

# athe

AWARDS FOR  
TRAINING AND  
HIGHER EDUCATION

# Learner Handbook

---

## Introduction to this document

This handbook should be used by all ATHE learners as it contains important information & guidance. This Handbook is designed to support you in developing your skills and understanding, achieving your ATHE qualification and helping you to progress to the next stage in your professional development and career.

If you have any questions regarding the contents of this Handbook please first consult your tutor who will be able to answer your query.

## Contents

Contents.....	2
Message from the Chief Executive.....	3
About Us.....	4
Contact Details.....	4
Regulated Qualifications Framework.....	5
Your ATHE Qualification.....	6
Actions for Achieving Your ATHE Qualification.....	8
What makes a Successful Assignment?.....	10
Guide to Referencing.....	13
Personal Development Planning.....	15
Ofqual Level Descriptors Summary.....	16
Command Verbs used in Units and Assignments.....	19
The Assessment Process.....	24
Suggested Resources.....	25
Management.....	25
Healthcare Management.....	26
Law.....	27
Computing.....	28
Accounting.....	29
After Achieving Your ATHE Qualification.....	30
Going to University, Higher Education or taking a Higher-Level Apprenticeship...	31
Preparing a CV.....	34
Drafting a Covering Letter.....	35
Preparing for Interviews.....	36
Appendix 1 Developing Study Skills.....	38
Appendix 2 Example Action Plan.....	47
Appendix 3 Action Plan.....	48
Appendix 4 Learner Achievement Tracking Sheet.....	49
Appendix 5 Example Learner Assignment.....	51
Bibliography.....	57
Notes.....	68



**Message from Alex Birks, Chief Executive**

Dear Learner,

Thank you for choosing to undertake a course of study towards an ATHE qualification.

ATHE qualifications have been developed by our team of experts with input from training providers, universities and professionals with experience in business and management, health and social care, accounting, law, computing, and other specialist areas. When developing the qualifications, we sought to meet the needs of the learner in terms of the content of the qualifications, the range and choice of units and the style of the assessment. In addition, we wanted to ensure that wherever possible learners could demonstrate the grade at which they had achieved and there were clear progression routes.

We believe that your qualification will enable you to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills required from today's professionals. The qualifications will also allow you to progress into employment, higher education or to a higher level ATHE qualification.

I hope you find this handbook useful and supportive in helping you to benefit from your learning and achieve your qualification.

With best wishes for success with your studies,

*Alex Birks*



## About Us

ATHE is committed to providing outstanding qualifications, customer service and support, enabling our recognised centres to thrive and their learners to achieve and progress.

We support this mission by:

- providing qualifications which enable learners to fulfil their potential and make a positive contribution both socially and economically
- delivering the highest standards of customer service
- delivering support and guidance which meet the needs of all centres and learners and enables them to improve performance
- upholding and maintaining the quality and standards of qualifications and assessments
- a commitment to lifelong learning and development.

Every year, thousands of learners take qualifications leading to ATHE awards from 240 recognised centres, across the UK and globally in over 40 countries.

ATHE is regulated by Ofqual, the UK Government's independent regulator of qualifications, examinations and assessments in England. ATHE is also accredited by a growing number of international regulators. This means you can be assured that we are working to the highest standards.

## Contact Details:

Learners should always contact their centre in the first instance if they have queries regarding ATHE qualifications. However, should you need to contact ATHE – for example, where appeals or complaints have not been satisfactorily resolved through the centre's own internal procedures and ATHE is the final arbiter, you can reach us via [support@athe.co.uk](mailto:support@athe.co.uk) or the Contact Us page on the ATHE website [www.athe.co.uk](http://www.athe.co.uk).

We also have a number of resources on our website to help learners, such as 'Find a Centre', Certificate Verification or Replacement, and how your qualifications can support your progression to university.

Please reference your ATHE Learner ID Number when contacting us so that we can find your details promptly.

## Regulated Qualifications Framework

All ATHE qualifications sit on the Ofqual Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). The RQF is the national qualifications framework for qualifications in England. Qualifications range in difficulty from Entry level to Level 8.

These qualifications also have direct comparisons to other national and international qualifications, so a qualification achieved through ATHE is recognised in countries across the world. This is important in supporting mobility of labour and acceptance of the qualifications. This will provide you with opportunities to apply for progression to other higher-level qualifications or for employment in different parts of the world.

