The Royal Agricultural University

Programme Specification:

BSc (Hons) Farm Management

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 specifications.

Section 1 – Material Programme Information

Criteria	Detail
Validating body	The Royal Agricultural University
Teaching Institution	The Royal Agricultural University
Subject Area	Agriculture Science and Practice (ASP)
Entry Award(s)	BSc (Hons) Farm Management BSc (Hons) Farm Management with Foundation Year BSc (Hons) Farm Management with Professional Placement Year
Final Award and exit route(s)	BSc (Hons) Farm Management BSc (Hons) Farm Management with Foundation Year BSc (Hons) Farm Management with Professional Placement Year Diploma of Higher Education Farm Management Certificate of Higher Education Farm Management
Programme title	BSc (Hons) Farm Management
Location(s) of study	Cirencester
Full time study	3 years 4 years with Foundation or Professional Placement Year 5 years with Foundation and Professional Placement Year
Part-time study	6 years (Foundation Year and Professional Placement Year are not available as a part-time study)
Language of study	English
Programme start month	September
Period of validation	2026 to 2029
Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body	Not applicable
Type of Accreditation	Not applicable
Accreditation due for renewal	Not applicable
UCAS Code	D440(Main) D442(PPY) D443(IFY)
Quercus Code	FM, FMP, FMZ
HECos Code	Code 1:; Code 2: 100978
QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and other reference points	QAA Subject Benchmark Statements - Agriculture, Rural Environmental Sciences, Animal Studies, Consumer Science, Forestry, Food, Horticulture and Human Nutrition (April 2024). QAA Honours Degree Subject Benchmark Statements for General Business and Management (2023)
Academic level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	Level 4, 5, 6
Approval at AQSC	02 Sept 2026
Version	V1

Entry Requirements

Criteria	Detail
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)	GCSE minimum five GCSEs at Grade C/4 including English Language and Mathematics (or Maths Numeracy for Welsh applicants) plus satisfactory level 3 qualifications: • A-Level: (Example grades BCC) – minimum of 104 UCAS tariff points across three A-Levels or equivalent qualifications – recommended at least one science subject (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Computer Science, Maths, Further Maths, Environmental Science, and Sport) • C&G Advanced Technical/BTEC – Level 3 Extended • Diploma (1080) at Distinction-Merit-Merit C&G NPTC/C&G Advanced Technical/BTEC – Level 3Diploma (720), Extended Certificate (360) and 90-Credit Diploma (540) acceptable when accompanied by other Level 3 qualifications • International Baccalaureate: 26 points • Access to Higher Education: 45 credits at level 3, of which 21 must be awarded at Distinction and 15 at Merit or higher. (Pass at Functional Skills level 2 are accepted in lieu of GCSE English & Mathematics) Other level 3 qualifications will be considered A period of relevant practical experience is also highly recommended.
Non-standard application	
English language	
Interviews	

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) Farm Management programme is normally 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. The programme is designed to allow students to choose, through elective choices at levels 5 and 6, specialist thematic pathways – e.g. business / agri-business, crops or livestock production, and agri-environmental management.

Foundation Year

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

Level 0

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
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
	Total credits: Integrated Foundation Year		**120**		

BSc (Hons) Farm Management (360 credits)

Level 4

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
4M002	Professional, Practical and Study Skills	4	20	Core	1+2
4A002	Farm Business Finance and Accounts	4	20	Core	1+2
4B002	Introduction to Business & Management	4	20	Core	1+2
4A007	Applied Agricultural Science	4	20	Core	1+2
4A003	Agricultural Machinery, Technology and Buildings	4	20	Core	1+2
4A008	Digital and Geospatial Technologies	4	20	Core	1+2
	Total Credits: Certificate of Higher Education		**120**		

Level 5

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
5M002	Research & Evidence	5	20	Core	1+2
5B005	People and Organisations	5	20	Core	1+2
5B003	Financial Management	5	20	Core	1+2
5M001	Industry Engagement	5	0	Core	1+2
5A003	Farm Business Planning & Food Supply Chains	5	20	Core	1+2
5B004	Business Strategy for Competitive Advantage	5	20	Core	1+2

