The Royal Agricultural University

Programme Specification:

FdSc Agriculture and Farm Management

2023/24

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION [ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/23]

This Programme Specification is designed for prospective students, current students, academic staff and potential employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the teaching, learning and assessment methods, learning outcomes and content of each module can be found in the Module descriptors.

Section 1 – Material Programme Information

Quercus code	*[completed by Registry post validation]*
Validating body	The Royal Agricultural University
Teaching Institution	The Royal Agricultural University
School	School of Agriculture, Food and the Environment
Entry Award(s)	Foundation Degree (FdSc): Agriculture and Farm Management
Final Award and exit route(s)	Foundation Degree (FdSc): Agriculture and Farm Management
Programme title	Agriculture and Farm Management
Location(s) of study	The Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester
Mode of study	Full time 2 years Part-time 4 years
Language of study	English
Programme start month	September
Period of validation	2019 – 2024
Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body	Not applicable
Type of Accreditation	Not applicable
Accreditation due for renewal	Not applicable
Entry requirements	5 GCSE's at Grade C or 4 including English Language and Maths plus 56 UCAS points to include one A level, or equivalent Level 3 qualification. This may include vocational qualifications.
UCAS Code	D401
QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and other reference points	Foundation Degree prospectus. HEFCE 2000. The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies. QAA 2014. Subject Benchmark Statements – Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Food and Consumer Sciences. QAA 2016. Foundation Degree – Characteristics Statement. QAA 2016. Foundation Degree Sectoral Framework for Land Management and Production. Lantra 2005. Agricultural Management – National Occupational Standards. Lantra 2011. QAA Subject Benchmark Statements
Academic level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	Level 4 and 5
Approval at AQSC	
Version	V.1 Removal of 1117, replaced with 1125 Agriscience. Removal of module 1122 Livestock Production 1, replaced with new module 1126 Livestock Husbandry. May AQSC V2. AQSC March 2023: Replace 1118 with 1052 and 2125 with 2226

Section 2 – Programme structure

The structure of all University awards complies with the University's [Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes](#) which includes information about the:
- Rules for progression between the stages of a programme;
- Consequences of failure for referrals, compensation and exist awards;
- Calculation and classification of awards.

FdSc Agriculture and Farm Management (240 credits)

The accumulation of credits to include a minimum of 120 credits at Level 4 and a maximum of 120 credits at Level 5, through the assessment of taught modules as detailed below.

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
Level 4					
1442	Applied Plant Science	4	15	Core	1
1123	Mechanisation and Buildings	4	15	Core	1
1125	Agriscience	4	15	Core	1
1400	Developing Academic Skills	4	15	Core	1
1116	Accounts and Economics	4	15	Core	2
1120	Farm Business Management	4	15	Core	2
1121	General Agriculture	4	15	Core	2
1441	Applied Animal Science	4	15	Core	2
Level 5					
2226	Agri-food Policy and Legislation	5	15	Core	1
2375	Livestock Husbandry Systems	5	15	Core	1
2342	Farm Business Planning and Operation	5	30	Core	1+2
2373	Agronomy	5	15	Core	2
2131	Work Based Learning	5	15	Core	2
2341	Commodities Marketing and Data Handling	5	15	Core	2
2343	Land, Property and Woodland Management	5	15	Core	2

Further details of the Foundation Year can be found [in the Course section on our website.](#)

Section 3 – Programme overview and Programme Aims

The educational aims of the programme will be to provide students with:

- The development of their learning in agriculture and farm management in a flexible manner on either a full-time or part-time study basis.
- Technical agricultural and farm management skills and knowledge for work in land-based businesses.
- A learning experience that is directly related to the needs of employers, a number of whom were consulted in the development and on-going running of this Foundation Degree programme.
- Transferable skills to meet the future needs of employment in the land-based sector and other industries.
- An opportunity to progress on to an honour's degree programme and further professional qualification, without the need for any bridging course.

- A stimulus to pursue life-long learning in both vocational and academic subjects.

These aims will be achieved through the delivery of a programme with flexible modes of study, including work-based learning and skills development. The programme has been developed through wide consultations with employers in land-based businesses and the Sector Skills Council for the Environmental and Land-based Sector (Lantra).

The Foundation Degree has been designed to allow students to develop greater academic skills through the programme as they progress from Certificate level modules at stage 4 to Intermediate level modules at stage 5.

On completion of the Foundation Degree, students will have the opportunity to progress to the BSc Hons Agricultural Management Top Up Degree. The articulation between the two programmes has been considered carefully in the module structure and in the individual module design.

Section 4 – Programme intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Knowledge and Understanding

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will have the knowledge and understanding of:	Module Code/s
1.	The principles of crop and livestock production, management and marketing and the mechanisation of agricultural production.	
2.	How to apply business management techniques to land-based businesses and use them in different approaches to problem solving.	
3.	The importance of sustainable development and environmental management in the rural sector.	
4.	The roles, impact and responsibilities of regulatory and other influencing bodies on land-based businesses.	
5.	The limits of their knowledge and how this may influence analyses and interpretations.	

Intellectual, Professional, Key skills

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will have the knowledge and understanding of:	Module Code/s
1.	How to acquire and apply research methodology and problem-solving techniques.	
2.	How to evaluate the usefulness and relevance of literature and other data to crop and animal production, farm management and related rural issues.	
3.	How to research, collect and critically evaluate information relating to problem solving in land-based businesses.	
4.	How to propose and test hypotheses using appropriate techniques.	
5.	How to apply intellectual skills to balance costs, benefits, risks, health and safety and environmental impact in real life situations.	
6.	How to apply practical skills and associated knowledge in a working environment.	

