University of Plymouth

Academic Partnerships

Exeter College

Operational Specification

HNC and HND Computing

Date

March 2020

1. Programme Management

1.1. Structure

Roles/Responsibilities

Director of Adult Learning & Higher Education
Head of Faculty
Faculty Management Group
HNC/D Computing Programme Manager
Lecturers
HE Quality & Standards Manager
HE Department Co-ordinator
HE Administrator
DSA Supervisor

1.2. Committees

The following provides a reference for all areas of operational importance across the members of the programme committee.

It is a College as well as University requirement that Annual Programme Monitoring, facilitated through twice yearly Programme Committee Meetings, takes place for **ALL** University Level programmes. The HE Department communicates the requirements annually to Programme Managers who arrange mutually convenient dates and times for their Programme Teams and Student Representatives in first half of the Autumn and Spring Terms. Agendas are circulated, and minutes taken by the HE Administrator, however, the Programme Manager is responsible for ensuring all Programme-Level data and information is made available at the meeting and for developing and updating the Programme Action Plan. The minutes and actions from these meetings are fed directly in to the University's Partnership Manager Reports and Joint Board of Study meetings and into the College's cross-College University Level Action Plan.

Dates and times for the SAP will be set by the HE Department in consultation with the University, EE and Programme Manager. A pre-SAP will take place in early June, during which the Programme Manager will meet with the HE Administrator to ensure that assessment data is complete and correct and SAP paperwork is in order. Module Reviews are also completed by Module Leaders in advance of the SAP. No grades are finalised prior to the SAP and sampling of assessed and moderated work by the EE. This is clearly communicated to all students.

Learner Voice – An internal committee at the college where each tutor group has a student representative. Regular meetings are held to provide feedback and college changes.
https://www.exe-coll.ac.uk/news/Article/Learner-Voice-and-Student-Representation/827

Timetable

The programme provides the option for students to study full or part time. However, the timetable is designed to accommodate a variety of students by ensuring a maximum of 3 days contact. The timetable can allow for flexibility of the students, so we can easily accommodate mature learners, learners with families and learners who may wish to work alongside studying.

2. Modes of Delivery and Assessment

The HND Computing offers improved access to Higher Education ensuring equality of opportunity and widening participation through a range of teaching and learning strategies.

A variety of methods will be applicable to this course, including lectures, seminars, workshops, practical lab sessions, group and individual tutorials, CPD courses and self-study.

In July 2017, Exeter College were awarded the TEF Gold standard for delivering consistently outstanding teaching, learning and outcomes for its University Level students. Therefore, this highlights that we are amongst the best in the country for teaching and employment within the HE sector.

Exeter College hosts Moodle, a remote learning environment situated on the internet/intranet promoting access to resources, discussion groups and other learning materials. In addition, students have open access to extensive computer facilities within the College to support their studies. Students submit their work via Turn-It-In on Moodle, aiding with the preparation for progression on to level 6. There is a generic list of websites and journals relating to the taught modules and overall programme. This reflects the holistic nature of the programme as the journals cross reference to the topics covered in taught sessions. The websites and journals also reflect current research and practice.

2.1 Modes of Delivery

Method	Description
Lectures (theory and practical based)	The majority of lessons will be lecture lead in a classroom setting. Teacher will lead the session to provide factual information relation to the topic
Workshops and Seminars (theory and practical based)	Some lessons may be considered as workshops or seminars where the sessions are learner-led and allow discussions and debated around a specific topic
Group and individual tutorials	The groups will be assigned a tutor and will have an hour slot of tutorial each week, allowing for group or individual tutorial sessions
Independent study and research	The learners will be given time to have self-study around their timetable, and will be encouraged to carry out their own research for a number of modules on the programme
Laboratory Practical's	The group will have regular sessions delivered in the Computer Lab allowing practical application of theory in a controlled environment
Small group work	Within lessons or as homework tasks, the learners will be set tasks to complete small group work; discussions, presentations, ideas
Placements	As part of the course, the students are expected to carry out a project in the work place with an expectation of regular hours undertaken in the setting.