Plus, one elective from the list below

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
5B001	Marketing Management (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
5L006	Management of the Natural and Built Environments (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
5W003	Landscape Recovery and GIS (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
5A001	Agronomy (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
5A002	Livestock Husbandry (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
5A007	Technology and Agroecological Innovations (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
5A010	Agricultural Commodities Trading (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
5A008	Farm Animal Health & Welfare (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
5A009	Alternative Cropping Systems (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
	Total Credits: Diploma of Higher Education		**240**		

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

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

Level 6

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
6A007	Applied Business Project	5	40	Core	1+2
6A003	Advanced Farm Business Management	5	20	Core	1+2
6A004	Farm Business Consultancy	5	20	Core	1+2

Plus, two electives from the list below

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
6B007	Corporate Finance (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
6A002	Agri-Food Systems and Policies (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
6B004	Organisation in a Changing World (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
6B006	Rural Entrepreneurship (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
6W001	Countryside & Environmental Management (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
6A001	Agroecological and Technological Solutions(E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
6A005	Advanced Livestock Nutrition & Breeding (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
6A006	Crop Health, Nutrition & Protection (E)	5	20	Elective	1+2
	Total Credits: BSc (Hons) Farm Management		**360**		
	Total Credits: BSc (Hons) Farm Management Farm with Professional Placement Year BSc (Hons) Farm Management with Foundation Year		**480**		

Section 3 – Programme overview and Programme aims

Intended to support farm businesses across a wide range of scales and structures, the **BSc (Hons) Farm Management** is a **management-led, industry-aligned** programme that

prepares graduates to manage, develop and improve commercial farming enterprises. Drawing on RAU's applied research and employer partnerships, the curriculum integrates **business and financial management**, **strategic decision-making**, **digital and geospatial decision-support**, **production knowledge**, and **sustainability and environmental compliance**.

Where conventional Agriculture programmes are commonly production led, with management and business taught in support, the Farm Management programme is explicitly **business-first**, applying technical agriculture, financial analysis and environmental data to optimise performance, strengthen resilience and enhance sustainability outcomes.

Students do not need a farming background, just the motivation to lead change in a rapidly evolving sector. Learning is anchored in real time farm and enterprise contexts, live case work and an Applied Business Project (capstone) in the final year, demonstrating readiness for professional practice (e.g., consultancy, management roles, or enterprise leadership).

What makes this programme distinct?

Commercial spine: Financial management, enterprise planning, investment appraisal and risk management sitting at the core, with production knowledge and applied to profitability and resilience underscored by the four cornerstones below:

1. *Technology & Digital/Geospatial Decision-Making (Digital & geospatial capability*: Students use farm data systems, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), remote sensing and analytics to inform agronomic, environmental and business decisions).
2. *Environmental Sustainability(Compliance & Natural Capital)*
3. *Business,Finance & Enterprise (Sustainability as a business driver*: Environmental regulation, natural capital and carbon accounting are treated as compliance essentials and value-creation opportunities).
4. *Professional Practice, Employability & Leadership Professional orientation*: (Emphasis on client-ready communication, consultancy skills, change management and leadership. Pathways/elective choices can support professional routes (e.g., IAgrM; alignment with RICS knowledge areas in Geomatics/Environmental Surveying).

Curriculum overview (by year)

Level 4 (Foundations in business-led agriculture):

Professional, Practical & Study Skills · Farm Business Finance & Accounts · Introduction to Business Management · Applied Agricultural Science · Digital & Geospatial Technologies · Agricultural Machinery, Technology & Buildings.

Outcome: Students from all backgrounds gain core financial literacy, systems thinking and digital awareness for farm decision-making.

Level 5 (Applied management and evidence):

People & Organisations · Farm Business Planning & Food Supply Chains, Financial Management, Research and Evidence, Industry Engagement

Electives (choose one): Business Strategy for Competitive Advantage; Environmental Assessment & Land Use Planning; Agricultural Commodities Trading; Marketing Management; Technology & Nature-Based Innovations.

Outcome: Students plan and justify business improvements using financials, supply-chain insight and evidence from the field and data.

Level 6 (Strategy, consultancy and capstone):

Agri-Food Systems & Policies, Advanced Farm Business Management, Farm Business Consultancy, Applied Business Project.