Example ATHE Qualifications	Regulated Qualifications Framework*	European Qualifications Framework	National Framework of Qualifications for Ireland	Higher / Further Education Qualifications	Scope of Apprenticeships (UK)
	8	8	10	Doctoral Degrees	Degree Apprenticeships
ATHE Level 7 Qualifications	7	7	9	Master's Degrees	
ATHE Level 6 Qualifications	6	6	8	Bachelor's Degrees	
			7		
ATHE Level 5 Qualifications	5	5	6	Foundation Degrees Higher National Diplomas	Higher Apprenticeships
ATHE Level 4 Qualifications	4			Higher National Certificates	
ATHE Level 3 Qualifications	3	4	5	A-Levels	Advanced / Apprenticeship
ATHE Level 2 Qualifications	2	3	4		Intermediate Apprenticeship
	1	2	3		

\* Relates to England and Northern Ireland, also to Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales.



## Your ATHE Qualification

ATHE qualifications are made up of units and each unit has a credit value. In order to achieve your qualification, you will need to gain a certain number of credits. For example, to achieve the ATHE Level 7 Extended Diploma in Strategic Management you will need to achieve 120 credits. The examples below refer to qualifications graded as Pass/Fail and Pass/Merit/Distinction.

### Unit Structure:

The unit aims show the overall purpose of the unit.

This shows the level of the RQF unit.

The table below shows the typical structure of an ATHE Unit with Pass/Fail grading.

4.6 Corporate Social Responsibility	
Unit Aims	To develop an understanding of CSR policy.
Unit Level	4
Unit code	A/503/7082
GLH	60
Credit Value	15
Unit Grading Structure	Pass
Assessment Guidance	Learners will understand the impact of CSR on business practice.
The Assessment Guidance gives centres an overview of what you are required to show in order to achieve the unit.	Assessment Criteria – The learner can:
1 Understand current corporate social responsibility issues facing business	1.1 define corporate social responsibility (CSR) 1.2 describe background and changing attitudes to CSR 1.3 describe the regulatory framework for CSR 1.4 explain environmental issues in CSR 1.5 explain economic and political issues in CSR 1.5 explain social and community issues in CSR
Learning Outcomes are statements of what you can be expected to know, understand, or do as a result of a process of learning.	
2. Understand the impact of corporate social responsibility policy on different stakeholders	2.1 assess the benefits of CSR to employees 2.2 analyse the impact of CSR on the supply chain 2.4 explain how a CSR policy impacts on business performance 2.5 explain how CSR impacts on marketing strategy 2.6 assess the potential conflicts which may arise between the needs and expectations of different stakeholders
These are the specific standards that you need to meet in order to show that the learning outcome has been achieved. Each standard starts with a command verb, and you must adhere to these requirements.	3.1 review the CSR policy of a specific business 3.2 assess the extent of voluntarism in CSR policy 3.3 recommend changes to CSR policy to benefit different stakeholders

Guided learning hours are an indication of the number of hours of staff time required to teach a qualification or support your learning.

Credit value indicates the size of a unit and how long it would normally take to complete.

ATHE units are either achieved (pass) / not achieved (fail) or are graded at merit or distinction.



**Unit Structure:**

The table below shows the typical structure of an ATHE unit which has Pass/Merit/Distinction grading.

Working in Teams	
Unit Aims	Good teamwork creates synergy within an organisation. This unit introduces the skills of teamwork- learners will explore the features of an effective team, leadership and the importance of influencing, and developing interpersonal skills.
Unit Level	3
Unit Code	A/508/3608
GLH	120
Credit Value	20
Unit Grading Structure	Pass/Merit/Distinction
Assessment Guidance	Assignments
Learning Outcomes – The learner will:	Assessment
1 Understand the key features of an effective team leader	1.1 Describe the qualities that make a team effective 1.2 Describe different team styles 1M1 Discuss own preferred team style giving reasons for their preference 1D1 Explain own approach to building a successful team
2 Understand the key features of an effective team leader	2.1 Outline the role of a team leader and the skills and qualities they require 2.2 Describe different leadership styles 2M1 Explain own personal preferred leadership style 2D1 Evaluate the team leadership skills of a specific individual
3 Understand theories of motivation	3.1 Describe different theories of motivation 3.2 With reference to leadership theory, identify those factors which are generally considered to demotivate and motivate people in the workplace 3M1 Assess own personal motivating and demotivating factors

Guided learning hours are an indication of the number of hours of staff time required to teach a qualification or support your learning.

