

QUALITY ASSURANCE DOCUMENT QA3 – PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Programme Code													
2. Programme Title	<p>Foundation Year</p> <p>- Pathway: Social Sciences</p> <p>Students are registered on a 4-year programme of BA/BSc (Hons) <i>with</i> Foundation Year from the list below</p>												
3. Target Award Title	<p><i>Social Sciences</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA (Hons) Criminology and Law with FY • BA (Hons) Criminology and Psychology with FY • BA (Hons) Criminology with Cybercrime with FY • BA (Hons) Criminology with FY • BA (Hons) Criminology with Law with FY • LLB (Hons) Law with FY • LLB (Hons) QLD with FY • BSc (Hons) Forensic and Criminal Investigation with FY • BSc (Hons) Policing and Criminal Investigation with FY • BSc (Hons) Psychology with Counselling with FY • BSc (Hons) Psychology with FY • BA (Hons) Psychology and Sociology with FY <p>This programme specification details only the Foundation Year of the above programmes and should be read in conjunction with the relevant Level 4-6 programme specification.</p>												
4. Exit Award Title(s)	Foundation Certificate												
5. Subject area	Social Sciences pathway												
6. School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute of Foundation Studies for Foundation Year • Relevant School for Level 4-6 												
7. Programme Team Leader(s)													
8. Programme Type	BL												
9. Delivery Model	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>DL F/T</td> <td>X</td> <td>BL F/T</td> <td>X</td> <td>Apprenticeship</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>DL P/T</td> <td>X</td> <td>BL P/T</td> <td></td> <td>Other</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	DL F/T	X	BL F/T	X	Apprenticeship		DL P/T	X	BL P/T		Other	
	DL F/T	X	BL F/T	X	Apprenticeship								
DL P/T	X	BL P/T		Other									
Where delivery model identified as 'Other' please provide details													
10. Location of delivery	BL - Delivered in Newcastle, Leeds, Newcastle, Manchester, Birmingham, London Ealing, London Holborn, London Stratford and Berlin												
11. Proposed Start date	September 2026												
12. Reference points	Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) RQF Level 3												

	FHEQ (Framework for Higher Education Qualifications) Level 4
13. Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Bodies (PSRB)	N/A

14. Programme aims

The Foundation Year as part of the Institute of Foundation Studies provides a preparatory scaffolded and supportive programme (1-year), enabling students to develop and enhance their academic study, investigation, personal development and subject-specific skills appropriate to a UK higher education environment. The Foundation Year provides access to a range of degree programmes for non-traditionally qualified students ensuring innovative learning, teaching and assessment methods with support for positive student outcomes.

Students are clustered in one of two subject-area pathways: Leadership and Technology, or Social Sciences. The pathways enable many opportunities to develop disciplinary-specific skills and knowledge and transferable skills, where relevant in their core modules, and more subject-specific skills in the pathway modules. While building their academic and professional developmental study toolkit, students on the Foundation Year also study some subject-specific modules to acclimatise and sample the learning, subjects and assessment appropriate to the university degree programme. With an increased confidence and development of an academic study toolkit, subject understanding and knowledge, students will gain the ability to investigate and provide solutions for their own future development and real-world problems.

The Foundation Year is structured for students to follow a specific module running order to: learn, develop and apply foundational skills and knowledge before moving to the intended Level 4 degree-programme of study.

The broad aim of the Foundation Year is to provide transitional support to subsequent study at undergraduate degree level in the eligible four-year programmes. The main programme aims are to:

1. Provide access to university higher education for those who may lack the necessary academic, professional experience or previous subject background for direct entry to a degree programme
2. Develop students' confidence and familiarity with different methods of learning, teaching and assessment used at university
3. Acquire broad knowledge and understanding specific to the pathway: Leadership and Technology; or Social Sciences ensuring the acquisition of relevant skills appropriate to those subject disciplines
4. Increase students' awareness of the opportunities as well and the challenges of studying in higher education with self-reflection of the types of support available and professional development through the degree programme
5. Develop and achieve suitable subject-area knowledge and understanding at level three to ensure successful continuation to the level four degree programme

The intended learning outcomes of the Foundation Year can be categorised in three areas: subject understanding and knowledge, academic subject-specific skills and other transferable skills (including professional careers development).