Electives (choose one): Organisations in a Changing World; Rural Entrepreneurship; Corporate Finance; Countryside & Environmental Management.

Outcome: Students synthesise policy, markets, technology and environmental constraints to deliver client-grade solutions and a credible industry project.

Thematic focus through elective choices:

Students can shape a focus area e.g., Digital Management, Business / Enterprise & Financial Management or Agri-Environmental / countryside Management, Crop and Livestock Management, through their Level 5–6 elective choices and the topic of their choice for the Applied Business Project.

Programme aims:

Graduates of BSc (Hons) Farm Management will be able to:

- Lead and manage farm businesses—interpret financial accounts and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), plan cashflow, appraise investments, and manage risk to improve performance and resilience.
- Use digital and geospatial data—apply farm information systems, Geographic Information System (GIS)/remote sensing and analytics to diagnose issues, benchmark performance and target interventions.
- Integrate production knowledge with strategy—evaluate crop and livestock options against commercial objectives, welfare, market dynamics and resource constraints.
- Embed sustainability and compliance—apply environmental regulation, natural-capital and carbon accounting to reduce risk, capture value and support market access.

- Plan and deliver change—design and implement improvement projects (e.g., diversification, technology adoption, process optimisation) with clear KPIs, timelines and risk controls.
- Advise and communicate professionally—produce concise, client-ready reports, dashboards and presentations; facilitate stakeholder engagement and decision-making.
- Conduct applied investigations—gather, quality-assure and interpret financial, technical, geospatial and environmental evidence to make defensible, ethical recommendations.
- Demonstrate workplace-ready behaviours—work independently and in teams, manage time and resources, and reflect on performance to support continuous professional development.
- Deliver an Applied Business Project—scope, execute and evaluate a substantive, real-world project with (or for) an employer, evidencing impact on business performance or compliance.

Professional alignment: The curriculum supports early-career knowledge for professional pathways such as IAgrM / AgSociety membership and Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) knowledge areas (e.g., Geomatics—GIS/data management; Environmental Surveying—sustainability/compliance) and client care and communication at RICS knowledge Level 1 Formal accreditation will follow respective institutional processes.

Section 4 – Programme Sustainability

The **BSc (Hons) Farm Management** programme is explicitly mapped against the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, ensuring that sustainability, ethical decision-making and responsible resource management are embedded across the curriculum and assessed through authentic, practice-based learning. The attached programme SDG map demonstrates that students repeatedly engage with SDG themes through core modules in farm business, farming systems, natural/built environment management, innovation and applied projects, supporting the University's commitment to developing graduates who can respond to the interconnected challenges facing farming and rural land-based businesses.

The SDG mapping shows that the programme places its **strongest and most consistent emphasis** on: **SDG2 (Zero Hunger)**, through productivity, food supply chains, and resilient farm business planning; **SDG15 (Life on Land)**, through land stewardship, farming systems, environmental management and agroecological innovations; and **SDG12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)**, through whole-system thinking around resource efficiency, waste reduction, sustainable supply chains and responsible enterprise design. In parallel, the programme strongly supports **SDG9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)** by developing the technical, digital and innovation capabilities required for modern farm management and rural enterprise, including the application of technology and business transformation tools.

The map also evidences substantial coverage of **SDG8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)** through enterprise finance, financial management, business strategy, people/organisations, and industry engagement, supporting employability and professional practice in the rural economy. Alongside this, **SDG13 (Climate Action)** is embedded through the programme's sustainability and systems-based modules and through applied decision-making in final-year work where students evaluate climate resilience, resource efficiency and mitigation options in real operational contexts.

Finally, the programme maintains supporting emphasis on **SDG4 (Quality Education)** by developing critical thinking, evidence-based decision-making and professional skills across Levels 4–6, and it includes further (selective) contributions to goals such as **SDG6 (Clean Water and Sanitation)**, **SDG7 (Affordable and Clean Energy)**, **SDG3 (Good Health and Well-being)**, **SDG10 (Reduced Inequalities)** and **SDG17 (Partnerships for the Goals)** through modules that address environment, people and organisations, industry collaboration and applied projects.