Credit value indicates the size of a unit.

ATHE units are either achieved (pass) / not achieved (fail) or are graded at merit or distinction.

Learning Outcomes are statements of what you can be expected to know, understand, or do as a result of your learning.

These are the specific standards that you need to meet to show that the learning outcome has been achieved. Each standard starts with a command verb, and you must adhere to these requirements. There are Merit and Distinction criteria in this unit – these are referred to as 1M1, 1D1 etc. and provide the opportunity to achieve these higher grades.



## **Actions for achieving your ATHE Qualification**

Listed below are seven actions you should take, in order to help you successfully achieve your ATHE qualification.

### **1. Develop your knowledge, understanding and skill.**

During your programme of study towards your qualification, you must use different sources of information to confirm and develop your knowledge of the topics you are studying. The sources of information will be wide ranging and include books, the internet, online learning, periodicals and lecture notes. The information will be a mixture of factual details and opinions. You must develop your understanding of the topics you are studying, so you can write assignments or answer questions in tests in your own words and with clarity and authority. You will need to use a range of skills to be successful in your qualification, for example analysis, planning, synthesis, and communication both oral and written. You will already have developed some of the necessary skills for success in the ATHE qualification, but all skills can be improved through practice and repetition.

### **2. Achieve the learning outcomes at the standards set by each of the assessment criteria listed in each unit you are studying.**

You must ensure you understand the meaning and implications of the learning outcomes and the assessment criteria for all of the units that make up your qualification. This includes any criteria you need to achieve for merit and distinction grades, where this is applicable. Read them carefully. You will need to demonstrate that your completed work achieves these learning outcomes and at the standards stated by the assessment criteria. You will also need to be familiar with the qualification level expected of you. You can find a description of each level offered in ATHE qualifications in this handbook.

### **3. Understand and take account of the command verbs in the assessment criteria.**

The assessment criteria always begin with a command verb. There is a large range of command verbs, and they vary between the different levels of qualification. They include evaluate, explain, review, plan, report, assess and analyse. It is essential that you understand what these command verbs mean. Check your understanding with your tutor. Your work must demonstrate that you have done what is required by the command verb in each criterion. The definitions of command verbs used in ATHE qualifications on page 19 should help you understand these terms.

#### **4. Achieving a higher grade**

Many ATHE qualifications can be obtained at higher Merit and Distinction grades and there are benefits to achieving units and the qualification at a higher level. The units are produced so that the standards for a higher grade are clearly stated. This is linked to the ATHE sample assignments, where there are extension tasks for you to complete. You will need to achieve all of the stated graded standards to achieve a Merit or Distinction. Please note that you cannot omit completing work to meet the pass standard and simply work to the higher grades, as this would put a pass for the unit in jeopardy. Similarly, you cannot complete work to meet the criteria for distinction in the anticipation that this will also meet the criteria for merit. However, where work for the pass standard is marginal, assessors can consider any extension work completed as this may support achievement of the pass standard.

#### **5. Take account of the feedback provided by lecturers and tutors.**

You must do this in order to build on the successes you have made and improve on any aspects of your work that do not meet the standards required. The feedback must be timely so that it allows you to improve. If you are unsure about what the feedback is saying or it does not relate sufficiently closely to the assessment criteria, you must seek clarification. General comments by a tutor such as 'Good work' are not sufficient, and you need to be clear which learning outcomes have been achieved and at what grade where this is appropriate. Where learning outcomes have not been achieved or a grade has not been given the feedback must clearly show why this is the case.

#### **6. Review the way you work.**

It is good practice for you to personally review on a regular basis how you are progressing on your programme of study, in order to identify what works well and the issues which are impeding your success. In your review, you should take account of information gained from your tutor and others. You can then plan any improvements which are required.

