Programme Specification

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she passes the programme. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each unit can be found in the programme handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this specification is reviewed annually by Activate Learning and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

Higher National Certificate (HNC) in Business

1.	**Awarding Institution/Body**	Pearson
2.	**Teaching Institution**	Activate Learning
3.	**Faculty responsible for management of the programme**	Academic and Professional Studies
4.	**Teaching site**	City of Oxford College
5.	**Mode of Delivery**	Full time / Part-time : Distance Learning
6.	**Final award**	HNC
7.	**Programme**	Business
8.	**UCAS Code**	
9.	**Credits/ECTS Value**	120 (60 ECTS)
10.	**Study level (FHEQ)**	4
11.	**Date of creation/revision (for version control)**	September 2020 (Version 1)
12.	**Intended start date of delivery**	March 2021

13. Educational aims of the programme

The aims of the HNC in Business delivered by Activate Learning is to develop students as professional, self-reflecting individuals able to meet the demands of employers in the business sector and adapt to a constantly changing world of business and enterprise.

This is an online programme for students who wish to pursue or advance their career in business. In addition to the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin the study of the business sector the programme will give students experience of the breadth and depth of the sector that will prepare them for further study or training

If you are in work and want to retrain, or if you are already working in business, and want to develop your skills sharpen your skills or obtain a qualification that recognises the work you do, our part-time online learning delivery offer a route so that allows you to manage your studies and other commitments so you can achieve success in work and life.

The qualification also aims to widen access and participation in higher education and enhance the career prospects of those who undertake it.

The programme aims to:

• Equipping learners with knowledge, understanding and skills for success in employment across a range of career pathways.
• Enabling progression to an undergraduate degree or further professional/specialist qualifications in a related area

• Developing learners' career progression through exploring major business functions to create a more diverse skills set and knowledge base
• Develop specialist knowledge to support a specific career aspiration.
• Transferable skills and knowledge, which will enable them to meet career challenges, whether within their current area of employment, or through career progression.
• Motivating individuals to progress to further professional development through future study or as part of their chosen career.

14. Programme Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, practical and transferable skills and other attributes.

Upon successful completion of the HNC in Business, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of where and how to access sources, business and financial information and the skills to apply this knowledge in the decision-making process.
2. Understand individual and group behaviour in organisations and to critically examine current theories and their application in managing behaviour in the workplace.
3. Demonstrate the understanding and critically evaluate the fundamental concepts and principles that underpin the marketing process.
4. Demonstrate understanding of different organisations, the structure of these organisations and the influence of stakeholders. While evaluating the relationship between businesses and the local, national and global environments
5. Communicate information in a variety of formats to a range of audiences using a range of media that evidences both academic and digital literacy skills
6. Work effectively as an individual and as a member of a team undertaking critical self-appraisal to support continued professional development, employability, lifelong learning and transferable skills

Progression

Students who successfully achieve 120 credits on the HNC will be eligible to progress to the HND at Activate Learning or progress to another institution depending on entry requirements.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

The learning and teaching strategy has been designed to ensure that students acquire the the knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes essential for learners to be successful on the programme

The delivery is all online but the learning and teaching strategy is based on a blended learning pedagogy and is designed to be flexible, allowing students to adapt their learning to the approach that best suits their circumstances and learning needs.

All students are provided with the programmes resources via the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), known as Activate Learning On-line (ALO). This system also facilitates the running of online lessons, seminars and tutorials and is a key tol in the delivery of all our courses. The programme is based on a blended learning pedagogy that allows students to experience primarily face to face teaching over the programme while also developing their ability to control their own learning and study. Units are delivered via interactive classes with mentored independent study. We expect students to experience a mix of these models during their time on the programme.

The following learning and teaching interventions have been designed to enable students to achieve the learning outcomes:

