

SECTION 2: PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

The Programme Specification is a concise description of the learning opportunities provided by the course and an outline of the ways in which these opportunities can be achieved and demonstrated.

FD Business (and associated pathways) (FDBU): Programme Specification

1. Awarding Institution/Body	University of Worcester
2. Teaching Institution	Worcester College of Technology
3. Programme Accredited By	Not Applicable
4. Final Award	FdA
5. Programme Title	FdA Business (and associated pathways)
6. Pathways Available	Business /Accounting/ Human Resources/ Marketing
7. Mode and/or site of delivery	Worcester College of Technology
8. Mode of Attendance	Full-time; part-time
9. UCAS Codes	N100, N1N4, N1N5, N1N6
10. Subject Benchmark Statement	Business and Management
11. Date of Programme Specification Preparation/ Revision	January 2008 Revised September 2010

12. Educational Aims of the Programme

The FD Business (and associated pathways) is a programme designed around the needs of individuals working in one of the four sectors – Business, Accounting, Marketing and Human Resources.

The programme is designed for all people working in the above sectors, irrespective of functional background who:

1. Are normally currently employed in the business sector.
2. Wish to develop or consolidate their professional skills
3. Aspire to increase knowledge of change in the sector and so improve their career development prospects
4. Have, or aspire to have, some management responsibilities
5. Wish to complete a full University of Worcester undergraduate degree on completion of the FD

There are 2 general attendance modes available. Students can study full-time (two days per week); part-time (one day per week).

For full-time students the 16 modules that make up the Foundation Degree are completed within the standard university two-year calendar. Part-time students are generally expected to complete within 30 months and work to an extended academic year.

The programme focuses on applied learning, and so allows you to develop a wider understanding of how organisations function. In particular, the aims of the programme are to provide you with:

- The encouragement to relate new knowledge and skills to your own workplace;
- The knowledge, understanding and skills to become more effective in your professional roles in your chosen sector;

- The capacity to develop and apply general management skills in a service sector context;
- A critical understanding of and a proactive approach to the management of change in the service sector;
- The basis for further professional development, and encouragement to take responsibility for your own CPD and those for whom you are responsible;
- A framework to promote critical reflection and reflexive practice;
- Progression opportunities to other programmes such as the proposed University of Worcester, BA (Hons.) Leadership and Management programme, with which the FD Business (and associated pathways) has articulation.

13. Intended Learning Outcomes and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Methods

By the end of the course you will be able to apply understanding and skills in a vocational and academic context

Employment skills:

- put your acquired skills and knowledge to use in the real world and so be immediately employable
- deploy the necessary skills and knowledge to tackle problems confidently in a wide range of working environments
- be self-evaluate and reflective; act upon own strengths and weaknesses in this vocational context and develop a commitment to continuing learning

Academic learning / intellectual skills:

- demonstrate a critical awareness of theories, concepts, models and methodologies appropriate to the business sector
- identify and critically evaluate a range of issues / problems in the business sector
- develop the ability to critically interpret data and text
- develop an independent and interdependent approach to further learning

In detail:

Knowledge and understanding

Knowledge and understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The knowledge, skills and competencies (where appropriate) required by service sector managers• The application of critical thinking to successful management• The basis of operational decision making, and how the drivers of change can influence strategic management in organisations	Examples of teaching, learning and assessment methods used: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inter-active materials available on VLE (Moodle).• Flexible attendance patterns made up of lectures interactive workshops, comprising group work sessions and individual tutorials.• Action Learning Sets at WCT and in the workplace which are intended to develop critical thinking• The negotiation, researching and writing of work-based assignments and subsequent oral and written feedback• Assessment by a variety of means including reports, oral presentations, group activity, and research-driven tasks.
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Skills and other attributes

