

The Royal Agricultural University

Programme Specification:

Graduate Diploma in Agriculture (GDA)

[2027-28]

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION [ACADEMIC YEAR 2027/28]

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 descriptors.

Section 1 – Material Programme Information

Criteria	Details
Validating body	The Royal Agricultural University
Teaching Institution	The Royal Agricultural University
Subject Area	Agricultural Science and Practice (ASP)
Entry Award(s)	Graduate Diploma in Agriculture (GDA)
Final Award and exit route(s)	Graduate Diploma in Agriculture (GDA)
Programme title	Graduate Diploma in Agriculture (GDA)
Location(s) of study	Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester
Full time study	1 year
Part-time study	2 years
Language of study	English
Programme start month	September
Period of validation	September 2026 to August 2031
Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body	Not applicable
Type of Accreditation	Not applicable
Accreditation due for renewal	Not applicable
UCAS Code	Not applicable
Quercus Code	GDA1
HECos Code	100517 - Agriculture
QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and other reference points	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 6
Approval at AQSC	28 May 2025 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/postgraduate
Version	V1

<p>Entry requirements (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>	<p>An Undergraduate Honours Degree (2:2 or above) from a UK university or overseas equivalent, or a professional qualification and/or experience considered to be equivalent to the above. For information on international qualifications, please, see our country specific pages. For countries not listed please contact admissions@rau.ac.uk</p> <p>Applicants may seek admission on the basis of work experience, but evidence of ability to study at degree level is essential.</p>
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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.

Graduate Diploma in Agriculture (120 credits) – Full time

Students are required to study three compulsory 20 credit modules (4A005, 5A003, 6A002) to provide a focus for their studies and an appropriate framework to link to the individual choice of electives. Students must then select three further modules from the list of electives based on their own interests and skillset, ensuring that their final programme includes modules totalling minimum 80 credits at level six

Students will choose three level 6 modules available within Agricultural Science and Practice at the start of the academic year depending upon the focus they want their studies to take, as well as timetabling and module availability

Module map

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ elective	Semester
4A005	Farming Systems and Sustainability	4	20	Core	1+2
5A003	Farm Business Planning and Food Supply Chains	5	20	Core	1+2
6A002	Agri-Food Systems and Policies	6	20	Core	1+2
	Elective from the Agricultural Science and Practice subject area	6	20	Elective	1+2
	Elective from the Agricultural Science and Practice subject area	6	20	Elective	1+2
	Elective from the Agricultural Science and Practice subject area	6	20	Elective	1+2
	Total Credits: Graduate Diploma in Agriculture		120		

Level 6

Electives from the Agricultural Science and Practice subject area

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ elective	Semester
6A001	Solutions for Livestock and Crops	6	20	Elective	1+2
6A003	Advanced Farm Business Management	6	20	Elective	1+2
6A004	Farm Business Consultancy	6	20	Elective	1+2
6A005	Advanced Livestock Nutrition and Breeding	6	20	Elective	1+2
6A006	Crop Health, Nutrition and Protection	6	20	Elective	1+2
6W001	Countryside and Environmental Management	6	20	Elective	1+2

Graduate Diploma in Agriculture (120 credits) – Part time

Students are required to study the 6 modules over two years instead of one, with the three core compulsory 20 credit modules (4A005, 5A003, 6A002) in year one, to provide a focus for their studies and an appropriate framework to link to the individual choice of electives. Students must then select three further modules from the list of electives based on their own interests and skillset, ensuring that their final year programme includes modules totalling 80 credits at level six.

Students will choose three level 6 modules available within Agricultural Science and Practice at the start of the academic year depending upon the focus they want their studies to take, as well as timetabling and module availability.

Module map (part time)

Year 1

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ elective	Semester
4A005	Farming Systems and Sustainability	4	20	Core	
6A002	Agri-Food Systems and Policies	6	20	Core	
5A003	Farm Business Planning and Food Supply Chains	6	20	Core	

Year 2

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ elective	Semester
	Elective from the Agricultural Science and Practice subject area	6	20	Elective	
	Elective from the Agricultural Science and Practice subject area	6	20	Elective	
	Elective from the Agricultural Science and Practice subject area	6	20	Elective	
	Total Credits: Graduate Diploma in Agriculture		120		

Level 6

Electives from the Agricultural Science and Practice subject area

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ elective	Semester
6A001	Solutions for Livestock and Crops	6	20	Elective	
6A003	Advanced Farm Business Management	6	20	Elective	
6A004	Farm Business Consultancy	6	20	Elective	
6A005	Advanced Livestock Nutrition and Breeding	6	20	Elective	
6A006	Crop Health, Nutrition and Protection	6	20	Elective	
6W001	Countryside and Environmental Management	6	20	Elective	

Section 3 – Programme overview and Programme aims

The Graduate Diploma in Agriculture (GDA) programme is designed to develop the professional agriculturalists of the future, equipping students with the knowledge and skills they need to understand and then address major challenges in our food systems. Our curriculum is a clear response to the current and future issues within our food system facing all citizens from all backgrounds. From environmental sustainability, land use and food security to economic resilience in the face of changing subsidy, government support and farm business tax, agriculture is in a period of transition.

