# Programme Specification

## Course record information

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| **Name and level of final award** | • Master of Science - Big Data Technologies<br>The award is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible |
| **Name and level of intermediate awards** | • Postgraduate Diploma (Pg Dip) - Big Data Technologies<br>• Postgraduate Certificate (Pg Cert) - Big Data Technologies |
| **Awarding body/institution** | University of Westminster |
| **Teaching institution** | University of Westminster |
| **Status of awarding body/institution** | Recognised Body |
| **Location of delivery** | Primary: Central London |
| **Language of delivery and assessment** | English |
| **QAA subject benchmarking group(s)** | QAA Subject Benchmark Statement - Computing March 2022 |
| **Professional statutory or regulatory body** | The programme is accredited by British Computer Society (BCS) The Chartered Institute for IT, for partially meeting the academic requirement for CITP and CEng. Accreditation is valid for intakes to this course between September 2022 - August 2028. |
| **Westminster course title, mode of attendance and standard length** | • MSc Big Data Technologies FT, Full-time, September start - 1 year standard length<br>• MSc Big Data Technologies PT, Part-time day, September start - 2 years standard length<br>• MSc Big Data Technologies FT, Full-time, January start - 1 year standard length<br>• MSc Big Data Technologies PT, Part-time day, January start - 2 years standard length |
| **Valid for cohorts** | From 2024/5 |

## Additional Course Information

The course builds on students' graduate competencies and develops further their logical, analytical skills and technical in a way that they can be applied to problems related to the use and applications of Big Data. The technical nature of the programme means that applicants need to have a prior study of some aspect of computing itself or another discipline that provides an important underpinning for, or insight into, the discipline of IT/computing, or an application domain where there are important benefits that flow from a close marriage with IT/Computing (e.g. sciences or engineering, business studies).

Mature applicants, who can demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to study and have a long and extensive relevant work experience in business and industry but who may lack the required formal academic qualifications, are encouraged to apply; all such applications will be considered carefully and where maturity and experience outweigh gaps in formal academic qualifications, the academic qualification requirement may be relaxed.

## Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all postgraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information. For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements. More information can be found here: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply.

## Aims of the programme

Advances in computing resulted in reduced hardware costs and faster processing power, whereas those in the distribution and integration of data storage enabled the development of highly scalable storage systems that can store and process efficiently and economically the massive amounts of data modern businesses have been capturing/collecting over time.

The above turned business data into a valuable asset as businesses strive to harness the power of their data to improve their understanding of their customer needs, their decision-making processes and develop new products and cut operational costs.

The MSc in Big Data Technologies has been designed with a high degree of relevance to the industry's needs. By its nature, the course is practitioner-oriented and it provides highly marketable skills relevant to the development of applications/processes for capturing, modelling, designing, storing, managing, administering and analysing the massive amounts of data that modern companies hold in their Corporate Information Systems and Information Centres to support business decision making.

The course is aimed at (a) graduates with a good Honours degree with a substantial computing flavour who wish to pursue a postgraduate qualification in the field of Big Data Systems; and (b) practitioners who want to enhance their professional abilities, develop further their careers, update their technical skills and/or deepen their knowledge/understanding of cutting-edge technologies.

Overall the course aims to develop/enhance students' competencies and equip them with the highly paid technical skills that will enable them to be employed as IT professionals who have a strong awareness of the environment in which they operate, can harness the power data has, and/or be able to pursue research-oriented academic study. More specifically, the course provides a balanced study that aims at producing graduates capable of:

- thinking in a systematic and methodological way about Big Data issues;
- utilising their problem-solving skills and their knowledge of various techniques/tools/methods, to deliver solutions to a wide range of Big Data related problems;
- studying the context within which the design of Big Data Systems takes place, i.e. as part of the range of strategic, managerial and operational activities involved in the gathering, processing, storage, representation and distribution of data and information;
- critically evaluating alternative design and implementation strategies and the impact emerging technological advances have on delivering solutions within Big Data practices;
- creating models and/or deploying appropriate techniques and tools to deliver/manage/administer web-enabled database solutions and/or information systems solutions that satisfy specified requirements in a target domain.
- independent in-depth analysis of a chosen topic making use of information resources outside a teaching environment;
- developing professional attitudes as well as the interpersonal and entrepreneurial skills required of a practitioner in the industry.

## Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements, which will inform the service delivered to students.

The MSc in Big Data Technologies aims to create talented/graduates who will have the knowledge and skills to seek employment as application/system developers, architects, designers and administrators of Data Systems, data scientists, data analysts, consultants, business intelligence developers, data quality/compliance officers, data officers, data governance analysts/officers, data governance, OLAP programmers, ETL programmers, in a diverse range of industries that require the capturing, storage, processing and use of Big Data Systems including banking, finance, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, NHS, retail, engineering, smart environments, security and more.

As businesses realise the importance of data in the decision-making process, they are increasingly seeking to recruit qualified people capable of harnessing the power of data. Moreover, studies show that these jobs are some of the most difficult for employers to recruit, due, in part, to the shortage of skilled workers.

Recent graduates of the course have been employed as Data Analysts, Graduate Technical Analysts, and consultants by a variety of organisations, mainly in the Finance and Service Sector, including Broadridge (Financial Services) and Hortonworks (one of the leading Data Software Companies), within 6 months after their graduation. In most cases, graduates without prior work experience were recruited at junior posts, whereas graduates with prior work experience managed to progress their careers in more senior posts.

**Further Studies**

Graduates of the programme can continue their studies by pursuing an MPhil/PhD qualification in areas such as Data Science, Data Mining, Database Systems, Data Warehousing, and Health Informatics, at the University of Westminster or at other higher education institutions.

## What will you be expected to achieve?

## Course learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning.

These are threshold statements of achievement the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

The overall knowledge and understanding you will gain from your course (KU)

Graduate attributes are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course (GA)

Professional and personal practice learning outcomes are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (PPP)

Key transferable skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course. (KTS)

**Level 7 course learning outcomes:** upon completion of Level 7 you will be able to:

- CLO01 Place a real-world Data Science, Analytics and/or Decision Support problem in the context of both business imperatives and current Business Intelligence, Data Science and Analytics practices and make critical evaluations subject to business and organisational requirements. ( KU KTS )
- CLO02 Recognise risks that may be involved in the success/failure of such systems and to devise, plan and implement strategies to address such risks. ( KU SS )

- CLO03 Critically evaluate various techniques / tools / methods to model and analyse data, design systems appropriate for the storage and processing of Big Data and to deliver solutions to real world problems ( KU KTS SS )
- CLO04 Have a critical awareness of current research issues, problems and/or insights in relation to the tools /technologies used to manipulate Big Data. ( KU KTS SS )
- CLO05 Understand and be able to participate within the legal, social, ethical and professional framework as professionals in the field of Big Data Systems ( KU KTS )
- CLO06 Recognise, evaluate and mitigate commercial risks associated with the use of Big Data systems and technologies ( KTS )
- CLO07 Embark on an independent in-depth analysis and/or study of the technologies / tools / methods /techniques employed in design, use and deployment of methods in the area of Big Data Systems that may require the extensive use of a variety of information resources ( KU PPP KTS SS )
- CLO08 Work effectively within a team both as a leader and/or member, clarify tasks and guide the activities of others, make appropriate use of team members abilities, negotiate and handle conflict with confidence, and participate effectively in the peer review process to improve practice and outcomes ( KTS )
- CLO09 Engage confidently in academic and professional communication with others, reporting on actions clearly, autonomously and competently ( KTS )
- CLO10 Demonstrate an awareness of continuing professional development and the importance and benefits of supporting equality, diversity and inclusion ( PPP KTS )

# How will you learn?

## Learning methods

The learning strategies employed in the course vary depending on the module and the learning outcomes for each module. In brief, the employed learning strategies involve the use of:

