

Programme Specification for FdA in Payroll Management

This document applies to Academic Year 2023/24 onwards

1.	Awarding institution/body	University of Worcester
2.	Teaching institution	Heart of Worcestershire College and the Chartered Institute of Payroll Professionals
3.	Programme accredited by	Chartered Institute of Payroll Professionals (for equivalence with professional awards only)
4.	Final award or awards	FdA
5.	Programme title	FdA in Payroll Management
6.	Pathways available and/or Linked Honours Degree progression route/s	N/A
7.	Mode and/or site of delivery	Predominately distance learning alongside face-to-face delivery.
8.	Mode of attendance and duration	Part time, 3-year duration for normal period of study.
9.	UCAS Code	N/A
10.	Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement	Characteristics Statement: Foundation Degree (2020) QAA The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (2014) QAA
11.	Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision	February 2022 – Course Review August 2022 – AQU amendments July 2023 – annual updates

12. Educational aims of the programme

The FdA in Payroll Management is a programme designed around the needs of employers in the payroll sector. This qualification will provide students with an excellent foundation in core payroll, including the operation of PAYE for Income Tax and National Insurance, the entitlement under legislation of statutory payments and the reporting obligations of an employer. Students will also gain managerial skills and knowledge in adapting management styles, communication, project management and departmental budget awareness.

Students will be taught by qualified payroll specialists who have experience of working for a variety of organisations and will benefit from their first-hand knowledge and experience. The programme encourages students to relate new knowledge and skills to their own workplace situation and to develop a wider understanding of how their organisations function. Throughout this qualification students will be required to analyse processes within their workplace for improvement, providing students with the skills to apply theory to real-life scenarios.

In particular, the purpose of this programme is to provide students with:

- The knowledge, understanding and skills to become more effective in their professional roles.
- The capacity to develop and apply technical and managerial skills.
- A critical understanding and a proactive approach to the contribution their sector makes to their organisation.
- The ability to be an independent learner, explore their potential and increase their awareness and confidence.

- The basis for further professional development and encouragement to take responsibility for their own CPD and those for whom they are responsible.
- Progression opportunities to other HE programmes or professional awards.

The programme is designed for all payroll employees, irrespective of managerial background who:

- Are currently employed in the payroll sector
- Wish to develop or consolidate their professional skills
- Aspire to positions of management within the payroll sector and so improve their career development prospects
- Seek to develop and/or update the technical skills required by the payroll sector.

Foundation Degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- Knowledge and critical understanding of the established principles in their field of study, and understanding of the limits of their knowledge
- Knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject and the ability to use established techniques to undertake critical analysis of information to propose solutions
- The ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems and to apply these in a work context
- The ability to apply their knowledge and skills to new situations, including in the workplace
- Effective communication skills in a variety of forms and for a range of audiences.

Foundation degree graduates have the qualities necessary for employment in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making. They can undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences. [Characteristics Statement: Foundation Degree \(2020\) QAA](#)

13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Learning Outcomes: Diploma in Higher Education Fda in Payroll Management.

To be eligible for the exit award of Diploma in Higher Education in the named subject/area of study, a student must have passed at least 240 credits in total including the mandatory modules for level 4 and level 5 of the award as specified on the award map.

Knowledge and Understanding		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Demonstrate, to a proficient level, the specialist knowledge, and skills necessary for a career in the payroll sector such as an extensive understanding of payroll legislation and the operational practice of Pay as You Earn (PAYE)	FDPP1112 FDPP1113 FDPP1114 FDPP2221
2.	Demonstrate effectiveness when managing a team of payroll specialists and the efficiency and compliance of creating processes which demonstrate quality improvement and performance management. Recognise the importance of appropriate application of each practice	FDPP1115 FDPP1226 FDPP1228 FDPP2222 FDPP2334
3.	Examine and evaluate the contribution of the payroll function to the wider organisation; for example, in areas such as financial budgeting, data protection and security, audit and risk, training and development of workforce and strategy planning	FDPP2222 FDPP2333 FDPP2335 FDPP2336

