PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION FOR

Higher National Diploma in
Computing and Systems Development

Delivered by East Kent College
(Broadstairs Campus)

Contents

1. General information

Awarding body/institution	Pearson
Teaching institution	East Kent College
Details of accreditation by a professional/statutory body	Links with the British Computer Society but direct accreditation has not been sought at this stage
Name of final award	Higher National Diploma
Programme Title	HND in Computing and Systems Development
UCAS code	I101
Subject benchmark statements	Benchmarking statements for the subject you are studying define what a student is expected to learn from studying that subject. They are defined by academic staff in the field and provided to students and universities by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). Benchmarking statements are explained and described on the Agency's website at: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements The Pearson curriculum has been devised with reference to the National Occupational Standards in the IT Sector (NQF BTEC Higher Nationals in Computing and Systems Development) QAA Subject Benchmark Statements - Computing (February 2016).
Other external or internal reference points to inform the programme	The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) – August 2008, is an important reference point for providers of higher education. The FHEQ, and associated guidance for implementation, has been written to assist higher education providers to maintain academic standards; to inform international comparability of academic standards, especially in the European context; to ensure international competitiveness; and to facilitate student and graduate mobility. The fundamental premise of the FHEQ is that qualifications should be awarded on the basis of achievement of outcomes and attainment rather than years of study. Qualification descriptors are key to this premise. Qualification descriptors set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of individual qualifications, and details of these can be found here: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Framework-Higher-Education-Qualifications-08.pdf
Mode of study	Full-time
Length of study	HND – 2 years (64 weeks)
Language of study	English
Date programme specification written	May 2016
Programme revision date	2019

2. General introduction to the programme

The HND in Computing and Systems Development programme is an established technical qualification that is highly respected throughout the computing industry. This programme of study provides you with the opportunity to develop both theoretical knowledge and technical practical skills over a wide range of computing applications. This is a Level 5 qualification and therefore is equivalent to the second year of an undergraduate degree programme. This programme is excellent preparation for employment; provides effective skill development if you are already employed; and offers direct progression on to Computing related degree programmes at University if you wish to continue your studies. Depending upon the degree applied for, it may be possible to begin studies at Year Three (level 6) of the chosen degree programme. The UK has a significant shortfall of specialist and skilled I.T. & Computing personnel, and recent industrial statistics have shown that I.T. and Computing skills are in demand, in particular when combined with the ability to manage projects.

The HND in Computing and Systems Development programme allows you to combine the highly technical skills and techniques that will be developed whilst studying on the programme, together with the wide variety of additional Microsoft industrial qualifications (MTA) that are available for you to study as part of the programme in Year 1, as well as studying an additional specialist Microprocessor Systems Engineering unit as part of your Year 2 studies. The programme is an opportunity to equip you with the appropriate professional qualifications and expertise required to enable you to either seek professional and technical employment within the Computing industry, or facilitate further progression to a higher level specialist qualification. To that end, as part of the programme, you will be provided with Student Membership of the British Computer Society, which is a recognised professional body within the Computing industry.

3. Distinctiveness of the programme

The programme aims to give you an insight into the experience and broad knowledge required to progress to employment in the I.T. and Computing industry, whilst retaining a strong focus on how fundamental computing techniques and technologies underpin all key industries.

During your HND studies, you will undertake practical and theoretical learning using industry standard techniques and resources within a range of specialist subject areas. In Year One, these will include a selection of units from the following: Business Skills for e-Commerce, Employability and Professional Development, Computer Systems, Networking Technologies, Website Design, Object Oriented Programming, Mathematics for Software Development, and Research Skills.

In Year Two, these will include a selection of more specialised units from the following: Computer Games Design and Development, 3D Computer Modelling and Animation, IT security Management, Programming in .NET, Programming in Java, Data Structures and Algorithms, Digital Forensics, and Web Application Development.

The learning developed over the period of the programme is brought together to allow you to design, develop, implement and review a working prototype using industry-standard techniques, tools and technologies within a project-based assessment as part of the Project Design, Implementation and Evaluation unit.

