OCN London

ocnlondon.org.uk

Access to HE Diploma Specification

Access to HE Diploma (Digital Technologies and Computer Science)

Diploma overview

The Level 3 Access to HE Diploma is a nationally recognised qualification regulated by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) which is designed to provide preparation for study in higher education (HE) in the UK for adults returning to education.

In order the gain the Access to HE Diploma, learners must achieve a total of 60 credits. Of these 60 credits, 45 credits must be achieved at Level 3 from graded subject specific units. Graded units can be awarded at Pass, Merit or Distinction. The remaining 15 credits must be achieved at Level 2 or Level 3 from study skills units which are ungraded.

Diploma details

Diploma title: Access to HE Diploma (Digital Technologies and Computer Science)

Learning aim code: 40012608

Validation start date: 1st August 2024

Validation end date: 31st July 2026

SSA sector code:

- Tier 1: 6 – Digital technology
- Tier 2: 6.1 - Digital technology (practitioner)

Diploma aims

The Access to HE Diploma (Digital Technologies and Computer Science) offers adult returners a coherent, integrated and supported year of study through which they will gain the knowledge, awareness, skills and confidence necessary for successful undergraduate studying in the intended progression routes for this Diploma. The course aims to provide a balance of essential study skills with specialist subject knowledge to enable the students to be prepared for the academic and practical rigours of undergraduate study in the Digital Technologies and Computer Science field. It must however be noted that the Access to HE Diploma does not provide guaranteed entry to UK Higher Education Institutions.

Its primary aims are:

- To provide HE progression opportunities for adults who, because of social, educational or individual circumstances, do not have the necessary qualifications;
- To give learners a general introduction to the basic concepts, methods, and key areas of knowledge within the core disciplines taken and offer a coherent and stimulating framework within which they can broaden their intellectual outlook and make connections between subject areas;

- To help learners to develop and consolidate the various skills required to enable them to cope successfully with the demands of undergraduate study and to become independent, self-directed learners;
- To establish a positive and supportive learning environment within which learners can build their confidence through successful learning and the sharing of their experience;
- To provide the personal, educational support (including preparation for application and interview techniques) needed to facilitate learners pursuing their aims within the framework of the course.

Target learners

- Adults who, because of social, educational or individual circumstances, were unable to participate in or benefit from initial education.
- Adults from groups under-represented in higher education.
- Adults seeking a change of direction because of unemployment or lack of career opportunities in their previous field and who have a demonstrable interest in entering a profession in Digital Technologies and / Computer Science.

Potential progression routes

Learners primarily progress to Higher Education study in areas related to Digital Technologies and / Computer Science. These may include some of the following areas of Degree level study: Artificial Intelligence / Robotics, Computer Science, Cyber Security, Data Analytics, Data Science, Digital Technologies, Games Design, Games Development, Information Systems, Software Engineering and a wide range of combined and related degrees.

Progression agreements

OCN London works with local universities to develop progression agreements that benefit all its providers and learners. The following agreements are in place:

- Goldsmiths, University of London (Progression agreement)
- St Mary's University, Twickenham (Progression agreement)
- LIBF (Progression agreement)
- University of East London (Partnership agreement)

Further information about each agreement can be found here on the OCN London website

Entry guidance

There are no centrally specified formal requirements for qualifications on entry; however there is usually the expectation that the learner will have literacy, communication skills and numeracy at Level 2 or above.

Guided learning hours

The Access to HE Diploma represents 600 notional Guided Learning Hours (GLH) with courses generally delivered in 450 GLH. This may vary between centres and may depend on whether the course is being delivered through blended learning. It is expected a centre delivering the course will clearly outline the intended delivery in terms of total hours and how this is broken down weekly over the period of study.

Diploma resources

The minimum required resources for this Diploma include:

- Access to IT facilities with specialist software as appropriate.
- Access to learning resources and online facilities.
- Access to VLE or other system, such as Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom.
- Access to resources for specialist learner support and reasonable adjustments.
- The same level of facilities and resources should be available at each site where the Diploma is delivered.

Staffing requirements

- Staff delivering, assessing or internally moderating on the Access to HE course must have the professional competence and level of subject expertise necessary to deliver and assess the units available on the Diploma. They should be qualified at Level 4 or above in the named subject, or in a discipline that includes the subject. For example, a tutor with a Social Science degree may be able to teach both Psychology and Sociology.
- Staff should have or be working towards a teaching qualification.
- Staff should have knowledge and understanding of the Access to HE Diploma, including QAA regulations, AVA assessment regulations, the QAA Grading Scheme and the Rules of Combination.
- New staff should be inducted to ensure that they have sufficient information to deliver, assess or internally moderate on the Diploma competently.
- It is desirable that teachers have personal practice experience.