Cognitive and Intellectual skills		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Apply reflective approaches to analyse and evaluate professional development needs across the payroll sector and identify behaviours and knowledge which will advance personal growth	FDPP1228 FDPP2337 FDPP2336
2.	Apply critical thinking to legislative developments, providing objective and robust thinking and challenging options implement pragmatic and compliant processes and practices	FDPP1227 FDPP2334 FDPP2336

Skills and capabilities related to employability		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Review a range of techniques and approaches and select the appropriate method to conduct critical analysis of real data	FDPP2222 FDPP2336 FDPP2334
2.	Explore a range of management styles. Reflect on the application of behaviour depending on audience	FDPP1115 FDPP1228 FDPP2336
3.	Use critical analysis to explore and investigate workplace problems. Apply relevant techniques to find a pragmatic and compliant resolution	FDPP1111 FDPP1226 FDPP1227 FDPP2334 FDPP2336
4.	Explore and reflect on fundamental payroll concepts and identify the key principles and apply them to an employment context	FDPP1111 FDPP1227 FDPP2221

Transferable/key skills		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Take personal responsibility and ownership for individual growth by investigating a variety of sources and resources to improve one's own knowledge skills and behaviours and expand experience	FDPP2337 FDPP1226 FDPP1227 FDPP2334
2.	Evaluate a range of communication styles for a given situation within a team environment and select the most effective approach for optimum outcome	FDPP1115 FDPP1228 FDPP2335

Learning, teaching and assessment

The learning strategy is based upon blended learning methods whereby students are supplied with the required course material as specified by the CIPP. Each module is thus supported with a bespoke package of learning materials containing both knowledge and activity. This, in turn, is complemented by a student workbook for competence-based modules and it is through the completion of the workbook that the student can test their developing competences.

The CIPP is the UK's largest originator of payroll literature and learning material and provides all students with extensive material. The Course has been weighted such that the early study is heavily biased towards the payroll discipline whilst at Year Three the bias is heavily towards the managerial discipline. In this way students are able to develop greater independence in learning, undertake wider research and prepare for progression at a pace that suits their developing learning maturity.

Much of the content of the FdA in Payroll Management is technical in nature and this has dictated the allocation of staff from HOW and the CIPP and their respective module responsibility on the programme. Institutional responsibilities per module are displayed in the programme structure chart.

Teaching

Students are taught through a combination of detailed study material, interactive module workshops, tutorials, practical activities, etc.

Interactive module workshops are held in key locations and online and take a variety of formats. These sessions are intended to enable the application of learning through discussion and group activities. Module workshops are a full day in duration.

Tutorials are held regionally or online in smaller groups and with the group's allocated tutor. These sessions enable the discussion and development of understanding of the module subject. They also focus on the module assessment criteria, providing the students with the confidence to undertake self-led study, research, and revision. Tutorials are 2-3 hours in duration dependant on the module.

The course encourages students to develop the independent learning capabilities that will equip them for lifelong learning and future employment, as well as academic achievement. A mixture of independent study, teaching and academic support from the course tutors enables students to reflect on progress and build up a profile of skills, achievements and experiences that will help them to flourish and be successful.

These features are supported by both formal tutorial and tutorial support available both on-line and on the telephone.

Contact time

Students will typically have around eight- ten hours contact hours of teaching. The precise contact hours depend on the module technicality.

Students are expected to attend a module workshop and tutorial per module, these sessions represent time spent being taught by a tutor. Each module comprises of eight- ten hours of supported learning, leading to a programme total of approx. 150 hours.

Independent self-study

In addition to the contact time, students are expected to undertake around 15 hours of personal self-study per week. Self-led study comprises, research, revision, preparation for assessments and the completion of the assessments. Self-study should equate to approx. 150 hours per module, leading to a programme total of 2250 hours.