Intellectual/cognitive skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Critical appraisal applied to current areas of the curriculum, and to the context of their work.• The development and application of a range of management techniques and tools, appropriate to the service sector client group• Interpretation of a variety of work-related data.• Exercising judgement and understanding in relation to ethical issues.	Examples of teaching, learning and assessment methods used: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All modules require learners to engage in discussion of key issues and the application of key concepts to workplace issues• Case study analysis and group discussions in the context of Action Learning Sets, offer you the opportunity to engage in problem solving and complex issues (see FHEQ statements)• Modules requiring analytical skills to be applied to a variety of data (e.g. FSSM 1005; FSSM 2007/ 2008)• Modules in Human Resource Management and Operations Management raise issues in which judgement needs to be exercised and decisions made in complex and unpredictable areas (see FHEQ statements)• Intellectual and cognitive skills are assessed by means of a range of written (and other) assignments. Key skills are formally identified on each piece of assessment
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<p>Professional practical skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciate their own role within the organisation and be sensitive to the differing perspectives of others. • Identify their personal development needs and devise and then implement strategies for meeting these needs. • Develop the necessary skills to work effectively with and to lead others within their service sector organisation. • Plan, manage and make sound judgements in accordance with the core values of the organisation • Presentation skills. 	<p>Examples of teaching, learning and assessment methods used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module FSSM 1004 requires preparation of a personal development portfolio and action planning and forms part of course assessment. This module has been developed in the context of QAA guidance on frameworks for personal and professional development • Group and individual tasks involving library and internet-based information retrieval feature in various modules. • Discussion / forum facilities enabled through a VLE (Moodle) and Action Learning Sets • Project-based tasks involving group activities in the context of Action Learning Sets • Assessment of information dissemination skills through group oral presentations to peers in the context of Action Learning Sets • Written assignments used to assess analytical skills.
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<p>Transferable/key skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numeracy and quantitative skills • Two-way communication skills, e.g. negotiation and persuasion • Self management skills and personal effectiveness, e.g. time management • Professional development • Effective use of ICT. 	<p>Examples of teaching, learning and assessment methods used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative skills / ICT skills are acquired through the use of worked examples, (e.g. in Managing information FDBU2002; Managing Financial Resources FDBU1004) • Group exercises involving role-play are used to develop two-way communication skills. The Action Learning Set provides a forum for the development of communication skills. • Time management skills are conveyed as an integral element of successfully completing the double work-based project (FSSM 2007/ 2008) • Certain quantitative skills are assessed through appropriate formative and summative assignments.
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Key Skills: Key Skills are essential skills which learners need in order to function effectively as members of a flexible, adaptive and competitive workforce. There are 6 Key Skills regulated by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority that will be used as a framework for the FD Business (and associated pathways):

Communication	-	level 4
Application of Number	-	level 2
Information Technology	-	level 3
Working with Others	-	level 4
Improving Own Learning	-	level 4
Problem Solving	-	level 4

Key Skills are mapped into each piece of assessment and are claimed by the student.

The modules that comprise the FD Business (and associated pathways) contain a range of assessment methods appropriate to this work-focused programme. In developing the programme, consideration has been given to the following strategies: -

Action Learning Sets: These may take place on the premises of your own organisation, although usually meet in college. ALS's are run by the students themselves (with ongoing guidance from WCT facilitators), so giving you an opportunity to;

- discuss, question and reflect upon key issues
- apply the learning achieved to the work place
- learn from each other and provide mutual assistance
- use feedback from others to support own learning and development
- develop critical reflection skills

Designated personal / academic tutor: who guides completion of Personal Development Plan in conjunction with work carried out in FDBU 1006 'Personal Effectiveness and Professional Development and offers general support & guidance (to include differentiated IT support if necessary). (N.B. the above guidance and support is formally timetabled. Preparation of a Personal Development Plan is a feature in FSSM 1004 in Semester 1 and that the progress file generated in that module provides the framework for subsequent tutorial discussion and action. Throughout the programme the designated tutor will offer you individual and plenary sessions, covering both academic and pastoral areas. In this way the team seek to avoid a 'problem-driven' approach to personal tutorship in which support is triggered only by a student identifying and communicating a 'problem' to the tutor. The team therefore recognise that the nature of this FD requires close, personalised and continuous monitoring and exchange.

Remote web-based tutorial support will be a key element for all students across all attendance modes. The main vehicle for this support will be the Mahara 'e-portfolio' which you will create as part of FSSM 1004 'Personal Effectiveness and Professional Effectiveness' module. This portfolio will receive data from your research and will form the basis for your critical reflection on your development on the programme. The designated member of staff for this module will monitor, comment and guide your progress on the module. This portfolio will also be used in the timetabled tutorial sessions as a basis for discussion.

