



Skills &
Education
Group Access

Access to HE (Business)

Diploma Guide



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Diploma Background and Aims

Business has been a core and stable curriculum area for Skills and Education Group. The existing Access to HE Diploma (Business) has historically been delivered by one provider with other providers adopting similar Diplomas, or offering Business related units within their 'Combined' or Humanities and Social Sciences provision. Providers and Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) evaluated the existing Diploma content with the Access to HE Diploma Specification in mind and the AVA presents this Learning Programme Plan (LPP) to reflect the wishes of providers.

This Diploma was prepared for validation, following a review of the existing Access to Higher Education Diploma (Business), which was first validated in May 2014.

The aims of the Access to HE Diploma (Business) are to:

- prepare students who are returning to education for progression to Higher Education, further training in a related vocational or occupational area
- help students develop the skills and knowledge they need to achieve on their chosen HE course or career pathway
- help students to gain confidence in their abilities, to review and monitor their own progress and to become independent students
- develop students' research, planning, analytical and evaluation skills
- enable students to make informed choices about their future progression
- develop specific business skills and knowledge to enhance employment prospects
- help students to understand the role of business in the world at large
- support students to develop business skills, expertise and knowledge
- support students in their understanding of the ethical, moral and legal obligations of business organisations.

Course Recognition

The Access to HE Diploma (Business) meets the AVA's policies and priorities for new provision. Skills and Education Group's approach to developing the new Access to HE Diploma (Business) is transparent, systematic and as consistently applied as to all other named Access to HE Diplomas. Skills and Education Group ensures that all Access to HE Diplomas are fit for purpose in providing an appropriate preparation for study in higher education for adults from defined target groups.

Skills and Education Group has worked with curriculum specialists and business development managers to co-ordinate and oversee the development of the Access to HE Diploma (Business). This has involved meetings to agree curriculum content, level, grading descriptors and general rules of combination. A pre-determined timetable of events was drawn up where providers were invited to meetings, or to contribute electronically if unable to attend these events, in order to meet the agreed deadlines.

Diploma and Credit Specification

The QAA Diploma and Credit Specification states that the Access to HE Diploma is a:

- unitised qualification, based on units of assessment which are structured in accordance with the Access to HE unit specification
- credit-based qualification, operated in accordance with the terms of the Access to HE credit specification
- graded qualification, as determined by the Access to HE Grading Scheme.

www.accesstohe.ac.uk/AboutUs/Publications/Pages/Default.aspx

Skills and Education Group has ensured that the proposals within this document meet the requirements of The Access to Higher Education Diploma and Credit Specification and any other regulatory information about the Access to HE Diploma, and that students who are awarded the Access to HE Diploma (Business) will have completed a planned, balanced and coherent programme of study, through which they have been able to acquire a subject knowledge and develop academic skills which are relevant to the intended progression route(s).

Target Groups

Skills and Education Group has developed the Access to HE Diploma (Business) specifically for students who wish to develop their academic study and vocationally related skills and aptitudes to prepare for the application and progression into HE programmes related to Business. This Diploma is aimed at a range of target groups, including people who are returning to education after being employed in similar sectors; people seeking qualifications to enable them to change their career path and students seeking a foundation in a number of subjects related to Business before moving on to higher level study in the UK.

Intended Progression Routes

Skills and Education Group has worked with FE and HE experts, employers and specialised recruitment agencies during the development process to agree the units and any Rules of Combination (RoC) so that the Access to HE Diploma (Business) provides a suitable preparation for higher education and future employment. Providers and others wishing to adopt or utilise the Access to HE Diploma (Business) have suggested the following possible progression routes for students:

- Business Management
- International Business Studies
- Business Studies
- Marketing
- Business
- Events Management
- Accounting and Finance.

Entry Requirements

There are no formal entry requirements for this diploma, however based on the level of study it is suggested that students have the following qualifications upon entry:

English – Level 2 Functional Skills, Grade C/4 GCSE

Mathematics – Level 2 Functional Skills, Grade C/4 GCSE

Many HEI's have the above Level 2 requirements in addition to Level 3 qualification requirements.

Rules of Combination

Required achievements for the Access to HE Diploma

Where options are available within a single set of rules of combination, which allow alternative requirements for the achievement of a named Diploma, the alternatives permitted by the options are consistent, in terms of academic challenge and demand, and will require equivalent standards for achievement, whenever and wherever it is delivered.