To address this, the farming industry needs new talent, and that means students are key. The aim of the GDA programme is to provide an inspiring and forward-thinking educational package of study for those students who have already graduated, qualified or have relevant experience in another discipline, and who now want additional agricultural study as part of their future career aspirations. This is the programme for those seeking a career change. The GDA is distinctive in that it offers additional study in agriculture at undergraduate degree level to those already possessing a BSc Honours or equivalent qualification on entry. The GDA programme aims to inform, inspire and enable students to gain a fundamental understanding and critical awareness of the problems facing agriculture regardless of their disciplinary background, particularly issues pertaining to the challenges of food production and its global impacts.

Here at the RAU, we're taking on the challenges and opportunities facing agriculture, nationally and globally. The RAU recognises and encourages students to go onto varied careers in agriculture. As a result, alongside the core modules which provide the basis transitional knowledge into agriculture, students choose from a diverse selection of Agricultural Science and Practice elective modules, which allow students to deepen their knowledge in specialist subjects that match their career aspirations as well as prior experience.

Based on the latest applied research, informed by the RAU's extensive industry networks and delivered by world-renowned experts in their fields, students will explore the science and practice that underpins agricultural production, sustainability and resilient farm management. For example, the livestock team have active research studies in the chicken, dairy, beef and sheep sectors on ethical breeding, sustainability and organic farming. The environmental and crop-based academics have extensive connections with local arable farmers and estates and have active studies into the long-term impacts of certain farming practices, such as herbal leys, crop rotations, trees and hedgerows.

Students do not need to have an agricultural or farming background; they simply need the passion and drive to make a difference in a rapidly evolving industry. Students will learn how to build sustainable, profitable and resilient agricultural businesses, which contribute to a thriving sector - whether as a farmer, land manager, rural entrepreneur, agronomist, economist, policymaker, researcher, scientist or consultant – career opportunities are diverse and eclectic.

The extensive industry experience of lecturers and high-profile research-active academics provides inspirational and critical support for students. Furthermore, the commercial facilities here at the RAU, such as our arable enterprise and new land labs helps to demonstrate the real-world application of research and management theory into practical and innovative farm practice. Students will have access to 400 hectares of commercial farmland as real-world business case study. In partnership with the commercial farm at Coates Manor and through our new partnership with three local farmers managing our arable enterprise in a regenerative

manner, students have access to thousands of acres of farmland, forestry, environmentally managed land, real estate and heritage properties. This is in addition to staff working closely with several local farming businesses, such as Ampney Brook farm, Abby Home farm, Miserden, Sapperton and Stowell estates and Ford Land Management to name a few; students learn about farming systems on working farms.

On joining the programme, students are expected to have already acquired a range of intellectual and transferable skills in their previous careers and study. However, this programme enables them:

- to demonstrate their commitment to continuing learning within agricultural science and practice,
- to utilise their existing skills in pursuit of new knowledge, understanding and career opportunities, and
- to develop new professional skills, specific to their areas of interest and focus applicable to a wide range of careers in agriculture.

Part-time Study

The University is committed to increasing flexible access to learning and therefore the academic programme on offer can be studied on a part-time basis to fit studying around already busy lives.

Part-time study will take longer than the full-time equivalent, but students spend fewer hours in the classroom each week. The modular programme structure means part-time students study alongside full-time counterparts and can access the same student support, resources and facilities as full-time students.

While it will take longer to complete a part-time programme, it could be the perfect option if:

- Pursuing a qualification is essential for advancing professional growth and enhancing career opportunities.
- A full-time study schedule is not possible.
- The university can be satisfied that the academic requirements can be met alongside work or personal commitments.

If you have queries related to part-time study, please contact the Programme Leader.

Section 4 – Programme Sustainability

The Graduate Diploma in Agriculture programme has been designed to foster greater knowledge and awareness of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The programme places a strong emphasis on SDGs – 12) Responsible consumption and production, 13) Climate Action, and 15) Life on the Land. The programme places some emphasis on SDGs – 1) No Poverty, 2) Zero Hunger, and 3) Good health and Wellbeing. These SDGs are embedded in the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) of the programme.

