

## The Royal Agricultural University

### Programme Specification:

**BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management**  
**BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management with**  
**Foundation Year**  
**BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management with**  
**Professional Placement Year**  
**2026-27**

#### **PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION [ACADEMIC YEAR 2026/27]**

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 they take 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 specifications.

When printed this programme specification becomes an uncontrolled document. Please visit the RAU's website for the most up to date version of the programme specification:

<https://www.rau.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate->

## Section 1 – Material Programme Information

Criteria	Details
Validating body	Royal Agricultural University
Teaching Institution	Royal Agricultural University
Subject Area	Land and Property Management (Business and Entrepreneurship)
Entry Award(s)	BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management with Foundation Year BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management with Professional Placement Year
Final Award and exit route(s)	BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management with Foundation Year BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management with Professional Placement Year Certificate of Higher Education Agricultural Business Management Diploma of Higher Education Agricultural Business Management
Programme title	BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management
Location(s) of study	Royal Agricultural University
Full time study	3 years 4 years with Foundation or Professional Placement Year
Part-time study	6 years
Language of study	English
Programme start month	September
Period of validation	September 2026 to August 2031
Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body	New programme accreditation is in progress
Type of Accreditation	Programme accreditation
Accreditation due for renewal	April each year
UCAS Code	D4N2, D4N4 (Foundation year), D4N3 (Professional Placement year)
Quercus Code	AGM/ AGMZ/ AGMP
HECos Code	100078 – Business Management
QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and other reference points	Business and Management (including Masters) (March 2023) Agriculture, Rural Environmental Sciences, Animal Studies, Consumer Science, Forestry, Food, Horticulture and Human Nutrition (April 2024)
Academic level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	Level 4, 5 or 6
Approval at AQSC	02 July 2025
Version	V.1

Criteria	Detail
Entry requirements for the BSc (this should be the standard University entry requirements unless otherwise approved by the Academic Board, and include UCAS entry profile for UG programmes and IELTS)	<p><b>Required:</b> Minimum five GCSEs at Grade C/4 including English Language and Mathematics (or Maths Numeracy for Welsh applicants) plus satisfactory level 3 qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level: (Example grades CCC) – minimum of 96 UCAS tariff points (to include at least two A-Levels or equivalent qualifications)</li> <li>• C&amp;G Advanced Technical/BTEC - Level 3 Extended Diploma (1080) at Merit-Merit-Merit</li> <li>• C&amp;G NPTC/C&amp;G Advanced Technical/BTEC - Level 3 Diploma (720), Extended Certificate (360) and 90-Credit Diploma (540) acceptable when accompanied by other Level 3 qualifications</li> <li>• International Baccalaureate: 26 points</li> <li>• Access to Higher Education: 45 credits at level 3, of which a minimum of 15 must be awarded at Distinction and 15 at Merit or higher (Pass at Functional Skills level 2 are accepted in lieu of GCSE English &amp; Mathematics)</li> </ul> <p>Other level 3 qualifications will be considered.</p>

## 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.

The BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management is normally of three years duration of full-time study (approximately 30 weeks per year). Study is undertaken at three levels on the FHEQ; Levels four, five, and six (one for each year of study). However, it is possible to follow the programme on a part-time basis, over a longer period, by gaining credits for the modules taken and achieved year-by-year. The time limits appropriate to part-time study are indicated in the University Academic Regulations available on the RAU website.

The option with a Foundation Year is normally four years of taught full-time study and the option with a Professional Placement Year is normally three years of taught full-time study with one year based in industry. A credit system ensures a balanced workload across the programme, with each credit point requiring approximately 10 hours of student work. Thus a 20-credit module will require a notional input of 200 hours of work, and a complete

academic year of 120 credits will require 1200 hours of work or approximately 40 hours per week.

**Students enrolled to study the programme with the Integrated Foundation Year will study the following modules in their first year of study:**

**Level 0**

<b>Module code</b>	<b>Module title</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Credit value</b>	<b>Core/ Elective</b>	<b>Semester</b>
0IFY20	Land-use and Management	0	20	Core	1+2
0IFY21	Countryside Evolution and Development	0	20	Core	1+2
0IFY22	Enterprise and Marketing	0	20	Core	1+2
0IFY23	Land-based Data Handling	0	20	Core	1+2
0IFY24	Food and Farming	0	20	Core	1+2
0IFY25	Developing your Skills	0	20	Core	1+2
	<b>Total Credits: Integrated Foundation Year</b>		<b>120</b>		

**BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management (360 credits)**

**Students enrolled to study the BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management with/without professional placement year will study the following modules:**