Students will continue to their chosen degree programme after successful Arden University academic regulations have been met.

15. Programme Entry Requirements

Please adapt standard/typical entry requirements, as necessary.

Standard entry requirements:

- A minimum of 45 credits at Level 3 completed within the last 3 years, or equivalent.

Typical non-standard entry requirements:

- A minimum of 2 years of appropriate and relevant work experience, or equivalent.

Standard English language requirements:

- English Language proficiency equivalent to IELTS 6.0, with no less than 5.5 in each component, if English is not the applicant's first language (or appropriate previous study in English).

16. Learning, teaching and assessment methods and strategies

Students on the Foundation Year will have four core modules across the year, and two subject-specific modules which will best prepare them for their degree programmes. The curriculum is inclusive and recognises that students may require a scaffolded approach to accessing their learning.

The Foundation Year programme will be taught using an active blended learning experience, both asynchronously and synchronously, with formative feedback opportunities. It will incorporate disciplinary-specific skills and knowledge, where relevant. Students are expected to engage in all activities listed and undertake independent study.

Blended Learning

- **Asynchronous (using the Virtual Learning Environment):**
- Independent guided blended learning supported by comprehensive online weekly sessions
- Mini lecture videos
- Pre and post face to face session activities (including mini quizzes, learning check points)
- Discussion forum activities
- Online-self assessment and reflective activities
- Use of key module reading lists
- Assessment preparation
- Arden University learning resources (e.g., Library and Careers Portal)

-
- **Synchronous (face to face sessions for blended learning):**
- Student centred activities using workshops, seminars, peer assessments, self-reflections, tutorials
- Regular planned opportunities for students to articulate and present ideas verbally
- Assessment preparation and support

Distance Learning

- **Asynchronous (using the Virtual Learning Environment):**
- Independent guided blended learning supported by comprehensive online sessions
- Study guide providing direction to independent study time
- Mini lecture videos
- Pre and post activities (including mini quizzes, learning check points)
- Discussion forum activities
- Online-self assessment and reflective activities
- Use of key module reading lists
- Assessment preparation
- Arden University learning resources (e.g., Library and Careers Portal)
-
- **Synchronous (live sessions online for distance learning):**
- Regular opportunities for students to meet on an informal basis for group study, related to pre-and post-session activities
- Live sessions will be seminar-based, focusing on discussion, and application of, key concepts
- Students will have additional opportunities to engage in tutorials on an individual, or small-group basis
- Regular planned opportunities for students to articulate and present ideas verbally
- Assessment preparation and support

Embedding of subject-specific skills and knowledge in module content

Where appropriate, module content will draw upon disciplinary-specific resources and approaches, aligned to the Foundation Year pathways.

In addition, students are encouraged to engage in office hours, module clinics and any drop ins with the Institute of Foundation Studies academic team to review any challenges or areas of difficulty.

With the use of the Arden Digital Backpack, students will have access to the following digital resources throughout their Foundation Year and throughout their degree programme years:

- Office 365 subscription

- Integrated zoom video conferencing
- Career services through the Arden Futures Target Connect platform providing career readiness
- Free online access to the Library Portal, which includes thousands of eBooks and journals, as well as industry databases carefully hand-picked to support your studies – all for free while studying with Arden
- Subscription to Togetherall for an abundance of mental health support

Assessment Methods and Strategies

Assessment on the Foundation Year will range from case study, coursework, portfolio, poster and a project. These assessment types will give students tasters and experience of the types of assessment which may appear on the degree programmes at level 4-6.

One of the key aims of the Foundation Year is to increase student confidence, metacognition and motivation to learn, and to provide students with regular feedback on their progress. To facilitate this, for each pathway, the two subject modules include a short, multiple choice questionnaire as summative assessment (weighting of 20%) submitted during the module. The MCQs encourage and reward students for engaging with the learning materials on iLearn, giving them an intermediate target to work towards and achieve, which increases motivation and provides students with timely feedback on knowledge and understanding of threshold concepts.