You will also be encouraged to undertake a number of industry-based Microsoft (MTA Microsoft Technology Associate) qualifications as part of your programme of study. The qualifications offered will depend upon your interests, but generally these include the MTA qualifications in the fields of Networking Fundamentals, Software Development Fundamentals, and Security Fundamentals.

By the end of the programme you will have developed the practical skills and key academic knowledge required to pursue a successful career within a broad range of computing disciplines. This will include the ability to demonstrate and apply your practical skills and theoretical knowledge as a technician or developer, as well as reflecting upon your performance and recognising areas for your own personal and professional development, including the ability to work within a group as well as an individual – an element that is essential within the Computing industry.

Although there are currently no formal progression agreements in place between the HND programme and local university undergraduate degree programmes, common progression routes exist for a variety of degree programmes entering at Year 1, Year 2 or Year 3 of study, depending upon the degree programme chosen. For example, progression on to Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) degree programmes include the BSc Computing, BSc Computer Forensics and Cyber-Security, and BSc Information Technology. Progression paths are available for HND achievements at Pass, Merit and Distinction grades.

The East Kent College Mission Statement is *to deliver high quality education and training that responds to the needs of employers and individuals.* This supports the QAA Equality & Diversity statement (Subject Benchmark Statement for Computing – Feb 2016), which states the following:

"The Quality Code embeds consideration of equality and diversity matters throughout. Promoting equality involves treating everyone with equal dignity and worth, while also raising aspirations and supporting achievement for people with diverse requirements, entitlements and backgrounds. An inclusive environment for learning anticipates the varied requirements of learners, and aims to ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities. Higher education providers, staff and students all have a role in, and responsibility for, promoting equality.

Equality of opportunity involves enabling access for people who have differing individual requirements as well as eliminating arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to learning. In addition, disabled students and non-disabled students are offered learning opportunities that are equally accessible to them, by means of inclusive design wherever possible and by means of reasonable individual adjustments wherever necessary."

QAA Subject Benchmark Statements - Computing (February 2016).

As such, the Programme Director for the HND in Computing and Systems Development at the Broadstairs Campus is currently engaged with the Association of Colleges (AoC) undertaking academic research, entitled: Assessing and addressing the Gender Imbalance within UCAS Applications for Level 4 HNC in Computing & Systems Development student applications at East Kent College (Broadstairs Campus) with a view to increasing female recruitment within the next three academic years.

In addition, and as part of the programme, you will be provided with Student Membership of the British Computer Society, which is a recognised professional body within the Computing industry.

4. Programme-specific resources

The programme will be taught within the specialist facilities of East Kent College, Broadstairs Campus. Additional investment has being made to enhance the facilities for Higher Education students at the College including a specialist custom-built computer and games development suite and practical workshop lab facilities in the new £6.5 million Michael Wright Centre for Creative Industries. Each workstation will be equipped with an appropriate range of specialist software, including web and games systems creation and programme development environments. In addition to these resources, the practical workshop lab facilities will have state-of-the art gaming systems, including a range of modern gaming consoles for interactive games development. There will also be a variety of PC hardware and software available to allow for the building and development of PC and data network systems within the PC Hardware & Network Development Lab in the *Enterprise* Building. All of the rooms used for HE teaching are equipped with AV facilities including data projection and interactive electronic whiteboards. Programme delivery will be supported online with programme documentation (such as unit guides and study materials) made available via the College's VLE system *Moodle*.

Additional programme specific resources include free access to *Microsoft Dreamspark Premium*, which is the provision of over 150 Microsoft developer and software applications that will be used as development resources within your studies. As part of your programme induction, you will also be provided with a *Welcome Pack*. This includes a good quality laptop, student membership to the Chartered Institute of IT (BCS), as well as a variety of UK-based trips and visits. Other resources may be provided throughout the year to enhance your learning experience[1].

There are also a number of education visits and trips during your studies, which are planned but are subject to availability & dates and therefore could change. Typical trips and visits include educational visits to local universities in October to support progression paths, as well as subject-specific trips to enhance learning whilst studying on the programme such as EGX Rezzed in London, Bletchley Park in Milton Keynes, and the Science Museum in London. There will also be a variety of Guest Speakers invited to speak to you during the course of the programme, with supporting workshops. These will include UCAS information and application, student finance, CVs, mock interviews, self-employment seminars and workshops.