Independent learning is supported by a range of excellent resources, including the library resources provided by HoW College, module specific digital learning guidance, the online learning platform 'Study Skills' and 'Shared Space' resources.

Teaching staff

Students will be taught by a teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course. The team includes teaching staff from HoW College and the CIPP.

Assessment

The course provides opportunities to test understanding and learning informally through the completion of practice or 'formative' assignments. Each module has one or more formal or 'summative' assessment which is graded and counts towards the overall module grade.

Assessment methods include academic report or examination.

The summative assessment requirements for each year of the course are:

Year 1: Two academic report assessed modules plus three examination assessed modules.

Year 2: Four academic report assessed modules plus one examination assessed modules.

Year 3: Three academic report assessed modules, one personal development portfolio assessed module plus one Work Based project assessed module.

14. Assessment strategy

A grid showing assessment methods and weightings mapped to modules at each level is included in the Student Handbook.

The Assessment strategy has been designed to challenge students both technically and academically. Due to the courses work-based learning structure, assessment for this programme is through a mix of work-based assignments and examinations.

Examinations are the most appropriate assessment technique to provide proof of technical competence. Whilst work-based assignments provide greater freedom for students to demonstrate their own development in areas such as critical analysis and to relate their learning to their workplace. Thus, the assessment strategy has been devised to address the constraints above and be appropriate to the technical nature of the subject.

72% of the course assessments, are work based assignment assessed modules. Work based learning is therefore integrated with the assessment strategy where possible. Although all the assessments are work related it is accepted that the assignments are the assessments where students will be able to directly apply their workplace experiences to their study.

The FdA in Payroll Management has 10 out of 15 modules that have an assessment element linked directly to the student's workplace. The assessment criteria are available in the Student Handbook.

An appropriate balance of formative and summative assessment forms the course assessment structure. In marking assessed work, internal and external verification, and moderation form part of the quality assurance procedure. This structure includes student and tutor feedback, comments from the external examiners and other review processes. Assessed work will be subject to the University of Worcester procedures. The University of Worcester Link Tutor is also given full access to these materials and asked to comment formally through UW channels and informally on an ongoing basis. Where there is some doubt as to the authorship of an assessment the programme will follow the University of Worcester published policy for investigating plagiarism.

15. Programme structures and requirements

The FD in Payroll Management comprises 15 mandatory modules. Students who complete the 15 modules, and thus accumulate 240 credit points, are eligible for the award of FdA in Payroll Management.

Students who exit, having completed 120 credit points, are eligible for a Certificate in Higher Education.

The programme is designed to allow students to complete the FD in Payroll Management award in part time mode over a period of up to 3 years.

Award Map for a Foundation Degree

Course Title: FdA in Payroll Management						
Level 4						
Year One						
Code	Title	Level	Credits	Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	Assessment	Responsibility
FDPP1111	Introduction to Payroll and Pensions	4	15	M	Assignment	CIPP
FDPP1112	Assessment of Pay and Benefits	4	15	M	Exam	CIPP
FDPP1113	Deductions from Pay	4	15	M	Exam	CIPP
FDPP1114	Absence processing	4	15	M	Exam	CIPP
FDPP1115	Working in a Team	4	15	M	Assignment	HOW
Upon successful completion of the five year one modules students will be awarded the Practitioner Certificate in Payroll by the CIPP.						
Year Two						
FDPP1226	Provision of Effective & Efficient Administration	4	15	M	Assignment	CIPP
FDPP1227	Contractual Aspects of Payroll Administration	4	15	M	Assignment	CIPP
FDPP1228	Leading the Team	4	15	M	Assignment	HOW
Level 5						
Year Two cont:						
FDPP2221	Advanced Payroll Processing	5	15	M	2 x Exam	CIPP
FDPP2222	Define & Manage Systems, Risk & Security	5	15	M	Assignment	CIPP
Upon successful completion of the five year two modules students will be awarded the Advanced Practitioner Certificate in Payroll by the CIPP.						
Year Three						
FDPP2333	Flexible Benefits, Finance & Budgets	5	15	M	Assignment	CIPP
FDPP2334	Improving Services and Operations	5	15	M	Assignment	HOW
FDPP2335	Understanding Customers and Clients	5	15	M	Assignment	HOW

