



## **Programme Specification**

# **Cyber Security and Digital Forensics {with International Year One}[UWEBIC]**

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### **Contents**

<b>Programme Specification</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Section 1: Key Programme Details</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Part A: Programme Information .....	2
<b>Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes .....	3
Part B: Programme Structure.....	9
Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis .....	12
Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks .....	12
Part E: Regulations .....	13

## Section 1: Key Programme Details

### Part A: Programme Information

**Programme title:** Cyber Security and Digital Forensics {with International Year One}[UWEBIC]

**Highest award:** BSc (Hons) Cyber Security and Digital Forensics

**Interim award:** BSc Cyber Security and Digital Forensics

**Interim award:** DipHE Cyber Security and Digital Forensics

**Interim award:** CertHE Computing

**Awarding institution:** UWE Bristol

**Affiliated institutions:** UWE Bristol International College

**Teaching institutions:** UWEBIC and Frenchay

**Study abroad:** No

**Year abroad:** Yes

**Sandwich year:** Yes

**Credit recognition:** No

**School responsible for the programme:** CATE School of Computing and Creative Technologies, College of Arts, Technology and Environment

**Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies:** Not applicable

**Modes of delivery:** Full-time, Sandwich

**Entry requirements:** For the current entry requirements see the UWE Bristol website and the Kaplan International Pathways website.

**For implementation from:** 01 September 2026

**Programme code:** G4HM13

## Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

### Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

**Overview:** The general aims of the programme are:

To prepare students for careers in computer security and computer crime-investigation (e.g. 'forensic technician')

To develop problem-solving, communication and other transferable skills applicable to a variety of careers

To prepare students for study for higher degrees in related subjects

**Features of the programme:** The programme includes an integrated International Year One (IYO) in Computing delivered on campus at University of the West of England, Bristol's International College (UWEBIC). The IYO is the first year of the programme delivered at FHEQ Level 4 (120 credits) and provides subject knowledge and higher-education skills enabling progression to Year 2 at Frenchay on successful completion. The curriculum covers a range of subject-related knowledge equivalent to the first year alongside academic English language knowledge and skills to a level requisite for effective engagement for Year 2 and 3 of the degree.

This integrated first-year route complements the employer-facing focus of the degree by building practical capability and academic independence from the outset, ensuring students join UWE in Year 2 ready to be successful in their future study and career.

**Placement learning:** A placement year is optional, nonetheless, students are strongly encouraged to take up this opportunity. The University and the School provide support in preparation for the placement in a number of ways. For example, the School arranges a series of talks from former placement students and industrialists, aimed at illustrating the benefits of the placement year. Support in applying for

placements is also provided through CV workshops, advertising of placement vacancies and more general information on careers and employability. Students who elect not to do a year-long placement are encouraged to gain work experience in other ways, for example through volunteering, summer internships, and entrepreneurial schemes.

If a student opts to take a placement year, they must also take the relevant Level 6 module, while they are undertaking the placement.

**Educational Aims:** The specific aims of the programme are:

To develop knowledge of computer hardware and software systems

To provide an understanding of applicable law, court procedure and the role of the expert witness

To introduce a variety of approaches to both the analysis of the security requirements of computer systems and the investigation of computer crime

**Programme Learning Outcomes:**

On successful completion of this programme graduates will achieve the following learning outcomes.

**Programme Learning Outcomes**

- PO1. Demonstrate an understanding of how computer systems and networks securely operate in the presences of threats.
- PO2. Demonstrate understanding of the tools, and be able to apply techniques for investigating computer crime and develop competence as a forensic computing practitioner.
- PO3. Apply coherent and detailed knowledge of global landscapes and critique and appraise legislation policies, and regulations governing fields of cyber security and digital forensics.

- PO4. Analyse security mechanisms and forensics frameworks for access control, encryption, digital signatures, and evidence preservation in digital case analysis.
- PO5. Develop and implement security management policies and procedures by defining and modelling trust and security concepts, while ensuring secure access to services across diverse devices.
- PO6. Critically appraise and use a variety of professional and academic literature sources to support independent research and enquiry.
- PO7. Develop rigorous and creative solutions to complex IT problems, involving uncertainty, that satisfy a range of stakeholder requirements.

**Assessment strategy:** Assessment at Level 4 on the IYO is explicitly mapped to programme-level outcomes and prerequisite subject outcomes for progression to Year 2. Students undertake an early diagnostic where required, followed by a balanced mix of formative and summative tasks including extended written assignments, presentations, portfolios, structured speaking assessments, practical assignments and projects all scheduled across modules with timely, accessible feedback to support improvement. This prepares students for the range of assessments used later in the degree (including individual and group coursework, demonstrations and technical reports), scaffolding confidence and academic integrity from Level 4 onward.

Assessment strategies for this programme focus on ensuring a strong technical knowledge skills in the use of appropriate tools and abilities in devising and deploying security measures, and an understanding of adversarial behaviours.