5. Programme aims

The programme aims to enable you to develop a wide variety of computing skills and understanding, supported by the development of analytical and research skills through a range and variety of lectures, practical workshops and relevant activities. By the end of the programme students will have developed the practical skills and key academic and technical knowledge required to pursue a successful career within a broad range of computing disciplines, which are reflected in the broad range of units chosen to deliver on the programme. Upon successful completion of this course students may progress into industry at technician or developer level and begin working towards chartered status (CITP), or apply for a specialist degree programme at University such as Computing, Computer Science, Network and PC Hardware Engineering, Web Development, Software Development, Games Development or Forensic Computing & Cybersecurity. Depending upon the degree

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[1] Resources subject to confirmation

applied for, it may be possible to begin your studies at Year Three (level 6) of your chosen degree programme.

6. Programme outcomes

"Diplomas of Higher Education (HND) are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed
- ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context
- knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study
- an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis
- effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively
- undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations.

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.

Holders of a HND qualification at this level will have developed a sound understanding of the principles in their field of study, and will have learned to apply those principles more widely. Through this, they will have learned to evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems. Their studies may well have had a vocational orientation, for example HNDs, enabling them to perform effectively in their chosen field. Holders of qualifications at this level will have the qualities necessary for employment in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making."

The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) – August 2008

Based upon these FHEQ principles, the following specific Programme Learning Outcomes have been devised with reference to the HND generic learning outcomes.

On successful completion of the Level 5 Higher National Diploma, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles within a variety of Computing-related disciplines relevant for a successful career in systems design, development and implementation;

2. Apply theoretical understanding of underlying concepts and principles to the development of individual and group projects within an employment context;

3. Reflect on learning and performance, understanding limits of knowledge and how this may influence analysis and interpretation;

4. Engage in continuing education and training to acquire new competencies that will enable the taking on of significant responsibility within a professional role.

By the end of Level 4 (the equivalent of an HNC exit award in Computing and Systems Development) students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the underpinning knowledge and practical performance skills required to pursue a successful career as a computing technician or systems developer;

2. Apply theoretical understanding to the development of their practical activity within the subject area;

3. Reflect on their technical learning and performance in order to identify areas for further development.

Consequently, a broad range of computing units have been chosen to enhance your development and progression which will allow you to meet these learning aims and outcomes in a technical, practical skill and knowledge-based sense.

7. Teaching, learning and assessment strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated

The emphasis of this programme is on the development of your learning journey that is focussed on a broad range of computing disciplines, beginning with the understanding of the necessary underpinning theory, through to the development of related design skills, and finally with the opportunity to practice the associated practical skills. This process is clearly laid out within the individual unit specifications and associated Schemes of Work, which highlights the importance of the development of students' transferable skills (such as communication, teamwork, and practical skills) as well as intellectual skills (such as analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and problem solving) which can be attributed to your personal and professional development.

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy for this programme, therefore, follows this same journey, with units being delivered with elements of systematic similarity, whilst maintaining a variety of learning dependent upon the discipline being studied. Thus, units will be structured in terms of the delivery and assessment (both formative and summative) of initial theory elements, followed by the creation of designs using skills developed within the taught sessions, with subsequent practical and role playing sessions to hone practical development skills, from both within and outside of the learning environment dependent upon the unit and the subject matter being studied. Emphasis will be on the practical application of the assessment criteria throughout the programme, providing students with realistic scenarios and making maximum use of work-related practical experience.

The additional development of theoretical and practical skills will be underpinned by the delivery and summative assessment of a range of industry-based qualifications under the MTA (Microsoft Technology Associate) banner within a variety of computing fields (primarily Networking Fundamentals, Software Development Fundamentals, and Security

Fundamentals being the three core disciplines). These are assessed using online multiple choice timed assessments, with immediate feedback being provided to the student both in terms of the result (Pass or Fail) and a breakdown of areas of strength and areas for improvement should a re-sit be required. The MTA qualifications are undertaken by you on the Broadstairs campus of East Kent College, and are assessed by the use of online multiple-choice examinations that you will undertake on campus within a designated testing facility.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment will be further supported by the issue of a College MSDNAA (Microsoft Developer Network – Academic Alliance) "Dreamspark Premium" account, which currently provides students with a range of additional free resources, including software development applications, which will be used within the teaching, delivery and assessment of the programme.