FDPP2336	Work based project	5	30	M	Project	HOW/CIPP
FDPP2337	Personal Effectiveness and Professional Development	5	15	M	Portfolio	CIPP
Upon successful completion of the five year three modules students will be awarded the Diploma in Payroll Management by the CIPP.						

Requirements at Level 4

All level 4 modules are mandatory. Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at Level 4.

Requirements at Level 5

All level 5 modules are mandatory. Students must successfully complete 120 credits in total at Level 5.

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

Statement on the academic level of the course with reference to how the relevant [FHEQ qualification descriptor](#), [Subject Benchmark Statement](#) and/or relevant [Characteristics Statement](#) (describing the distinctive features of various qualifications) has been applied. Specific reference must be made to the [QAA Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement](#). This section can also include reference to PSRB requirements and/or other professional or national reference points where applicable; provide full title and date of any relevant benchmarks in each case.

This award is located at Level 5 of the [OfS sector recognised standards](#).. There is no appropriate QAA Subject Benchmark for the subject matter within this Foundation Degree, however the CIPP is the leading body, nationally, for payroll related qualifications and, as such, is acting in the role of a Lead Body. The CIPP has an employer membership base of over 5000 organisations, and it is through consultation with these members that the competences required of an employee working in the payroll sector have been established. These competences have been further refined into key areas of knowledge and understanding and it is these that have been used to inform both course design and assessment strategy for the FdA in Payroll Management.

The programme adheres to the requirements for undergraduate qualifications set out by [The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies \(2014\) QAA](#). The FdA in Payroll Management is located at Level 5. The Programme Learning Outcomes (Section 13) have been devised with full reference to the Descriptors for a qualification at Level 5.

The programme is also aligned with, both in design and execution, to the [Characteristics Statement: Foundation Degree \(2020\) QAA](#)

17. Support for students

The following support services are in place to provide for students on the programme:

Support is available via the CIPP Education Services team at education@cipp.org.uk or by telephone on 0121 712 1023 or the students allocated tutor.

The CIPP also offer the following support services and resources:

- Induction programme per year with inputs from HOW, CIPP and UW
- Designated personal tutor – contractually bound to provide both evening and weekend access to students via e-mail and/or telephone. Precise times of availability are agreed

between tutor and tutor group. The personal tutor may, in some cases, also be the module tutor but this is generally the exception

- Direct telephone re-routing to CIPP education team in the event of tutor unavailability.
- Guaranteed 48-hour response time for all enquiries within business hours
- Project selection advice and guidance for the Work based project if the student's manager does not wish to contribute
- Access to other members of the tutor group for mutual support
- Comprehensive study-pack accompanying each competence-based module
- Access to a range of CIPP membership benefits including:
 - The CIPP Policy Hub resources offering updates on legislation and industry change/discussion.
 - A weekly e-mail magazine sharing payroll changes and issues
- Access to HoW College online learning platform for wider research opportunities
- Access to CIPP and HoW College student support offering a range of support services.

In addition, a range of services are available at Heart of Worcestershire College as detailed below:

Student Services at Heart of Worcestershire College is the central department that provides non-academic support of students. The department includes the following:

Careers Service & Support

Helping you to make future career plans and put them into practice.

<https://www.howcollege.ac.uk/student-life/careers-service-support/>

Tel: 01527 572662 or 01527 572674

Email: careers@howcollege.ac.uk

College Wellbeing Service

Available to all part-time and full-time students and provides access for any student experiencing difficulties or concerns relating to general health, well-being and mental health issues.