For the core skill-based modules, there is a submission point during the module where students submit a short task that will help them to prepare for the second submission, for which they will receive formative feedback.

Our academic staff on the Foundation Year will focus on assessment criteria per module using assessment workshops in all modules. These workshops provide structured guidance in the development of both wider assessment literacy skills, such as understanding and applying assessment criteria, the interpretation of assessment questions, and practical advice (e.g., how to use Turnitin to develop academic writing, as well as targeted support for the specific module formative assessments (e.g., class discussions on the assessment task topics).

Formative Feedback will be provided throughout the module. Such opportunities are built into the asynchronous and synchronous module delivery. These may take the form of peer assessment in discussion forums/in sessions, group activities, draft submissions with feedforward feedback and tutorials with lecturers. Students will also be exposed to other relevant assessment types that may not be part of the summative assessment but are used to provide practise of assessment types they may encounter at levels 4-6. Marks for summative assessments are awarded for students' achievements of the learning outcomes, with relevant feedback.

17. Intended programme learning outcomes and the means by which they are achieved and demonstrated		
Learning outcomes	The means by which these outcomes are achieved	The means by which these outcomes are assessed
At the end of this Foundation Year course you, the student, will be able to:		
<p>1. Demonstrate an understanding of the chosen degree programme area, with the ability to investigate, interpret and analyse academic, and professional information</p>	<p>In the Foundation Year, there are opportunities to study subject-specific modules which focus on the introduction to the wider field of study in Block 1 and a deeper unpacking in the Block 2 subject-specific modules. By being in a relevant pathway to the degree programme, there will be opportunity to fully investigate threshold concepts with the interpretation of academic and professional information to ensure a sound understanding and motivation for the study of the chosen programme area.</p>	<p>The assessment strategy on the Foundation Year uses a variety of assessment methods aligned to the learning outcomes and focus on knowledge, understanding and skills. The assessment methods range from case studies, MCQs, coursework, portfolio, poster and a project. These assessment types will give students tasters and experience of the types of assessment which may appear on the degree programmes at levels 4-6. Assessments are designed to be inclusive and authentic, with real-world applicability. The use of multi-component assessments distributes the assessment workload across a semester.</p> <p>Formative Feedback is an integral part of the programme and provided in all Foundation Year modules. Such opportunities are built into the asynchronous and synchronous module delivery. These may take the form of peer assessment in discussion forums/in sessions, group activities, draft submissions with feedforward feedback and tutorials with lecturers. Students will also be exposed to other relevant assessment types that may not be part of the summative</p>

		<p>assessment but are used to provide practice of assessment types they may encounter at levels 4-6.</p>
<p>2. Increase confidence in identifying, accessing and evaluating relevant academic sources for currency, scope and credibility</p>	<p>As part of the Foundation Year in all modules, there is an expectation that academic sources are provided, utilised and exploited by students to ensure they are using adequate amounts of evidence and support in their academic work.</p> <p>The development of this learning outcome will be apparent in all sessions largely with tailored source evaluation activities and assessment workshops. These workshops provide structured guidance in the development of both wider assessment literacy skills, such as understanding and applying assessment criteria, the interpretation of assessment questions, and practical advice (e.g., how to use Turnitin to develop academic writing). These opportunities will ensure a thorough academic orientation to academic integrity, referencing of sources and using evidence and support when writing.</p>	<p>The assessment strategy on the Foundation Year uses a variety of assessment methods aligned to the learning outcomes and focus on knowledge, understanding and skills. The assessment methods range from case studies, MCQs, coursework, portfolio, poster and a project. These assessment types will give students tasters and experience of the types of assessment which may appear on the degree programmes at levels 4-6. Assessments are designed to be inclusive and authentic, with real-world applicability. The use of multi-component assessments distributes the assessment workload across a semester.</p> <p>Formative Feedback is an integral part of the programme and provided in all Foundation Year modules. Such opportunities are built into the asynchronous and synchronous module delivery. These may take the form of peer assessment in discussion forums/in sessions, group activities, draft submissions with feedforward feedback and tutorials with lecturers. Students will also be exposed to other relevant assessment types that may not be part of the summative assessment but are used to provide practise of assessment types they may encounter at levels 4-6.</p>