Reviewing progress by individuals, teams, and organisations in order to improve is not a new concept. Ralph Coverdale, Head of Management Studies at Esso, and founder of The Coverdale Organisation developed theories on how people work while he was studying at Oxford University. He believed strongly that skills could not be taught like knowledge, but rather developed through experience, 'Life has to be lived forwards, but it can only be understood backwards'. Review is a way of helping you to learn from your experience.

#### **7. Produce successful assignments.**

Use the information provided in the following section in this handbook to help you produce assignments that meet the required standards.

## What makes a Successful Assignment?

The following is a list of general features which characterise successful assignments. They are provided to help you reflect on what you need to do to achieve a pass standard or higher grade in your work. However, each assignment which is issued to you, as part of the assessment programme for your qualification, is unique. So, you must use this information as a general guide and always follow the instructions given to you by your tutors. You should also seek your tutor's guidance if you are unsure how to proceed with an assignment.

1. You must complete the tasks which are given in the assignment to the correct standard. Ignoring the assignment and addressing only the individual assessment criteria provided in the ATHE units is insufficient. Look at the completed assignment in Appendix 5, where a full response is produced when assessing personal academic competence, including a skills audit ranking and SMART improvement targets.
2. Some assignments will have extension tasks to help you achieve higher grades. Your work will need to be to a higher standard. Discuss with your tutor whether you should attempt these tasks.
3. You must plan your work carefully so that you are ready for the submission dates. Do not leave things to the last minute as work completed quickly may not meet the standards required for success. Unless your centre has granted any special considerations, you must submit your work by the deadlines provided.
4. You must present the work appropriately so that it is easy for the assessor to read. In the completed assignment in Appendix 5, the learner has produced work in a well-structured format with a combination of concise narrative and tabular presentation of ranking scores and development targets.
5. Some tasks in assignments expect work to be presented in a particular way. You may be asked to draft a report, produce a booklet, or prepare slides and other materials for a presentation. You must follow the instructions in the task and present the work as required for the target audience. The finished assignment in the appendix required the learner to produce a personal development plan and the learner has completed this task. If you are unsure about the features of a report or how to produce slides or a booklet for a presentation, please ask your tutor for guidance.
6. Fundamentally your completed work must show that you have achieved the stated learning outcomes tested in the assignment. These learning outcomes must be achieved at the standards set by the assessment criteria for that learning outcome.

Look at the unit specification for the assignment you have been given and you will see the link between the specification and the tasks in the assignment. You must achieve the standards set by the assessment criteria. Check that you have done this, as failure to do so will compromise the success of your work.

7. In each assessment criterion there is a command verb such as 'evaluate', 'analyse' or 'critically assess'. You must follow the direction given by the command verbs. There are definitions of command verbs in this handbook but check with your tutor what these verbs mean if you are unsure what is required.

In the completed assignment at the end of this handbook, the learner has assessed their soft skills, academic skills and English language skills through a self-audit ranking approach which clearly identifies their relative strengths and weaknesses.

For each skills type, the learner translates this audit into an appraisal of strengths and weaknesses, which then enables the weaknesses identified to be matched with objectives for improvement in the table that follows.

In turn, this links with the personal development plan (AC1M1) produced which shows how the objectives will be achieved.

8. The best work is produced from the synthesis of data and ideas. Data has been processed, problems have been solved, decisions taken, and the conclusions justified. In the completed assignment in Appendix 5, the learner has synthesised the outputs from the self-audit, highlighted the issues to be addressed (weaknesses) and presented ideas to address them (personal development plan).
9. The completed assignment must be coherent, have a logical development of information, ideas, principles, and concepts and demonstrate effective thinking. The learner has done this in the completed sample assignment included in this Handbook.
10. Some tasks may require self-reflection and you need to produce a balanced analytical response which is detailed, factual and wide ranging.
11. As stated above, all of your work must be planned and organised but large projects such as a piece of research must also be managed carefully. You must gather sufficient and reliable information and data to support your conclusions. Your plan must be able to accommodate any unforeseen developments. You should evaluate the validity of results in assignments against stated criteria.

12. Wherever possible you should try to apply innovative thought in your work. This can be applied to a wide range of tasks but there are certain tasks in assignments which require creativity such as the production of marketing materials or materials for a presentation. All of your work must take account of the target audience and the communications must use appropriate media.
  