You will learn through a variety of taught lectures and seminars, practical workshops and self-directed study sessions. Units and MTA qualifications are delivered through a combination of lectures and classroom based activities, as well as practical workshop practice (both supported and self-directed), which are all reinforced by group and individual-based learning outside of your normal timetabled sessions.

The delivery strategy will enable you to reflect upon your own performances, integrating theory and practice into a coherent learning development process. You will be assessed through written reflection, written report-based assignments, ongoing coursework, practical workshops, video-based submissions, individual and group project work, presentations, individual journals and portfolios, and group work for some assessments. Electronic resources (such as e-journals, e-books, research resources) as well as assessment submissions will be co-ordinated via the College's Moodle (VLE) site.

There is active engagement with external speakers, such as the BCS (The Chartered Institute for IT) and local employers, to help support and develop your understanding of the rationale of professional development, and also to assist with formative assessments such as mock interviews and CV workshops, both of which provide you with feedback and require a level of reflection from you.

As such, the key learning strategies used within the programme are primarily project work carried out as an individual or as part of a group (which in year two includes collaboration with a *live client)*, practical work-related learning, lectures and seminars, facilitated activities (including practical workshops and taster lectures at a local university), visits to companies, and local industry visiting speakers from within the IT and Computing sector.

The majority of emphasis will be on the practical application of the assessment criteria throughout the programme, providing you with realistic scenarios and making maximum use of work-related practical experience.

The programme uses a rising profile of assessment (see Appendix 2 - Pearson Grading Criteria for Merit and Distinction achievements) that identifies the overall grade from a combination of the learning outcomes of the assessment elements. You will be awarded a grade for each item of assessment you undertake, with the results of each assessment counting towards the overall grade for each unit. Please refer to Appendix 3 – Assessment Regulations for details on the calculation of the overall grade for the qualification.

The indicative assessment methods for a range of planned units to be delivered are indicated in the table below:

Units (units in red text are core units, and units in blue text are additional to the core programme of study, which adds to your skill development)	Coursework	Report	Presentation	Practical Workshops / Demonstration of skills	Video-based submission	Project Work	Group work	Online multiple-choice examinations
Year One								
Business Skills for e-Commerce	✔	✔	✔	✔				
Computer Systems	✔	✔		✔	✔			
Employability and Professional Development	✔	✔						
Networking Technologies	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	
Object Oriented Programming	✔	✔	✔	✔				
Website Design	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	
Mathematics for Software Developers	✔	✔		✔				
Research Skills	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	
Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA)	✔			✔				✔
Year Two								
Project Design, Implementation and Evaluation	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	
Computer Games Design and Development	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	
Data Structures and Algorithms	✔	✔		✔				
Web Application Development	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	
3D Computer Modelling and Animation	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	
Programming in Java	✔	✔	✔	✔				
Programming in .NET	✔	✔	✔	✔				
IT Security Management	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	
Digital Forensics	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Microprocessors	✔	✔		✔	✔		✔	
Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA)	✔			✔				✔

8. Programme structures and requirements, levels, units, credits and awards

"Computing is concerned with the understanding, design and exploitation of computation and computer technology - one of the most significant advances of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It is a discipline that:

- Blends elegant theories (including those derived from a range of other disciplines such as Mathematics, Engineering, Psychology, Graphical Design or well-founded experimental insight) with the solution of immediate practical problems.

- Underpins the development of both small and large scale, secure reliable and usable systems that support organisational goals.

- Helps individuals in their everyday lives.

- Is pervasive, ubiquitous and diversely applied to a range of applications, and important components are often invisible to the naked eye."

QAA Subject Benchmark Statements - Computing (February 2016).

For each iteration of the programme, the Programme Director will ensure that you complete the selected units from those listed below. The Programme Director will be able to select optional units from the list of optional units. The first year will consist of eight units at level 4 of 15 credits each, and the second year will consist of eight units at level 5 of 15 credits, with the exception of the Project Design, Implementation and Evaluation unit which is level 5 at 20 credits.