**Level 4**

<b>Module code</b>	<b>Module title</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Credit value</b>	<b>Core/ Elective</b>	<b>Semester</b>
4B001	Practical Business Finance and Accounts	4	20	Core	1+2
4M002	Professional, Practical and Study Skills	4	20	Core	1+2
4B002	Introduction to Business and Management	4	20	Core	1+2
4A005	Farming Systems and Sustainability	4	20	Core	1+2
4B003	Entrepreneurship, Intrapreneurship and Enterprise	4	20	Core	1+2
4B004	Business Informatics	4	20	Core	1+2
	<b>Total Credits: Level 4</b>		<b>120</b>		
	<b>Total Credits: Certificate of Higher Education</b>		<b>120</b>		

## Level 5

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
5M001	Industry Engagement	5	0	Core	1+2
5B001	Marketing Management	5	20	Core	1+2
5B005	People and Organisations	5	20	Core	1+2
5W007	Global Development and Environmental Sustainability	5	20	Core	1+2
5B003	Financial Management	5	20	Core	1+2
5M002	Research and Evidence	5	20	Core	1+2
5A009	Alternative Cropping Systems	5	20	Core	1+2
	<b>Total Credits: Level 5</b>		<b>120</b>		
	<b>Total Credits: Diploma of Higher Education</b>		<b>240</b>		

## Professional Placement Year (studied after Year 2 of the programme)

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
PPY	Professional placement year	5	120	Core	1+2

## Level 6

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
6B001	Changing Consumer Behaviour	6	20	Core	1+2
6B004	Organisations in a Changing World	6	20	Core	1+2
6M001	Research Project	6	40	Core	1+2

## Plus two elective modules (one from each group below)

### Group 1

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
6A004	Farm Business Consultancy	6	20	Elective	1+2
6B006	Rural Entrepreneurship	6	20	Elective	1+2
6L005	Rural Land and Business Management	6	20	Elective	1+2

## Group 2

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
6W001	Countryside and Environmental Management	6	20	Elective	1+2
6A002	Agri-Food Systems and Policies	6	20	Elective	1+2
6B007	Corporate Finance	6	20	Elective	1+2
	<b>Total Credits: BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management</b>		<b>360</b>		
	<b>Total Credits: BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management with Professional Placement Year</b>		<b>480</b>		

### Section 3 – Programme overview and Programme aims

The BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management is strategically designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and critical thinking necessary to navigate and lead in the dynamic agri-food sector. It integrates academic rigor with practical learning to address the challenges and opportunities of the global food supply chain, aligning with the Royal Agricultural University's mission to champion sustainability, resilience, and innovation in agriculture and rural enterprise.

The programme uniquely combines business acumen with agricultural expertise, preparing students to navigate the economic, environmental, and technological challenges shaping the future of food and farming. Unlike traditional business degrees, it is tailored to the agri-food sector, equipping graduates with the ability to manage farms, lead rural enterprises, and shape agricultural policy. With a strong emphasis on sustainability, innovation, and rural entrepreneurship, it positions students at the forefront of modern, tech-driven, and climate-resilient agricultural businesses.

### Overview of the Programme

This programme focuses on the intricate supply chain that connects agricultural production to food trading, processing, packaging, distribution, and consumption. It highlights the importance of resilience, innovation, and security in these supply chains to ensure a sustainable economy and global food security. Students will gain a solid foundation in business principles and advanced skills in managing agri-food supply chains while addressing challenges related to climate change, resource efficiency, and consumer demands. The curriculum spans key disciplines such as agriculture and environmental science, ensuring a multidisciplinary approach to managing agri-business enterprises.

## What Students Can Expect

**Year 1 (Foundation of Knowledge):** Students are introduced to the core principles of business management, economics, and the fundamentals of agriculture and food systems through engaging lectures, hands-on seminars, and real-world case studies. For example, students might analyse the economic impact of supply chain disruptions in agricultural markets or examine the role of sustainability in food production systems. Discussions might focus on topics such as climate-resilient farming, or the transition to regenerative agricultural practices. By examining these trends, students gain a well-rounded understanding of the sector's complexities and dynamic nature. Opportunities to develop essential skills, particularly in digital literacy, are embedded throughout this stage. For instance, students will learn to use tools such as Microsoft Excel for data manipulation, creating financial models, or analysing production metrics. These activities provide valuable experience in problem-solving and data-driven decision-making, equipping students to approach modern agricultural challenges with confidence and precision.