13. Your completed work must have a range of sources of information, which need to be relevant and reliable. Where you are quoting specific sources, you must use a standard referencing system and include a bibliography. Look at the completed assignment where the learner has appropriately attributed references to self-assessment being used in both academic and professional contexts, and planning of objectives helping ensure successful achievement. Cited words are in quotation marks and diagrams taken from sources are clearly referenced. As a reader, we are clear which words are the learner's own and which are attributed to particular sources. You should not copy large sections of text written by others, even if you attribute this, unless there is a clearly justifiable reason for doing so. Centres can use different referencing systems depending on what it considers best for learners and tutors, so please follow the instructions provided.



## Guide to Referencing

When preparing for your assignment, you are more likely to be successful if you use a range of relevant, reliable, up-to-date, credible sources to inform your thinking, such as books, journals, and websites.

You should use sources in two ways: firstly, to absorb ideas and information; and secondly to cite short relevant phrases or sentences to support your own thinking.

It is very important that you acknowledge your sources, so your tutor knows which sources have informed your thinking and so that you give credit to the writers who have provided you with the information. By acknowledging your sources, you can also show your tutor that you have read widely on the topic and that you are presenting credible information.

Failure to reference your sources may make your tutor think you are cheating by knowingly taking another's work and claiming it as your own. This is called plagiarism and is a serious offence. By careful, honest, and accurate use of referencing you can avoid plagiarism.

There are a number of established referencing systems, and you should ask your tutor if there is a preferred system for your centre. ATHE does not prescribe any particular referencing system, but whichever one you use, you must use it consistently and with great attention to detail throughout the assignment.

When you directly quote the exact words from sources, you must put the cited information in inverted commas known as quotation marks to show that you are attributing the source to another person and are not claiming that the words are your own. For example:

**Schein (2009, p.79) argues that a culture cannot be measured through questionnaires as it might only measure 'superficial characteristics of the culture'.**

Or you could begin the sentence with

**The author states that '.....'**

In the following example, the student has written the sentence, but the source is identified as the words are paraphrased from the work of another person.

**An organisation is composed of individuals that will interpret and attribute meanings to their organisational life (Schultz, 1995).**

For longer citations (where it is 50 words or more), you may also indent the quoted words. When you incorporate graphs, pictures, or diagrams from other sources you must give details of the sources.



When you quote, you should use the spelling of the original text. For example, if you cite from an American English website, you must retain the spelling in American English.

When you are preparing for the assignment, it is a good idea to keep a record of the sources as you use them, listing for example the author's name, year of publication, edition number, publisher name, title of article, page number in journal, date website accessed, and type of electronic resource.

At the end of your assignment, you should have a list of references and a list of the sources which have generally informed your thinking in a Bibliography. This should be done in alphabetical order. Using the examples above the entries would be as follows:

**Schein, E.H. (2009) The Corporate Culture Survival Guide. San Francisco: John Wiley distributor.**

**Schultz, M. (1995) On Studying Organizational Cultures: Diagnosis and Understanding. Berlin: de Gruyter.**

This is only a brief guide to referencing and your college will undoubtedly provide you with more information.



## Personal Development Planning

Many colleges and universities have processes in place to help learners recognise their strengths and areas for development and plan for their short term and long-term future. Identification of personal strengths and areas for development and a clear ability to learn from experience and to plan for further improvements are highly valued by employers looking for effective managers in their organisations. High value is placed on the skill of being a reflective learner whether you are a student or in employment, as there is a focus on learning and improvement. So, you should develop this skill now and:

- critically review and evaluate your learning on your programme of study including the skills you used
- identify areas of success and where you need further development
- build on the successes and learn from the mistakes or areas of weakness
- plan for future developments.

The audit at the end of this handbook focuses on Study Skills. Completion of this audit will help you to identify where your strengths and areas for development lie currently. You can then create an initial action plan which is aimed at further improvement. This should focus on your academic and personal objectives, and you should decide what specific steps are needed in order to achieve the goals. In time, you may wish to extend this into career objectives. Each objective needs to have clearly defined targets with associated action points that are challenging but can be realistically achieved in a specified timescale. At the end of the handbook there is a blank template and some examples to help you to get started with the action plan.