Work-based Support:

Because the content of the course is firmly centred in the workplace, it is expected that you subsequently draw upon and share your practical experience in the classroom and the ALS. Successful completion of the assessment pieces will require research and activity to take place in the workplace and the co-operation of the employer, or another appropriate individual at work will also be required. The course team recognise that the student/employer relationship is not as would exist for placement students but is ideally that of a sponsoring employer who has selected staff members for further development. The team are also aware that in many cases reality falls short of this ideal and support from the employer may be more passive. In this case students are required to discuss this with the course manager so that they may equably achieve the learning outcomes. A 'Guide to Employers' document, will be circulated to employers in which their suggested responsibilities are clearly set out.

Successful completion will therefore rely upon the co-operation of the student, the employer and the Course Leader. To this end there will be meetings of the three parties where progress to date and future assessment activity will be discussed.

As such the support offered meets precepts B3 – B6 of the QAA Code of Practice on Collaborative Provision.

(QAA (2004) Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education Section 2: Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning), (P27 – 29)

Teaching and Learning Strategies:

The learning is based on the principles of Action Learning/Action Research. The model encourages you to become both independent and interdependent learners and anchors the student's learning in current industry practice. The application of the model allows for highly differentiated learning. The learner is encouraged to seek out a live, authentic issue in his/her organisation and, through the Action Research process, offer recommendations to the organisation on how best to proceed. The process is therefore a three-way exchange between student employer and project supervisor. In this way you integrate academic and work-based learning through collaboration between employers and academic staff.

Lectures and seminars are supplemented by Action Learning Sets, Visiting Lecturers and structured visits. Given the nature of this module visits and VLS will form an important part of your learning.

Part-time students follow a similar pattern but have a greater emphasis on web-based and work-based learning. The module leader performs a range of functions from delivering traditional inputs and guiding student research to facilitating student learning and managing the introduction of other specialists on the module. The module leader both ensures academic rigour and develops vocational competencies by maintaining a focus on work-based learning via the 3-way 'Learning Exchange' model.

14. Assessment strategy

The assessment strategies are designed to enable you to demonstrate your achievement of the course aims, outcomes and Key Skills development. As such they are intended to develop and assess the knowledge and skills relevant to practising managers in the Business Sector.

80% of assessments on the programme are therefore work-based or work-related. Work-based learning is therefore a continuous thread throughout the programme and is integrated with the assessment strategy where possible. The remaining assessment activities, by their nature, cannot be undertaken by candidates in the work place. In these circumstances a case study/simulation/challenge test approach is used.

Therefore, as with the Learning and Teaching strategy, outlined above, the assessment strategy has been designed to provide you with a variety of challenges appropriate for undergraduate level work and appropriate to the business sector context of the qualification. Assessment is constructed in such a way that a student's knowledge and understanding of each module studied during the course is assessed. Note: To achieve a pass grade in each module all Learning Outcomes must be achieved. In practice, you must therefore achieve at least a grade of 'D-' in every assessment item in order to pass each module. There is no compensation between modules.

You are required to complete much assessed work on an individual basis. However, at this level, you are also actively encouraged to discuss your understanding of models, concepts and theories, and more importantly your application to a given scenario, with other members

of your Action Learning Set. This allows you to share ideas and experiences, test your understanding, and more critically, evaluate the models under discussion. In this way you learn from each other, develop relationships from the workplace that will help you through the rest of your studies and engage in the 'lived experience' of managing peers.

Assessment items are scheduled so that they can be completed on an ongoing basis throughout the year. Detailed assessment briefs are given to you at the start of a module and are published to the VLE (Moodle). You are encouraged to access all assessments electronically. Where a module comprises two assessments, the first is normally submitted half way through the module, enabling a student to receive detailed feedback, before submission of the second piece of assessment. The second piece of assessment is normally submitted towards the end of the module. Both may be submitted electronically where appropriate.

Full attendance will normally be expected. It is the nature of the programme however that work commitments may over-ride attendance on occasions. If you cannot attend a class for unavoidable reasons, they should inform the module leader and the members of your ALS of their non-attendance in advance so that alternative arrangements for the delivery of material, or additional support tutorials can be organised. In every circumstance you are expected to meet submission deadlines and will be expected to make full use of the VLE to assure timely submission of work. In cases of non / late submission UW procedures will apply.