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.	Analyse the organisational structure of farm businesses (accounts, cashflow, KPIs, capital structure, investment appraisal, marketing, human resources) to inform strategic and operational decisions and planning. (SDG,2,8,9,12)	4002 4B002 5B001 5B003 5B001 5B004 6A007 6A003 6A004 6B007 6B004 6B006
2.	Explain and analyse how environmental regulation, climate change, natural capital and carbon accounting shape land-use change, compliance and value creation in modern farm businesses. (SDG 2,12,13,15)	4A007 5A003 5B004 5L006 5W003 6A007 6W001
3.	Appraise agri-food markets and policy (incl. supply chains, trade, price risk, the UK agricultural support transition) and evaluate implications for enterprise mix and risk management. (SDG 2,8,12,17)	4A007 5A010 5B004, 5A003 6A002 6A007
4.	Demonstrate applied knowledge of crop and livestock systems sufficient to evaluate technical options against commercial, welfare and sustainability objectives. (SDG 2, 3, 12,13,15)	4A007, 4M002,5A001 5A002 5A007 5A008 5A009 6A001 6A005 6A001
5.	Describe, compare and evaluate farm machinery, digital, precision and geospatial technologies (e.g., sensors, Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS), drones /Remote Sensing (RS), farm machinery / management software, Geographic Information Systems (GIS)) and their business use-cases. (SDG 2,9,12,13)	4A008 4M002, 4A003, 5W003

6.	Appraise the legal and governance context of farm management (contracts, tenancy, Human Resources (HR), health & safety, data governance/ethics) relevant to decision-making and professional conduct. (SDG 8,16)	5B001 5L006 5B004 6A007 6A003 6A004 6B007

Intellectual, Professional, Key skills

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Diagnose performance problems and opportunities using enterprise budgets, benchmarking, KPIs and scenario/sensitivity analysis; prioritise value adding intervention in the context of sustainable agriculture.	4A002 4B002 5A003 5B003 5B001 5B004 6A007 6A003 6A004 6B007 6B006
2.	Design data informed management plans that combine production, finance and environmental constraints; justify choices using digital data/geospatial evidence.	4A008 5W003 4A003 6W001 5L006
3.	Apply project and change management methods to implement improvements (e.g., diversification, technology adoption, lean processes), including risk, resources and timelines.	4A002 4B002 4A008 5B001 5B003 5B001 5B004 6A007 6A003 6A004 6B007 6B004 6B006
4.	Conduct professional investigations: acquire, quality assure and interpret primary/secondary data (financial, technical, geospatial, environmental) and draw defensible conclusions.	4A002 4B002 4A008 5B001 5B003 5B001 5B004 6A007 6A003 6A004 6B007 6B004 6B006
5.	Communicate with influence—produce client ready reports, dashboards and presentations; facilitate stakeholder engagement (owners, staff, contractors, regulators, supply chain partners).	4A007 5A003 5B004 5L006 6A007 6W001 6A003 6A004 6B007 6A002
6.	Demonstrate personal, academic and career development skills for lifelong learning by effectively participating in teamwork and demonstrating the ability to communicate with a wide range of stakeholders.	5M001 6A007 PPY

Section 6 – Approach to Learning and Teaching delivery

The BSc (Hons) Farm Management is designed for a diverse cohort, recognising the range of skills, knowledge and prior experiences students bring.

Learner autonomy is developed intentionally across the programme through a staged "scaffold–stretch–sustain" design. At Level 4, students are supported to build confidence in university-level study through structured learning tasks, guided reading and supported practice in core academic, technical and business skills. As students move into Level 5, autonomy increases through guided inquiry: students take greater responsibility for planning and conducting evidence gathering, working with more open-ended briefs, selecting and justifying tools and methods, and managing their own time against intermediate deadlines. Across these levels, feedback progressively shifts from directive (what to change) to dialogic and developmental (how to improve judgement), supporting students to self-evaluate and act on feedforward.

Group learning is used deliberately to build **teamwork, decision-making and evaluative synthesis,** with these capabilities reinforced through structured tasks, individual work and student led discussions. Throughout, learning activities are tied to **authentic industry contexts**, ensuring that analysis and problem-solving are applied to real-world settings.

