

Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

Basic Course Information

1.	Awarding Institution:	Nottingham Trent University
2.	School/Campus:	Science & Technology/Clifton Campus
3.	Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study:	BSc (Hons) Information Systems FT BSc (Hons) Information Systems SW
4.	Normal Duration:	Full Time 3 years, Sandwich 4 years
5.	UCAS Code:	350A / G501

6. Overview and general educational aims of the course

The BSc (Hons) Information Systems degree is designed to enable you to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for a range of careers in Computer-based industry. The competitiveness and prosperity of companies increasingly depends on the design and use of effective information systems. This course aims to produce graduates capable of designing, developing and managing such business information systems and who have the understanding and skills necessary to enable business change. You will study the basics of computing including multimedia, databases and internet development alongside modules which address current trends in business information systems, including interactive and web-based systems. The course meets the accreditation requirements of BCS – The Chartered Institute for IT, for CITP registration.

Accreditation of courses by the BCS provides independent recognition that the course content is relevant to the IT profession. It ensures a level of standardisation across Higher Education institutions so that the courses meet the needs of employers. A key part of the accreditation is the incorporation of professional, ethical, social and legal issues relating to computing. Graduating from a BCS accredited degree allows students to apply for professional membership of the BCS, giving an accelerated route to Chartered status. Employers often look for accredited degrees, and accredited degrees are recognised internationally.

The course puts theory into practise through skills development relevant to the modern world. It offers skills development as an integral part of the curriculum and as preparation for the world of work. As well as practical skills and knowledge necessary for the Computing professional, you will develop transferable skills which will make you suitable for general graduate employment in an ever-changing job market.

There are many opportunities throughout the course that include international learning. In particular, students conducting projects at level 6 are expected to interpret their results within a wider, international context.

The salaried placement year is an important feature of the course. It is optional, and requires an application process through a company, but if chosen it will give you a distinct advantage on graduating, and we have an excellent placements office to provide support in finding a placement that is right for you.

In brief the course aims to:

- Equip you with the knowledge and skills necessary for a range of careers in computing.
- Enable you to develop a range of transferable skills in preparation for general graduate employment and an ever-changing job market
- Provide you with the foundation for postgraduate study
- Develop the skills and knowledge necessary to design and implement interactive information systems in a business environment.

Flexibility is built into the programme design with options for 1/6 of study at level 6.

Options include business and other computing modules, work-based learning or communicating science and technology. Also, the common first year (level 4) with BSc (Hons) Computing, BSc (Hons) Information and Communications Technology and BSc (Hons) Digital Media Technology allows for transfer between any of these courses at the end of the first year.

7. Course outcomes

Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.

Knowledge and understanding

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- K1. Demonstrate knowledge of the fundamental characteristics of information systems i.e. the way information is processed, stored and communicated (B)
- K2. Demonstrate a good understanding of the theory underpinning your technical skills (B)
- K3. Describe the role of the computing professional and discuss the managerial, social and legal aspects of information systems (B)
- K4. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of theory and practice for the design and implementation of interactive information systems in a business environment, and demonstrate awareness of some of the current research issues (B)
- K5. Apply appropriate techniques for quality assurance to ensure fitness for purpose, reliability, timeliness and maintainability of computer systems (B)
- K6. Appraise the context and application of computer-based information systems in business

Skills, qualities and attributes

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- S1. Select and apply appropriate analysis and design techniques to computing problems (B)
- S2. Program and implement computer systems using the tools of the computing professional e.g. compilers, databases, multimedia production tools (B)
- S3. Organise data in a computer system (B)
- S4. Evaluate requirements; define, analyse and solve problems; and evaluate potential and existing solutions (B)
- S5. Gather, organise and interpret technical information demonstrating a high level of IT competency and good numeracy (B)
- S6. Work effectively as part of a team and work and learn independently (B)
- S7. Communicate effectively via reports and presentations and develop a reasoned argument (B)
- S8. Organise your work and apply project management techniques to work in a task/deliverable-orientated way (B)

(B) indicates that the outcome has been mapped to the Computing benchmark standards <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-Computing-16.pdf>

The Computing benchmark standards provide a national framework for describing the content and standards of a bachelors degree with honours in Computing disciplines.

8. Learning and teaching methods

The teaching methods used on this course have evolved over a number of years based on feedback, review and reflection. Our approach is to use practical illustration and first-hand experience to enhance learning wherever possible.