In marking assessed work, Internal Verification and Moderation form part of the quality assurance procedure. Assessed work will be subject to University of Worcester Business School procedures. The University of Worcester designated Link Tutor (contact details in Course Handbook, Section 1) is also given full access to these materials and asked to comment formally through UW channels and also informally on an ongoing basis. Where there is some doubt as to the authorship of an assessment, the programme will follow the University of Worcester published policy for investigating plagiarism.

In testing student understanding, great use is made of relevant and up-to-date case studies that encourage you to synthesise, distil and apply theories, models and concepts and apply them initially to your own organisation. Assessment is linked to the student's own workplace and in each module, you are asked to relate your learning to your organisation or to a lesser extent, the sector as a whole. In this way you are encouraged to 'contextualise' your learning by critically evaluating, and reflecting upon your own organisations. As noted above, this process is the beginning of continuing personal and professional development and is linked to developing individual students' experiences as participants on the programme. For this reason formative assessment is an important feature of the programme. In this, the team are guided by the rationale and approaches offered in the QAA Code of Practice; Section 6: Assessment of Students. September 2006 (P35)

'Formative Assessment has a developmental purpose and is designed to help learners learn more effectively by giving them feedback on their performance and how it can be improved and / or maintained. Reflective practice by students contributes to formative assessment.'

Formative assessment on the programme works in three ways. Firstly because undertaking any assessment is in itself a learning experience, feedback on any item of assessment is therefore diagnostic, positive and formative for future work and is intended to guide and motivate the student towards higher levels of achievement. Assessment has therefore been devised to ensure that feedback on performance is given at a time and in a way that is useful to the student as he/she prepares for the next assessment. Individual feedback is supplemented by group debriefings. Exemplar materials are also provided on the VLE and you are encouraged to evaluate these materials (These processes are supported by Module

FSSM 1004 whose outcomes are concerned with self-diagnosis, self-assessment and critical self-reflection). Secondly, learning outcomes are achieved through assessments that recognise the benefits to the student of formative assessment – you submit draft work for consideration; receive feedback on presentation rehearsals; do mock challenge tests, undertake reflective accounts of your learning on 'Mahara'. Thirdly the teaching and learning strategy recognises the need to develop transferable skills. In-class case studies are used to develop skills in analysis and synthesis by transferring learning from one context and applying it to another.

The overall purpose of this assessment is to enable you to:

- Demonstrate that you have the intellectual rigour commensurate with a course of this nature and have developed the analytical skills expected of study at this level.
- Demonstrate the ability to synthesise appropriate theories, models and concepts from a range of modules studied on the course and apply them so as to critically evaluate your own service sector organisation
- Gain experience in working individually and as part of a team
- Maximise the opportunity to utilise and share your own experience(s) and studies to produce concise documents of the kind used in the service sector organisation
- Receive continuous, regular and appropriate feedback throughout the course
- Develop the intellectual and practical abilities required of managers in the sector
- Work towards critical reflection and self development

The range of assessments specified in the module outlines have been developed in order to support the pedagogical approaches employed and which are appropriate for the nature of the specific workplace context. It has also been the course team's intention to set assignments that are relevant to your own service sector organisation and role. The assessment styles include individual and group-based work in preparation for final summative assessment and a range of methods suitable for the business sector context. As noted above where work-based assessment is not possible other assessment methods are employed – case studies, simulations and challenge tests. (A challenge test is a time constrained open book exercise in which you are required to transfer your learning into a specified context).

To assist you, assessment criteria and grade descriptors are provided for each assessment item. This means that you can match your developing work on each assignment with the grade at each level. You are encouraged to use these grade descriptors as part of your discussions with module tutors during timetabled sessions and again when you complete the 'Student Assessment' sections of the 'Grading Report Form' prior to final submission.

In line with the University of Worcester Assessment Policy (Academic Regulations and Procedures: Section V) assessments for the individual modules have been designed to enable you to demonstrate that they have successfully met the learning outcomes. Each module outline thus specifies an assessment strategy outlining the nature of the summative assessment exercises it employs and the respective weighting of each assessment item in its overall assessment loading. If you fail to achieve a learning outcome University of Worcester procedures as to resits apply. The course complies with the University's anonymous marking requirements as articulated in the UW Assessment Policy.