At Level 6, autonomy becomes the organising principle of learning. **The Applied Business Project (ABP)** replaces the traditional dissertation and provides a structured but independent capstone experience. Students work with a live/simulated client brief to define and refine the problem, plan and undertake discovery and analysis, design a pilot minimum viable product (MVP), build an investment-grade financial and implementation case, and defend recommendations through an investor-style pitch and viva. Autonomy is supported through a nominated supervisor model, action learning set support where appropriate, and a transparent milestone pathway with formative checkpoints (e.g., concept note, draft report skeleton, mock panel(s)) that de-risk the summative work while maintaining student ownership of decisions, evidence and outputs. This consultancy style format embeds professional practice (e.g., client care, communication) at **RICS knowledge Level 1** while avoiding duplication with farm planning and business consultancy modules. **Work-related and Experiential Learning**

Work-related learning is threaded through the programme. Campus based seminars and tutorials are **integrated with practicals and field trips** to the Land Laboratory Teaching Centre, RAU farms, research facilities and partner farms/agribusinesses. Guest lectures and demonstrations provide sector insight and currency.

Assessments across the programme use live data and real farm contexts; including whole farm planning, farm accounts, agronomy regimes, tenancy plans, breeding / nutrition analyses and animal health plans to build applied decision-making. The ABP intensifies this authenticity: students engage with client discovery, market and competitor scanning, policy/compliance due diligence, unit economics and cashflow sensitivity, culminating in a consultancy report/portfolio and panel pitch with a viva. Formative touch points (e.g.,

concept note, draft report skeleton, mock panel(s)) derisk the summative work and sharpen professional reflection.

Intellectual skills

Where and how intellectual skills are built:

- **Foundation Year–Level 5:** Intellectual skills (critical reading, argument construction, evidence handling, analysis and evaluation) are explicitly taught and practised in contextualised modules (e.g., Research and Evidence) and embedded across topical modules. Feedback is staged to build confidence and independence over time.
- **Level 6 (Capstone—Applied Business Project):**
  The ABP is the deliberate *step-up* in intellectual demand. Students must synthesise literature and industry insight to frame a researchable business question; design and justify methods (including ethics and data management); analyse and interpret qualitative/quantitative evidence to generate valid findings with clear limitations; and produce a professional consultancy output and defend it orally**.** This structure mirrors real consultancy practice and directly mobilises higher order skills criticality, synthesis, judgement under uncertainty and reflective evaluation—aligned to the RAU Graduate Framework (professional approach, sustainable mindset, technical/digital skill, innovative thinking).

Information technology and computational skills

Every module makes purposeful use of digital platforms and tools. Students build competence through project work, presentations and assignments, including modules such as Digital and Geospatial Technologies and Landscape Recovery and GIS. Real-world scenarios in Farm Business Finance and Accounts, Farm Business Planning and Food *Supply Chains, Advanced Farm Business Management and Farm Business Consultancy* develop applied problem-solving and analytical skills.

Within the ABP, students extend these capabilities by constructing **unit economics models, cashflow and sensitivity analyses,** and **KPI dashboards,** and by integrating **policy/compliance datasets** where relevant to the chosen initiative. The **VLE** underpins access to guidance, readings and templates throughout.

Independent Learning

Independent learning is embedded throughout. Students are expected to read widely to consolidate and extend taught content, prepare for tutorials/seminars, complete coursework and case studies, and develop major projects.

Additional guided independent study (including prerecorded lectures) is used to:

- stimulate interest in subject matter;
- provide key information and multiple perspectives;
- explain difficult concepts and theories;
- deepen subject knowledge; and

- offer access to specialist guest content.

In the ABP, independence is scaffolded via a supervision model and a transparent 24-week pathway from selection/scoping to feasibility, commercialisation, risk/resilience and final defence—ensuring students manage a substantive project plan, meet milestones and act on feedback.

Section 7 – Approach to Assessment

A varied mix of assessment methods is used across the programme to ensure students can demonstrate the **intended learning outcomes** for each module in authentic farm and agribusiness contexts. Taken together, these methods test knowledge, analysis, professional judgement, decision making and communication. At Level 6, the traditional dissertation is replaced by the **Applied Business Project (ABP)** to emphasise evidence based, actionable recommendations for real clients in the land-based sector.