Learning is facilitated in a range of different ways. Most modules involve a series of lectures to explain and develop the subject concepts to you. These are accompanied by either seminars or laboratory sessions or sometimes a combination of both. In these you apply the theory from the lectures. This leads to a more thorough understanding of the subject and the development of any practical skills associated with it. The seminars and laboratories are also often used to help you in coursework assignments, which in themselves also help to embed knowledge and develop skills. In the laboratory sessions, staff will help you to explore and use the technology, and give you feedback on your practical work. They will also discuss links between theory and practice in these sessions. Some modules also have optional surgery sessions to support learners. These are student-driven in that students bring to the sessions questions on any aspects of the module that they are finding difficult.

The university runs an online resource to support teaching and learning, a virtual learning environment known as the NTU Online Workspace (NOW). All modules are represented on NOW and use it to provide you with the material associated with the

module. Our aim is to support your development into an autonomous independent learner.

The nature of the subject means that much of your learning will be computer-aided. As well as using development environments and packages for coursework implementation tasks, you will also use some computer-aided learning packages and techniques such as online discussion groups. Again, we aim for you to become an engaged learner who takes responsibility for your learning.

The development of your independent learning skills will include the undertaking of a substantive project. This involves you working on a topic aligned to your degree, which you choose in consultation with your project supervisor. You will see your supervisor throughout the third taught year (level 6) and they will guide you in your work. Your project will bring together the knowledge and skills that you have gained at levels 4 and 5 – analysis and design techniques, software or hardware implementation, testing procedures etc. And so, as part of this project, you will be well placed to reflect on the skills and experiences achieved so far throughout your degree in relation to employment aspirations and, in particular, through engagement with the project.

9. Assessment methods

Modules are either assessed via coursework, exam or a combination of both. Coursework makes up over half of the total assessment for the course.

Coursework assessments can take many forms. You will often be given a practical task to do for the assignment which you then write up in a report. You may also have to demonstrate what you have done or give a presentation on it. Some modules involve an element of seminar contribution in the assessment and some others use computer-based assessment. Your final year project will give you an opportunity to specialise in an area of Information Technology that interests you. You will undertake practical work which you will demonstrate and report on in a dissertation.

The range of assessment methods aims to give you a variety of ways in which to demonstrate achievement as well as encouraging the development of the communication skills valued by employers.

10. Course structure and curriculum

The course is studied over 4 years for the sandwich mode, or 3 years full time. On the sandwich route you apply to obtain a paid placement with a company working for 9 months or more between your second year and your final year. The placement will be in the IT industry. Successful completion of the year of industrial experience is

necessary for you to gain the Sandwich award. For this, you will write a report detailing and evaluating the work you undertook and your part in the overall company context. You will also receive a Diploma in Professional Practice. In full time mode, you will go direct to the final year after Level 5.

You will study a programme of modules as indicated below. These develop your knowledge and skills along themes of: professional skills, business knowledge, information-based systems and interactive systems. Between them they develop the learning outcomes of the course. The mapping between the modules and the course outcomes is known as a curriculum map and is available should you be interested.

Development of employability is a key strength of the course. This is achieved through the technical and personal skills you develop which are sought after by employers. Preparation for work is covered in the professional development theme where you learn about c.v. writing and career planning.

You need to obtain 360 cp (credit points), 120cp per year, to gain the honours qualification. Your final degree classification will be based on your Level 5 (second year) mark (20%) and on your Level 6 (final year) mark (80%). Students who do not obtain enough credit points may be eligible for one of the following awards: Certificate of Higher Education (120 cp), Diploma of Higher Education (240 cp) or Ordinary Degree (300 cp).

Successful completion of the year of industrial experience is necessary for you to gain the sandwich award. You will write a report detailing the work undertaken by you and evaluating your part in the overall company context. You will also receive a Diploma in Professional Practice.

Year 1 (Level 4)

Foundation in Computer Programming and Technology	20cps
Essential Skills	20cps
Web-based Programming	20cps
Internet Technology	20cps
Systems Analysis and Design	20cps
Professional Development for Industry	20cps

Year 2 (Level 5)

Information Systems Development	20cps
Information and Database Engineering	20cps
Internet Applications Development	20cps
Techniques for Business	20cps
Interface Technology and Design	20cps
Practical Project Management and Professional Development	20cps

Year 3 - Industrial Placement year for Sandwich students

Year 3/4 (Level 6)

Project	40cps
Information Systems Management	20cps
Business Analysis	20cps
Data Visualisation and UX	20cps

One option chosen from:

The following computing/technical based 20cps modules:

Mobile Platform Development	20cps
Serious Games	20cps
Information Security	20cps
Cyber Security	20cps

Or

The following module will be of interest to you if you wish to explore teaching as a career route as it involves working with teachers in a school setting:

Communicating Science and Technology	20cps
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11. Admission to the course

For current information regarding all entry requirements for this course, please see the 'Applying' tab on the NTU course information web page. The full UCAS entry profile for this course can be found at: <http://www.ucas.com/>

12. Support for learning

We will work with you to ensure that you settle into your new academic environment and that your studies go well, and you will find that there are lots of people to support you at Nottingham Trent University.