7.	How to perform work related tasks at commercial speed, in a safe and competent manner with minimal guidance/supervision.	
8.	How to analyse technical and financial data so as to determine their validity and relevance to land-based enterprises.	
9.	How to prepare business plans for land-based enterprises, including strategic planning and problem solving, so as to achieve the objectives of a business.	

Section 5 – Learning and Teaching Approach

This Foundation Degree has been designed so that students can study flexibly, either on a full-time or part-time basis. The programme can be completed full-time over 2 years or part-time over 4 years.

Phase II
One work-based module relating to:
The student's personal development whilst on work-based experience including the achievement of the clearly stated objectives in the Individual's Learning Agreement (ILA).

A minimum period of ten weeks will be spent by the student in a work-based environment. The bulk of this period may be spent on the home farm, but a period of two weeks must be spent in a work-based situation that is not the home farm. Experience can be gained on the home farm, but work experience from other venues are preferred.

Each student will be required to assemble a portfolio of evidence and deliver a presentation for assessment in this module.

During this work-based learning period, employers or their staff will be encouraged to provide guidance and advice to students and help them link knowledge and understanding with work-based activities.

Learning and Teaching Strategy

This programme is inclusive of disabled people with particular regard to teaching, learning and assessment, in accordance with Part 10: Inclusive Practice of the University's Teaching Quality Handbook and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

Lectures
One of the methods of delivery of learning during the University-based phases of the programme will be by lectures. Lecturers aim to:
1.   provide information
2.   encourage students to pursue additional information on subjects covered
3.   provide various views on subjects
4.   explain difficult ideas and issues relating to particular areas
5.   demonstrate ways in which students can widen and increase their depth of knowledge.

Seminars / Tutorials
These will provide opportunities for dialogues between students themselves as well as lecturers. Exchanges of information and ideas can be achieved under the direction of

tutors in seminars/tutorials. Through these meetings students should be able to express and share their views and develop their ability to participate in group activities.

Visits
Visits to environmental conservation and heritage management enterprises will be an important part of the programme. These will aid the reinforcement and application of information learned through more formal study.

Portfolio Development and Key Skills
During the programme students will be required to develop and maintain a portfolio relating to their work-based and work-related experiences.

Directed and Private Study
Students are expected to undertake additional study on their own behalf as an important learning method within the programme. This will normally involve reading to explore the breadth and depth of the syllabus, preparation of tutorial/seminar work, preparation of coursework, case study submissions and preparation of major projects. The use of the University library, electronic journals and the RAU intranet resources which can be accessed remotely will be encouraged for the effective use of private study time.

The learning outcomes will be promoted employing the range of teaching and learning methods listed above. Students will be required to undertake some self- directed study with learning support provided by University staff. Students will also be encouraged to progress to further study for a BSc Honours degree

Section 6 – Assessment Approach

Each taught module will include summative assessments that will assess all learning outcomes. The assessment strategy for each module has been chosen based on the relevance for the module and to ensure an appropriate mix of assessment approaches. Assessment marking criteria will integrate the RAU level 4 and 5 marking criteria, discipline specific criteria and reference to the four learning pillars.

Section 7 - Course work grading and Feedback

Assessment is an integral part of the learning experience of students. All University programmes are assessed by a range of assessment activities, each developed to provide the most appropriate means of demonstrating the student's achievement of a specified learning outcome. An assessment may assess more than one learning outcome.

The University operates standard pass criteria which can be found in the RAU Academic Regulations; (paragraphs 137 – 153).

The normal basis for awards will be the overall average score in the final assessment, graded as follows:

First Class Honours	70% and above
Second Class Honours upper division	60% - 69%
Second Class Honours lower division	50% - 59%
Third Class Honours	40% - 49%

Fail	0% - 39%

In addition to assigning a percentage mark to the work, the tutor adds comments; usually about the strengths and weaknesses of the piece as well as advice about improving the work. All assessment decisions are subject to internal moderation and external scrutiny by the programme's External Examiners. Students must ensure they retain all coursework in case the External Examiner(s) wishes to see it.

Section 8 – Employability

During Phase II of the course students will be required to undertake a minimum of 10 weeks work-based experience. Prior to starting work, learning objectives for this period will be agreed between the student, employer and university staff. During this experience students should be able to:

1. Work effectively in a commercial environment
2. Organise themselves as regards time management, resourcefulness and ability to work on their own
3. Develop existing practical skills and acquire new ones
4. Gain insight into the management of the enterprise including financial and personnel aspects.

A minimum period of ten weeks will be spent by the student in a work-based environment. The bulk of this period may be spent on the home farm, but a period of two weeks must be spent in a work-based situation that is not the home farm. Experience can be gained on the home farm, but work experience from other venues are preferred.

Each student will be required to assemble a portfolio of evidence and deliver a presentation for assessment in this module.

During this work-based learning period, employers or one of their staff will be encouraged to act as mentors to provide guidance and advice to students and help them link knowledge and understanding with work-based activities.

Section 9 – Enhancing the Quality of Learning and Teaching

The programme is subject to the University's rigorous quality assurance procedures which involve subject specialist and internal peer review of the course at periodic intervals, normally of 6 years. This process ensures that the programme engages with the applicable national Subject Benchmarks and references the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

All programmes are monitored on an annual basis where consideration is given to:
- External Examiner's Reports
- Key statistics including data on retention and achievement
- Results of the Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Feedback from Student Course Representatives
- Annual Programme Monitoring