The anticipated delivery structure is for all units to be delivered in parallel, with the exception of the following combinations of optional units, which if selected, will be delivered concurrently:

- Business Skills for e-Commerce (core) / Website Design

- Database Design Concepts / Systems Analysis & Design

However, the Database Design Concepts and Website Design units are also available as stand-alone units than can be delivered in parallel within the programme delivery structure. This is to maintain a good level of programme unit flexibility and to ensure that, as far as possible, you are given as wide a variety of choice of units to study as possible.

Optional units are chosen based upon two factors. These are as follows:

- Key interests and preferred areas of study identified by interviewing staff and/or choices expressed by applicants at interview having first viewed an introductory presentation about the programme and the options available. This is the primary factor upon which unit selection is made by the Programme Team. If no specific request is made or preferences expressed by the applicants at interview, then the following point becomes the deciding factor

- Availability of specialist teaching staff for optional units within the Programme Team

As such, the following broad selection of units have been chosen in order to develop your skills, attributes and abilities whilst studying at Levels 4 and 5 that will enable you to achieve an academic qualification which will empower you to embark on your chosen progression route and, ultimately, you chosen professional career:

Compulsory units (from the Pearson specification):	Level and credit value:
Unit 1: Business Skills for e-Commerce	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 2: Computer Systems	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 3: Employability and Professional Development	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 4: Project Design, Implementation and Evaluation	Level 5 – 20 credits
Optional units (selected from the Person specification)	
Unit 5: Emerging Technologies	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 7: Research Skills	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 8: Management of Projects	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 9: Systems Analysis and Design	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 14: Website Design	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 17: Database Design Concepts	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 18: Procedural Programming	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 19: Object Oriented Programming	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 20: Event Driven Programming Solutions	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 21: Software Applications Testing	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 23: Mathematics for Software Development	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 24: Networking Technologies	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 26: Design a Small or Home Office Network	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 28: IT Support for End Users	Level 4 – 15 credits
Unit 32: Quality Systems in IT	Level 5 – 15 credits
Unit 33: Data Analysis and Design	Level 5 – 15 credits
Unit 34: Data Structures and Algorithms	Level 5 – 15 credits
Unit 35: Web Applications Development	Level 5 – 15 credits
Unit 38: 3D Computer Modelling and Animation	Level 5 – 15 credits
Unit 39: Computer Games Design and Development	Level 5 – 15 credits
Unit 41: Programming in Java	Level 5 – 15 credits
Unit 42: Programming in .NET	Level 5 – 15 credits
Unit 48: IT Security Management	Level 5 – 15 credits
Unit 49: Digital Forensics	Level 5 – 15 credits

You will learn through a variety of taught lectures and seminars, practical workshops and self-directed study sessions. Units and MTA qualifications are delivered through a combination of lectures and classroom based activities, as well as practical workshop practice (both supported and self-directed), which are all reinforced by group and individual-based learning outside of your normal timetabled sessions.

You will be assessed through written reflection, written report-based assignments, ongoing coursework, practical workshops, video-based submissions, project work, presentations, and group work. The MTA qualifications are assessed by the use of online multiple-choice examinations that you will undertake on campus within a designated testing facility.

The majority of emphasis will be on the practical application of the assessment criteria throughout the programme, providing you with realistic scenarios and making maximum use of work-related practical experience.

"Diplomas of Higher Education (HND) are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

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- ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context
- knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study
- an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis
- effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively
- undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations.

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.

Holders of a HND qualification at this level will have developed a sound understanding of the principles in their field of study, and will have learned to apply those principles more widely. Through this, they will have learned to evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems. Their studies may well have had a vocational orientation, for example HNDs, enabling them to perform effectively in their chosen field. Holders of qualifications at this level will have the qualities necessary for employment in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making."