15. Programme structures and requirements

Code	Title	I-Level Credit Value	Pre requisites	Modules Mandatory or Operation
Level 4 / Semester 1				
FDBU 1001	The Business Environment	15		Mandatory
FDBU 1002	Marketing 1 (Fundamentals in Marketing)	15		Mandatory
FDBU 1003	Organisations and Behaviour	15		Mandatory
FDBU 1004	Managing Financial Resources	15		Mandatory
Level 4 / Semester 2				
<i>FDBU 1005</i>	<i>Operations Management</i>	15		<i>Optional</i>
FSSM 1004	Personal Effectiveness & Professional Development	15		Mandatory
FSSM 1005	Investigative Techniques	15		Mandatory
FDBU 1008	Business Law	15		Mandatory
<i>FDBU 1009</i>	<i>Financial Accounting and Business Mathematics</i>	15		<i>Optional</i>
<i>FDBU 1010</i>	<i>Marketing Customer Communications</i>	15		<i>Optional</i>
<i>FDBU 1011</i>	<i>Employee Resourcing</i>	15		<i>Optional</i>
Level 5 / Semester 1				
FDBU 2001	Employment Law	15		Mandatory
FDBU 2002	Managing Information	15		Mandatory
FDBU 2003	Managing People	15		Mandatory
<i>FDBU 2004</i>	<i>Marketing 2</i>	15	<i>FDBU 1002</i>	<i>Optional</i>
<i>FDBU 2005</i>	<i>Management Accounting and Business Economics</i>	15	<i>FDBU 1009</i>	<i>Optional</i>
<i>FDBU 2006</i>	<i>The Marketing Environment</i>	15	<i>FDBU 1010</i>	<i>Optional</i>
<i>FDBU 2007</i>	<i>The HR Function</i>	15	<i>FDBU 1011</i>	<i>Optional</i>
Level 5 / Semester 2				
FDBU 2008	Leadership, Direction and Change	15		Mandatory
<i>FDBU 2009</i>	<i>Small Business Enterprise</i>	15		<i>Optional</i>
<i>FDBU 2010</i>	<i>Ethics, Corporate Governance and Law</i>	15	<i>FDBU 1009, 2005</i>	<i>Optional</i>
<i>FDBU 2011</i>	<i>Marketing in Practice</i>	15	<i>FDBU 1010, 2006</i>	<i>Optional</i>
<i>FDBU 2012</i>	<i>Training and Development</i>	15	<i>FDBU 1011, 2007</i>	<i>Optional</i>
FSSM 2007/2008 (Double module)	Work-based Project	30		Mandatory

Modules FDBU 1005, 1009 – 1011, FDBU 2004 - 2007 and modules FDBU 2009 – 2012 are sector-specific modules. You are required to choose one sector. All other modules are mandatory.

- Students who complete all modules (and thus accumulate 240 points) are eligible for the award of FD Business (and associated pathways) (FdA). Students may progress

to the final year of the proposed University of Worcester, BA (Hons.) Leadership and Management programme, with which there is articulation.

- Full-time students attend 2 days per week; part-time students 1 day per week. Full-time students' attendance follows the standard University of Worcester calendar. Part-time students work to an extended academic year and complete the academic year each year in July. Full-time students can expect to complete the qualification in 2 years; part-time students in 2½ years

16. QAA Academic Infrastructure

The Benchmark statements used for this programme are those of general business and management. The rationale for this choice is set out above in the Contextual Statement. QAA benchmarking of undergraduate programmes in business & management within the UK, recognises that there is a wide diversity of courses available and that these different orientations need to be explicitly addressed when designing the Learning, Teaching and Assessment requirements, as well as the specific Knowledge, Understanding and Skills that underpin each course.

The QAA subject benchmarks specify key areas of knowledge and understanding, and these have been used to inform the assessment strategy for this undergraduate programme.