**Year 2 (Skill Development and Application):** The focus shifts to applied learning, with modules on financial management, marketing, operations, and sustainable business practices. Students engage in financial management case studies, where they analyse the financial health of an agri-business by examining balance sheets, cash flow statements, and investment decisions of a real or simulated farm operation. They assess financial risks and propose strategies for profitability and sustainability. In addition, students delve into financial planning and control mechanisms pertinent to agribusinesses. This includes understanding budgeting, investment appraisal, and financial risk management, equipping students to make informed financial decisions within agricultural contexts. The marketing module focuses on strategies to effectively promote agricultural products and services. Students learn about market research, consumer behaviour, branding, and digital marketing techniques tailored to the agribusiness sector. Emphasizing the importance of sustainability, the second year teaches students how to integrate environmental and social considerations into business strategies. Topics include sustainable resource management, corporate social responsibility, food security, climate resilience and the implementation of eco-friendly technologies in agriculture to mention a few

**Year 3 (Leadership and Specialisation):** At this point, students are ready to hone their strategic thinking and decision-making skills through advanced modules on farm business consultancy, rural entrepreneurship and food ethics and governance. These modules prepare students for leadership roles in agricultural business management by focusing on high-level problem-solving, ethical considerations, and innovation in the sector. Here are some examples of how these areas are explored:

- **Farm Business Consultancy Case Study:** Students assume the position of consultants for a simulated farm business, conducting financial and operational assessments. They develop strategic plans to improve profitability, increase efficiency, and integrate sustainable practices.
- **Rural Entrepreneurship Business Plan:** Students independently develop a comprehensive business plan, focusing on innovation and sustainability. Their ideas

may include but are not limited to, launching a value-added agricultural product (e.g., organic dairy, speciality grains), establishing a vertical farming venture, or developing an Agri-tech solution such as precision irrigation systems.

These experiences ensure that students graduate with practical expertise, enabling them to become leaders, consultants, or entrepreneurs in the agricultural business sector.

Students also have the opportunity to undertake two elective modules, tailoring their education to specific interests or career goals by choosing one module from each group of elective modules. The electives span diverse fields, including entrepreneurship and business strategy, land policy and governance, as well as finance and ethical management, but are grouped to provide diverse study.

The final experience is a research-based dissertation, ensuring graduates are prepared to make an immediate impact in the industry.

### **Programme Features**

- Accreditation by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) ensures that students graduate with a Level 5 Diploma in Management and Leadership alongside their degree, enhancing their professional credentials. This Level 5 Diploma in Management and Leadership is awarded by aligning select RAU modules with CMI modules, enabling students to meet the qualification requirements and earn the Diploma.
- A curriculum aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and UN Global Compact emphasizes ethical, sustainable, and responsible business practices.
- Opportunities for work-based learning which provide real-world experience, connecting students with leading organisations in the agri-food sector.
- Assessments based on live projects provide practical applications of theory, ensuring readiness for industry challenges.

### **Rationale and Fit with the University Mission**

This programme provides an opportunity to be part of the Royal Agricultural University's mission to "equip a new generation to address global challenges and thrive through change." By focusing on sustainable farming and land management, the curriculum prepares students to make a meaningful impact on some of the most pressing issues facing the world today. What makes this programme stand out is its combination of research-led teaching and strong connections with local employers and industry leaders. It connects students with Agribusiness Managers, who oversee farm enterprises, supply chains, and market strategies, as well as entrepreneurs and start-up founders, who drive innovation in agri-tech, food production, and rural business ventures. These collaborations foster a dynamic and inclusive learning community, equipping students with real-world insights and industry expertise. The programme also links with entrepreneurs and start-up founders- innovators in agri-tech, food production and rural business ventures. These links are geared towards creating a vibrant and inclusive learning community

## Section 4 – Programme Sustainability

The Undergraduate Agri-Business Management Programme is firmly aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Food and Farming Strategy, supporting the broader objectives of the UN's Envision 2030 agenda. This alignment reflects the University's commitment to equipping students with the knowledge and skills needed to address global challenges such as poverty, hunger, quality education, and climate action while fostering sustainability and ethical business practices within the agricultural sector.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), established in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly, provide a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all" by 2030. These goals underpin the programme, ensuring that students understand their significance and the critical role businesses play in their realisation. In particular, the programme emphasises SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) by addressing how agri-businesses can drive rural development, enhance food security, and create economic opportunities for marginalised communities. Through modules focused on the agri-food supply chain, students explore strategies for improving agricultural productivity, fostering fair trade, and supporting sustainable livelihoods, all of which contribute to alleviating poverty and hunger.