The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) – August 2008

9. Student support

You can access general study support and support for additional/specific learning needs via the College's 'Student Central'. The College will make available individual and/or small group support for study skills including academic writing. You will also have a weekly programme of individual and small group tutorial sessions provided by the Personal Tutor and/or Programme Director in order to support and monitor your progress. The purpose of the tutorial provision is to:

- ensure effective communication between staff and student;
- provide a systematic review of student progress;
- support the resolution of personal issues affecting academic work either through advice and guidance or through referral to the most appropriate member of the College's Student Support Team;
- encourage onward progression to employment or university (level 5).

Where students present with DSA funding evidence for additional support, support workers will be provided to help meet a student's specific needs.

10. Work-based learning

There is no specific provision for work-based learning within the context of this programme, other than the industry-based experience of the academic teaching team and the industry-relevant skills and techniques developed by you during the course of your studies. This is supported by the use of industry standard equipment and software that you will be using within your programme of study.

11. Entry criteria

East Kent College encourages and welcome applications from all students with the potential to succeed on this course. Applications are considered individually and we take into account academic qualifications in addition to paying great attention to the personal statement and the reference(s) provided with the application.

An offer of a place on the Higher National Diploma is offered upon successful completion at Pass level or above of a Higher National Certificate (HNC) programme (recognised as year one of the HND programme – see entry criteria for the HNC below) in a computer related subject area, and you should possess or be working towards GCSE grades C and above in English and Maths.

An offer of a place on the Higher National Certificate is offered in terms of grades up to a certain number of UCAS tariff points. A typical offer for entry to an HNC is 120 UCAS tariff points and, as with the HND entry criteria above, you should possess or be working towards GCSE grades C and above in English and Maths.

In order to meet this entry requirement you would, for example, need to have gained two A-levels at Grade D or above, OR achieved at least PPP for a BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma, OR at least PP for a BTEC Level 3 Diploma OR at least M for a BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma.

Applicants studying on an Access to Higher Education programme will need to achieve a Pass in your qualification in order to progress to a Higher National Certificate. Applicants who do

not possess any one of these qualifications, but do have related work experience, will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Applicants should be aged 18 or over (prior to enrolment in September) to apply for the HND programme, and external applicants (i.e. those not studying on the HNC in Computing & Systems Development programme at East Kent College – Broadstairs Campus) will be asked to participate in a College interview. External applicants should also provide a satisfactory academic report or appropriate references.

If you are successful at interview and meet the entry requirements when your exam results come through you will be invited to start your programme. You will receive an induction from your Programme Director and a student handbook. The purposes of these are to make you welcome and accommodated to your programme. You will receive more specific details on how the programme runs (timetable), an assessment plan, details on tutorials, support available to you, as well as details on College policies on plagiarism, assessment, and how to make a complaint. If you have any questions do ask!

12. How should you apply?

Applications from external candidates should be submitted through UCAS using the following

Institution code name: CANT

Institution code: C12

Campus code: 1

Course code: I101

Internal candidates (current HNC students) will register their interest to progress on to the HND in Computer and Systems Development programme with the HND Programme Director.

13. Tier 4 status

Canterbury College, as the registering body with UCAS, do not currently hold tier 4 status and are unable to sponsor international student visa applications at this time.

Non-native speakers of English who do not require a visa or have their own visa will need to meet the funding criteria and need to provide evidence of a standard of English commensurate of an IELTS score of 5.5 with a minimum of 5.0 being awarded on individual sections.

14. Accreditation of prior learning

Evidence of current or prior learning at Level 4 (Higher National Certificate) needs to be made available at interview. Acceptance on to the HND programme will be dependent upon on all HNC core units being successfully completed together with the appropriate number of optional units to the collective value of 120 credits, correctly using the Pearson published "rules of combination" for the HNC programme studied. These must directly relate to the core units for the HNC in Computing & Systems Development programme, and the awarding of Accredited Prior Learning is subject to agreement by Pearson.

15. Collaborative arrangements

The programme is to be delivered by East Kent College via its partnership arrangement with Canterbury College. East Kent College is the sole deliverer of the programme however will benefit from access to Canterbury College's Virtual Learning Environment, library, and adhere to its quality assurance requirements. Students can discuss this arrangement at interview.

16. Programme Management

The programme is managed by a Programme Director who co-ordinates the work of the programme team and overseas all aspects of delivery. The Programme Director reports to the Programme Area Manager who in turn reports to the Campus Principal. Overall oversight of all HE programmes delivered at East Kent College is via the Dean of Higher Education at Canterbury College.