Access to HE Diploma (Business)	
Credit Value of the Diploma:	60
Students must achieve all the units within the Diploma.	
<p>All Diplomas are 60 credits, irrespective of the place, subject or mode of study.</p> <p>Of the 60 credits 45 must be from graded units concerned with academic subject content, with the remaining 15 credits to be achieved from ungraded units.</p>	
Students can achieve up to a maximum of 9 credits at Level 2 and 21 from Level 3 through credit transfer and the award of credit through the recognition of prior learning.	
<p>Students undertaking any Access to HE Diploma, whatever their mode of study, must be:</p> <p>a) registered and certificated for units to a maximum value of 60 credits</p> <p>b) registered for units to the value of 60 credits no later than 84 days from the start date of their Access to HE course, or before the student makes a formal application to a higher education course through UCAS or any other application process, whichever date occurs first.</p>	

Differentiated Performance

Consideration has been given to the allocation of Grading Descriptors 'to ensure that they provide opportunities for differentiation of performance consistent with the requirements of the grade descriptors'.

Curriculum, Delivery and Assessment

It is expected that 'information provided about unit content, delivery and assessment methods is sufficient to ensure consistency in the required standards of achievement, whenever and wherever the Diploma is delivered'.

Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning

Credit Transfer provides a means by which students who have already achieved units of an Access to HE Diploma, either with the same centre/AVA or another, can transfer their credits and grades, if applicable, to a new diploma registration.

The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) provides a means by which students who have already achieved some of the requirements for the award of the Access to HE Diploma, through some means other than study on an Access to HE course, can be awarded the Access to HE Diploma without necessarily being required to undertake units for which equivalent achievement has already been demonstrated.

No more than 30 credits required for the award of the Access to HE Diploma may be awarded through Credit Transfer or RPL.

Students registering onto the Access to HE Diploma (Business) may have undertaken a Level Two 'pre-Access' course. It is expected that providers will have offered students written guidance on Skills and Education Group's application process for RPL of these credits or other credit or work achievement that may allow exemption from some units within the Access to HE Diploma. Students must be advised that RPL cannot be graded.

Successful Completion Criteria

Skills and Education Group expects that any successful completion criteria that is in addition to the Diploma's rules of combination do not make demands which impacts on achievement.

Special Requirements

There are no special requirements needed for this Diploma although appropriate resources should be made available.

Supporting Students

Skills and Education Group expects all students will be offered appropriate support during their course of study until they have completed the diploma. Students will be encouraged to use a range of resources to support their progress and to engage with appropriate staff in their organisation for further information and advice. The assessment methodology must be appropriate and rigorous for an individual or groups of students.

For students with particular requirements, Providers should refer to the Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedure which can be found in the Provider Handbook.

The Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedure section in the Skills and Education Group handbook gives clear guidance on the Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration arrangements that can be made to take account of particular needs or learning difficulty, without compromising the achievement of the assessment criteria.

Credit Accumulation and Recognition of Student Achievement

Students accumulate credit towards the award of the Diploma. In general they do this by achieving units of a particular credit value (3, 6 or 9 credits) through the process of assessment on the Access to HE Diploma (Business), but may also do this through the processes of credit transfer and through the recognition of prior learning.

Student achievement is recognised both through the award of level, credit and grades (as identified on an achievement transcript) and the award of the Diploma (as identified on a certificate), subsequent to the student having satisfied the requirements of the rules of combination of the Access to HE Diploma (Business). The award of the Diploma will, therefore, indicate that a student has successfully met the generic requirements for achievement of an Access to HE Diploma, as well as the particular requirements of the Access to HE Diploma (Business).

Skills and Education Group expects that where the Access to HE Diploma (Business) is intended to lead to further study for a professional qualification, students must be made aware of any additional entry requirements that are needed to study at a Higher Education Institution.

Quality Assurance

Skills and Education Group operates robust quality assurance arrangements for the proposed Diploma and maintains the quality and standards of this recognised Access to HE Diploma. Skills and Education Group makes Access to HE awards to students who have met the specified requirements for achievement and performance. Please visit the Skills and Education Group website for the Access to HE Provider Handbook.

Operation of moderation processes

Skills and Education Group maintains a system of regular external moderation, conducted by external moderators appointed. External moderator training is scheduled during the year in preparation for their visits to allow Skills and Education Group to update external moderators. Where a provider is new to Access to HE, or is running a new Diploma for the first time, or has transferred from another AVA, a 'support visit' is also scheduled.

Skills and Education Group may arrange for support or supplementary visits in the following situations:

Support Visits

- The first run of a new Diploma as a support to the provider. A member of Skills and Education Group Access to HE team may also accompany the external moderator.

- When a provider has transferred from another AVA.

Supplementary Visits

- When a Diploma has undergone substantial quality assurance or curriculum development or is in fragile circumstances. This additional visit usually incurs a chargeable Quality Intervention fee.

Where a provider offers various start points, an external moderator will arrange a first visit and the final moderation and Awards Board at the most appropriate time within the academic year.