SDG 13 (Climate Action) is a cornerstone of the programme, with a strong focus on sustainable agricultural practices, resource efficiency, and climate resilience. Students examine how the agricultural sector can mitigate environmental impacts while ensuring economic sustainability, addressing pressing challenges related to climate change.

Furthermore, the programme also emphasizes SDG 4 (Quality Education) through its innovative and inclusive teaching strategies, fostering critical thinking and leadership skills essential for future leaders in agri-business. By equipping students with interdisciplinary knowledge and practical expertise, the curriculum supports lifelong learning and career readiness.

The programme's alignment with the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) further reinforces its commitment to sustainability and corporate responsibility. Launched in 1999, the UNGC encourages businesses to adopt principles-based policies in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment, and anti-corruption. These ten principles are embedded into the curriculum, informing teaching materials such as case studies and assessments. Students are taught to integrate these principles into business strategies, ensuring ethical and responsible decision-making within agri-business management.

Additionally, as a signatory to the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), the University champions the integration of sustainability, corporate responsibility, and ethical practices into its operations. PRME is a UN initiative aimed at inspiring responsible management education globally. This programme embodies PRME values by embedding sustainability and ethical business practices into all modules, empowering students to critically analyse and address real-world challenges within the agri-food sector.

The Food and Farming Strategy aligns seamlessly with these goals, particularly in promoting sustainable food production systems, reducing food waste, and enhancing rural resilience. Modules explore how these strategic priorities can be implemented within agri-businesses to meet the growing demand for sustainable food production while addressing environmental and social concerns.

Through its alignment with the SDGs, UNGC, PRME, and the Food and Farming Strategy, the programme ensures that students are not only aware of these critical global frameworks but are also equipped to act upon them. Graduates emerge as innovative and ethical leaders ready to contribute to the transformation of the agri-food industry, advancing the UN's Envision 2030 agenda while addressing the interconnected challenges of poverty, hunger, education, and climate change.

## Section 5 – Programme intended learning outcomes

On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to demonstrate the following Learning Outcomes (LOs):

### Knowledge and Understanding

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Develop a critical understanding of trends within the agri-food business sector and design business opportunities using a range of tools and techniques.	4A005, 4B003, 6A004
2.	Examine the internal and/or external factors, functions and processes of organisations including corporate behaviours and cultures which exist within and between different agri-food organisations.	5B005, 5B004, 6B002
3.	Apply key academic theoretical concepts and frameworks underpinning the analysis and development of business strategy in organisations in an agri-food business context.	4B002, 5B001, 5B005, 6B006
4.	Evaluate agri-food organisational performance using a range of business tools and frameworks establishing strategic direction with recognition of intended and unintended consequences.	4B001, 5B003, 6A004, 6B006, 5B005
5.	Demonstrate awareness and critical analysis of the importance of personal attributes in the agri-food workplace such as resilience, open-mindedness, reflection, motivation, professional behaviours, and employability.	5M001, 4M002, 5B005, 6M001

### Intellectual, Professional, Key skills

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Develop commercial acumen using the key drivers for business success, causes of failure and the importance of understanding external and internal factors that affect organisations in dynamic situations.	4B004, 5B003, 5B001, 6B007
2.	Encourage self-development into professionally organized and interactive individuals by practicing skills of selection, assimilation and communication.	5M001, 4M002, 6M001
3.	Develop abilities to critically evaluate strategic issues through a range of learning experiences using suitable tools and models	4M002, 5B004, 6B002

4.	Utilise a variety of media including information technology, to convey ideas and arguments effectively to a range of audiences, and demonstrate the ability to write, discuss and present arguments and ideas using appropriate academic conventions.	4B004, 5M002 4M002, 6M001
5.	Synthesise appropriate solutions to complex and unpredictable business problems using quantitative and/or qualitative analysis.	5M002, 5B003, 6M001

### Programme specific skills

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Assemble a critical understanding of the characteristics of a business owner in the agri-food supply chain	4B003, 6A004, 5M001, 6B001
2.	Develop an applied knowledge of the management of the agri-food supply chain	4A005, 5M001, 6W002, 5A009, 5W007, 6L005
3.	Employ business tools in the evaluation of the agri-food supply chain, using current sources and data analysis	4B004, 5B001, 6A002, 6W001
4.	Analyse agri-food business data using statistical and analyses functions and procedures available in spreadsheets and statistical/econometric software packages.	4B001, 5B003, 5M002, 6M001
5.	Through an informed insight evaluate the dynamics of agri-food business within a range of interdependent national and international contexts	6A002, 5B001, 6B007, 6M001, 5A009, 6B004

## Section 6 – Approach to Learning and Teaching delivery

The programme spans three years for full-time study, on the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Levels 4, 5, and 6. Additional pathways include a Foundation Year, extending the programme to four years, or a Professional Placement Year, offering three years of study with a year in industry to enhance practical experience between Levels 5 and 6.