The programme implements a comprehensive assessment strategy that aligns with learning outcomes and professional requirements:

Diverse Assessment Methods:

Technical implementations and practical demonstrations

Written reports and documentation

Project presentations and demonstrations

Individual and group assignments

Research-based assessments

Professional Practice Assessment:

Evaluation of technical competencies

Assessment of professional skills and communication

Project management capabilities

Ethical consideration and responsible practice

Progressive Development:

Regular formative feedback throughout modules

Balanced distribution of assessments across the academic year

Integration of theoretical knowledge with practical applications

Focus on both individual and collaborative achievements

Industry Alignment:

Assessment tasks reflecting real-world scenarios

Emphasis on production-ready solutions

Evaluation of professional documentation and communication

Integration of current industry practices and standards

Quality Assurance:

Clear assessment criteria and learning outcomes

Regular review and updating of assessment methods

External examiner oversight

Alignment with university assessment regulations

This assessment strategy ensures graduates demonstrate both technical proficiency and professional capabilities required for successful careers in this field.

**Student support:** During the IYO, students are enrolled university students with access to UWE facilities (including library and IT services) while also receiving comprehensive academic and pastoral support at UWEBIC. Targeted English, academic and wellbeing support is provided, with a focus on facilitating the development of the skills for effective learner autonomy, reflection and management of own learning. Each student will be supported during the programme to develop the skills required for successful study and progression to Year 2. This will be through a number of methods, including access to a suite of support materials and individual or small group support depending on needs. There is an emphasis on facilitating learning in groups, teams, and individually with tutors using a range of resources to differentiate learning and meet individual learning needs.

#### Pastoral Care:

At UWE a wide range of services are on offer to provide pastoral care through professional services who provide comprehensive, full-time student support service. Professional services are trained to provide advice on matters commonly of concern, including regulatory and other matters.

#### Student Support and Guidance:

At UWE student support is provided by academic staff, for all issues relating to the content and delivery of the module, and academic progress. Additional support and guidance is provided by Programme Leaders who are also responsible for gathering and acting upon student feedback and escalating issues through the appropriate governance structures.

Further support is provided through the administration team, the admissions office, the Students Union, the central University career service and UWE's counselling

provision. The UWE placements services provide extensive support for students in preparation for, as well as throughout, their study year abroad and acts both as an intermediary with partner institutions and as a recruitment service for employers.

Students seeking employment opportunities during their studies have access to UWE's Job Shop and are also encouraged to develop valuable skills by volunteering with the Community Volunteer Service. The UWE Global Centre provides support and organises specific activities to assist international students in adapting to life in the UK, such as an additional induction week, and the provision of specific literature to assist with their study.

All students have a formal induction process to socialise them to university life and to provide them with the means to access the support that they may require during their study at UWE. Signposting to appropriate resources is provided.

Support to students with disability is offered centrally through professional support services, who coordinate academic support for disabled students, including communication of student support requirements to teaching and support staff and advice and recommendations on reasonable adjustments to teaching and assessment. These act as a central service for disabled students and applicants to UWE and also support the academic and administrative staff members who work with disabled students.

The Career Team provides various services and programmes to assist students in analysing their career interests, aptitudes, values and goals. It also assists students in career planning and preparation for job interviews, in addition to providing job placement services for graduating students through our network with industry and potential employers. Its services include: career counselling; career talks and workshops; resume writing and grooming seminars; career-related fairs and company trips.

An orientation programme is organised for all students prior to the start of the programme and each year. It introduces students to the support available within the

University, via a range of events. There are additional events for international students.

## Part B: Programme Structure

### Year 1

Full time and sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 1.

Year 1 is taught at and delivered by UWEBIC. Year 1 students will also study an English for Academic Purposes module in year one where they need to demonstrate they have met the required level for progression.

Students starting the International Year One in September will start Year Two the following September.

Students starting the International Year One in January will start Year Two in September.

### Year 1 Compulsory Modules (Full Time and Sandwich)

Full time and sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Full Time and Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UFCEXR-10-1	Computer Architecture 2026-27	10
UFCEXS-20-1	Digital Evidence 2026-27	20
UFCEXT-20-1	Principles of Computing 2026-27	20
UFCEXQ-20-1	Introduction to Databases 2026-27	20
UFCEY5-20-1	Introduction to Programming 2026-27	20
UFCEY6-20-1	Object-Oriented Programming 2026-27	20
UFCEYD-10-1	Introduction to Networking 2026-27	10

### Year 2

Full time and sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 2.

**Year 2 Compulsory Modules (Full Time and Sandwich)**

Full time and sandwich students must take 105 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Full Time and Sandwich).

