

#TRANSFORMINGLIVES



READY TO TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE?



Professional and Creative Studies  
**COMPUTING AND IT**

Qualifications that prepare people for Higher Education or  
work in many roles in the exciting and dynamic field of  
Computing and Information Technology

**TRANSITION PACKAGE**

Computing and IT is part of the school of Professional and Creative Studies (PCS), which also includes Art & Design, Business and Performing Arts.

If you want to become the next Programmer, Cybersecurity Expert, Games Designer, Database Manager, Web Designer, Network Manager or IT Technician, you're already on the right track.

The qualifications that we focus on are primarily BTEC vocational qualifications, which prepare you for work in the above roles, as well as many others, giving you the background knowledge and practical skills to progress into higher education at university, into an apprenticeship or into paid work on completion. BTEC qualifications are recognised by employers, and the college works closely with employers to ensure that students meet their needs. Students have been chosen to become apprentices by many employers, including one of Hartlepool's leading IT support companies.

**ROUTES** - We offer different routes that take into account your current qualifications, your confidence, your needs and wishes, and your tutors and support staff have a wealth of experience in placing students where they need to be. Staff are well-trained and experienced in all areas and are committed and determined to give you the best opportunities possible. All you need to do is have the same commitment and determination to transform your life and become the next successful Computing or IT professional.

## WHERE DO YOU FIT IN?

### Level 1 IT and Creative Pathway

Building confidence and gaining the required study skills to progress to next stage. A fantastic experience and introduction to vocational practices.

### Level 2 Information and Creative Technology Extended Certificate

For those who may not have the required qualifications or confidence to "dive in" to Level 3 just yet. A wide range of units that build a solid foundation to move on with confidence to the more advanced programme.

### Level 3 Information Technology Subsidiary Diploma, Diploma, Extended Diploma

You have already gained a good level of GCSEs and are keen to show that you have what it takes. Ready to commit to solid, hard work; ready to expand your knowledge in all areas to determine your preferred career path.

*At HCFE, we aim to "Transform Lives". In Computing and IT, we also aim to prepare you for adulthood and the working environment, with an approach that is probably different to what you are familiar with at school – your tutors aren't Sir or Miss – you are workers and we are supervisors – Christine, Darren, Keith, Dave and Steve!*

## Course Outline Information

You will be able to study at HCFE on either a one or two-year course, or may wish to work all the way through, depending on your needs, from Level 1 to second year Level 3.

What qualification will I gain and what will it enable me to do afterwards?

**Level 1 – The IT and Creative Pathway, which will teach you how to study effectively, how to interact with others, how to use a computer properly, how to plan, create and evaluate projects, and how to be more confident. You can progress to Level 2 on successful completion.**

**Level 2 - You can gain a BTEC Extended Certificate in Information and Creative Technology after one year of study. The course is practical and work-related. You learn by completing projects and assignments that are based on realistic workplace situations, activities and demands. You will gain the valuable skills that employers seek, and the necessary knowledge to progress to Level 3 if you choose, in order to specialise further.**

**Level 3 – You can gain a Subsidiary Diploma after one year, and either a Diploma or Extended Diploma after two years. It introduces you to the employment area you have chosen, giving you experience of a wide range of tasks, skills and approaches to work relevant in the IT industry. This provides you with a good basis on which to choose a specific career path and a Higher Education course.**

## What jobs could I do at the end of my course?

To progress in many IT careers, it is necessary to go to university to gain a higher education qualification. Students go on to careers such as:

- Technical Support
- Network Management and Administration
- Database Development
- Software and Application Development
- Website Design and Development
- Computer Security and Forensics
- Computer Game Development
- Virtual Reality Development
- Interactive Media Development
- Cybersecurity

## What is the course structure?

All courses are organised into units, which can be completed over a short period of time or run alongside other units. The units are often grouped together into subject groups, such as:

- Technical Support
- Computer Game Development
- Application Development
- Visualisation (Digital Graphics)
- eCommerce
- Web Development
- Information Systems
- Computer Networking

## How does the timetable work?

Approximately 16 hours of your course is timetabled. During these sessions a lecturer will give you information, demonstrate techniques and set work. You are expected to take information and understand it. Even if you are given notes by the lecturer, you are still expected to make your own additions to them, therefore you will need to bring writing implements and paper!

Attendance at all sessions is compulsory, as key information will be delivered in class, and if you miss it you will struggle to catch up. If you do not have maths and English GCSEs at grade 4 or above, you will be required to continue study for these, and must attend as part of your programme.

The times you will be required to attend will initially be given to you, but may be subject to change whilst settling in. After a few weeks, your timetable will be set and should not change further.