The programme adopts a modular structure, where each module typically holds a value of 20 credits, representing approximately 200 hours of student learning, including 48 hours of face-to-face teaching. These teaching hours are distributed across lectures, seminars, workshops, and practical sessions, designed to balance theoretical knowledge and practical application. In the final year, students are given the opportunity to pursue elective modules, tailoring their learning to align with personal interests or career goals. Additionally, first-year students follow an identical curriculum to those enrolled in the BSc (Hons) Business Management, offering a pathway to transfer between programmes (subject to the approval of the programme leader) to best suit their evolving interests and aspirations.

The programme employs a comprehensive and inclusive approach to learning and teaching, designed to cater to diverse student needs, foster critical thinking, and ensure the

achievement of learning outcomes. Central to the programme is the use of varied teaching methods (lectures, seminars, workshops and visits) that combine theoretical instruction with practical application, ensuring students are well-prepared for both academic success and professional careers.

Lectures provide the foundation of the learning experience, introducing core concepts, theories, and frameworks essential to understanding the subject. These sessions are complemented by digital resources, including pre-lecture readings, recorded lectures, and supplementary materials hosted on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This blended approach allows students to engage with the content at their own pace, ensuring accessibility for all. The lectures set the stage for more interactive forms of learning, such as seminars and group discussions, which encourage active participation and peer-to-peer learning. These sessions provide students with the opportunity to explore complex topics in depth, exchange diverse perspectives, and refine their ability to articulate arguments clearly and effectively.

Workshops and practical sessions play a crucial role in applying theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios. Students engage in activities such as case study analysis, which not only deepens their understanding but also enhances their problem-solving skills. These sessions are supported by access to software and tools, equipping students with the technical competencies required in modern business environments.

The programme also emphasises experiential learning through work-based opportunities. Work Placement and Professional Placement Years enable students to bridge the gap between academic theory and practical application. These experiences provide valuable insights into industry practices, allow students to build professional networks, and enhance employability. Regular guest lectures and industry-led workshops further enrich the curriculum by offering real-world perspectives and highlighting current trends and challenges in global agricultural and business sectors.

Technology-enhanced learning is integral to the programme's delivery. The VLE (Gateway) acts as a central hub for learning, offering resources such as interactive quizzes, discussion forums, and e-portfolios, which allow students to document their skills and achievements. The integration of digital tools supports Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles by providing materials in multiple formats, including audio, text, and video, to ensure accessibility for all learners.

Overall, the programme's structured approach ensures that students develop the theoretical understanding, practical skills, and professional attributes required to thrive in a dynamic global agribusiness environment.

## **Section 7 – Approach to Assessment**

Assessments are designed to appraise individual capabilities fairly and consistently. We use clear, descriptive assessment guidelines (made available to students) to grade coursework and examinations and to aid classification. Lecturers communicate their expectations clearly to students and use explicit schema to facilitate consistency of marking within and between modules and to ensure good feedback on individual performance. All assessments that contribute to degree classifications are subject to scrutiny by the External Examiner.

From one level to the next assessments are increasingly designed to test analytical and other cognitive capabilities in relation to particular module aims and content. Coursework assignments such as individual essays, reports, case study analyses, individual and group-based reports and presentations and various technique-oriented assessments are used to test these skills.

The final year Dissertation Project is the final demonstration of these various skills, requiring students to conceive, justify, design in detail and execute a substantial piece of academic research. For the most able students, the Dissertation Project can generate work of a standard appropriate for submission to practitioner and academic journals in business and management.

At every Level we place high value on students being able to demonstrate effective communication in its various forms. This priority is reflected not only in how assignments are specified, but also in how they are marked - good command of written and spoken English is vital for work placements and for graduate employment. In order to encourage time management skills, students are set tasks to predetermined deadlines and are penalised for non-conformance.

Some modules have a teamwork requirement and in some there are group assignments, assessed via presentations and reports. All group assignments allow for an element of individual assessment, in order to recognise differences in individual performance where appropriate. Peer feedback can also play a significant part in team activities and is encouraged.

Work placement learning is assessed through a graded report requiring a reflective, critical and conceptually grounded analysis of the placement context and experience.