2.2. Modes of assessment

Method	Description
Essay	An essay or piece of extended writing is a discursive, usually analytical piece of writing.
Report	This is an analytical piece of work, which demonstrates the student's ability to link theory to practice. The report will concentrate upon a specific area of practice relevant to the module. It will be a well-structured approach that includes for example a literature review and a methodology.
Practical	Students will undertake assessments in a controlled setting to demonstrate application of theory to practical implementation (e.g. database construction etc)
Presentation	Presentations will enable students to demonstrate professional and practical skills and facilitate the dissemination of information from a range of perspectives involving individuals and groups. Discussion of key issues enhances the application of theory to practice. Presentations can be individual or group work.
Academic Poster	A visual representation of the research/ideas. These can be displayed at a seminar or conference, like a poster format.
Portfolio	Throughout the programme students will be required to conduct practical and academic tasks based on the modules being studied. The portfolio will be a collection of evidence from practice tasks (e.g. lab work, work place activity), reflective accounts and links where students can identify the key and transferable skills that they have achieved through completing the tasks. The portfolio will support the student's professional development and document their progress.

2.3. Alternative and Inclusive Assessment Strategies

The College's Equality and Diversity Policy, as adopted in March 2017, is underpinned by a number of core values, including a commitment to inclusive education informed by the principle of diversity. This extends to assessment processes, as well as teaching and learning within the classroom.

The assessment strategy for this programme includes a diverse range of assessment methods, with at least two different methods per module. This enables students to evidence a range of academic skills and to excel in their areas of strength, whilst continuing to develop areas for improvement throughout the programme.

Lecturers and assessors have access to on-line student profiles, including disclosed specific learning difficulties and other physical and/or medical conditions. Where a student has had a diagnostic and needs assessment undertaken, this is also available for guidance.

Where the student profile indicates it is necessary, lecturers and assessors may make reasonable adjustments to assessment requirements (for example; presentations may be delivered to an individual if a student has identified mental health issues affecting their ability to deliver to a group), provided that the associated learning outcomes can still be evidenced within the given timescale and there is parity with the assessment requirements for other students.

Summative feedback on assessments is provided both in writing and verbally to ensure understanding, identify and challenges and highlight areas for improvement. In addition, one to one formative conversations between students and assessors are on-going throughout the programme identifying further opportunities to develop inclusive practice or make reasonable adjustments and enable signposting or referrals for additional targeted support to be made if required.

2.4 Assessment schedule

The staff who are delivering the module will decide upon the date of assessment. There is an allocated number of weeks after Easter break where written and practical examinations take place. Some exams may take place mid-year also. All students will have access to the assessment schedule from when they start. The assessment schedule is collated and put together by the Programme Manager. See appendix for example assessment schedule.

3. Feedback Processes/Policies

Students will gain feedback via Turnitin on their submitted work within 15 working days. Student feedback can also be verbal feedback to the lecturers throughout the academic year which must then be reported/fed back to the programme manager. This can be done in one to one tutorials, or group discussions.

More on assessment policies can be found on the college website.
https://www.exe-coll.ac.uk/College/About/Policies

4. Specific Issues

4.1. Fieldwork

N/A

4.2. Placements

Students will undertake a work place learning module as part of the HND year 2 which will require them to work with local employers on a specific problem scenario. Placements will be agreed between the student, programme manager and the industry placement co-ordinator. In most cases it is anticipated that students will be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement by the employer if they are to be privy to sensitive information.

4.3. Work Based Learning

Although the main formal work based learning will be undertaken in the work place learning module, there will be opportunities for the students to work on projects throughout the two year programme. The tutorial programme has an embedded mentoring scheme from local employers and students will engage in an enterprise challenge each year.

4.4. Partnership

Liaison: TBC
Partnership Manager: X
Academic Liaison Person: TBC

5. Management of Student Choice

Applicants can apply via UCAS or to the college direct. Applicants must gain 64 UCAS points or equivalent, including GCSE English and Maths Grade C/4 or above, or equivalent. Most applicants will be interviewed to ensure they are on the right course or may be sent an assessment task to complete prior to acceptance on to the programme.