All students at Nottingham Trent University have full access to Student Support Services. In addition, School based support networks are in place to offer you support, guidance and advice on academic and personal issues. Within the course, students experience the full support of the Computing and Technology Academic Team. The Head of Department, with support from the Course Manager, Course Leader(s), Module Leader(s), and Personal Tutor, takes responsibility for student support and guidance. The Module Leader will offer guidance and support to students taking each specific module

As a new student you will experience a minimum of a 3 day induction period at the commencement of your first academic year. Induction will inform you about:

- Student Support Services at University, School and Course level;
- University policies and procedures on academic systems;

- Personal development planning;
- Timetable issues, room allocations and location;
- University, School and Course Handbooks;
- Enrolment procedures;
- Computing, IT and Library services;
- Health and Safety procedures.

You receive a course handbook which contains the essential information about the course and the support we provide for your learning. You also meet your personal tutor and year tutors. There is also a special induction programme for direct entrants to level 5 / level 6.

You are assigned a personal tutor at the start of the course. They meet with you in a small group during the first year and provide you with any advice and support that you may need. Year tutors and a course leader oversee the smooth running of the course and they also serve as an additional source of support and advice for you. Every year, you will have regular time-tabled sessions with your Personal Tutor, in small groups. Your group tutorials will help you to reflect on your approaches to study and make connections between modules, integrating material from across the curriculum and encouraging you to achieve your maximum potential. You will also have an opportunity to discuss and deal with any personal or course-related issues which may be affecting your studies and get advice on what support the university can offer. Personal tutorials can also be used for personal development planning and skills development.

In particular, at level 4, you will meet your personal tutor during welcome week at a designated "Meet your personal tutor" session. This session includes familiarisation with NTU resources – email accounts, student timetables, NOW resources etc.. Each personal tutor group consists of approximately 12 students. As part of this personal tutor group, you will meet your personal tutor for one hour, weekly, throughout the whole of level 4. Your group of students will be paired with another personal tutor group to make up a seminar/lab group. This seminar/lab group (of approximately 24 students) will be timetabled in the same lectures, seminars and labs throughout the year (subject to a course transfer). Throughout term 1 of level 4, your term 1 tutorials will include content such as time management, mental health/resilience, NTU procedures etc. Throughout terms 2 and 3 of level 4, your tutorials will continue with a greater emphasis on professional development, including content such as working in a team, presentation skills, CV development etc. You will also meet individually with your personal tutor at two points during terms 1 and 2. These individual consultations will include reflection on your progress made, consideration of any barriers to learning and target setting.

In particular, at level 5, you will have personal tutorials scheduled at intervals during the year. You will also have further scheduled contact with your personal tutor throughout terms 1 and 2, as part of the Practical Project Management and Professional Development module (where the personal tutor acts as the project supervisor). The personal tutor group consists of approximately 12 students. Your personal tutor group will meet your personal tutor for one hour at five timetabled sessions during level 5. These tutorials will include content such as CV development, time management skills, goal setting.

In particular, at level 6, you will have personal tutorials scheduled at intervals during the year. You will also have further regular contact with your personal tutor throughout the year, as your project supervisor for the Final Year Project module. The first tutorial is a group tutorial (normally between 3 and 6 students from a range of C&T UG courses) that will cover target setting and reflection on study skills for the year. The remaining four tutorials will be 1-to-1 discussions including content such as career planning, reflection on feedback, preparation for the C&T Degree Show.

Towards the end of the second term of the first year (level 4), you will receive a talk on the course and module options available to you for the following years of study (level 5 and 6).

Extensive online module information including learning materials is provided on the university virtual learning environment (NOW). This also includes course information such as the course handbook and assessment deadlines. We have excellent laboratory facilities with some 24 hour availability for IT labs.

The school operates a "one-stop-shop" administrative centre for assessment handling, handback, queries about fees and other general queries. You can also make appointments with tutors via this centre. The friendly staff in the centre are always available to help.