- Case studies, to improve students' analytical and problem-solving skills; moreover, to integrate the knowledge gained in individual modules and demonstrate how the accumulated knowledge and understanding can be used, common case studies, where possible, are used across modules, with each module tackling different aspects of the same problem.
- Specialised software tools and packages to build students' hands-on skills and understanding of such tools.
- Presentations from outside speakers with industrial experience, to enable students to see how the taught material is applied in industry; and appreciate how industry uses the various technologies/tools/methods/techniques to produce solutions.
- Team/group work, to enable students to develop further their teamwork skills to work effectively in a professional environment.
- Seminar sessions during which students present work to their classmates and evaluate/assess each other's work. Presentations and academic report writing as part of the assignments set, to develop further these important skills.
- Continuous encouragement to exploit networking opportunities and to participate and get involved in community-organised events, as these enable students to identify areas for improvement while demonstrating their skills and knowledge on specific subjects/topics.
- Industry-based projects to enable students to (a) participate in a real-life project; (b) develop/enhance a high degree of organisational skills as they have to work under the guidance of industrial supervisors and adhere to strict timetables for deliverables and deadlines; (c) be exposed to work ethics and culture and experience the ethos of a workplace environment all of which enhance further students' social, interpersonal and professional skills.
- Assessment and feedback as an integral part of the learning process to enable students to (a) gauge their progress in relation to learning; (b) reflect on what they have learnt; (c) identify areas in which they are strong and areas in which they need to learn more so that students develop the rights skills faster; and (d) help them make informed decisions on the pace and focus of their own independent learning.
- Assessments as a tool to develop/enhance students' skills and competencies; for example working on an assignment as part of the team will help students develop/practice their group working skills, whereas an essay and research report can be used not only to assess students' knowledge and understanding of a specific topic(s), but also help develop students' academic writing skills including those related to formatting and proper use of referencing.

Finally, to support students in their studies and to allow access to module materials and course-related information the

University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), called Blackboard, is routinely used as a repository for lecture notes, presentation transparencies, course/assessment schedules, coursework briefs (including feedback), and assessment purposes. The VLE is also used as a platform that through the exchange of emails, sharing of files and documents, and online discussions encourages student interaction, promotes group activities and supports collaborative work.

**How is Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) addressed in your course**
The core values of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity are central to the MSc Big Data Technologies program. The course has been meticulously designed to provide you with a flexible and inclusive learning experience that honours diversity, fosters active engagement, and takes into account the diverse needs of our students. For instance, the course actively encourages and empowers you to customise your learning journey in alignment with your career objectives, cultural background, and personal aspirations. This is achieved by offering you the freedom to select a specialised MSc project within the broad domain of Big Data Technologies, express your unique perspectives supported by evidence on various societal and ethical concerns, devise practical solutions to specific problem sets, and choose elective modules that allow you to specialise or gain greater confidence in various application areas. Through this array of opportunities and choices, the course equips you with the necessary technical skills and employability attributes needed to thrive in a dynamic and diverse world. Most importantly, you can rest assured that the course team is committed to dismantling any arbitrary obstacles to your learning and collaborating with you to help you attain your highest potential.

The MSc Big Data Technologies course is rooted in three fundamental principles, which form the foundation of its learning methods. These principles encompass:

- Creation of an inclusive and diverse learning environment, both in physical and digital realms, enabling flexible learning with materials accessible across various contexts and times, including mobile and home settings.
- Establishment of a supportive and secure learning atmosphere, characterised by mutual trust and respect, where students are empowered to engage as active partners in their transformative learning journeys.
- Development of a forward-looking curriculum that remains pertinent to the workplace, stays current, and maintains authenticity.

In practical terms, these principles manifest in the following ways:

- The design of teaching materials strives for inclusivity, accommodating diverse learners whenever possible.
- Group assignments are structured to ensure a mix of abilities, genders, and cultural backgrounds.
- The cultivation of mutual trust and respect is actively encouraged amongst students and between staff and students.
- Diversity is celebrated and promoted throughout the core course delivery and extracurricular activities.
- The emphasis is placed on skill-based learning, employing a practical learning-by-doing approach, utilising up-to-date industry-standard tools, chains, and methodologies. Industry-supported projects, such as the Work-Based Learning (WBL) project, are integrated.
- Broader concerns, concepts, and skills, such as environmental considerations and project management, are taught with a strong emphasis on inclusivity and diversity.
- The curriculum maintains its currency, adopts a global perspective, and focusses on application areas that tackle real-world challenges.