Section 5 – Programme intended learning outcomes

The Graduate Diploma in Agriculture (GDA) programme is designed to develop the professional agriculturalists of the future by attracting talent from a wider and diverse community than other agricultural programmes typically do. The GDA is for career changers, career refreshers and those that want to tackle real-world challenges that affect everyone. The GDA embeds diversity from day one by who it is for, what it is comprised of and where students go on to. Careers vary from active farming, to consultancy, governmental roles, food supply chain and agricultural media.

The aim of the programme is to provide an inspiring and forward-thinking educational package of study for those students who have already graduated and/or have experience in another discipline, and who now want additional agricultural study as part of their future career aspirations. GDA is distinctive in that it offers additional study in agriculture at undergraduate degree level to those already possessing a BSc Honours or equivalent qualification on entry.

The RAU recognises and encourages students to go onto varied careers in agriculture. As a result, alongside the core modules which provide the basis transitional knowledge into agriculture, students choose from a diverse selection of Agricultural Science and Practice elective modules, which allow students to deepen their knowledge in specialist subjects that match their career aspirations and prior knowledge and experiences. This could be in animal agriculture or more crop and plant-based sectors. The GDA equips students with the knowledge and skills they need to understand and then address major challenges in our food systems with transferable skills.

The aim of the GDA is to provide students with an academically rigorous and professionally relevant education that will serve their career needs throughout their personal and professional development. The degree combines essential farm management knowledge with relevant practical and professional skills, alongside the 'bigger picture' and timely discourse around the future of agriculture, preparing students to be part of the transition we need to see in our food and farming system.

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.	Understand, describe and compare agricultural production systems, particularly the scientific principles and practices of sustainable animal and crop production systems	4A005
2.	Evaluate the scientific principles and practices applied in regenerative, integrated, conventional and sustainable animal and crop production systems	4A005
3.	Evaluate the implementation of agroecology into farming systems for mitigation and adaptation using data, technology and cutting-edge innovations.	4A005, 5A003, 6A002
4.	Explain the concept of sustainability, One Health & food security in the context of current challenges facing the food system and discuss the role of policy and global food supply chains in solving them.	5A003, 6A002
5.	Critically analyse the opportunities and challenges of emerging agricultural science and practice relevant to the future of food and farming and their career within it.	All modules

Intellectual, Professional, Key skills

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Critically evaluate appropriate literature, applied data sets and other credible sources to inform their study and the application of knowledge within future careers	All modules
2.	Apply subject-specific scientific, theoretical and practical knowledge within a range of learning and assessment environments, for continuous professional development	All modules
3.	Develop critical thinking, self-reflection and thought leadership to address challenges and embrace the opportunities for the future of food and farming	All modules

Programme specific skills

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Demonstrate leadership and communication skills in addressing current and future social, economic and environmental challenges in agriculture, towards humane and sustainable food systems	All modules
2.	Develop and apply a sustainable farm management plan, which applies learning from across the programme ranging from environmental management, arable cropping, farm animal husbandry and business management, to make the case for an innovative and viable new food and farming enterprise(s).	All modules
3.	Develop sustainable farm management skills to improve net zero GHG emissions, biodiversity, ethical farming practice and farm profitability and resilience	All modules

Section 6 – Approach to Learning and Teaching delivery

All students on this course, but particularly for those returning to studies after a period of break from formal education, will be supported in several ways to facilitate a smooth transition into their core and elective modules. This is underpinned by a bespoke induction week programme, which is specifically designed to support students returning to formal study. At this point, all students will be given direct online access to the content of prerequisite modules, as part of the online gateway platform, which they can utilise in their own study time to address knowledge gaps, or revise the basic subject areas pertinent to a smooth transition into the core agricultural modules on this programme. These prerequisite modules are developing academic skills, applied animal and plant science, and business finance and accounts. Furthermore, throughout the study students will have access to a designated academic personal tutor. Due to the small community at the RAU compared to other universities, students will also be able to get personalised support from module leaders relevant to subject interests.

To further aid students who seek to study part-time, the GDA timetable is organised so that delivery of the core modules is set to one day per week. This allows the maximum amount of flexibility for students in managing their studies around part-time jobs or other key responsibilities and time commitments. The time limits appropriate to part-time study are indicated in the University Academic Regulations available from the RAU website.

This programme is accessible to all students in accordance with the University's Admissions Policy and the Equality Act 2010. In the case of a disability, students are encouraged to disclose this to the Disability Officer so that the appropriate support can be provided. Students have the right to request that the nature of their disability is treated as confidential. With regards to practical sessions and study visits, reasonable adjustments are made so that visits are accessible to all students.