If you decide to opt for the sandwich award, our placements tutor will work with you to develop your c.v. and will help you to target your applications so that you get a placement that is right for you. You will be assigned a visiting tutor who will visit you at the company. Successful completion of your placement, including a written report, will enable you to receive a Diploma in Professional Practice.

We also provide you the opportunity of gaining experience in mentoring and leadership skills by applying to the Student Ambassador scheme. Selected level 5 and 6 students can develop these skills by running support sessions for students from lower levels as well as assisting on Open Days. Successful completion will enable you to be awarded the Certificate in Mentoring and Leadership Development.

The school has a Student Information Desk for assessment hand-in and return, queries about fees, and other general queries.

The university provide Student Support Services, who offer extensive support and advice on a range of issues, e.g. financial problems, dyslexia and disability and personal problems.

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/current_students/resources/sources_support/index.html

For accommodation matters, University Accommodation Officers will provide you with information, guidance and continuing support, for example hall of residence, private rented accommodation, and the Landlord Approval Scheme. The Accommodation Services can be accessed through www.ntu.ac.uk .

13. Graduate destinations/employability

Graduate employability is fundamental to the strategic aims of Nottingham Trent University, as reflected by the fact that NTU is consistently placed close to the top of the league table of all UK Universities for graduate employment.

The generic attributes acquired through the Information Systems course will equip you with the knowledge and skills necessary for employment in a broad range of computing related fields. With the rapid and unavoidable move towards an Information-Society both the public and private sectors are relying on the ability to communicate accurate and up-to-date information to conduct e-government and e-business. The Information Systems course is designed to address these very needs by preparing graduates who are trained with the necessary skills to design and develop the necessary information systems. In addition the course provides you with the skills to keep up-to-date with the forever and rapidly changing techniques and devices underpinning information systems.

The BCS accreditation paves the way to a structured framework for career development. Whilst still being required to meet relevant professional experience requirements, graduates from accredited programmes will benefit from an accelerated route to CITP status. The course provides a progression pathway to professional registration by fulfilling the academic requirements for CITP and a potential advantage when looking for a job as some employers may look for graduates with accredited degrees.

Some graduates will choose to venture into other sectors and will be equally successful in gaining employment because of the transferable skills developed on the courses. Other graduates from the School go on to further study, or research.

In addition to the expertise available within the School, the University has a comprehensive careers service open to all students to assist in securing employment.
<http://www.ntu.ac.uk/careers/>

14. Course standards and quality

All aspects of quality management within the School are in accordance with the University's Quality Handbook. The Course Management Team, which includes the Course Manager and Module Leaders, oversees the operational arrangements for the Course. In addition, the Course Committee, central to which are the student representatives, meets regularly throughout the year to review, evaluate and develop the Course. Formal course monitoring takes place at the end of each module through the administration of questionnaires offering closed and open ended questions, which is in addition to informal feedback received from students throughout the year.

Overarching responsibility for quality control lies with the School Academic Standards and Quality Committee whose remit is to provide guidance and support to academic Courses. External Examiners offer further quality control through monitoring academic standards, moderation of assessment tasks and processes. Feedback from the Course Committee and student evaluation at module and course level inform the Interim Course Report (ICR), which reviews and evaluates the student experience at course level. In turn the ICR informs the School Quality and Enhancement Plan (SQEP), which is presented to the University as part of the institutions quality assurance and enhancement cycle. The ICR also informs a Periodic Course Review every three years to ensure that the course remains current and that standards have been maintained.

15. Assessment regulations

This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in Section 16 of the Quality Handbook). Any course specific assessment features are described below:

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No compensation is permissible for the level 6 module 'Project' – a condition of the BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT.

16. Additional information

Collaborative partner(s):	N/A
Course referenced to national (QAA) Benchmark Statements:	Computing
Course recognised by:	BCS – The Chartered Institute for IT
Date this course specification approved:	June 2018

Any additional information:

The Computing benchmark can be found at:
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-Computing-16.pdf>

The common first year (level 4) with BSc (Hons) Computing, BSc (Hons) Information and Communications Technology and BSc (Hons) Digital Media Technology allows for transfer between these courses at the end of the first year (level 4). Several modules are also shared with BSc (Hons) Computer Science, BSc (Hons) Computer Science (Games Technology), BSc (Hons) Software Engineering, BSc (Hons) Computer Systems Engineering, BSc (Hons) Computer Systems (Networks) and BSc (Hons) Computer Systems (Forensic and Security).

The address for the BCS website is : <http://www.bcs.org/>