Learning intervention	Content and Learning outcomes	Mode of experience
Lectures	These are the most common techniques used by tutors. They offer an opportunity to engage with a large number of students, where the focus is on sharing knowledge through the use of presentations. They are used to provide an introduction to each topic area, contextualising students' prereading and drawing out interesting points of academic interest in a practical, business context.	These may be experienced live, streamed online, with the facility to ask question: or prerecorded with an interactive question and answer session
Seminars	These provide a forum for students to explore practice techniques and explore and apply theory to problems and case studies, developing their skills and deepening their knowledge in the process. They are often premised upon the flipped classroom approach, with students expected to have reviewed the lecture, done the reading, and prepared exercises in advance.	These are small group sessions timetables through ALO to discuss the lecture topics
Tutorial /Feedback sessions	These provide an opportunity for students to develop their individual learning through individual or small group contact with their lecturer. These sessions provide the opportunity for students to clarify issues arising from their reading / any of the above activities, as well as to seek guidance on how to develop and improve their skills. There is no formal teaching structure for these sessions. Students might use these to i) revisit topics covered in lectures, seminars or their own individual study ii) ii) develop their understanding of topics covered in lectures and seminars iii) iii) obtain formative feedback on work or coursework assessments.	Students can book time during staff 'Office hours' using the calendar on ALO These give students the opportunity to have individual time to discuss their progress and address any academic questions. They can choose to attend individually of in small groups depending on the topic under discussion
Workshops	These provide a forum for students to apply the knowledge and skills that they have developed in the context of practical sessions. External speakers will also contribute to workshops. The focus here is on the development of general transferable skills	These may be experienced live (face to face or online, using appropriate technology).
One-to-one support	These provide the opportunity for students to discuss wider issues related to their learning as such,	Students will have open access to their module tutor for advice by a range

	there is both a knowledge, skills and welfare component to this support, albeit tailored to the specific needs of the individual students. These sessions are also available for specific s HE study support	of communication methods (face to face, telephone, email, chat etc.). Again, these can be booked via the ALO calendar
Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Activate learning Online (ALO	Our VLE, known as ALO, is invaluable. It is more than a repository for teaching material such as presentation slides or handouts. Further reading could also be located on ALO, along with a copy of the programme documents, such as the handbook and assessment timetable	ALO is used as the conduit for effective teaching and learning all delivery it is via the VLE, and all formative and summative assessment is undertaken via ALO

Assessment Strategy

A variety of modes of assessment are used on the programme. These are designed to be the most appropriate assessment methods for each of the modules in question in terms of their learning outcomes. Assessments are designed to replicate the kind of activity students would be expected to undertake in the workplace wherever possible.

The following tools are therefore employed:
- Written assignments;
- Individual presentations
- Group presentations;
- Group assessments
- Peer assessment;
- Portfolio assessment (including learning logs);

This multi-dimensional approach has the following benefits:
- As in work, students are assessed on the basis of their performance over the entire programme;
- In the course of this assessment regime, students' written, oral and online communication skills will be tested along with their capacity to work in a team and individually to set deadlines.

Feedback

Students will have the opportunity to receive formative feedback, typically as part of the academic feedback sessions during the term. During the sessions feedback will be provided in writing and orally. Draft presentations and assignments are also scheduled for which feedback is provided in advance of the summative assessment. Students will receive feedback on summative assessment within 15 working days of their submission deadline.

The Virtual Learning Environment

Students are supported by a wide range of learning resources made available via the Virtual Learning Environment enabling them to study wherever and whenever they want, on their laptop, tablet or smartphone.

Through Activate Learning Online (ALO) students can access a variety of high-quality study materials designed to support their learning. These include all essential reading including textbooks, articles and multimedia content such as videos. In addition:

- Recommended reading is available in electronic format which can be read online or downloaded on to student devices for offline reading.
- All lectures are recorded and available online so that students can watch them on their laptops, tablets or smartphones, pause and review subject matter that they find difficult to understand and watch them again as revision.

- Interactive topic reviews are provided to help students self-assess their understanding of a subject either at the start or end of a topic in order to help embed learning.
- Discussion forums for online discussion and debate are provided.

In addition to learning resources ALO also provides students with a gateway to a wide range of other resources to help them with their studies including news and announcements, timetables, support and guidance.

In addition to the provision of all essential reading in electronic format students also have access to a wide range of online library resources via ALO using their Athens account which is provided at the start of the programme.

Library resources include full access to an online library that contains access to academic books and journals across a range of business -related subjects, disciplines and databases.

15. Programme Structure and Requirements, Levels, Units and Credits

Introduction to the programme

The programme is designed around enhancing the employability of students and their long-term career prospects. This includes developing attributes in students such as resilience and an appreciation of cultural diversity and its impact on commercial entities and decision-making, particularly in a global environment. It aims to provide a solid theoretical and academic foundation, enabling students to solve problems and capitalise on opportunities within a business context. The programme also aims to make students aware of their social responsibilities to the community as much as to the needs of employers. In the digital age of pervasive social media, this is a commercial as well as an ethical imperative, and one with which students on the programme will be fully acquainted.

The programme has been designed with the needs of the modern learner in mind. As such it is flexible both in mode and duration. Online delivery makes it accessible at all times anywhere in the country.