The HE team at Exeter College will review applications and will ask Programme Manager for advice where applicant does not meet the minimum or usual expectations.

6. Student Support

6.1. Academic Support

Each student will be provided with a Personal Tutor who can support with academic issues. In addition to this each module will have a module leader who the student can access for support. The college provide study support for all students including HE students. The SEN Manager can also support with access for additional study support. In year one of the programme, the students will study “Academic Study” to support with the leap to Level 4 studying.

6.2. Pastoral Support

Each student will be provided with a Personal Tutor who can support with pastoral care and the college have an excellent system in place for safeguarding. The DSA Manager can also support in pastoral care.

6.3. Equality and Diversity

The programme committee engages with its institution's disability, equality and diversity policies and procedures to ensure that each and every student is considered equitably. As follows:

(A useful point of reference for University of Plymouth's policies etc. is the Equality and Diversity community: https://intranet.plymouth.ac.uk/equality/intranet.htm)

The University of Plymouth's Equality and Diversity Policy may be viewed at: https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/2/2333/Equality_and_Diversity_Policy-2.pdf

Exeter College has Equality and Diversity Policies and Procedures in place, which apply to both students and staff and govern all aspects of the institutions operations from recruitment through to completion of a programme of study or period of employment. The following extract summarises the College's commitments in this respect:

> Exeter College is committed to both eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce community. Our aim is that our learners and staff will be representative of all sections of society and that each learner and employee feels their contribution is respected and that they are able to give of their best. As an employer, we oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. A similar set of values will underpin the recruitment of learners to programmes of training and study. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation. To that end, the aim of this policy is to foster equality and fairness for all College members and those who deal with us. Through the College culture we aim to educate, inform and nurture best practice and behaviour in relation to Equality and Diversity in our student body.

Exeter College's full Equality and Diversity Policy may be viewed at:

http://www.exe-coll.ac.uk/Media/PDF/FOI/Equality%20and%20Diversity%20Policy.pdf

In addition, the College is subject to the Office for Students (OfS) requirements in relation to the preparation, implementation and evaluation of an Access and Participation Plan (formally Access Agreements).

The Access and Participation Plan and associated Resource Plan for 2019/20 has been approved by the OfS' Director of Fair Access and is based on the following objectives:

- **Widening access to HE**

  To raise awareness and aspiration in relation to the opportunities presented by HE to prospective students within the community served by the College, with a focus on underrepresented groups identified by national strategic guidance, local demographics and the College's HE student profile;

- **Ensuring success within HE**

  To provide support to all current students to aid their transition to HE, continuation on programme and achievement of their intended qualifications and to provide

targeted interventions to underrepresented groups and individuals to close attainment gaps in a timely and supportive manner;

- **Supporting progression from HE to graduate employment, self-employment or further academic study**

  To provide a range of services to ensure that all students are able to realise their ambitions in relation to undertaking further study at or outside of the College, securing graduate level employment or starting their own enterprises, with a particular focus on underrepresented groups.

- **Enhancing progress through positive relationships**

  To develop positive working relationships with local schools, communities and employers to facilitate the sharing of knowledge, skills and expertise to improve evidence-based practice, thereby paving the way for more young people to progress into HE.

Exeter College's full Access and Participation Plan for 2019/20 may be viewed at:

http://www.exe-coll.ac.uk/Media/PDF/Higher-Education/Exeter-College-Access-Agreement-2019-2020.pdf