Overall, the programme is assessed through*:

	Directed	Independent	Placement	Exam	Coursework	Practical
Year 1	30.33%	69.67%	0.00%	3.33%	96.67%	0.00%
Year 2	21.28%	52.99%	25.74%	3.33%	75.00%	21.67%
Year 3	24.83%	75.17%	0.00%	0.00%	88.33%	11.67%

**This refers to any other assessment methods except examinations.*
*** placement data includes module 5M001, Industry Engagement (0 credits)*
**** Includes popular elective options available for the programme.*

* **Assessment methods used**

- Essays
- Reports (academic or professional/consultancy)
- Case studies
- Group exercises
- Oral presentations
- In class / in lab / infield / online tests (e.g., multiple-choice, short answer)
- Practical assessments (e.g., livestock performance assessments; health and welfare diagnosis; crop/soil management plans; feed plans; laboratory investigations)
- Portfolios / e-portfolios
- Skills observation

- Peer review
- Subject specific exercises
- Academic posters
- Research proposals
- Applied Business Project (capstone consultancy portfolio/report and pitch & viva

Progression across levels

Progression of analytical/research capability, learner autonomy and professional practice (cross-referenced to modules)

- **Progressive development across level 4–6:** Analytical, research and professional capabilities are scaffolded from structured foundations (Level 4), through guided inquiry and defensible judgement (Level 5), culminating in independent capstone performance (Level 6).

Level 4 — Supported foundations (structured learning and early autonomy)

- Professional, Practical and Study Skills (4M002 / AM002): Students develop early academic and professional learning habits through structured reflection, critical thinking, sourcing and evaluating information, and digital literacy—including basic data handling (e.g., Excel) and presentation of information.
- 4M002 reflective capability (explicitly taught and practised): Reflective thinking and reflective writing are introduced and practised early, supporting students to identify existing skills, set development goals, and evidence progress
- 4M002 practical competence & H&S awareness: Practical learning is delivered through six half-day practical sessions with instructional briefings (including health and safety) and assessed via a skills portfolio that requires completion of practical tasks.
- Farming Systems & Sustainability (Level 4 example): Students begin applying analysis to real contexts, including primary farm data collection and systems-based thinking about sustainability challenges (as referenced in your programme narrative and mapping).
- Authentic context from the outset: Level 4 learning is explicitly positioned as an introduction to the land-based sector, its dynamic change, and the economic, policy, science and sustainability issues that shape decision-making.

Level 5 — Developing autonomy (guided inquiry, evidence handling, defensible judgement)

- Research & Evidence (5M002): Students progress from structured tasks to guided inquiry, developing the ability to design a structured research proposal, locate and evaluate evidence, and justify methodological choices with increasing independence.
- Industry Engagement (5M001): Students apply learning in authentic settings, strengthening professional behaviours and evidence gathering/synthesis through engagement with industry contexts and expectations.
- Farm Business Planning & Food Supply Chains (5A003): Students work with more open-ended applied problems, building autonomy through planning, evaluation of alternatives, and decision-making grounded in real farm/supply chain contexts.
- Financial Management (5B003) + Business Strategy (5B004): Students develop judgement under uncertainty by working with scenario-based information, selecting assumptions, evaluating risk/alternatives and defending recommendations.
- Technical/system electives (examples): Modules such as *Agronomy (5A001)*, *Livestock Husbandry (5A002)*, *Technology and Agroecological Innovations (5A007)* and *Landscape Recovery and GIS (5W003)* reinforce autonomy through interpretation of technical/environmental/spatial information and evidence-informed management decisions.

Level 6 — Independent autonomy (capstone synthesis and defence)

- Applied Business Project (ABP) — dissertation alternative: The ABP is the capstone vehicle for independent learning and higher-order intellectual development, requiring students to frame a live/simulated client problem and progress from discovery to investment-grade recommendations.
- Methodological justification (incl. ethics and data management): Students must select, justify and implement appropriate methods; manage ethics and data; and build a defensible evidence chain from literature/industry insight through to findings and limitations.
- Qualitative + quantitative analysis and synthesis: Students analyse and interpret mixed evidence (e.g., discovery insights, market scanning, compliance due diligence and financial modelling) to generate implementable recommendations.
- Professional defence: Students defend investment-grade recommendations through an investor-style pitch and viva, demonstrating clarity of argument, evidence hierarchy and decision rationale.