Review of moderation guidance to ensure continued currency

Skills and Education Group routinely reviews and updates its guidance to ensure its continuing currency. Moderation guidance updates are generated from external moderator visits and final moderation reports, external moderator mandatory training events and Skills and Education Group Access standardisation events. The requirements of the Access to HE Diploma Specification have been incorporated within moderation guidance.

Moderation Reports

External moderators report regularly to Skills and Education Group on all aspects of course organisation, including registration, content, assessment design and practice (including internal moderation, assessment and grading decisions) - for which they are responsible.

Skills and Education Group operates standard procedures for responding to external moderators' reports, including receiving and responding promptly to individual external moderation reports, providing copies of external moderators' reports to appropriate provider/centre staff, and ensuring that matters raised in reports that require specific action by providers are brought to providers' attention, a clear timescale for action is given, and implementation of actions is confirmed.

Skills and Education Group uses a risk rating approach; the outcomes of external moderator visits contribute to risk ratings for individual Diplomas. Higher level risk rates are likely to instigate sanctions and provider quality assurance teams are required to address all resulting conditions with some urgency.

Skills and Education Group will introduce a Centre Moderation Report that summarises the findings and outcomes for all Diplomas delivered by a Centre.

Course Monitoring and Review

Skills and Education Group monitors and reviews Access to HE Diplomas delivered by providers on a regular (normally annual) basis. Two visit reports with associated risk rates and supplementary visit reports as appropriate are used to review provision. Skills and Education Group collects and analyses statistical data about Access to HE Diplomas, students and their individual achievement.

Standardisation

Skills and Education Group takes steps to ensure that equivalent standards and requirements for achievement apply on different Access to HE Diplomas, within Skills and Education Group and across different student cohorts, with reference to QAA's Access to HE Diploma qualification and credit specifications and grading requirements.

Skills and Education Group holds annual standardisation events that are mandatory for all Access to HE providers. Fines are incurred where an Access to HE Diploma has not been represented at an appropriate event. The agenda for each event is based on recommendations from the Lead Moderator Standardisation Report of the previous year. Study Skills is always a focus, with an emphasis on a different element each year. Grading is also a key feature of all events.

Skills and Education Group also expects that providers hold internal standardisation events. The external moderator is tasked to discuss this activity and outcomes during visits.

Award of the Access to HE Diploma

Skills and Education Group operates standard specified procedures for the award of Access to HE Diplomas to students that are consistent with the Access to HE Diploma and credit specifications, grading requirements and assessment regulations. The external moderation process ensures that all external moderator decisions to recommend the award of the Access to HE Diploma are made with confidence that all regulations and specification requirements have been met. The formal Awards Board is made up of appropriate personnel in line with Skills and Education Group guidelines and formal decisions to award credit and the Access to HE Diploma are agreed before the Recommendation for the Award of Credit (RAC) is signed by the tutor, the internal moderator and the external moderator for each Diploma. Award Board minutes and copies of the signed RACs are received by Skills and Education Group Access within one working day of the Awards Board.

The AVA takes immediate action to record and remedy any errors relating to the award or certification of the Access to HE Diploma. Skills and Education Group advises QAA immediately of any major errors in the issuing of Diploma certificates, including providing information on how errors were remedied and how such errors will be avoided in the future.

Data Systems


Skills and Education Group has a dedicated and secure data system for Access to HE. All current Diploma, provider and student information is maintained and all student certification is generated from this system.

Issue and Dispatch of Access to HE Diplomas and Achievement Transcripts

All students who have been awarded the Access to HE Diploma are issued the AVA's Access to HE Diploma certificate which has a standard format. Skills and Education Group operates a service standard that ensures that all unit transcripts and Diploma certificates are forwarded on to providers within 15 working days of the Awards Board. Providers commit to return any unclaimed certificates to the AVA. All certificates are numbered and kept secure.

Person authorising development of the Diploma Specification

I confirm that the Diploma meets QAA's qualification requirements and will be quality assured in accordance with this Diploma Specification. All providers delivering this Diploma and external moderators responsible for quality assuring it will have a copy of this Diploma Specification.

Name: (please print)	Heather Brown
Signature:	
Date:	7 th June 2023
Post held:	Product Development Manager

This agreement will be reviewed by the AVA regularly

Appendix 1 - Units of Assessment

Grading Descriptors

Understanding of the Subject	US		5	Communication and Presentation	C P
Application of Knowledge	AK		6	Autonomy / Independence	A I
Application of Skills	AS		7	Quality (Mandatory)	Q U
Use of Information	UI				

Access to HE Diploma (Business) Units

For every unit included in the table, further information, is included in the Unit Specification, including learning outcomes and assessment criteria. All units must be set out using the AVA standard format.