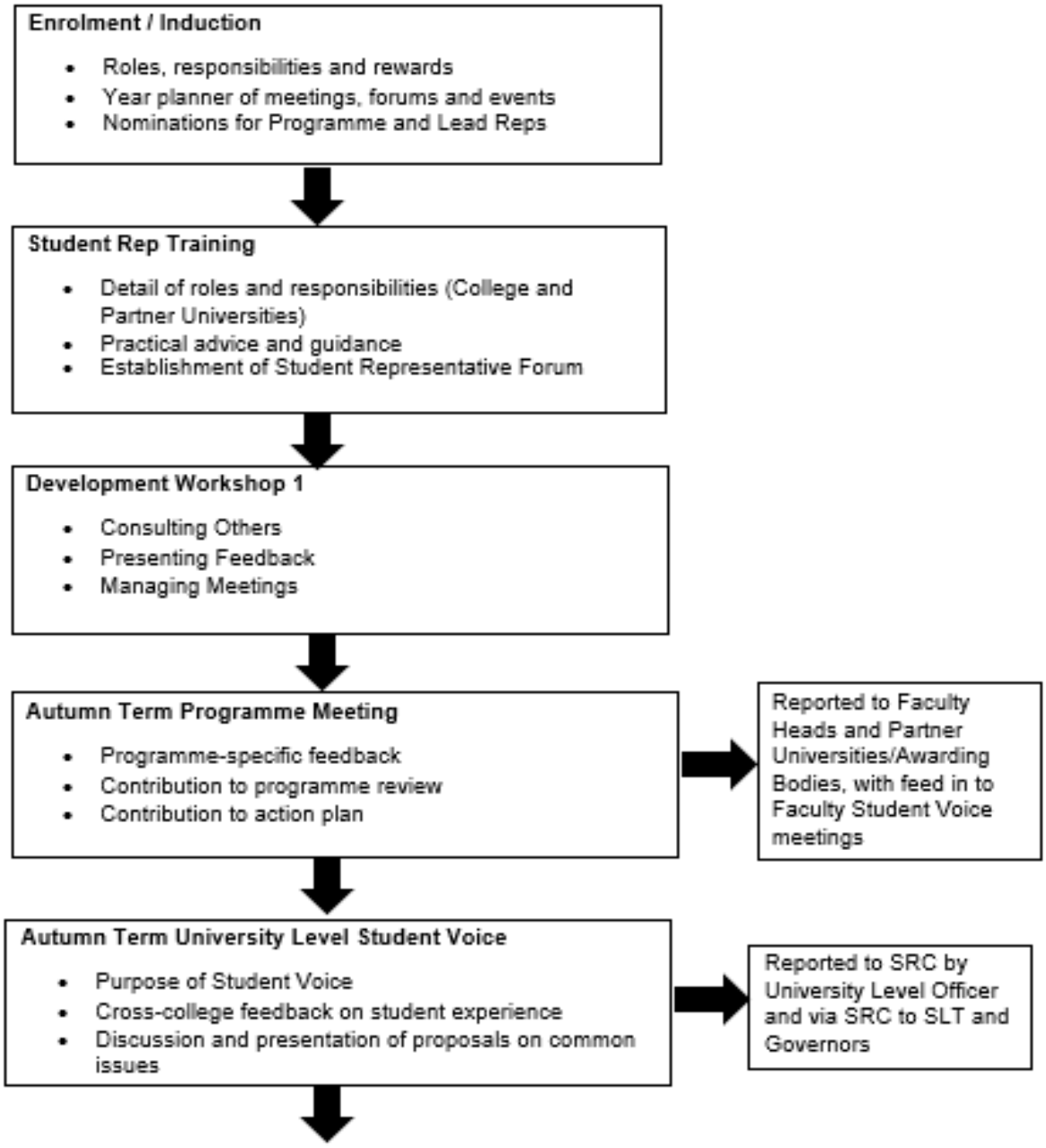
7. Student Liaison, Representation and the Student Voice