The programme will be delivered using the RAU blended learning approach that is designed as an efficient and effective method of teaching by allowing students to work individually at

their own pace, as well as in a group seminar setting to benefit from peer-to-peer discussion and synthesis knowledge and understanding.

Students must engage with preparatory material before weekly seminars which aims to:

- Stimulate interest in the subject matter
- Give information
- Offer different perspectives on a subject
- Explain difficult concepts and theories
- Show how to deepen knowledge
- Provide an opportunity to listen to specialist guest lecturers and industry specialists

Students must also attend face to face lectures, seminars and tutorials which will:

- Allow students to express their views
- Enable academic interaction
- Facilitate discussions
- Provide opportunities to practice presentations
- Encourage structured research
- Enable sharing and diversification of information and experience
- Introduce group work and develop team works skills

Each module includes 2-4 hours of face-to-face sessions per week. Practical activities, visits and demonstrations will take a variety of forms, on farms, at agricultural businesses and in laboratories. They form an important part of overall programme provision and help to reinforce and apply the subject principles received through lectures and seminars. The number and frequency of visits and practicals varies with modules, see module descriptors for more detail.

Students will also be expected to undertake private study as an important learning method within the programme, particularly at the beginning of their studies to support any knowledge gaps associated with a transition into agricultural science and practice. Throughout the whole study period this will normally involve reading to explore the breadth and depth of the curriculum, preparation of tutorial/seminar work, and preparation of coursework/assignments.

The use of the RAU's e-library is very important for the effective use of private study time. Thorough guidance in private study will be included in the induction week programme,

however the library staff are on hand throughout your studies to provide further advice and assistance on both finding and utilising relevant resources. Furthermore, with regards to the specific areas of study covered in the programme, modules have a resource list and signpost to further online resources to facilitate your focused private study and research around the module content.

Students attempting to shortcut their learning activities may find themselves experiencing difficulties. It is particularly important that new students returning from a study break attend the induction and engage with preparatory material and establish an effective routine for their studies as soon as possible. Maintaining a balanced workload from the start of the programme will help to avoid intense periods of activity which can lead to unnecessary stress, and ensure knowledge and understanding gradually develops throughout the semesters and year in readiness for end of module assignments.

Here at the RAU, we are always looking for ways to support our students. We recognise that a number of our UK domiciled students may be working or have caring responsibilities alongside studying which can sometimes make it difficult to attend all lectures in person. As such we have the ability for students to join lectures and seminars through a live stream, and if students are unable to do this, recordings of lectures can be made available after they have been held. Please note that this type of study participation is only available to registered UK based students and on discussion with relevant module leaders.

Section 7 – Approach to Assessment

The full GDA programme comprises three core modules which provide a baseline for a transition into the agricultural sector. In addition, the three elective modules build on this to contextualise and facilitate students self-determined continuous professional development. Modules are assessed by two or three pieces of applied assessment at key points in the academic year, which are designed to replicate real world tasks pertinent to the current challenges and opportunities in food and farming, building students core critical thinking and problem-solving skills required for their careers. Throughout modules, students will receive formative feedback from module leaders to support their own reflective learning process and help them progress towards their final assessment(s).

In **Farming Systems and Sustainability**, students are introduced to the diversity of farming systems and begin to develop an in-depth understanding of their impact on the environment, nationally and across the globe. Students come away with a critical sense of the strengths and weaknesses with different production systems in varying contexts, such as agroecology and industrial agriculture. This core module is assessed by a recorded presentation and a written report using a case study-based approach to teaching.

In **Farm Business Planning and Food Supply Chains**, there are two 2000-word reports as the summative assessments, which enable students to integrate their weekly learning into 2 distinct case study reports. One report is a farm business management plan based on a real-world scenario and using financial data to manage performance and the other focuses on the production, processing and marketing of a farm output allowing for choice and creativity.

In **Agri-Food Systems and Policies**, students are encouraged to take a systems approach to the challenges facing the food system and apply concepts such as One Health, food security and a policy perspective to on-the-ground realities of farming and producing food. There are two summative assessments; the first is to design an academic poster on a food system

challenge demonstrating their systems thinking approach and the second is an essay applying the concept of One Health to a global agri-food challenge.

Within module seminars and tutorials, formative exercises are used to develop students' confidence and competence in progression and completion of assessments. For example, students may take part in peer-to-peer learning activities, group-critiques of work in progress, presentations to demonstrate knowledge and understanding, and sessions on understanding and incorporating feedback/feed-forward. Where relevant, students are also provided with 1-to-1 formative feedback to maximise the active learning process.

