International Foundation Certificate in Computing
Programme Specification

Awarding Institution: University of London (Interim Exit Awards made by Goldsmiths' College)	
Teaching Institution: Goldsmiths, University of London	
Final Award: Certificate	
Programme Name: International Foundation Certificate in Computing	
Total credit value for programme: 120	
Name of Interim Exit Award(s): Not applicable	
Duration of Programme: 1 year full-time	
UCAS Code(s): Not applicable	
HECoS Code(s): Not applicable	
QAA Benchmark Group: Languages and Related Studies	
FHEQ Level of Award: Level 3	
Programme accredited by: Not applicable	
Date Programme Specification last updated/approved: September 2022	
Home Department: Centre for Academic Language and Literacies	
Department(s) which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme: Computing	

Programme overview

The International Foundation Certificate (IFC) suite of programmes is aimed at pre-undergraduate students who wish to develop or consolidate their academic English language skills and/or undertake preliminary study in the subject areas they would like to study at BA level. They will gain insight into how disciplinary knowledge is constructed and studied. The aim is also to enable students to become familiar with UK academic culture, in particular at Goldsmiths, and in the standards required at undergraduate level. It may help students who do not have a clear idea of exactly what they want to study to find their particular focus. Through taking modules related to their interests, and with one-to-one tutorial guidance, they can find the future degree best suited to them.

Students who successfully complete the programme at the required level are guaranteed a place on a relevant Goldsmiths undergraduate degree. Students who wish to go on to study elsewhere in the UK will be given the appropriate tutorial support to complete their

applications and write an impactful personal statement; their personal tutor will write a supporting reference.

The core modules introduce and develop the following skills:

1. Reading

Through a wide range of texts (both academic and non-academic) students are exposed to contemporary ideas and topics and ideas relating to themes like identity, gender, democracy, inequality and social justice. They study relevant theoretical concepts to help frame these themes. Language development is embedded: through their reading, students are exposed to a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary. They are also encouraged to read independently, developing the skills of reading for gist and specific information in order to acquire the information they need from academic texts.

2. Writing

Students are taught how to write in a range of settings, with emphasis given to appropriate academic style. Students become familiar with the organisation of key writing genres, learning how arguments are presented and how to use language appropriately. Lecturers support a move away from the kind of writing that students may have been coached to produce for English language tests; instead, there is a focus on research-informed writing and using evidence to support claims.

3. Listening and Speaking

Regular use is made of up-to-date broadcasts and contemporary discussions, with the aim of introducing students to a range of challenging and engaging material related to contemporary issues. We make use of Goldsmiths' excellent audiovisual collection, and interrogate themes like accessibility, climate inequality and social justice. The aim is to develop students' familiarity with current aspects of British culture, to build on their existing knowledge and experience, and provide opportunities for the development of their own interactive skills. Students learn how to give researched presentations and interact effectively in seminars.

4. Research skills

The programme aims to develop essential research skills: using the library; performing critically engaged web-based research using search engines such as Google Scholar; assessing the validity and reliability of sources and avoiding plagiarism. The focus is on students to develop the independent research skills that will enable self-discovery and equip them for undergraduate study.

Programme entry requirements

• Students must normally be 18 years of age on admission

• A minimum score of 5.0 in UKVI IELTS (with no sub-score lower than 5.0)

• Students must normally have graduated from Senior High School

Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Develop your ability to speak and write critically, fluently and accurately for a variety of academic contexts	LS50002A: Academic Reading and Writing, LS50002B: Academic Listening and Speaking
A2	Apply relevant knowledge to a variety of spoken and written academic genres	All modules
A3	Apply the academic and study skills necessary to succeed on a Level 4 programme in a UK HE environment	All modules

Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Apply critical thinking skills to a range of academic contexts	All modules
B2	Analyse and interpret a range of text types	All modules
B3	Ability to construct and support an argument	All modules

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Demonstrate an understanding and application of relevant knowledge and performance in practice-based disciplines such as music, design and computing	IS50001C Foundations of Programming IS50003C Foundations of Problem Solving
C2	Structure and communicate ideas effectively both orally and in writing	All modules
C3	Acquire an awareness of the assumptions and expectations of a student studying at Level 4 in a UK university	All modules

Transferable skills (Elements)

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Engage with and respond to tutors and students from a range of disciplinary, cultural and linguistic backgrounds	All modules
D2	Participate effectively in groups, assessing the relevance and importance of the ideas of others	All modules
D3	Acquire the necessary skills to become an independent, creative and lifelong learner	All modules