Assessments are normally issued at the start of each module, with submissions typically due at the midpoint and/or end of the teaching period. Each module includes formative activities to diagnose strengths and gaps and to support improvement ahead of summative assessment. Students receive written feedback on all assessed coursework (supplemented by oral feedback where appropriate) within 20 working days of submission

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:

Grade	**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 – Placement module (5M001) and Professional Placement Year (PPY)

All RAU degrees, including those with a 52-week Professional Placement Year, feature a 12-week industry placement period to ensure that our graduates develop key technical, operational and management skills that add invaluable long-term benefits to their career and employability. There will be opportunities to connect with one of our many industry partners through work placements across the country and abroad. Students will benefit from between 525 and 1200 hours working and applying knowledge as part of the degree programme – essential work-based skill development that counts as credits towards the degree meaning RAU students will graduate prepared and competitive for employment.

In the second year of the programme, students are required to undertake a 15-week self-employment placement (or in an organisation) between end of March / early April and September of that year. This will be part of the completion of their **Industry Placement** module (2317).

For students enrolled on the **BSc (Hons) with Professional Placement Year**, they are also required to undertake 120 credits (1200 hours, i.e. 35 weeks with a minimum 35 hrs per week, professional placement year. The **Professional Placement Year** (PPY) is taken between levels 5 and 6 of the academic programme from September of that year, having competed the placement requirement for 2317.

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 Placement Module and its role in Year 2

The compulsory work placement 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 the link tutor (see below).

Failure to secure a work placement, or to submit a satisfactory report within the time scale laid down (normally mid-October in each academic year), will normally result in a failure in the 15-credit module, and thus a failure in Year 2.

The placement opportunities are generally viewed very favourably by potential employers and provide you with the chance to experience real organisational life at first hand. It is not uncommon, in some situations, for students to find that a placement may also result in a job offer, for take-up after graduation. It is particularly important that students undergoing placements keep alive the possibility of using their experience as the basis for a research project in Year 3, and thus basing a dissertation on a 'real-life' organisation.

The opportunity is open to wide ranging possibilities of type of organisation, and also country of placement. It is certainly important for students to remember the many types of organisation that may usefully provide opportunities; including those in the public and private sector, the for-profit and not-for-profit organisations, charities, co-operatives, and so on.

The Placement Coordinator is assisted by the subject Academics. Their role is specifically to provide support for students during the search process, and while the placement is underway, and he will be pleased to talk to students about possible placements. It is important for students to give thought to the placement in good time in order to arrange the best possible opportunity.

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.

Before placements commence, all students will be called to a pre-placement advice session, to begin the process of providing them with appropriate guidance and support in preparation for, during, and after their placements.

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.

The student is encouraged to keep in touch with this 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

Graduate value

The BSc (Hons) Farm Management develops commercial managers who can lead complex rural enterprises: setting strategy, managing people and assets, controlling risk and finance, using data for performance improvement, and delivering profitable, sustainable growth. Students are supported by the University's careers and enterprise services (1to1 guidance, employer fairs, placements and alumni links) designed to help them transition into leadership roles across land based and rural sectors. [rau.ac.uk]

Typical roles and destinations

Graduates progress into roles such as:

- Farm Business Manager / Operations Manager (whole farm Profit & Loss (P&L), budgeting, capital planning, KPI dashboards, workforce leadership).
- Rural Enterprise / Diversification Manager (new venture feasibility, market entry, agritourism, value add brands).
- Consulting & Advisory (junior) — farm business analysis, benchmarking, improvement projects.
- Agri finance / Banking analyst (lending support, cashflow and risk review) and Supply chain / Procurement analyst (contracts, supplier performance).
- Estate & Asset Management (junior) — operational oversight integrating natural capital, compliance and reporting.
  These routes are reinforced by RAU's placement offer and employer engagement throughout study. [rau.ac.uk]