## Teaching methods

The teaching strategies employed on the course are wide ranging and vary across the modules that make up the programme of study. Those selected for an individual module depend on what is most appropriate for the module's topic, learning outcomes and assessment strategy.

The delivery of the course's taught modules involves using lectures, tutorials, workshops and seminars. The lectures are used to provide a firm grounding in the theory, methods and techniques relevant to the module's topic. Within lectures a range of approaches are adopted, such as, traditional lectures, and 'structured lectures', where lecturing is broken up by periods of student-led activity. Lectures are usually supplemented by instructor led sessions where a more experimental, investigative and problem-solving approach is adopted, than is feasible in a formal lecture, to solve theoretical and/or practical problems.

During these sessions you will attend problem solving tutorials or workshops, where you work at your own pace, working alone or in small groups with a tutor guiding the work or on hand to help resolve problems. To integrate the knowledge gained in individual modules common case studies, where possible, are used across modules, with each module tackling different aspects of the same problem. Modules with a highly technical and practical content are

typically delivered in the form of workshops. These take place in a computing lab and they combine material normally covered in a lecture with practical/hands-on exercises. In particular, the various concepts/constructs of the module's topics are introduced in short bursts and they are followed by a series of practical exercises that aim at enabling students to appreciate these and understand how they can be used. This approach encourages you to actively participate in the development of a solution by allowing you to (a) express your thoughts; and (b) receive individual individual feedback from peers and/or the tutor.

## Assessment methods

Assessments and feedback are important and are designed to form part of the learning experience and they can have a variety of types and forms. For example, assessments may involve practical exercises ranging from short focused tasks that might be completed in a tutorial, to more complex tasks, such as the critical analysis of the large data set or the investigation/research on a topic/area. Some of the assessments are designed to be completed individually, whereas other assessments may require you to work as part of a team, emulating as close as possible the environment you will face in industry. Types of assessment used in the course include essays, technical / lab reports, practical tests/exercises, quizzes, in-class or online tests, practical exercises, portfolios, demonstrations, oral presentations, vivas, project reports, time constraint examinations, etc.

Assessment can be (a) formative (i.e. helps establish where you are in you learning and what you have learnt so far), or (b) summative (i.e. measures how much you have learnt in a way that contributes to your overall grades). The type and nature of the employed assessment methods varies depending on the module and its associated learning outcomes. The guiding principles in designing/choosing a module's assessment and its associated feedback include:

- the choice of assessment method(s) employed needs to provides an opportunity for new learning and contribute to the learning process;
- the assessment method used should be fit-for-purpose able to measure students' achievement in the module's associated learning outcomes of each module;
- assessment is criterion-based, i.e., assessed work is marked using clearly stated assessment criteria;
- in selecting assessment methods consideration is given to the amount of effort and time required to complete the task(s) and to maintain an acceptable and balance assessment loading;
- timely and formative feedback is to be given for all assessments, including examinations;
- providing information about how you performed in the (summative or formative) assessment; guidance on how you can improve your performance in future, either individually or as part of a team.

All assessments that contribute to final grades will be assessed against clear assessment criteria stated in module descriptors; these assessment criteria are directly linked to the module's learning outcomes and they will be used to evaluate the submitted work and produce written feedback. Marks will be produced following rigorous quality mechanisms that ensure academic judgement remains fair and consistent with the wider educational sector. Feedback is given in various forms and stages; for example, in response to assessment, in response to questions in lectures, seminars and tutorials, and in guidance given during the supervision of student projects. Feedback will also come from interactions with other students.