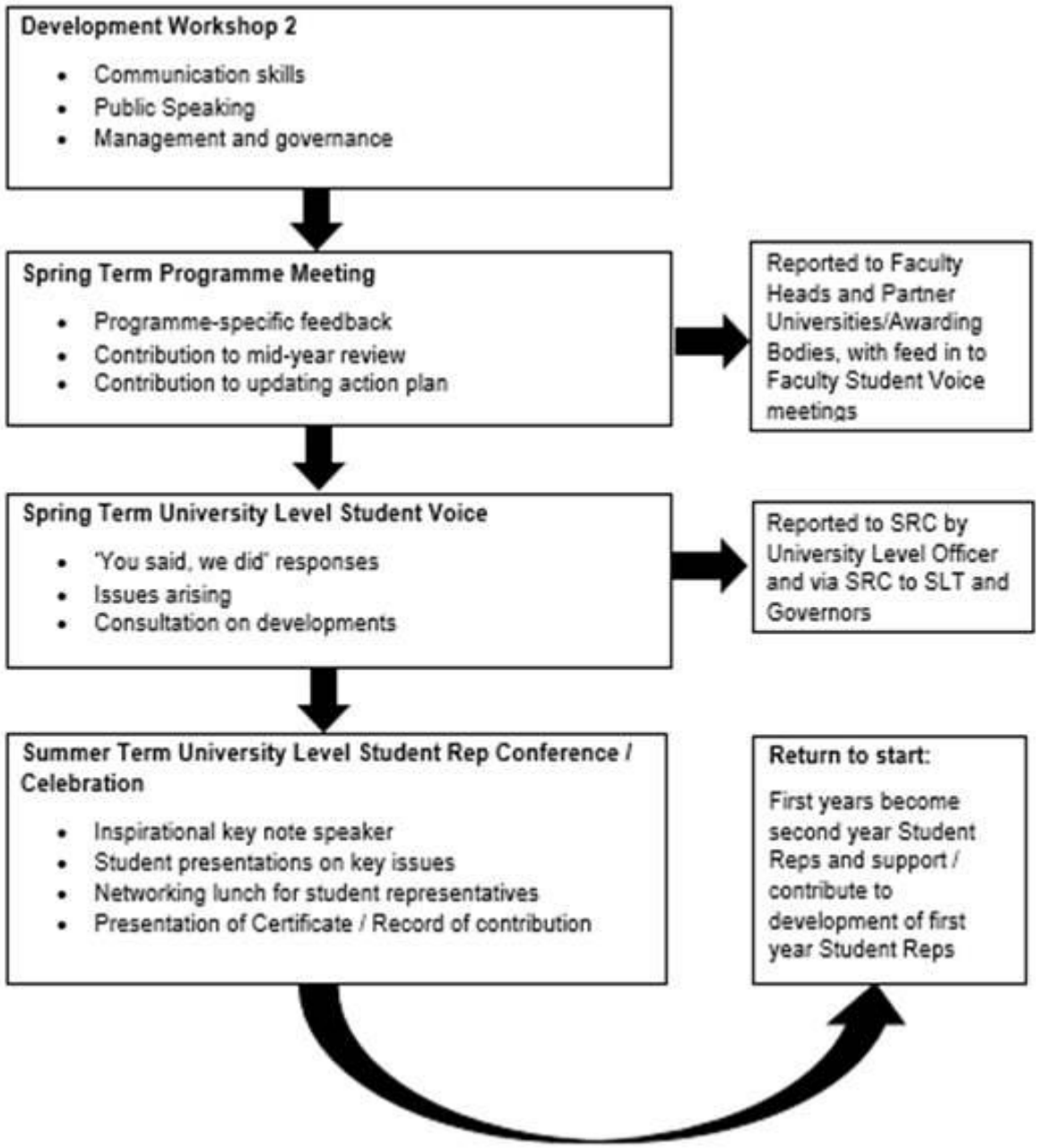
Student representation for each stage of the programme is essential to programme committee membership. Furthermore, programme committee meetings are not considered quorate without that representation present. Enhancement of the student activities must also be identified noting impact and sustainability.

Operationalising the recruitment, briefing and introduction of student representatives to their position on the programme committee is detailed as follows.

Information for students on the importance of course representation has been developed in partnership with the students along with the course representation cycle. Other useful resources are available within the UPSU partner college pages.

Two programme level Student Representatives are nominated and/or elected for each year of a University Level programme at Exeter College. This also meets the University of Plymouth and UPSU requirements. The Student Representatives are consulted and provide feedback at both programme level, via the Programme Committee Meetings, and cross-college level, via the University Level Student Voice Forum. This enables academic, pastoral and overall student experience matters to be raised and responded to. The flow chart below summaries the interactions and opportunities for University Level Student Representatives across the course of the academic year.