Professional alignment and external certifications

The programme prioritises business and management capability. Students who want additional professional recognition can pursue the following after (or alongside) their degree at their own expense via external providers:

a) Management & leadership

- Chartered Management Institute (CMI) Levels 5–7 awards/certificates/diplomas provide nationally recognised management credentials and a pathway to Chartered Manager (CMgr) status for experienced managers. [managers.org.uk]
- ILM Level 5 Leadership & Management (City & Guilds) offers flexible units focused on leading teams, strategy execution, change and performance improvement. [i-l-m.com]

b) Project delivery

- APM Project Fundamentals Qualification (PFQ) — an entry-level, knowledge-based certificate in project management (lifecycle, scheduling, risk, communication) with no prerequisite experience; widely offered with online assessment. [apm.org.uk]

c) Sustainability and compliance

- IEMA/ISEP Foundation Certificate in Environmental Management (AIEMA**)** — a 5-day foundation in environmental governance, management systems (ISO 14001), carbon accounting and reporting; successful completion confers eligibility for Associate membership (AIEMA). [makeuk.org], [rrc.co.uk]

d) Operational competence (where role relevant)

For managers overseeing operations, external short courses can evidence practical compliance within the team (often completed during placements or employment): NPTC (City & Guilds) pesticide units (e.g., PA1 core theory; PA2/PA6 application modules) and Lantra tickets for tractor/telehandler/ATV and wider land-based safety. These are independent of the degree and typically delivered by accredited centres. [nptc.org.uk], [nptc.org.uk], [lantra.co.uk]

e) Specialist technical routes (optional, for role specialisation)

Where a graduate's job requires technical agronomy or animal health prescribing, they may pursue:

- **BASIS** (e.g., *Certificate in Crop Protection – IPM, Agriculture*) for those in crop advice or product supply roles; delivered via approved providers and assessed by MCQ, ID test, project and viva. [basis-reg.co.uk]
- **FACTS** (Fertiliser Advisers Certification & Training Scheme) to demonstrate competence in nutrient management; commonly expected by assurance schemes. [basis-reg.co.uk]
- **AMTRA RAMA (SQP)** accreditation for the prescription/supply of certain POM-VPS/NFA-VPS animal medicines, with species modules selected to suit job

scope; governed by the **SQP Code of Practice** under the Veterinary Medicines Regulations. [amtra.org.uk], [vetskill.com]

The degree equips students with **f**arm and business management decision-making across production systems and diversified enterprises. These external awards are optional and pursued where specific job roles require technical certification.

Placement learning & Industry Project (management outcomes)

Students may take an optional Professional Placement Year after Level 5. All complete an Applied Business Project (L6) focused on business improvement (e.g., performance dashboard design, cost & cash-flow optimisation, diversification feasibility, digital systems implementation, ESG reporting). These deliverables strengthen interview portfolios and can underpin professional applications (e.g., CMI, APM, IEMA) by evidencing leadership, analysis and impact. [rau.ac.uk]

Earnings outlook for salaried farm business managers (context for graduates)

Independent UK surveys continue to show competitive remuneration for salaried farm/farm business managers, with total packages increasing alongside enterprise scale and responsibility:

- **Average total cash earnings (2026): £67,605** (avg. gross salary **£63,994** + bonuses/profit share **£3,611**); noncash benefits (e.g., accommodation, vehicle) often lift total package further, with one in five managers now receiving six figure packages once benefits are included. [fwi.co.uk]
- The trend reflects the growing complexity and scale of modern farm businesses and the premium on strategic, financial and people leadership at manager level. [fwi.co.uk]

Professional body membership and postgraduate routes

- **Society of Agriculture (SocAg)** — formed in 2026 through the merger of IAgrM and BIAC — provides a professional home for farm and rural business managers (networking, CPD, national conference, pay survey). Graduates can join and progress membership grades as their responsibility and experience grow. [biac.co.uk], [iagrm.com]

Postgraduate options include management, sustainability or innovation focused MSc/MBA pathways, and research degrees aligned to enterprise performance and rural business transformation. (CMI and ILM routes offer parallel professional upskilling while in work).

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. ATS 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