The assessment diet of most of the modules involves a mixture of practical coursework and a closed book problem solving focused examination. For most of the modules, the coursework component involves a few assessment elements that may involve laboratory work, technical reports, oral presentations, in-class (written or online) tests, etc. The project, which is a substantial piece of work that involves the investigation/research of a topic and the development of software, is assessed using a written project proposal, final report and a viva where the students need to discuss and defend their work.

| **Example of Summative assessments used in the course** | |
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| **Practical Coursework / Practical based portfolio** | You will be expected to complete lab tasks following lab guidelines and either answer specific questions about the labs (Coursework) or analyse your results based on a given scenario (Portfolio). This type of assessment is used to assess the technical skills you acquired during the term and your ability to apply your knowledge gained in the correct context following the correct procedures and standards. |

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| **Group Presentation with/without Group Coursework** | You will be working in a group, typically of 3 to 4 members, investigating a specific problem, or research a specific topic. You will be expected to give a presentation to demonstrate your group work. This is usually followed by a brief discussion and questions and answers with your peers and instructor. Generally, you will need to discuss in detail what the group has achieved, and how, and also how the work and the team member responsibilities were distributed. This type of authentic assessment is used to assess your ability to work in teams in a context that closely matches typical teamwork activities found in industry. This demonstrate that you are able to be productive and complete your given tasks in a timely manner. This assessment generally has both a group and an individual mark component. |
| **ICT (exam conditions)** | You will be expected to sit an in-class test under timed conditions. Typically, these in-class tests can be a closed-book or open-book where you will have access to certain materials. This type of assessment is used to assess your understanding of the fundamentals, theory, and paradigms. Tests help ensure you can demonstrate that you have developed a deep understanding of the subject which enables you to cope with complex problems that require deep inside in order to provide secure and optimal solutions. |
| **Lab-based Practical** | You will be expected to complete a specific lab task in the lab. This will be in most cases a timed activity where you are given instructions and a set of tasks to complete. This type of assessment is used to assess and evaluate your technical skills in a timely manner. |
| **Coursework Case study** | You will be required to work on a scenario that illustrates a specific problem. You will have to study this problem and assess it and take decisions or make recommendations. This will require research and analysis and potentially implementation in order for you to produce an assessment and recommendation. This type of assessment is used to assess your understanding of topics related to your module and how you can apply your knowledge to a given scenario. This type of assessment usually requires you to evaluate your given solution or method and justify your answers. |
| **Research essay** | You will be expected to conduct in-depth research on a specific topic. This involves examining various resources, concepts and ideas about the topic you are researching. This type of assessment is used to assess your ability to critically evaluate research material and concisely summarize, formulating your own recommendations and suggestions depending on the context. |
| **Oral Assessment and/or Individual Presentation** | You will be expected to present in a form of either a presentation or discussion on a given topic. This could also be a part of your dissertation where you will be expected to sit a viva voce assessment to defend your work.<br><br>This type of assessment is used to assess the authenticity of your work and give you an opportunity to explain the reasoning of the choices, methods and principles used in your work. This assesses a wide range of practical, analytical, and interpretative skills that demonstrate your understanding of the topic and your refection. |
| **Artefact** | You will be expected to produce a product such as code implementation or a document containing a set of recommendation and guidelines that demonstrate your ability to innovate to provide solutions to a given problem. This assessment is used to assess your ability to produce quality artefacts as this is an essential requirement in the workplace. |

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| **Report** | You will be expected to produce a document that outlines activities you have undertaken. This can be either for lab work that you have completed, a work experience and work placement that you undertook or your reflective comments about a specific topic. This type of assessment is used to evaluate how you can convey technical matters about activities you have conducted in an academic, concise, and justified manner. |
| **Project Report** | This will probably be the biggest document you will have to produce for your entire studies. You will be expected to produce an extended piece of written work, that contains substantial evidence of research, investigations, and possibly implementation, all related to a specific problem you have chosen. The project report is the result of your independent work, carried out under the guidance of a supervisor. This type of assessment is used to verify that you have developed a sound understanding of the course material and are able to utilize the skills and knowledge gained in order to produce an independent and substantial project that successfully meets the given requirements. |

| Graduate Attribute | Evident in Course Outcomes |
|---|---|
| Critical and creative thinker | CLO02, CLO03, CLO04, CLO07 |
| Literate and effective communicator | CLO08, CLO09 |
| Entrepreneurial | CLO01, CLO06 |
| Global in outlook and engaged in communities | CLO09 |
| Socially, ethically and environmentally aware | CLO05, CLO10 |