<p>3. Demonstrate effective communication skills in diverse types of tasks suitable for an audience</p>	<p>Students will begin to develop their academic communication skills suitable for different audiences e.g., academic, subject-area and based on scenarios which will reflect the real-world.</p>	<p>The assessment strategy on the Foundation Year uses a variety of assessment methods aligned to the learning outcomes and focus on knowledge, understanding and skills. The assessment methods range from case studies, MCQs, coursework, portfolio, poster and a project. These assessment types will give students tasters and experience of the types of assessment which may appear on the degree programmes at levels 4-6. Assessments are designed to be inclusive and authentic, with real-world applicability. The use of multi-component assessments distributes the assessment workload across a semester.</p> <p>Formative Feedback is an integral part of the programme and provided in all Foundation Year modules. Such opportunities are built into the asynchronous and synchronous module delivery. These may take the form of peer assessment in discussion forums/in sessions, group activities, draft submissions with feedforward feedback and tutorials with lecturers. Students will also be exposed to other relevant assessment types that may not be part of the summative assessment but are used to provide practise of assessment types they may encounter at levels 4-6.</p>
<p>4. With the use of scaffolded guidance and feedback, understand the requirements of higher education in line with the development of</p>	<p>On the Foundation Year, students will benefit from using the guidance and support offered as part of the programmes, and modules The development of understanding the university context and how to be successful will be thoroughly explored with practical development tools for students to improve their time</p>	<p>The assessment strategy on the Foundation Year uses a variety of assessment methods aligned to the learning outcomes and focus on knowledge, understanding and skills. The assessment methods range from case studies, MCQs, coursework, portfolio, poster and a project. These assessment types will give students tasters and experience of the types of assessment which may appear on the degree programmes at</p>

<p>self-regulation of time management and working to deadlines</p>	<p>management and keeping to deadlines. Through self-reflections, self-assessments and reflections on assessment feedback block by block, students will be able to continue/progress to their next level of study confidently equipped with the understanding and expectations of being a successful university student.</p>	<p>levels 4-6. Assessments are designed to be inclusive and authentic, with real-world applicability. The use of multi-component assessments distributes the assessment workload across a semester.</p> <p>Formative Feedback is an integral part of the programme and provided in all Foundation Year modules. Such opportunities are built into the asynchronous and synchronous module delivery. These may take the form of peer assessment in discussion forums/in sessions, group activities, draft submissions with feedforward feedback and tutorials with lecturers. Students will also be exposed to other relevant assessment types that may not be part of the summative assessment but are used to provide practise of assessment types they may encounter at levels 4-6.</p>
---	--	---

18. Graduate Attributes and the means by which they are achieved and demonstrated		
<i>Attributes must be covered and assessed in every level of study on a programme.</i>		
Graduate Attribute	The means by which these attributes are achieved	The means by which these attributes are assessed
1. Digitally literate	<p>Digital upskilling and tasters will be interweaved into all modules providing students with opportunities to use a range of IT tools effectively. There will be opportunities for students to use these tools to self-regulate their own learning, and to serve as an introduction to their digital capabilities. Students will develop their information literacy in navigating library resources effectively as part of necessary critical thinking skills for locating and using information effectively. As part of the Preparing for University Success module, students will be supported in identifying appropriate digital resources/tools required for studying at university through the Foundation Year and beyond.</p> <p>This learning outcome will be achieved in the following module explicitly on the Foundation Year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FDY3001 Preparing for University Success 	<p>Portfolio where students are expected to explore relevant digital tools for their own study success.</p> <p>Formative Feedback is an integral part of the programme and provided in all Foundation Year modules. Such opportunities are built into the asynchronous and synchronous module delivery. These may take the form of peer assessment in discussion forums/in sessions, group activities, draft submissions with feedforward feedback and tutorials with lecturers. Students will also be exposed to other relevant assessment types that may not be part of the summative assessment but are used to provide practise of assessment types they may encounter at levels 4-6.</p>
2. Contextually innovative	<p>Develop and justify structured and coherent arguments providing evidence of the ability to interpret different assumptions and perspectives.</p> <p>This learning outcome will be achieved in the following modules explicitly on the Foundation Year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FDY3008 Investigation & Innovation Project 	<p>Project and poster</p> <p>Formative Feedback is an integral part of the programme and provided in all Foundation Year modules. Such opportunities are built into the asynchronous and synchronous module delivery. These may take the form of peer assessment in discussion forums/in sessions, group activities, draft submissions with feedforward feedback and tutorials</p>