## Will I have a Course Tutor?

You will be assigned a specific course tutor who will be your main point of contact. One hour each week is on the timetable as a tutorial, which gives an opportunity to discuss individual progress, but also to discuss group topics that are relevant or of interest to you. You will take part in regular reviews with your course tutor, in which your progress and any problems you may be having will be discussed. You will be helped with action planning and ensuring that your work is completed on time and to the appropriate standard. If any problems arise, or there is anything you are not clear about, your tutor will be able to point you in the best direction to get help.

### Do I have to do work when not in college?

Directed time is a chance for you to organise your own work! You will usually have access to computer equipment in the Learning Core and this will give you an opportunity to keep up with course work, assignments or practical work. This is time when you are not timetabled to do any specific subject or with any particular member of staff. Remember, you are on a full-time course! It is up to you to identify the work you need to do and complete it, which may mean that work at home is a good idea, although you will not normally be given homework in the way that you did at school.

### What will I need?

Whenever you attend college you should be prepared to work. This means that you should bring writing implements and paper. You will be taking lots of notes covering lots of different topics so you will need a large, loose-leaf file divided into sections or a number of loose-leaf binders in which to organise your notes. You are not permitted to bring in a laptop, Chromebook or tablet, as all PC equipment is readily available.

### What is the policy on mobile phone use and drinks?

As we prepare you for work in the industry, we have professional policies in place prohibiting the personal use of phones and devices in sessions. We also follow strict Health and Safety legislation that does not allow food or drink to be consumed in computing labs. An acceptable use policy is also in place for college equipment and applications and should only be used for course related work.

### What else should I be aware of?

Although there is no dress code or uniform, we do expect a high level of personal hygiene, as we work in a professional environment. You will not be allowed to wear baseball caps, beanies or raised hoods in class. You may see that students in other rooms may not be required to follow these strict rules, and there will be a reason for this e.g. Art & Design students may be using headphones as part of their research or to help with their creativity. It has been proven year after year that in Computing and IT we need to maintain high levels of focus and standards to prepare students for the world of work in this field.

## How will I be assessed?

An assessment will test you on the knowledge and practical skills that you have studied. The assessment type can vary and may be in the form of individual or group written assignments, observed practical work, written tests or online exams. The majority of assessments take place on-site, though online exams are currently used at Level 2, for Online World and Technology Systems units. You are required to complete assignments set by the tutor according to BTEC guidelines. You must complete all tasks on time and to the required standard to pass the course.

## How are assessments graded?

Each assessment describes the type and quality of work required. The assessment will also include one or more tasks which describe specifically what you must do to achieve the criteria. When you have completed all the assignments for a unit, you will be awarded a grade for that unit. To Pass the unit, you must have met all the Pass criteria. To gain a Merit in the unit, you must have met all the Pass and Merit criteria. To gain a Distinction in the unit, you must have met all the Pass, Merit and Distinction criteria.

## Can I resit if necessary?

You are entitled to one attempt at an assessment, but if, for some reason, your work does not meet the required standard, the assessor will give clear guidelines as to what has to be provided to gain the missed criteria. A piece of work not meeting the required standard is called referred work. You may be granted a second attempt if particular conditions are met, given the opportunity to make good any problems with this work and resubmit it. If it still does not meet the required standard, then the matter will be referred to the assessment board – a meeting of staff who will decide on an appropriate course of action.

## How do the qualifications compare to A Levels?

You can gain a BTEC Subsidiary Diploma in IT after one year of study at Level 3. This is equivalent to one A level, but it is quite different to an A Level. After two years of study you can gain a BTEC Extended Diploma in IT, equivalent to three A levels. BTEC is a nationally recognised qualification and desired by employers. This, along with the profession standards you will learn, meets employers needs and expectations. Students have been picked to become apprentices by one of Hartlepool's leading IT support companies amongst others, who the college work with.



## What do I do now?

We have prepared a number of tasks that you could work on in preparation and to smooth your transition. You will be given you the appropriate materials once you have enrolled to a particular course and level. If you have not yet enrolled, you should contact Student Services on 01429 807935.

## Tutor contacts:

Christine:	<a href="mailto:christine.deane@hartlepoolfe.ac.uk">christine.deane@hartlepoolfe.ac.uk</a>
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## In the meantime...

Why not research the range of job roles in Computing and IT?

Look at personal and security risks involved, and how these can be overcome.

Consider how computing and the Internet has changed the way people work.

Why not try creating something that shows your skills: a website, a game, a program, an image, a report?

*Preparing for your transition to a new way of working can give you a head start and improve your confidence!*