## Course Structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year. Additional free text information on the choices may also be included, for example where students must choose one of two modules.. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

## Modules

### Level 7

| Module Code | Module Title | Status | UK credit | ECTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7BDIN006W | Big Data Theory and Practice | Core | 20 | 10 |
| 7BUIS008W | Data Mining and Machine Learning | Core | 20 | 10 |
| 7BDIN007W | Data Repositories Principles and Tools | Core | 20 | 10 |
| 7BUIS010W | Data Warehousing and Business Intelligence | Core | 20 | 10 |
| 7COSC012W | MSc Project | Core | 60 | 30 |
| 7BUIS024W | Business Analytics | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7CSEF002W | Cyber Security Threats and Countermeasures | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7BUIS009W | Data Visualisation and Dashboarding | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7BUIS025W | Web and Social Media Analytics | Option | 20 | 10 |
| | | Elective | 20 | 10 |

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot register for your first choice of option modules.

## Professional body accreditation or other external references

This master's degree has been accredited by BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT for the purposes of partially meeting the further learning academic requirement for registration as a Chartered IT Professional. The accreditation is a mark of assurance that the course meets the standards set by BCS and it entitles you to professional membership of BCS, which is an important part of the criteria for achieving Chartered IT Professional (CITP) status through the Institute.

This master's degree has also been accredited by BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT on behalf of the Engineering Council for the purposes of partially meeting the academic requirement for registration as a Chartered Engineer. The accreditation is a mark of assurance that the course meets the standards set by the Engineering Council in the UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence (UK-SPEC).

An accredited degree will provide you with some or all of the underpinning knowledge, understanding and skills for eventual registration as an Incorporated (IEng) or Chartered Engineer (CEng).

Some employers recruit preferentially from accredited degrees, and an accredited degree is likely to be recognised by other countries that are signatories to international accords. More information on BCS and membership paths can be found at www.bcs.org

## Course management

The management structure supporting the course is as follows:

- Course leader: responsible for the running and overall management of the course and development of the curriculum.
- Module Leader: responsible for overall management of the module, coordinating the module team and for the delivery, resourcing and smooth running of the module.
- Course Team: comprises the Course Leader and all the members of staff who teach on the course.
- Personal Tutor: responsible for providing academic and personal support for a student throughout their studies.
- Head of School of Computer Science and Engineering, holds academic responsibility for the course, and for the other courses within the School within the College of Design, Creative and Digital Industries.
- Head of the College of Design, Creative and Digital Industries, holds overall responsibility for the course and for other courses run by the College.

### Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations.

Course specific regulations apply to some courses.

### Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Campus Registry. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students. Further information on Blackboard can be found at https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/your-student-journey/when-you-arrive/blackboard

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students1 can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services.

They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught in their College. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

## Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at https://www.westminster.ac.uk/student-advice

The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at https://www.westminster.ac.uk/students-union

## How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel. University Panels normally include internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university. a representative from industry and a Student Advisor.

The course is also monitored each year by the College to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the evidence of student surveys, student progression and achievement and reports from external examiners, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course and make changes where necessary.

A Course revalidation takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with revalidation panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

## How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through student engagement activities at Course/Module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Course representatives are elected to expressly represent the views of their peers. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the course representatives.
- There are also School Representatives appointed jointly by the University and the Students' Union who meet with senior School staff to discuss wider issues affecting student experience across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key College and University committees.;
- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.
- Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.

This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate, if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification is supplemented by the Course Handbook, Module proforma and Module Handbooks provided to students. 