		with lecturers. Students will also be exposed to other relevant assessment types that may not be part of the summative assessment but are used to provide practise of assessment types they may encounter at levels 4-6.
3. Socially intelligent and proactively inclusive	<p>Students will have the ability to explore their own personal development route to university and proposed SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timebound) plan of continuing through their years of study for the undergraduate degrees. There will be opportunities within the Preparing for Your Future Success for team engagement, working with others and experiencing different views of others, including an understanding of equality, diversity, and inclusion. The Foundation Year will explore items from equality, diversity and inclusion to ensure that our students are respectful and inclusive of others and in different scenarios.</p> <p>This learning outcome will be achieved explicitly in the following module on the Foundation Year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FDY3007 Planning for Your Future Success 	<p>Portfolio consisting of a personal development plan in which students will submit a Personal Development Plan in which they describe a potential career pathway of choice, demonstrating that they have researched the selected career in depth and have considered their career selection in relation to their personal strengths and career preferences.</p> <p>Formative Feedback is an integral part of the programme and provided in all Foundation Year modules. Such opportunities are built into the asynchronous and synchronous module delivery. These may take the form of peer assessment in discussion forums/in sessions, group activities, draft submissions with feedforward feedback and tutorials with lecturers. Students will also be exposed to other relevant assessment types that may not be part of the summative assessment but are used to provide practise of assessment types they may encounter at levels 4-6.</p>
4. Professionally knowledgeable in their subject area	Students will be able to demonstrate the application of knowledge, skills and confidence linked to a broader subject area related to the chosen degree programme. There will be opportunities in the subject-specific modules to identify relevant theory and apply to real-world leadership, computing or social	The subject-specific modules have assessments attached which require effective written communication addressing real-world issues. The assessments used to assess this graduate attribute include a case study and coursework where students

	<p>sciences examples. Students will also be introduced to relevant data, methodologies and techniques relevant to the subject area. This learning outcome will be achieved explicitly in the following modules on the Foundation Year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FDY3003 Exploring the Social World • FDY3004 Advancing Your Academic Skills • FDY3006 Examining Social Justice • FDY3007 Planning for Your Future Success 	<p>will define the core skills and concepts associated with the discipline of social sciences. All students will also take the project module which introduces a range of problem-solving, creative, and critical thinking strategies that are then applied to students' own projects.</p> <p>Formative Feedback is an integral part of the programme and provided in all Foundation Year modules. Such opportunities are built into the asynchronous and synchronous module delivery. These may take the form of peer assessment in discussion forums/in sessions, group activities, draft submissions with feedforward feedback and tutorials with lecturers. Students will also be exposed to other relevant assessment types that may not be part of the summative assessment but are used to provide practise of assessment types they may encounter at levels 4-6.</p>
--	---	--

19. Summary of modules and mapped programme learning outcomes

(List modules in order of delivery)

Level	Module Code and Module Title	Module type <i>Compulsory (C) or Optional (O)</i>	Pinned / Paired Modules	LO1	L02	LO3	LO4	GA1	GA2	GA3	GA4
3	FDY3001 Preparing for University Success	C	Block 1: Pinned and Paired (all)		X	X	X	X			
3	FDY3003 Exploring the Social World	C	Block 1: Pinned and Paired (Social Sciences pathway only)	X	X	X					X
3	FDY3004 Advancing your Academic Skills	C	Block 2: Pinned and Paired (all)		X	X					
3	FDY3006 Examining Social Justice	C	Block 2: Pinned and Paired (Social Sciences pathway only)	X	X	X					X
3	FDY3007 Planning for Your Future Success	C	Block 3: Pinned and Paired (all)		X	X	X			X	
3	FDY3008 Investigation & Innovation Project	C	Block 3: Pinned and Paired (all)	X	X	X	X		X		