Grading Criteria (Foundation)

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Pass	Overall achievement is at an exceptional level, both written and spoken. There is considerable independence of thought and control of communication in both general academic content and specific theoretical ideas. There is evidence of clearly structured and focused argumentation using an exceptional range of appropriate grammatical structures and

		vocabulary. Work produced is cited and referenced correctly and shows thorough analysis based on extensive research.
70-79%	Pass	Overall achievement is at an excellent level, both written and spoken. There is substantial independence of thought and control of communication in both general academic content and specific theoretical ideas. At this level there is a high level of grammatical accuracy and appropriacy, and an excellent range of vocabulary. Work produced follows a very coherent line of argument and is cited and referenced throughout, evidencing solid research.
60-69%	Pass	Overall achievement is at a very good level, both written and spoken. There is some degree of independence of thought and communication is rarely impeded in both general academic content and specific theoretical ideas. The main issues of topics are explored and there is a line of argument with only minor lapses. A wide range of sentences structures and vocabulary are used although some errors may occur when using complex language. Work produced is appropriately researched and supported through citation and referencing with only minor lapses in accuracy.
50-59%	Pass	Overall achievement is at a good level, both written and spoken. Independence of thought is adequate, and communication is generally effective for general academic content and there is articulation of some theoretical ideas. There are some lapses in clarity when constructing an academic argument and the logical relationship between points may not always be evident. There is a good range of sentence structures and vocabulary but there may be errors which occasionally impede understanding. Work produced is not always fully researched and citation and referencing are not always thorough.
40-49%	Pass	Overall achievement is at a satisfactory level, both written and spoken. There is a reliance on description over analysis and independence of thought. Communication of general academic content is satisfactory but there is some difficulty with theoretical ideas. Accuracy and range of grammar and vocabulary are satisfactory but errors when using more complex structures impede understanding. There is some attempt at argument, but citation and referencing are inconsistent.
25-39%	Fail	Learning outcomes have not been met satisfactorily. There is an over-reliance on description and arguments are not adequately developed, showing little or no research. Communication is confined to simple sentences with frequent errors, which impedes understanding. There is a limited range of vocabulary and errors are clearly evident. There is little

		evidence that an argument can be supported and referenced correctly.
10-24%	Bad fail	Learning outcomes have not been met. Content is purely descriptive and there is no attempt at analysis or personal argument. Communication is poor due to the lack of basic grammar and vocabulary structures. There is little or no evidence of the academic conventions of argument, citation and referencing.
1-9%	Very bad fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes (shall be deemed a non-valid attempt and module must be re-sat).
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment.

Mode of study

On campus

Programme structure

All modules are compulsory but depending on IELTS level on entry students will take either LS50002B Academic Listening and Speaking (IELTS 6.0 or below) or LS50017B Collaborative Research (IELTS 6.5 or above).

Core modules:

LS50001A Academic Reading and Writing

The module covers the key aspects of Academic Reading and Writing. The Academic Writing component of the module has a particular focus on presenting an argument and includes the planning process, structuring an argument, summarising and paraphrasing techniques, referencing and avoiding plagiarism, and drafting and editing a piece of work. Features of academic style and the acquisition of relevant vocabulary are also included. Emphasis is given to the logic underlying academic writing conventions and the culture at university level.

The Academic Reading component develops skills to understand and analyse academic texts. These include expanding academic vocabulary, inferring meaning of unknown words from the context, learning about cohesion of academic texts, reading for gist and specific

information as well as identifying and summarising key information of a text. The texts focus on a background to Western thought and culture, including the ancient Greeks, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the influence of Modernity, Feminism and Marxism. More recent critical perspectives include postmodern and postcolonial approaches, Black Lives Matter and LGBTQ.

LS50002B Academic Listening and Speaking

To enhance listening skills, the module makes use of a wide range of authentic academic audio and visual texts to help students acquire the skills of listening for gist and specific information and taking useful notes. The module deploys recordings from Goldsmiths library as well as BBC radio shows. Students are exposed to a range of challenging and interesting recordings related to the arts, current affairs, media, education and aspects of British culture. Many of the recordings are relevant to subjects studied at Goldsmiths, for example race and ethnicity, representation, identity and culture. Wherever possible, the recordings are exploited for vocabulary development.

To develop speaking skills, students will have to research and give seminar presentations and lead the class through a discussion of their chosen topic. They will receive input on effective seminar techniques and functional language. There is also ongoing feedback on their presentations.