<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credit</b>
UFCEX5-30-2	Operating Systems and Software Security 2027-28	30
UFCE8B-30-2	Data Science for Cyber Security 2027-28	30
UFCFLC-30-2	Secure Computer Networks 2027-28	30
UFCEJ6-30-2	Security and Forensic Tools 2027-28	30

**Year 3**

Full time students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 3.  
Sandwich students must take 15 credits from the modules in Year 3.

**Year 3 Compulsory Modules (Full Time)**

Full time students must take 90 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Full Time).

<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credit</b>
UFCE8A-30-3	Cyber Security Project 2028-29	30
UFCFC5-15-3	Forensic Computing Practice 2028-29	15
UFCE88-30-3	Global Landscapes of Cyber Security and Adversaries 2028-29	30
UFCFRB-15-3	Security Management in Practice 2028-29	15

**Year 3 Compulsory Modules (Sandwich)**

Sandwich students must take 15 credits from Compulsory Modules (Sandwich).

<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credit</b>
UFCE6-15-3	Professional Experience 2028-29	15

**Year 3 Optional Modules (Full Time)**

Full time students must take 30 credits from the modules in Optional Modules (Full Time).

<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credit</b>
UFCE8C-15-3	Cyber Security Consultancy 2028-29	15
UFCE87-15-3	Cyber Security Engineering 2028-29	15
UFCE8F-15-3	Digital Evidence - Crime Scene to Court Room 2028-29	15

**Year 4**

Sandwich students must take 105 credits from the modules in Year 4.

**Year 4 Compulsory Modules (Sandwich)**

Sandwich students must take 90 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Sandwich).

<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credit</b>
UFCE8A-30-3	Cyber Security Project 2029-30	30
UFCEFC5-15-3	Forensic Computing Practice 2029-30	15
UFCE88-30-3	Global Landscapes of Cyber Security and Adversaries 2029-30	30
UFCEFRB-15-3	Security Management in Practice 2029-30	15

**Year 4 Optional Modules (Sandwich)**

Sandwich students must take 15 credits from Optional Modules (Sandwich).

<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credit</b>
UFCE8C-15-3	Cyber Security Consultancy 2029-30	15
UFCE87-15-3	Cyber Security Engineering 2029-30	15
UFCE8F-15-3	Digital Evidence - Crime Scene to Court Room 2029-30	15

**Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis**

Graduates in the field of Computer Security and Computer Forensics would be expected to have an excellent understanding of the internal operation of computers and operating and file systems. They would be able to use appropriate tools to investigate computer-based activities, deploy tools and techniques to prevent security breaches and investigate the mis-use of computer systems and other devices. As much of this work is carried out either directly in support of legal processes an understanding of appropriate legal systems and law would be expected.

**Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks**

This programme is consistent with the UWE 2030 strategy in that its focus on the practice of computer security and forensics aligns with our aim of producing practice-oriented graduates.

The partnership with Taylors helps to ensure that the programme has an inclusive and global reach. The programme adopts the general approach of the school of Computing and Creative Technologies in including input from industry in terms both of visiting speakers and placement and work experience opportunities.

The QAA Computing and Law benchmark statements:

The QAA Subject Benchmark Statements for Computing (2022) and for Law (2023) are applicable to this programme.

The programme clearly falls into the cognate area described by the Computing benchmark. Due to the nature of Digital Forensic practice, much of the computing material is of a technical, low-level nature, with relatively little computing theory. Thus, in terms of the benchmark's high-level characterisation of Computing, the emphasis of the programme is on software, communication and interaction and practice, developed within the context of the specialised requirements of the programme. From the body of knowledge the following are considered essential to a study of Digital Forensics: Data Mining (in the context of forensic investigations);

Computer Based Systems; Computer Networks; Data Structures and Algorithms, with emphasis on data structures; Distributed Computer Systems; Operating Systems; Programming Fundamentals; Security and Privacy; Web-based Computing.

The Computing Benchmark Statement also contains (section 4) statements of the standards expected of graduates at both modal and threshold levels. The team is of the view that graduates of the proposed programme will be able to meet the required standards.

The Law benchmark has been considered during the design process at the 'Law as Subsidiary' level of performance, which focuses on the development of legal skills related to some specific area (in this case Digital Forensics). Though the Statement is targeted at programmes with at least 180 credits of legal subjects, its expectations also apply to programmes such as Digital Forensics, where the legal aspects make up a relatively small, but very important component. No attempt has been made to include all aspects of law or to provide the foundation for a legal career as such – instead the most important points of law and court procedure are covered. The aim of the design team has been to provide sufficient legal knowledge to be aware of the rules and legal system pertaining to Digital Forensics: as suggested in the Benchmark, the relevant law is treated mainly as data from which legal conclusions or opinions can be derived. It is expected that student will be able to assimilate legal information from a variety of sources and apply the knowledge acquired to computer crime investigation and security analysis.

### **Part E: Regulations**

Approved to University Regulations and Procedures.

\*\*A variant regulation for the progression requirement between the international year one and year two is being developed and will be submitted to academic board for approval before students start. \*\*