Students must successfully complete each unit in order to be awarded the specified number of credits for that unit. One credit corresponds to approximately ten hours of 'learning time' (including all classes and all private study and research). Thus obtaining 120 credits in an academic year requires 1,200 hours of overall learning time.

Where a student fails to achieve a unit(s) due to illness or other mitigating circumstances, such failure may be condoned, subject to the requirements of the Credit Framework and provided that the student has achieved the programme learning outcomes

The academic year is 32 weeks and delivery is planned over 2 semesters of 16 weeks

Full time delivery option

Unit Nº	Unit Title	Level	Credit Value	Year 1 S1	Year 1 S2
	Core Units				
1.	Business and the Business Environment	4	15	X	
2.	Marketing Essentials	4	15	X	
3.	Human Resource and Management	4	15	X	
4.	Management and Operations	4	15		X

5.	Management Accounting	4	15		X
6	Managing a successful Business project	4	15		X
	Specialist Units				
7	Business law	4	15		X
9	Entrepreneurship and Small Business management	4	15	X	

Part Time delivery option

Unit N°	Unit Title			Y1 S1	Y1 S2	Y2 S1	Y2 S2
	Core Units						
1.	Business and the Business Environment	4	15	X			
2.	Marketing Essentials	4	15	X			
3.	Human Resource and Management	4	15			X	
4.	Management and Operations	4	15		X		
5.	Management Accounting	4	15		X		
6.	Managing a successful Business project	4	15				X
	Specialist Units						
7.	Business law	4	15				X
9.	Entrepreneurship and Small Business management	4	15			X	

16. Support for Students and their learning

Academic and pastoral support:
- At programme commencement, students will be allocated a personal tutor, who will effectively act as their academic mentor.
- Personal Tutors will provide ongoing advice on academic and pastoral matters (in partnership with academic tutors in other modules). They will act as students' first port of call for support during their studies.
- Students will have an initial one-to-one meeting with their Personal Tutor in the first few weeks of their studies as part of a settling in process, in which any early issues of an academic or pastoral nature may be addressed.
- Students' academic progress will be formally reviewed at least twice per academic year by their Personal Tutor.
- If a student experiences issues or problems which their Personal Tutor the student may contact the Programme Coordinator.

Learning support:
   Students with specific learning support needs will be directed to our team of HE Study Support tutors to obtain support, advice and guidance on how to progress through their studies. This includes addressing any special needs requirements. Further information is available in the Student Handbook.

17. Admissions Criteria

Applicants for the HNC in Business would normally be expected to possess the following:

A minimum of 64 UCAS points
or
a Level 3 qualification in any Business-related topic
or
Access to Higher Education Diploma

GCSE grade 4 or above in Maths and English is required. other L2 qualifications in English and Maths will be accepted

Applications from students returning to education who do not possess the formal entry qualifications, but can demonstrate relevant industry experience, will be considered on merit but would normally be expected to have achieved a Level 2 Maths and English qualification.

Personal Profile
A typical applicant might be expected to demonstrate at the commencement of his/her studies the following:
● a general interest in business related topic
● a strong interest in developing a business career
● a willingness to work collaboratively with others
● good oral and written communication skills
● a willingness to build knowledge across all aspects of business
● appropriate levels of numeracy and literacy

18. Methods for Evaluating and Enhancing the Quality and Standards of Teaching and Learning

- Student module evaluations
- Annual programme and module monitoring reports
- External Examiners review
- Periodic programme review
- Annual staff appraisals
- Peer observations
- Quality Assurance Framework
- Office for Students

Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating quality and standards

HE Committees/Boards at Activate Learning:
● Programme Committee
● Faculty Improvement Boards
● Higher Education Academic Board
● Higher National Assessment Board

Mechanisms for gaining student feedback on the quality of teaching and their learning experience

● NSS survey
● Internal student satisfaction surveys
● Student complaints procedure
● Academic appeals procedure
● Programme Committees
● Student module evaluations
● Student representation system

Indicators of Quality and Standards

- Annual External Examiner reports
- Annual programme monitoring reports

Study Costs:

You will need access to a laptop or desktop computer as this programme is delivered in line. It should have a camera and mic.

Students looking to purchase hardware should consider that it should be suitable for regular business use   Most mid to high range desktops / laptops are in the region of £400 - £1,000. However, it pays to shop around and speaking to some of our staff could help you to get the best value. Office 365 software is available to students from the College.

Textbooks are available online but you may choose to purchase personal copies

Reference points used in creating this specification

- QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals Centre Guide to Quality Assurance and Assessment L4-7