Mandatory (3 credits)

Prefix	Unit title	Unit Id	Level	C V	Grading
Study Skills: Academic Writing Skills		YHS 243	Three	3	Ungraded

Optional Units Graded (45 Credits)

Unit Title	Unit ID	Level	CV	Grading
Business: Business Structures	CER029	Three	3	1257
Business: Communications (Business)	CER047	Three	3	1257
Business: Customer Service	CER065	Three	3	157
Business: Developing a Business Plan	CER075	Three	6	1234567
Business: Finance for Business	CER106	Three	6	12457
Business: Human Resources in Organisations	CER139	Three	6	1247
Business: International Trade and Development	CER149	Three	3	1257
Business: Marketing Concepts	CER169	Three	3	1267
Business: Organisation Structures	CER196	Three	3	127
Business: Principles of Leadership	CER217	Three	3	127
Business: Principles of Management	CER218	Three	6	1257
Business: Principles of Marketing	CER219	Three	6	1267
Business: The Business Environment	CER273	Three	6	127
Business: The Economic Environment	CER276	Three	6	127
Business: UK Economic Environment	CER291	Three	6	12457
Business: Using the Internet for Business	CER297	Three	3	127
Computing: Database Development	YHS229	Three	6	137
Computing: IT in Organisations	CER152	Three	3	247
Computing: Spreadsheet Modelling	CER260	Three	6	1237
Computing: Systems Analysis	YHS230	Three	6	237

Computing: Web Page Design and Production	CER424	Three	3	137
Law: Consumer Law	CER054	Three	3	1247
Law: Employment Law	CER085	Three	6	1247
Law: The Formation of a Contract	CER278	Three	3	1257
Mathematics: Numerical Analysis of Statistical Data	CER189	Three	3	137

Ungraded (12 credits)

Unit Title	Unit ID	Level	CV	Grading
Business: Exploring Marketing Concepts	CER580	Three	3	Ungraded
Business: Exploring Principles of Leadership	CER581	Three	3	Ungraded
Mathematics: Exploring Number and Graphical Representation	CER476	Two	3	Ungraded
Mathematics: Exploring Numerical Analysis of Statistical Data	CER614	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Advanced Information Technology	CER007	Three	6	Ungraded
Study Skills: Communication Skills	CER045	Three	6	Ungraded
Study Skills: Communications	CER046	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Databases	CER070	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Exam Techniques and Practice	CER099	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Group Processes	CER118	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Higher Education Toolkit	CER132	Three	6	Ungraded
Study Skills: Information Literacy Skills	CER147	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Interview Skills and Group Presentations	CER150	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Numeracy	CER188	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Organisation and Evaluation of Study	CER194	Two	3	Ungraded

Study Skills: Organisation and Evaluation of Study	CER195	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Presentation Skills	CER215	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Reading and Note making	CER228	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Reflective Practice	CER230	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Research Skills	CER236	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Research Skills: Project	CER238	Three	6	Ungraded
Study Skills: Researching and Understanding Opportunities in Higher Education	CER240	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Spreadsheet Software	CER261	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Use of Information and Communication Technology	CER293	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Using IT for Study	CER296	Two	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Using Word Processing Software	CER613	Two	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Word Processing	CER306	Three	3	Ungraded
Study Skills: Work Experience	CER307	Three	6	Ungraded

Appendix 2 - Inclusion and exclusion rules of combination

Barred Unit 1	ID 1	CV	Barred Unit 2	ID2	CV
Business: Marketing Concepts	CER169	3	Business: Exploring Marketing Concepts	CER580	3
Business: Marketing Concepts	CER169	3	Business: Principles of Marketing	CER219	6
Business: Principles of Leadership	CER217	3	Business: Exploring Principles of Leadership	CER581	3
Business: Principles of Marketing	CER219	6	Business: Exploring Marketing Concepts	CER580	3
Mathematics: Numerical Analysis of Statistical Data	CER189	3	Mathematics: Exploring Numerical Analysis of Statistical Data	CER614	3

Barred Unit 1	ID 1	CV	Barred Unit 2	ID2	CV
Study Skills: Advanced Information Technology	CER007	6	Study Skills: Spreadsheet Software	CER261	3
Study Skills: Advanced Information Technology	CER007	6	Study Skills: Use of Information and Communication Technology	CER293	3
Study Skills: Communication Skills	CER045	6	Study Skills: Communications	CER046	3
Study Skills: Group Processes	CER118	3	Study Skills: Interview Skills and Group Presentations	CER150	3
Study Skills: Higher Education Toolkit	CER132	6	Study Skills: Interview Skills and Group Presentations	CER150	3
Study Skills: Higher Education Toolkit	CER132	6	Study Skills: Presentation Skills	CER215	3
Study Skills: Research Skills	CER236	3	Study Skills: Research Skills: Project	CER238	6
Study Skills: Spreadsheet Software	CER261	3	Study Skills: Use of Information and Communication Technology	CER293	3