The programme has also been designed to meet QAA Guidelines on HE progress files. Module FSSM 1004 has been devised to meet the criteria for good practice set out in QAA 'Guidelines for HE Progress Files'. The learning model is based on principles of Action Learning which encourage the student to critically reflect and question. This model complements the QAA aim as it will:

'improve the capacity of individuals to understand what and how they are learning and to review, plan, and take responsibility for their own learning, (...) QAA 'Guidelines for HE Progress Files', (P2)

The Action Learning approach is confirmed as good practice in the QAA 'Learning from reviews of Foundation Degrees in England, carried out in 2004-05:

'Teaching and learning Strategies that are particularly effective in FDs include:

- The imaginative use of action-learning sets'

QAA (2005) 'Learning from reviews of Foundation Degrees in England, carried out in 2004-05' Sharing good practice, P28)

17. Support for students

The following support services are in place at WCT to provide support for students on the programme:

- Induction programme including inputs from WCT Student Services as well as course staff
- Course handbook and module outlines
- Support from WCT Study Centre staff during induction and subsequently at St Wulstan's Study Centre Study
- Representation on Programme Committee to address course-wide issues and offer feedback (from students on all modes)
- Personal tutor to provide academic and pastoral support
- Work-place manager / 'Client' to provide work-based framework for research

- Moodle (WCT VLE)
- Email (via student email address)
- Range of support services through Student Services at WCT and UW
- Equal opportunities unit implements codes of practice in relation to disability, racial and other forms of discrimination
- Course Handbook Section1 (above)

18. Admissions policy, criteria and procedures

The Foundation Degree Business (and associated pathways) course seeks to be inclusive as far as possible and recruit people who wish to begin or develop their career in each of the designated pathways (Business; Accounting; Human Resources; Marketing)

Entry to the Programme requires all applicants (whether full-time or part-time) to complete a WCT application form which gives a variety of information about current work experience, qualifications and motivation. (Full-time students may alternatively apply via UCAS) These will be checked by the Programme Manager who must be satisfied that the applicants are at the appropriate stage in their development to benefit from the Programme, and capable of undertaking a programme of academic work and also offer evidence of academic ability and motivation. All students are invited for interview with the Programme Manager

The university's standard entry requirements apply: 4 GCSEs at Grade C or above plus a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 3½. A levels or equivalent Level 3 qualifications. Details of acceptable level 3 qualifications can be found in the prospectus or on the University webpages. The current UCAS tariff requirements for entry to the course are published in the prospectus.

The policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can also be found in the prospectus or on the University webpages

Additionally applicants should be working in an organisation which can provide an effective focus for work-based learning. It is further expected that students will have a working knowledge of standard Information Technology software (i.e. Microsoft Office or equivalent) and its applications, so that they can benefit fully from the programme. Applicants' needs for any additional IT support will be explored at interview and offered subsequently. The University of Worcester admissions procedures, which obtain here, provide opportunities of study to as many students as possible, provided that

- they have evidence that they have the ability to benefit from study in HE (for example through references from employers)
- there is a reasonable expectation of achieving an award (evidence of equivalence to study at level 3 is normally required – see above).

Accreditation of Prior Learning / Prior Experiential learning:

In many cases it is possible to gain credit from learning from previous study or experience.

1. Credit is given for learning, and not for experience alone, and where the level, standard and content are relevant to the particular course. The award of credit is a matter of consistent application of academic judgement, and must result from a transparent and demonstrably rigorous and fair decision making process.
2. Credit will not normally be given for learning that has taken place more than six years previously, and will be allocated according to Table 1 below. Credit can only be given for

whole modules and no more than one third of credit awarded should be experiential. Credit may not be counted twice for the same award level.

3.

Award	Credit required for award	Maximum credit allowed	NQF Level
Foundation Degree	240	120	4/5

4. APL that has been accredited by the University will be clearly identified on students' transcripts.
5. All credit awarded will be relevant to identified modules or awards. Accreditation for non-specific 'free' modules is allowed, where equitable. Detailed assessment of credit whether based on certificated or experiential learning, can only be made by subject specialists since the assessment can only be made in the light of detailed subject knowledge. These specialists should ensure that the experience represents the achievement of learning outcomes comparable to those which would have been achieved had the course of study against which credit is claimed been taken. This may be assessed by any method appropriate to what is being assessed, and should be verified by another specialist.