LS50017B Collaborative Research

The focus of the module is on research methodologies, firstly by providing students with a comprehensive overview of some of the main ways that knowledge is generated within university contexts. Aspects studied include:

- defining research questions;
- qualitative and quantitative approaches;
- research design;
- research ethics;
- good questionnaire design;
- conducting surveys, using software where appropriate;
- Conducting structured and semi-structured interviews;
- ethnographic approaches;
- coding data;
- drawing conclusions;
- and recognising limitations.

Students collaborate in small groups (3-4 students) over the academic year to design and conduct their own research project. This is done in close supervision from the module convenor, and can relate to, and extend, IFC students' pathway studies or learning from

Music foundation studies. As the projects develop, the module adopts more of a workshop approach, with some group tutorials offered.

As well as the content focus on research, there is a focus on 'soft' skills: recognising individuals' value to a team effort, conflict resolution, pooling resources, time management, poster design, confidence building, presentation skills and self-reflection.

Subject-specific modules:

These modules offer students the opportunity to prepare for a relevant BA programme.

IS50001C Foundations of Programming

This module aims to introduce computer programming to foundation year students with no prior knowledge of programming. The module aims to provide students with the necessary background to use a computer to develop and execute simple software programs in a manner that will prepare them for the programming courses in the first year of a Computing degree programme.

IS50003C Foundations of Problem Solving

This module is designed to be taught concurrently with the Foundations of Programming module to students with little or no experience with computer programming. It complements the bottom-up tendency of the syntax based Programming course by providing a top-down view of programming. It is expected that this will increase students' interest in and understanding of algorithms, and clarity and efficiency when programming, which are fundamental when pursuing a career in Computing.

Academic year of study 1

Module Name	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
Academic Reading and Writing	LS50001A	30	3	Compulsory (Non-compensatable)	1,2
Academic Listening and Speaking	LS50002B	30	3	Optional	1,2
Collaborative Research	LS50017B	30	3	Optional	1,2

Module Name	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
Foundations of Problem Solving	IS50003C	30	3	Compulsory (Non-compensatable	1,2
Foundations of Programming	IS50001C	30	3	Compulsory (Non-compensatable	1,2

Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in a number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally.

All students are allocated a Personal Tutor (one in each department for joint programmes) who has overall responsibility for their individual progress and welfare. Personal Tutors meet with their student at least three a year either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically. The first meeting normally takes place within the first few weeks of the autumn term. Personal Tutors are also available to students throughout the year of study. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This provides an opportunity for progress, attendance and assessment marks to be reviewed and an informed discussion to take place about how to strengthen individual learning and success.

All students are also allocated a Senior Tutor to enable them to speak to an experienced academic member of staff about any issues which are negatively impacting their academic study and which are beyond the normal scope of issues handled by Programme Convenors and Personal Tutors.

Students are provided with information about learning resources, the [Library](#) and information available on [Learn.gold (VLE)](#) so that they have access to department/ programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance.

Taught sessions and lectures provide overviews of themes, which students are encouraged to complement with intensive reading for presentation and discussion with peers at seminars. Assessments build on lectures and seminars so students are expected to attend all taught sessions to build knowledge and their own understanding of their chosen discipline.

All assessed work is accompanied by some form of feedback to ensure that students' work is on the right track. It may come in a variety of forms ranging from written comments on a marked essay to oral and written feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops.

Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is provided on the Goldsmiths website and for new students through new starter information and induction/Welcome Week. Any support recommendations that are made are agreed with the student and communicated to the department so that adjustments to learning and teaching are able to be implemented at a department level and students can be reassured that arrangements are in place. Opportunities are provided for students to review their support arrangements should their circumstances change. The Disability and Wellbeing Services maintain caseloads of students and provide on-going support.

The Careers Service provides central support for skills enhancement, running The Gold Award scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR).

The Centre for Academic Language and Literacies works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision for students throughout the year

Placement opportunities

Not applicable

Employability and potential career opportunities

This programme is designed to support progression onto further study.

Programme-specific requirements

Students on this programme should have English as an additional language.

The pass mark is 40%. Students must pass all modules of the programme to be awarded the International Foundation Certificate.

In order to achieve guaranteed progression students will also need to have an overall mark of 50%.

Students who successfully complete this programme at the required level can progress to the following programmes:

BSc Business Computing and Entrepreneurship
BSc Computer Science
BSc Creative Computing
BSc Games Programming

Tuition fee costs

Information on tuition fee costs is available at: https://www.gold.ac.uk/students/fee-support/

Specific programme costs

Not applicable