Assessment

Grading Standards

The graded units in an Access to HE Diploma are graded using a scheme which has been designed to accommodate the flexibility of the qualification (it can be applied to all Access to HE Diploma graded units, whatever their subject or structure). A grade of Pass, Merit or Distinction is awarded for every graded Level 3 unit that a learner completes successfully as part of an Access to HE Diploma. Grades can only be awarded for graded units which are part of the Diploma (and conform to the Rules of Combination). There is no overall grade for the Diploma.

There are 3 grading standards which are applied to **all** graded units:

GS1: Knowledge and Understanding
GS2: Subject Specific Skills
GS3: Transferable Skills

Each grading standard comprises of a set of components and sub-components which describe types of performance associated with the standard. For each component, there are parallel statements at merit and distinction, which describe increasingly demanding standards of achievement. The most appropriate sub-components of the standards are selected when grading the unit.

For Grading Standard 3: Transferable Skills, all three of the components (a, b and c) must be used at least once across the Diploma.

For further information can be found here on the OCN London website.

Assessment mechanisms

The Access to HE Diploma assessment mechanism incorporates:

- Assessment tasks which are designed and set by the Centre
- Internal assessment of learner work
- Internal and external moderation of assessment.

There are no additional external assessments for this Diploma.

Recommended methods of assessment

The recommended assessment methods for this Diploma should include a variety of methods which take into consideration the target learners for this Diploma and the appropriateness for the units being assessed. Assessment methods should be valid, reliable, and inclusive and assure equity.

The following assessment methods could be used to assess the units within this Diploma. These could include a number of the following, but at least part of one graded subject specific unit must include a formal examination taken under timed conditions.

- Artefacts
- Blogs
- Case studies
- Oral presentation
- Practical tasks/demonstrations

- Question and answer (written and oral)
- Tests/exams with seen or unseen papers
- Tutor observation
- Worksheets
- Written assignments
- Written essays/reports

This is not an exhaustive list and other methods could be selected with agreement from either OCN London or the Centre Moderator.

Rules of Combination

To be awarded the Access to Higher Education Diploma (Digital Technologies and Computer Science) learners must achieve a total of 60 credits comprising of:	
Credits required from graded academic subject content units at Level 3	45
Credits required from ungraded units at Level 3 or Level 2	15
Total Credits required	60

Learners must also meet the following Rules of Combination:				
Rule: Units in	Status	Mandatory Credits (see below)	From Optional Credits	Total Credits
Study Skills	Ungraded	3 @ L3	12 @ L2 or L3	15
Subject Specific Units	Graded	6 @ L3	39 @ L3	45

In addition:

A learner must achieve a minimum of one 6 or 9 credit unit to achieve the Diploma.

A learner's programme of study can only include a maximum of 30 credits made up from 6 or 9 credit units.

Additional information

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Overall, the total proportion of credits awarded or exempted through either credit transfer and/or recognition of prior learning must not exceed 30 credits (that is 50 per cent of the credits required for the achievement of the Diploma).

Barred Combinations of Units

Where unit content between units overlaps by more than 25% of the learning outcomes this would represent an excluded combination of units.

Information on barred combinations for this Diploma can be found on page 11.

Approved Units

Mandatory Units

Unit ID	Unit Name	Level	Credits
CBB803	Sourcing and Reading Information **(ungraded)**	L3	3
CBA786	Extended Project **(graded)**	L3	6

Study Skills (ungraded)

Unit ID	Unit Name	Level	Credits
BPM041	Basic Arithmetic Skills	L2	3
CBA847	Essay Writing	L3	3
CBA785	Examination Skills: Preparing for and Succeeding in an Examination	L3	3
CBA878	Multimedia Presentation	L3	3
CBA851	Note-taking and Note-making	L3	3
CBB392	Preparation for Higher Education	L3	3
CBB804	Report Writing	L3	3
BPM059	Statistics and Probability	L2	3
CBA855	Writing and Delivering Seminar Papers	L3	3
CBA856	Writing Standard English	L3	3

Subject Specific Units (graded)

Digital Technologies			
Unit ID	Unit Name	Level	Credits
CBB306	Big Data	L3	3
CBB861	Develop a Cyber Security Plan for Business	L3	3
CBB309	e-commerce	L3	6
CBB856	Games Development – Design, Implementation and Review	L3	6
CBB853	Introduction to AI, Machine Learning and Deep Learning	L3	3
CBB858	Introduction to Cyber Security	L3	3
CBB857	Introduction to Games Development	L3	3
CBB859	Introduction to Robotics	L3	3
CBB311	Mobile Technology	L3	6
CBB313	The Internet of Things	L3	3