**Assessment methods and writing:**

Assessment methods are varied to align with learning outcomes and provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in diverse formats. These include essays, reports, and projects, which test critical thinking and analytical abilities, as well as practical assessments, such as case studies and group presentations, which emphasise problem-solving and teamwork.

It is vital that students learn and get to know how to do well in these various assessments in the programme. The University’s criteria for assessment of projects, essays and examination contain helpful information about the kind of things that are looked for by examiners.

Overall, the programme is assessed through\*:

	Learning and Teaching			Assessment		
	Directed	Independent	Placement	Exam	Coursework	Practical
Year 1	<b>30.00%</b>	70.00%	0.00%	0.00%	95.00%	5.00%
Year 2	<b>21.28%</b>	52.99%	25.74%	3.33%	96.67%	0.00%
Year 3	<b>22.33%</b>	77.67%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%

## Section 8 – 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 116 – 124).

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

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Equivalent Mark</b>
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, tutors provide written feedback for all assessments which normally includes the strengths and weaknesses of the piece as well as advice about improving the work. Individual feedback is provided within 20-working days of the deadline for submission. 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 9 – Industry Engagement (5M001) and Professional Placement Year (PPY)

All RAU degrees, including those with a 52-week Professional Placement Year, feature a 12-week industry placement. Employers have consistently expressed their desire to employ graduates who are able to evidence successful periods of prolonged work experience in relevant positions in agricultural businesses and related allied industries and the ability to reflect on individual skills, their own performance and the decision making and performance of the business.

The ability to reflect on personal and business performance is a key graduate skill required within industry. Many practitioners within the agricultural industry demonstrate their ability to reflect daily on a range of management decisions and business performance but seldom take the time to also reflect on personal performance and career aspirations.

The module enables students to reflect on the skills and experiences they have gained during the time spent in the industry and in higher education.

The 12-week module is assessed through a reflective portfolio of evidence. This module aims to support students to become reflective practitioners in their selected subject area. It builds on the development of knowledge and understanding gained across modules within the applied programme of study to enable the application of theory into practice and reflection of their own and an organisations practices in the workplace.

Students will be required to produce an industry experience portfolio recording progress on your individual role and responsibilities covering 444 hours of work-based engagement. Reflection on personal development should be included within the portfolio and students should draw on knowledge and skills attained throughout their course of study to help them complete their portfolio. The period of work-based learning will also provide the opportunity for students to critically reflect upon the practical application of knowledge and research gained on their programme of study into a real-world context to enable evaluation of working practices.

The Professional Placement Year is assessed through a reflective portfolio which includes a case study and a professional skill assessment which is undertaken by a nominated supervisor at the placement host organisation.

### **Approval process**

It is the University's responsibility to ensure that learning opportunities during a placement are appropriate. However, it is at the same time desirable that students secure a self-placement (or in an organisation) which is suitable for their needs as well as amenable to them. For this reason, as well as for others, the responsibility for developing and securing a placement rests with the individual student. However, to ensure that the University's responsibilities are carried out, all placements are subject to approval by the University, in advance of the placement commencing.

This means that no placement can be considered to be in place and accepted until such time that appropriate checks have been made, and the placement has been approved for this purpose, by the placement coordinator. Students must submit relevant details of their desired placement on the appropriate form (including dates, name of organisation, outline job description, and so on) well in advance of the placement commencing, and at least by the date laid down, to ensure that checks can be carried out, and in case subsequent difficulties emerge.

#### Criteria for approval will include:

- The nature and function of the placement organisation, in relation to the student's learning programme (considering the student's pathway, for example).
- The placement organisation's ability to provide appropriate learning opportunities, (which must include the likely nature of the tasks and responsibilities that students may be expected to undertake during the work-based placement)
- Whether and how the University is able to support students on placements, and;
- The extent to which the placement organisation can fulfil its responsibilities under Health & Safety legislation.

It is in the interests of students, as well as the RAU, in this approval process, if students are able to gain an outline job description indicating the likely content of the job role during the placement, and submit this for approval.

The University must be in a position to assess whether placement providers know what their responsibilities are during the period of placement learning, both in terms of the provision of learning opportunities, and in relation to their role on the assessment of students, and thus have the organisation and prospective job role approved, before any placement commences.

## **The Industry Engagement module and its role in Year 2**

The industry engagement module is a very important element of the Year 2 programme. It has a large and important educational value, in terms of the ability to provide a bridge or link for the learning aims of many individual programme modules, between the formal 'academic' activities, in-university, and the specific practical work-based experience and organisational reality to which they often ultimately relate. It is especially important in the whole programme as it represents an opportunity for students to locate their final year dissertation topic (with the agreement of the employing organisation) in a real-world organisation, and thus focus the research study on an area where empirical data-gathering is feasible. Students are strongly encouraged to consider this aspect in advance, and discuss this with their link tutor.