<https://www.howcollege.ac.uk/student-life/student-support/college-wellbeing-service/>

Email: welbeingw&m@howcollege.ac.uk

Disability Support

Support is available through our HE Engagement Officer.

<https://www.howcollege.ac.uk/student-life/student-support/support-for-he-students/>

Email: hehub@howcollege.ac.uk

Student financial advice

Help with all issues relating to financial support such as grants, student loans, state benefits, etc.

<https://www.howcollege.ac.uk/student-life/student-finance/higher-education-finance/>

Tel: 01905 725575

Email: hehub@howcollege.ac.uk

18. Admissions

Admissions policy

The CIPP, HoW College and University of Worcester aims to be accessible; it is committed to widening participation and encouraging diversity in the student population. We actively encourage and welcome people from the widest range of economic and cultural backgrounds and value the contribution of mature learners.

Entry requirements

Applications to the course are generally from mature students who are currently working in a payroll environment, and as a result there are no formal educational qualifications specified for entry; the general admissions requirement of the programme is either:

- Mature students with current payroll experience or,
- Holders of the CIPP Payroll Technician Certificate awarded by the CIPP or equivalent qualification.

It is a further requirement for admission that the applicant be working in, or have access to, a payroll environment.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in relation to the FdA in Payroll Management is when students are awarded credits for knowledge or skills attained either during a previous qualification, training course or workplace experience. Undertaking the RPL assessment allows potential students the opportunity to progress directly to year two of the Foundation Degree in Payroll Management.

The RPL assessment is available to those working in either a payroll bureau, accountancy firm or in-house payroll team who have successfully completed the Level 3 Payroll Technician Certificate qualification or have over two years' workplace experience in payroll and are competent in manual payroll calculations.

RPL Assessment

The assessment is broken down into five short, timed tests delivered via the CIPP online learning platform. The five tests are based on module content from year one of the Foundation Degree in Payroll Management. Details can be found in section 15 Award Map.

Requirements to pass RPL assessment

- The minimum pass mark is 70% for each module.
- Students are required to pass each of the five modules, using the knowledge and skills they have gained prior to undertaking this assessment.

On successful completion of the RPL assessment, students will be awarded 75 credits and entitled to progress directly into year two of the Foundation Degree in Payroll Management. These awarded credits must be used to enrol onto year two of the Foundation Degree in Payroll Management within two years as due to legislation changes the RPL assessment expires after this time.

Admissions procedures

Entry to the programme requires all applicants to apply to the CIPP using HoW College application forms, to provide information about current work experience, qualifications and motivation. These will be checked by the Course Manager who must be satisfied that the applicant is at the appropriate stage in their development to benefit from the programme and capable of undertaking a programme of academic work.

Admissions/selection criteria

Applications will be conditional against successful meeting of entry requirements and email confirmation of enrolment from the CIPP.

Any evidence from personal or employer statements, certificates and/or references included with the application form will be considered to ascertain a candidate's ability to demonstrate commitment to study, knowledge, and the academic capability to succeed on the Course.

System requirements

A computer with the following basic specs should suffice for any online learning content.
Minimum

Operating systems (OS): Microsoft Windows 8 or later, Mac OS 10.10 or later
(Note: previous MS Windows OS versions no longer receive support from Microsoft; consequently, they are no longer reliable)

Disk space: 1GB

Memory (RAM): 2GB

CPU: 2.0GHz (Intel or AMD processor)
GPU: Latest Nvidia, Intel or AMD updated card

Recommended

Operating systems (OS): Microsoft Windows 10 latest version and Mac OS latest version
Disk space: 250GB or higher
Memory (RAM): 4GB or higher
CPU: 2.5GHz or higher (Intel or AMD processor)
GPU: Latest Nvidia, Intel or AMD updated card

Other software: latest version of Adobe Acrobat or any other PDF reader
Screen resolution: Most courses are designed for a minimum screen resolution of 1028x768

19. Regulation of assessment

Formative assessment is an important feature of the programme and has a developmental purpose and is designed to help learners learn more effectively by giving them feedback on their performance and how it can be improved and/or maintained.