Campus Principal (Broadstairs)	Lucy McLeod
Programme Area Manager (Computing)	Trevor Haydon
Programme Leader / Assessor/ Internal Verifier / Personal Tutor	Tim Jackson
Assessor/ Internal Verifier / Personal Tutor	Peter Gibbins
Assessor/ Internal Verifier	Peter Brewster

17. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of learning, including consideration of stakeholder feedback from, for example, current students, graduates and employers

The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) undertook their Higher Education Review of East Kent College in April 2014. The College met all necessary criteria based upon the UK Quality Code, which is available to download on the QAA website at:
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality

The QAA report is available to download on the QAA website at:
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports/provider?UKPRN=10006570#.Vy-YZIQrLIV

The College's action plan following this review is available to view and download from the College's website at:
http://www.eastkent.ac.uk/sites/default/files/EastKentCollegeHigherEducationActionPlan2014.pdf

An update to the College's action plan in June 2015 is available to view and download from the College's website at:
http://www.eastkent.ac.uk/sites/default/files/QAA%20HE%20Review%202014.pdf

Staff-student liaison will occur three times a year within a termly Programme Management Committee and as part of the College's annual Higher Education Programme Quality Self-Assessment Review (HE PQSAR) process. The Programme Director is responsible for leading the completion of the HE PQSAR programme review document in collaboration with the Programme Team, with student input through student representation at programme meetings and the completion of student questionnaires issued after induction, at the mid-

point and at the conclusion of the academic year, which will help inform the programme review document. Feedback will be received from the Campus Principal, from which targets will be set and reviewed at the next meeting. This will occur on a tri-annual basis.

Within the document, as well as within the Programme Team Meetings (staff-student liaison meetings), clear reference will be made and targets will be set (where appropriate) in relation to the QAA report and the targets it set. Regular reviews will be undertaken, within the context of these meetings and the HE PQSAR documentation, to ensure continued compliance with the QAA targets.

Each member of the Programme Team will participate in developmental teaching observations throughout the academic year as part of the College's Professional Enhancement Framework, with best practice encouraged and shared by the Programme Area's Learning Coach as well as the Senior Innovator for Teaching, Learning and Assessment. Additionally the Senior Innovator will provide college-wide oversight of the operation of Pearson BTEC programmes and will be available to support effective quality management of the programme.

Institutional oversight of the College's HE provision will be managed through a Higher Education Committee with membership including a representative of each of the HE programmes being run at the College across the campuses.

Assessment documents will be written by each of the unit Assessors to cover the Pearson published learning outcomes for each unit that will be taught on the programme. These assessment documents will then be checked by an Internal Verifier to ensure that the documents to be published will meet the learning outcomes and are appropriate for student understanding. This process is referred to as the Internal Verification process.

During the academic year, an external representative from Pearson will attend the College to check a sample of student work from the units that will be taught on the programme. The External Verifier will comment on the suitability of the assessments for the programme and will make a judgement as to whether the programme, and the assessments, are fit for purpose. Their review will be fedback to the Programme Director, with action points if appropriate, which will be set as targets by the Programme Director. This process is referred to as the External Verification process.

The HE Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Officer ensures the College meets its external requirements in terms of quality assurance whilst supporting at an institutional level to improve the student experience.

Overall responsibility for the quality provision of the programme ultimately will lie with the Programme Director.

Appendix 1

Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 4:

The descriptor provided for this level of the FHEQ is for any Certificate of Higher Education which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor can also be used as a reference point for other level 4 qualifications.

Certificates of Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study
- an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work
- communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments
- undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment.

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.

Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 5 HND:

The descriptor provided for this level of the FHEQ is for any HND which should meet the descriptor in full.

HNDs are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed
- ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context
- knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study
- an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis
- effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively
- undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations.

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.

See appendix 2 for the grading criteria.