### **Prior to placement**

Before placements commence, it is important that students familiarise themselves with the guidance available in the module handbook. In particular, they must be aware of your responsibilities and rights

Responsibilities include those:

- As representatives of the University as a Higher Education Institution (as the placement provider might well be asked to offer equivalent opportunities to other students in future years)
- Towards the placement provider; their customers or clients; and to their other employees. In effect students are acting as employed persons within the organisation, subject to the normal employer/ employee mutual obligations, to fulfil the contract of employment.
- For managing their learning & professional relationships
- For recording progress and achievements (very important in terms of the final reporting process, as documented in the module handbook and assessment brief)
- For alerting both the placement provider and the Royal Agricultural University to any problems experienced during the placement. In the latter case, the expectation is that students maintain an ongoing communication with the University, in most cases through the designated tutor.

Students should be aware of their rights;

- To a safe working environment, with all that this entails

- To be treated in accord with the law, for example in relation to discipline and grievance issues, redundancy, and equal opportunities.

### **During placements**

It is important that students keep in touch with the university throughout their placement period, and for this purpose all students are allocated a tutor who will provide for liaison, and a point of contact during the placement. This tutor will normally visit the student on at least one occasion during the period of the placement, normally before the end of July. For the PPY contact will be scheduled as; X3: 1-1 tutorial in person/online with academic teaching team 3 x 30 mins and 3 x 15 mins online interactions by the placement team. The purpose of the visit is to ensure that all is satisfactory from the viewpoint of both the student and placement provider, to counsel all parties if difficulties emerge, and to remind students of the requirements of the reporting process required of students to fulfil the module criteria. In some rare instances, no visit will be possible, in which case alternative arrangements will be made to fulfil this function of monitoring.

Students are encouraged to keep in touch with their link tutor throughout the placement period, by email or telephone as appropriate, both before and after the visit. If all is going well a weekly email may well be sufficient. Thus, it is crucial that all student email addresses, mobile telephone numbers, etc., that are relevant to the placement period, are recorded by University and maintained as up-to-date as possible. However, if problems occur during placements, as sometimes happens, please ensure you make contact as soon as possible, if necessary with the Programme Leader, or the Placement Coordinator, if the link tutor is not available at the time. Students must not wait for a visit if the problem is an urgent one.

### **Section 10 – RAU Graduate Framework**

At the RAU we have chosen five values to underpin our learning community. These are the values which we will all work by and for which we want the RAU to be known for. We aim for our graduates to be:

#### **Collaborative**

We believe in the power of working together. We are stronger as a community of practice - inspiring each other, identifying shared goals, and providing reciprocal support leads to greater success.

#### **Open-minded**

We are receptive to new ideas and we value the diversity of experiences and skills. We are committed to listening to everyone across the RAU community.

#### **Resourceful**

We adopt creative approaches to achieve our goals while setting higher standards, promoting professionalism and sustainability.

#### **Responsible**

Individually and collectively we take accountability for our actions working with integrity to achieve the highest ethical standards.

## Inclusive

We acknowledge the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals and are committed to maintaining an environment that seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination and respects diverse traditions, heritages, and experiences.



## Section 11 - Progression

The programme is thoughtfully designed to prepare students for a wide range of career opportunities, further academic pursuits, and entrepreneurial ventures. It equips students with the knowledge, skills, and practical experience necessary to thrive in a competitive and evolving global job market. The programme is fully aligned with the University's Graduate Framework, ensuring students develop as collaborative, open-minded, resourceful, responsible, and inclusive individuals prepared to make a meaningful impact in their chosen fields.

### Progression into the Labour Market and Graduate Employability

Graduates of this programme are highly sought after for managerial and professional roles in the agricultural and food industries, as well as related sectors such as finance, consultancy, supply chain management, and rural enterprise. By fostering resourcefulness and responsibility, the programme ensures students build a strong foundation in core business management principles, including strategic planning, financial analysis, marketing, and organisational management, all tailored to the unique context of agriculture and rural industries.

Key graduate employability skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and communication, are central to the curriculum. For example, students develop collaborative abilities through group projects and work placements, while also honing digital literacy through hands-on experience with industry-standard tools for data analysis and modelling. These skills ensure that students are fully prepared for the demands of the modern

workplace. Real-world case studies, guest lectures, and partnerships with industry professionals further enhance their understanding of business applications in practical settings, fostering an open-minded approach to addressing real-world challenges.