Enrolment / Induction
Roles, responsibilities and rewards
Year planner of meetings, forums and events
Nominations for Programme and Lead Reps
Student Rep Training
Detail of roles and responsibilities (College and Partner Universities)
Practical advice and guidance
Establishment of Student Representative Forum
Development Workshop 1
Consulting Others
Presenting Feedback
Managing Meetings
Autumn Term Programme Meeting
Programme-specific feedback
Contribution to programme review
Contribution to action plan
Reported to Faculty Heads and Partner Universities/Awarding Bodies, with feed in to Faculty Student Voice meetings
Autumn Term University Level Student Voice
Purpose of Student Voice
Cross-college feedback on student experience
Discussion and presentation of proposals on common issues
Reported to SRC by University Level Officer and via SRC to SLT and Governors



Student Voice is an important aspect of being an HE student. The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education in the UK suggests that 'Student engagement is all about involving and empowering students in the process of shaping the student learning experience'. Thus, the Student Voice is really important and as such we actively encourage all students to get involved at a range of levels in their learning and in quality assurance, enhancement and management of their course.

The Student Voice is one of the tools we have at our disposal in order to facilitate real, positive change in partnership with our University Level student community. We are committed to the ongoing improvement of our services, but it relies heavily on the interchange of feedback between students and staff so that we are able to focus our efforts effectively.

There are many opportunities for the student voice to be heard within an academic year. Student Reps will be invited to share their views at regular course level Programme Committee Meetings and the termly HE Student Voice meetings. Their feedback will be gathered and fed back through the community voice updates to the College's Governors. We want you to feel that the student feedback is being taken seriously and that it is being acted upon. At the second Student Voice meeting we will present a 'You said, we did' action plan that explains what is being done to act upon the wishes of our students. Unfortunately for operational reasons, not everything is feasible, but we will maintain a commitment to transparency on these occasions.

In addition to the formalised student voice meetings processes, we aim to offer informal feedback through an open contact policy with the Student Engagement Officer. Informal feedback made through this contact route will be logged and presented alongside the regular student voice activities.

The University values the Student Voice and is actively promoting the work supported through the student community. More information can be found at https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/student-voice

8. Student Transfer and Progression Opportunities and Arrangements

On successful completion of the HND students can progress on to the BSc (Hons) Computing at the University of Plymouth or can opt to apply elsewhere.

Students who wish not to progress to a top-up programme can choose to work within the professional IT industry with the HND qualification. This may be private self-employed business opportunities or may seek to find employment within a business or industry already.

Appendix 1: Mapping of Programme Learning Outcomes

App1

Operational Specification: mapping of Programme Learning Outcomes. Insert rows and columns as required.

Module Code	Level	Credits	C - core E - elective	**Award Learning Outcomes** (for more information see Section 8 of the Programme Specification) Please map where a module does one or more of the following: **I** – ALO is **introduced** **A** –ALO is **assessed**													
				8.1 Knowledge & understanding			8.2 Cognitive & intellectual skills			8.3 Key & transferable skills			8.4 Employment related skills			8.5 Practical skills		
				1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
EXCE1157	4	20	C	IA		IA	IA	IA			IA	IA						
EXCE1158	4	20	C	IA			IA	IA			IA	A				IA		IA
EXCE1159	4	20	C		IA		IA	IA		IA	IA					IA	IA	IA
EXCE1160	4	20	C		A	A	A			IA				IA		A	A	
EXCE1161	4	20	C		A		A	A					IA	IA		A	A	
EXCE1162	4	20	C	A	A		A						IA			A		
EXCE2027	5	20	C	IA		IA					IA		IA	IA	IA			
EXCE2028	5	20	C				IA	IA		IA	IA		IA					
EXCE2029	5	20	C	A	IA	A				A	A	IA				A		
EXCE2030	5	20	C	A	A		A	A	IA			A					IA	IA
EXCE2031	5	20	C					A	IA	A		IA	IA	IA	IA		A	
EXCE2032	5	20	C		A						A	A			A	A	A	A