Appendix 2

Grading Criteria

Pass	
A pass grade is achieved by meeting all the requirements defined in the assessment criteria for a pass for each unit.	
Merit grade	
Merit descriptors In order to achieve a **merit** the learner must:	**Indicative characteristics** The learner's evidence shows:
• identify and apply strategies to find appropriate solutions	• effective judgments have been made • complex problems with more than one variable have been explored • an effective approach to study and research has been applied
• select/design and apply appropriate methods/techniques	• relevant theories and techniques have been applied • a range of methods and techniques have been applied • a range of sources of information has been used • the selection of methods and techniques/ sources has been justified • the design of methods/techniques has been justified • complex information/data has been synthesised and processed • appropriate learning methods/techniques have been applied
• present and communicate appropriate findings	• the appropriate structure and approach has been used • coherent, logical development of principles/ concepts for the intended audience • a range of methods of presentation have been used and technical language has been accurately used • communication has taken place in familiar and unfamiliar contexts • the communication is appropriate for familiar and unfamiliar audiences and appropriate media have been used

Distinction grade	
Distinction descriptors In order to achieve a **distinction** the learner must:	• **Indicative characteristics** • The learner's evidence shows:
• use critical reflection to evaluate own work and justify valid conclusions	• conclusions have been arrived at through synthesis of ideas and have been justified • the validity of results has been evaluated using defined criteria • self-criticism of approach has taken place • realistic improvements have been proposed against defined characteristics for success
• take responsibility for managing and organising activities	• autonomy/independence has been demonstrated • substantial activities, projects or investigations have been planned, managed and organised • activities have been managed • the unforeseen has been accommodated • the importance of interdependence has been recognised and achieved
• Demonstrate convergent/lateral/ creative thinking	• ideas have been generated and decisions taken • self-evaluation has taken place • convergent and lateral thinking have been applied • problems have been solved • innovation and creative thought have been applied • receptiveness to new ideas is evident • effective thinking has taken place in unfamiliar contexts

Appendix 3: Assessment regulations

To achieve a level 4 qualification a learner must:

- achieve 120 credits at or above the level of the qualification
- achieve a minimum of 65 credits at Level 4
- complete a valid combination of units.

The best valid combination of units is used to calculate the overall grade, e.g. if a learner has completed more than the minimum number of optional units the best performance from these will be used.

All learners will receive a Notification of Performance showing all unit grades whether or not they were included in the calculation for the overall grade.

Calculation of the BTEC HNC qualification grade

The calculation of the qualification grade is based on the learner's best performance in units at or above the level of the qualification to the value of 75 credits:

- The best 75 credits must come from a maximum of 120 credits as a valid rule of combination.
- The units from which the 75 best credits are selected come from the whole qualification including the core/mandatory credit.

This means that credit from some mandatory units is likely to form part of the best 75 credits in most programmes.

It is the responsibility of a centre to ensure that a correct unit combination is adhered to.

To achieve a level 5 qualification a learner must:

- achieve 240 credits from a valid combination of completed units
- achieve a minimum of 125 credits at Level 5

The best valid combination of units is used to calculate the overall grade, e.g. if a learner has completed more than the minimum number of optional units, the best performance from these will be used.

All learners will receive a Notification of Performance showing all unit grades whether or not they were included in the calculation for the overall grade.

Calculation of the HND qualification grade

The calculation of the qualification grade is based on the learner's best performance in units at or above the level of the qualification - i.e. only units at level 5 can be counted towards the value of 75 credits:

- The best 75 credits must come from a maximum of 240 credits as a valid rule of combination.
- The units from which the 75 best credits are selected come from the whole qualification, including the core / mandatory units, but must be level 5 units.

This means that credit from some core / mandatory units is likely to form part of the best 75 credits in most programmes.

It is the responsibility of a centre to ensure that a correct unit combination is adhered to.

Qualification grades

Learners will be awarded a pass, merit or distinction qualification grade using the points gained through the 75 best credits based on unit achievement.

Unit points available per credit for specified unit grades, for either Level 4 or level 5 units.

Unit points per credit		
Pass	Merit	Distinction
0	1	2
Example for level 4 or 5 unit of 15 credits		
Pass	Merit	Distinction
0	15	30
Points range Grade		
0-74	Pass	P
75-149	Merit	M
150	Distinction	D
Only level 5 units can count towards the HND		