Graduates are also equipped to pursue leadership roles or careers in consultancy, supported by modules such as Organisational Studies, Farm Business Consultancy, and Entrepreneurship. These modules develop resilience and adaptability—qualities essential for succeeding in dynamic professional environments. The emphasis on inclusive leadership ensures graduates are prepared to navigate and lead within diverse organisations.

### **Preparation for Postgraduate Study**

For those aiming to further their academic journey, the programme provides a rigorous foundation that prepares students for postgraduate study. Modules on research methods and the opportunity to undertake an independent dissertation equip students with advanced analytical, investigative, and academic skills. These experiences are invaluable for those pursuing specialised study in areas such as agri-business, rural development, or sustainability.

Guided by experienced lecturers, students receive personalised advice on postgraduate opportunities, helping them align their research interests with career goals. This collaborative mentorship supports the development of strong research portfolios and provides students with the tools to excel in the academic rigour of Masters or Doctoral programmes. The focus on academic inquiry also instils a sense of responsibility, encouraging students to approach complex global challenges with integrity and professionalism.

### **Fostering Enterprise and Entrepreneurship**

The programme nurtures entrepreneurial thinking, enabling students to innovate within existing organisations or launch their own ventures. Modules on Entrepreneurship and Rural Land and Business Management help students identify opportunities, evaluate risks, and design sustainable business models, reflecting the resourceful and responsible values of the Graduate Framework. Practical support for entrepreneurial ambitions is embedded in the programme through access to the university's enterprise and entrepreneurship resources, including business incubation spaces, funding opportunities, and mentoring from successful entrepreneurs. Students also engage in projects that simulate the process of starting and managing a business, from concept development to market entry.

### **Links with Employers and Professional Bodies**

The programme's close collaboration with employers and professional bodies ensures its curriculum remains relevant to industry needs and aligned with professional standards. Strong partnerships with organisations and rural business networks provide students with opportunities for work placements, fostering connections that enhance employability. These partnerships also embody the collaborative value by integrating real-world perspectives into the learning experience. Professional accreditation from bodies such as the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) strengthens the programme's credibility and offers students a competitive edge in the job market. Guest lectures, workshops, and industry visits allow

students to learn directly from professionals, gaining insights into current challenges and opportunities in the agricultural business sector. These engagements encourage an open-minded approach to solving problems while developing the practical skills needed to excel in their careers.

## **Section 12 – Student support, wellbeing and counselling**

The [University](#) is offering a wide range of support to all RAU students, including practical advice and guidance as well as emotional support.

### **Disability and Neurodivergent support**

We support disabled & neurodivergent students and students with long-term health conditions. These disabilities include dyslexia, mental health diagnoses, ADHD, autism, mobility challenges, sensory impairments and many more. Students are encouraged to make contact with Student Services as early as possible by emailing: [studentservices@rau.ac.uk](mailto:studentservices@rau.ac.uk) . When you tell us about a disability, you will be offered support based on your specific needs, which can include:

- **Alternative exam arrangements** such as extra time, rest breaks, or a smaller room.
- **Access to support workers** such as study skills tutors, specialist mentors, readers and scribes.
- Access to assistive technology (AT), which helps remove barriers to learning, communication and participation. The AT can help students who face difficulties with taking notes, organisation and time management.

### **Mental Health Support**

Student Services has a dedicated team who are here to support you with the emotional challenges that can crop up during university life. They take a wide-ranging approach to mental health support, and the team ensure they are available for informal chats as well as providing in-depth support for students with emerging or existing mental health conditions.

The team also offer mental health support in the form of daily drop-in sessions, weekly group Time to Talk sessions, mental health workshops, awareness and campaign days and 1:1 confidential meetings for when students face challenges to their wellbeing.

Student Services can also refer students for counselling sessions with an external agency if they are required. They can also signpost you to our Student Assistance Programme, providing 24/7 care, support and advice.

### **Academic Support Tutor Programme**

All students have access to the Academic Support Tutor (AST) programme, which provides high-quality academic support for students. ASTs provide timetabled group tutorials and individual support for students who are most at risk. Group tutorials focus on providing high-

quality academic support at the appropriate academic level; advice and guidance in relation to the course; and advice about making study choices on the course (in line with the AST Handbook). Individual support focuses on continuation and may be in person or online.

### **Section 13 – 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 Reports
- Key statistics including data on retention and achievement
- Results of the Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Feedback from Student Delegates from programme committees
- Feedback from Student-Staff Liaison committees
- Annual Programme Monitoring