Formative assessment takes place through the personal tutor, feedback on progress with the module workbooks and, feedback on examination performance.

In line with the University of Worcester [Assessment Policy](#) assessments for the individual modules have been designed to enable students to demonstrate that they have successfully met each learning outcome.

All examination assessments are marked as either Pass or Fail with a minimum pass mark of 70%. This may appear high, but it is a guarantee to the profession that a high standard of technical competence has been achieved.

The minimum pass mark for work assessed by assignment is D- in line with normal University practice.

The course operates under the University's Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module or a Pass for examinations for each module.
- A student is required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- A student who submits course work late but within 7 days (one week) of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- A student who submits work later than 7 days (one week) will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

Retrieval of failure

- A student is entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.

- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student will be notified of the reassessment opportunities in the confirmation of results notification issued via email. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and comply with any reassessments.

Requirements for Progression

- A student will be permitted to progress from Level 4 to Level 5 if, by the time of the reassessment Board of Examiners, they have passed at least 90 credits at Level 4. Outstanding Level 4 credits must normally be studied in the following academic year.
- A student who, by the time of the reassessment Board of Examiners, has failed 90 credits or more (after exhausting all reassessment opportunities) during the academic year, will have their registration with the University terminated
- If a student has not passed at least 90 credits by the reassessment Board of Examiners, the student is not permitted to progress to the next level and will be required to either complete outstanding reassessment or retake the failed modules the following academic year. Students will be able to carry forward any passed modules.

Requirements for Awards

The following awards will be available to students who meet the following requirements:

Award	Requirement
Cert HE	In order to be eligible for the exit award of Certificate in Higher Education in the named subject/area of study, a student must have passed at least 120 credits in total including the mandatory modules for level 4 of the award as specified on the award map.
Foundation Degree in Payroll Management (FdA)	120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5 as specified on the award map.

These awards are not classified.

20. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

At the course level the majority of the CIPP tutors are practising payroll experts, most of whom are also active payroll managers. This approach brings a very high level of currency and experience both to the course and to student learning.

Graduate destinations

The Foundation Degree in Payroll Management prepares graduates for a career in operational management within their chosen field. The course offers the technical learning for a successful career in the payroll industry, but the knowledge skills and behaviours achieved by graduates through the management modules can be applied worldwide throughout a variety of organisations.

Progression to Linked Honours Degree(s)/Top-Up Degree(s)

For those students wishing to progress to further study the Foundation Degree in Payroll Management articulates with the BA Hons in Applied Business Management run by Lincoln University, a formal 'top-up' arrangement exists between the CIPP and Derby University. Students may further progress to the MSc in Strategic Leadership available at University of Loughborough.

Student employability

The course has been designed primarily for those already working in the payroll sector wishing to develop their careers by enhancing their skills and knowledge in preparation to becoming payroll supervisors and managers. There is a focus upon career development and the course

provides students with the transferrable skills needed to develop their careers into operational management in any sector. There are ample success stories from current students and recent graduates to support this stance.

Links with employers

The CIPP, HoW College and University of Worcester view employer engagement as a key strength. The involvement of employers in the design of this programme has been significant, perhaps more so than any other Foundation Degree. Over three thousand employers responded to the consultation exercise conducted by the CIPP that led directly to the development of the FdA in Payroll Management. Employer involvement in the course continues at a steering level with employer representatives on the Board of the CIPP. Regular employer forums are attended by CIPP Full, Fellow and Chartered members who assist the CIPP in ensuring that the course maintains its industry relevance. This continual employer engagement underpins the continual quality and standardisation process.