment Model	Possible Weighting	Comments
Case study	Strongly Recommended / Recommended / Suggested	<i>Useful when studying organisations</i>
Essay	Strongly Recommended / Recommended / Suggested	<i>Can be used for title-related units</i>
Extended essay	Strongly Recommended / Recommended / Suggested	<i>As above</i>
Reflective log	Strongly Recommended / Recommended / Suggested	<i>Useful for title-specific and title-related units</i>
Literature review	Strongly Recommended / Recommended / Suggested	<i>As above</i>
Web page development	Strongly Recommended / Recommended / Suggested	<i>A very useful business skill</i>