CBB860	Using Robotics	L3	3

Computer Science			
Unit ID	Unit Name	Level	Credits
CBB484	Communications Networks	L3	3
CBB458	Computer Architecture	L3	3
CBB491	Installing, Configuring and Administering a Server	L3	3
CBB494	Number Systems and Computer Processing	L3	3
CBB312	Software Testing Principles	L3	3
CBB479	Spreadsheets	L3	3
CBB497	Switching Basics	L3	3
CBB498	System Analysis	L3	3

Databases			
Unit ID	Unit Name	Level	Credits
BRW705	Database Design	L3	3
CBB486	Database Implementation	L3	3
CBA889	Database Theory and Normalisation	L3	3
CBB536	Using Structured Query Language (SQL)	L3	6

Mathematics			
Unit ID	Unit Name	Level	Credits
CBB594	Algebra	L3	3
CBB854	Business Mathematics - Graphical Methods	L3	3
CBB855	Business Mathematics - Graphical Techniques	L3	3
CBB849	Business Mathematics - Statistics and Probability	L3	3
CBB597	Differentiation and Integration	L3	3
CBB600	Data Analysis and Descriptive Statistics*	L3	3
CBB601	Data Analysis and Probability*	L3	3
CBB847	Handling Scientific Data	L3	3
CBB500	Mathematics for Computing	L3	3
CBB603	Numerical Methods	L3	3
CBB606	Vectors and Matrices	L3	3

Networking

Unit ID	Unit Name	Level	Credits
CBB460	Computer Networks	L3	3
CBB492	Introduction to Routers and TCP IP	L3	3
CBB493	Networking Fundamentals	L3	3
CBB499	WAN and Wireless Networking	L3	3

Programming			
Unit ID	Unit Name	Level	Credits
CBA871	Arrays and Data Types	L3	3
CBB496	Program Control, Structures and Procedures	L3	6
CBB505	Programming Fundamentals	L3	6
BOV934	Programming - User Interface Design	L3	3
CBB501	Programming Methods	L3	3
CBB480	Visual Programming	L3	3

Psychology			
Unit ID	Unit Name	Level	Credits
CBB702	Introduction to Social Psychology	L3	3
CBB706	Psychological Research: Sources and Ethics	L3	3

Social Media			
Unit ID	Unit Name	Level	Credits
CBB506	Introduction to Media Communications	L3	3
CBA679	Introduction to Social Media	L3	6
CBA996	Principles of Social Media Advertising and Promotion	L3	3
CBB507	Understanding Social Media Technologies	L3	3

Web Design			
Unit ID	Unit Name	Level	Credits
CAA354	Advanced CSS Technique	L3	3
CBB489	HTML and CSS Basics	L3	3
CBB466	Image Manipulation Fundamentals	L3	3
CBB443	Web Authoring Software	L3	3
CBB444	Website Design and Creation	L3	6
CBB481	Web Security	L3	3

CBB482	Website Optimisation	L3	6

Business and Legislation			
Unit ID	**Unit Name**	**Level**	**Credits**
CBB253	Business Communication and Information Management	L3	6
CBB336	Business Organisations and Structure	L3	3
CBB338	Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility	L3	3
CBB304	Social, Legal and Health Implications of ICT	L3	3

Barred combinations

* The following units constitute barred combinations within this Diploma title and must not be delivered together on the same course.
Mathematics
Data Analysis and Descriptive Statistics is barred with **Data Analysis and Probability**

Guidance and support materials

OCN London devised assignment briefs are available for the following units:

Study skills

- Examination Skills: Preparing for and Succeeding in an Examination
- Multimedia Presentation
- Note-taking and Note-making
- Preparation for Higher Education
- Report Writing
- Sourcing and Reading Information
- Writing and Delivering Seminar Papers
- Writing Standard English

Subject specific units

- Algebra
- Business Communication and Information Management
- Business Mathematics - Statistics and Probability
- Business Organisation and Structure
- Extended Project
- Numerical Methods
- Website Design and Creation

Online learning materials

The following online support materials are available:

- Extended Project
- Note-taking and Note-making
- Preparation for Higher Education
- Sourcing and Reading Information
- Writing Standard English

These online learning materials can be used as part of your teaching or an induction to the course. It is expected that the learners will still receive teaching on these topics and assignments must be set for them by their tutor and assessed by the centre.

The courses can be accessed via the OCN London website or incorporated into your own VLE or online delivery systems. If you have any queries, please contact Sarah Francis (sarah@ocnlondon.org.uk)

All OCN London devised assignment briefs can be found in the Access Centre Area on the OCN London website (login required).

Further resources and guidance including tutor guidance documents, marketing materials, forms, templates and checklists can be found in the above area of the website (login may be required).

If you are interested in delivering this Diploma, please contact Michelle Wood (Access to HE Development Coordinator) at michelle@ocnlondon.org.uk.

OCN London

OCN London
24 Angel Gate, 326 City Road, London EC1V 2PT
www.ocnlondon.org.uk
enquiries@ocnlondon.org.uk
020 7278 5511