The content and skills developed over the course of the three core modules are contextualised, enhanced, broadened and specialised by the students self-selected elective modules, each comprising 2-3 subject specific, applied assessments.

Electives are designed to provide students with an opportunity to focus their studies around their future career aspirations and fine tune their expertise, but also select a broader diversity of subjects. The major agricultural challenges and opportunities are covered in depth within the elective modules as a real time response to the current and future issues within the food and farming system. This prepares and equips students for their future career aspirations.

Students select 3 electives from a large and diverse choice of Agricultural Science and Practice modules. This deepens their knowledge and understanding of science, practice, policy and innovation that underpins humane and sustainable agricultural production resilient for the future. Indicative topics include but are not limited to emerging agricultural issues, Livestock and Cropping Solutions, Crop Health & Protection, Livestock Breeding & Nutrition, Advanced Business Management, Farm Consultancy and Countryside and Environmental Management.

Advice and guidance in selecting elective modules is available from the programme leader.

This programme is designed as a route into the agricultural sector. Assessments are therefore designed to encourage students to develop and showcase their critical thinking, reflective, problem solving and thought leadership skills in evaluating and applying emerging agricultural science and practice, relevant to their career aspirations in food and farming.

Overall, the programme is assessed through*:

Year	Directed	Independent	Placement	Exam	Coursework	Practical
Year 1	30.45%	69.55%	0.00%	0.00%	90.00%	10.00%

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 in an academically rigorous way. 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:

Grade title	Equivalent Mark
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 – Work Opportunities

The aim of the GDA programme is to provide an inspiring and forward-thinking educational package of study for those students who have already graduated, qualified or have relevant experience in another discipline, and who now want additional agricultural study as part of their future career aspirations. This is the programme for those seeking a career change and as such there are several opportunities for skills development and training here at the RAU and with associated partners.

The programme is primarily classroom based with several field trips and practicals (on farms, rural businesses and in the laboratory) built into the learning experience to help build knowledge. The field trips act as a vital link with the industry and many GDA students use these to seek further work experience in holidays and at weekends. The on-farm practicals and field trips help students to see the real-world application of the content taught in class and practice professional and employability skills, such as consultancy skills, animal handling, environmental sampling and farm business data analysis. This aligns with the RAU graduate framework and prepares students for jobs in their area of interest, and which are sought after by employers.

We also provide opportunities for rural skills training (e.g. quad bike driving, chain saw use, calving/lambing techniques etc.) through partner organisations, which are optional and in addition to the taught content.

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.



We inspire our graduates...



Section 11 - Progression

There are many diverse career opportunities available to students in agriculture, not least after graduating from the GDA programme. The applied nature of the programme, research-led teaching methods and close links with industry, provide students with the academic, technical and professional employment skills that are highly valued by employers.

Irrespective of the different specialisms chosen by students through their elective modules, the programme provides students with skills in critical thinking and problem solving for current

and future agricultural practice. This diploma enables students to not only acquire the most up-to-date knowledge relating to their chosen subject areas, but fundamentally use and apply that knowledge with confidence to meet the challenges and opportunities of a rapidly changing industry. Designing a herd/flock/farm business plan that considers economic, ethical, social and environmental drivers to a successful enterprise and analyses real data to show how to improve and mitigate risks, is one example of the transferable and real-world skills GDA students develop in the programme.

To further support and enhance student's employability, The Royal Agricultural University Enterprise and Employability team offer guidance and training events for all students. Furthermore, the Enterprise and Employability pages on gateway offer advice and resources to help plan your career and employability, including advice on creating CVs, interviews, and presentations. Sign up for the weekly e-news letter to keep up to date with part-time, full time, and temporary vacancies. A series of events are planned throughout the academic year to help develop student's enterprise and employability skills, focused around networking, interview techniques and how to get a job in the farming sector. Furthermore, the module leaders are well connected with farming businesses across the globe and often stay connected with students into the future careers.

Several students from the GDA programme have started practical farming after completing the programme, as farm owners or managers, with many hosting RAU students on farm visits as part of teaching activities. Other careers include:

- Agricultural media and knowledge exchange
- Farm management
- Advisory/consultancy roles
- Government and food supply chain roles (e.g., farm assurance, sales, technical support)
- Further research and even lecturing!

It should be noted that although proven practical farming abilities may be required by some employers prior to engaging in direct production agriculture, this is not the sole focus of this programme. Further rural skills training is provided by partner organisations in addition to the timetabled teaching activities and at the choice of students.

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. 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