It is the responsibility of the student to prepare an application and submit adequate documentation. Applicants should identify in advance whether they wish to apply for admission to a course or credit. Guidance and counselling may be sought from the University, where appropriate.

19. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

University of Worcester policies on the evaluation and improvement of teaching and learning apply to this qualification. Mechanisms for review and evaluation of teaching, learning, assessment, the curriculum and outcome standards, include:

- Module feedback – mid module and end of module
- Annual Course Monitoring Report completed by course manager
- QAA Reviews
- Quinquennial course review including external scrutiny
- Peer teaching observation (WCT model)
- External examiners' reports
- Academic staff annual appraisal (based on peer teaching observation)
- Feedback from workplace managers
- Link tutor reports
- Questionnaires to employers

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

- Module feedback questionnaires mid module and end of module
- Programme committee 'students' issues' item
- Meetings with personal tutor
- Meetings with managers/ training managers (at sponsoring authorities)
- On-line tutorial support systems

WCT provides a range of staff development activities designed to improve teaching & learning

WCT staff attend similar University of Worcester-sponsored events and acknowledge the role of the HEI in cascading good practice and research to the college.

20. Regulation of Assessment

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Some modules have attendance requirements. Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who fail to submit an item of assessment lose their right to reassessment in that module, and will be required to retake the module.

- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations see URF.

Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance or non-submission.
- Reassessment items that are passed are graded at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module).

Requirements for Progression

- Students at Level 4 may be permitted to progress to Level 5 when they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 4.
- Students at Level 5 may be permitted to progress to Level 6 when they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 5.
- A student who fails 90 credits or more due to non-submission will be required to withdraw from the University.
- Students who pass less than 90 credits but have submitted all items of assessment will be required to retake modules.

The following award will be available to students who meet the following requirements:

<i>Award</i>	<i>Requirement</i>
Cert HE	120 credits at level 4 or higher
Foundation Degree in Business (and associated pathways) (FdA)	240 credits (120 credits at level 4; 120 credits at level 5)

Institute-level Assessment Boards review and confirm results for modules, and the Board of Examiners considers students' mark profiles to make decisions about progression, awards and degree classifications as appropriate.

21. Indicators of Quality

- All Annual External Examiners reports for the current FD programme as well as Link Tutor reports have been extremely supportive and complimentary of the team's approach
- Formal feedback from students (mid and end of module evaluations) has been extremely positive
- Worcester College of Technology holds the 'Investors in People' Kitemark and 'Matrix' accreditation.

In November 2005, the University was audited by the Quality Assurance Agency. The audit confirmed confidence in the University's management of the quality of its academic programmes and the standards of its awards. The QAA particularly commended the University's supportive ethos and range of departmental and central services provided to students and staff in support of its mission to deliver an excellent inclusive higher education. The University will be audited next in 2011.

22. Career opportunities and links with employers

- Students engage in career planning as part of the assessment for the programme. FSSM 1004 'Personal & Professional Development' has been developed in the context of QAA guidelines on HE progress files. As such it allows students to 'reflect upon their own learning, performance and / or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development' (Guidelines for HE Progress Files, P2).
- The programme aims both to make holders of the FDBU award more effective in their workplace in the business sector and alert them to other career development possibilities.
- To ensure consistency and a shared student experience, the model is one of individual, 'student-negotiated contracts' with each employer. It is the course manager's responsibility to moderate those contracts to ensure consistency, and to communicate to all partners the need for consistency in student experience. The responsibility of the employer is to fulfil the contract once agreed.
- As noted above at Para. 20, you must achieve at least a 'D-' grade in each assessment, with no compensation between assessment items possible. This provides employers with the re-assurance that all (work-based) outcomes are successfully completed by their employee.

The FDBU course allows immediate progression to the final year of the University of Worcester BA (Hons.) degree in Business Management. Typically 90% of FDBU graduates will proceed to a level 6 qualification, usually while continuing to work with their current employer. Alternatively students will use the work-based features of the degree and the collaboration with their employer in the service of the qualification to progress their management careers with their current employer without academic progression. Since 'employability' is a key feature of the course some students may progress their career by seeking new and better employment as managers in the business sector.

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 s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module outlines and Section 3 of the course handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