As the learning on your ATHE programme of study towards your qualification proceeds, you can then build on this information and plan for further improvement. As you progress through the units in the qualification, you need to review regularly and ensure that this becomes a normal way of working. It does not need to take long. The information obtained from the review will enable you to modify your action plan for further development.

## Ofqual Level Descriptors Summary

The Ofqual level descriptors in the table below show what level of knowledge and understanding, application and action and autonomy and accountability learners should be able to demonstrate relevant to the level of qualification they are studying. It is important to take these into account when studying towards ATHE qualifications.

Level	Knowledge descriptor (the holder...)	Skills descriptor (the holder can...)	Example ATHE Qualifications	Example General Qualifications
1	<p>Has basic factual knowledge of a subject and/or knowledge of facts, procedures, and ideas to complete well-defined routine tasks and address simple problems; and</p> <p>Is aware of aspects of information relevant to the area of study or work.</p>	<p>Use basic cognitive and practical skills to complete well-defined routine tasks and procedures.</p> <p>Select and use relevant information.</p> <p>Identify whether actions have been effective.</p>		
2	<p>Has knowledge and understanding of facts, procedures, and ideas in an area of study or field of work to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems.</p> <p>Can interpret relevant information and ideas.</p> <p>Is aware of a range of information that is relevant to the area of study or work.</p>	<p>Select and use relevant cognitive and practical skills to complete well-defined, generally routine tasks and address straightforward problems.</p> <p>Identify, gather, and use relevant information to inform actions.</p> <p>Identify how effective actions have been.</p>		
3	<p>Has factual, procedural, and theoretical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to complete tasks and address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Can interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas.</p>	<p>Identify, select, and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills, methods, and procedures to address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Use appropriate investigation to inform actions.</p>	ATHE Level 3 Diploma in Law	A Levels

	<p>Is aware of the nature of the area of study or work.</p> <p>Is aware of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.</p>	<p>Review how effective methods and actions have been.</p>		
4	<p>Has practical, theoretical, or technical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Can analyse, interpret, and evaluate relevant information and ideas.</p> <p>Is aware of the nature of approximate scope of the area of study or work.</p> <p>Has an informed awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.</p>	<p>Identify, adapt, and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills to inform actions and address problems that are complex and non-routine while normally fairly well-defined.</p> <p>Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions, and results.</p>	<p>ATHE Level 4 Diploma in Computing</p>	<p>Higher National Certification (HNC)</p>
5	<p>Has practical, theoretical, or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to find ways forward in broadly defined, complex contexts.</p> <p>Can analyse, interpret, and evaluate relevant information, concepts, and ideas.</p> <p>Is aware of the nature and scope of the area of study or work.</p> <p>Understands different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the reasoning behind them.</p>	<p>Determine, adapt, and use appropriate methods, cognitive and practical skills to address broadly defined, complex problems.</p> <p>Use relevant research or development to inform actions.</p> <p>Evaluate actions, methods, and results.</p>	<p>ATHE Level 5 Diploma in Management for Health and Social Care</p>	<p>Foundation Degree</p>



6	<p>Has advanced practical, conceptual, or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors.</p> <p>Understands different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the theories that underpin them.</p> <p>Can critically analyse, interpret, and evaluate complex information, concepts, and ideas.</p>	<p>Determine, refine, adapt, and use appropriate methods and advanced cognitive and practical skills to address problems that have limited definition and involve many interacting factors.</p> <p>Use and, where appropriate, design relevant research and development to inform actions.</p> <p>Evaluate actions, methods and results and their implications.</p>	ATHE Level 6 Diploma in Healthcare Management	Bachelor's Degree
7	<p>Reformulates and uses practical, conceptual, or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors.</p> <p>Critically analyses, interprets, and evaluates complex information, concepts, and theories to produce modified conceptions.</p> <p>Understands the wider contexts in which the area of study or work is located. Understands current developments in the area of study or work.</p> <p>Understands different theoretical and methodological perspectives and how they affect the area of study or work.</p>	<p>Use specialised skills to conceptualise and address problematic situations that involve many interacting factors.</p> <p>Determine and use appropriate methodologies and approaches.</p> <p>Design and undertake research, development, or strategic activities to inform or produce change in the area of work or study.</p> <p>Critically evaluate actions, methods, and results and their short- and long-term implications.</p>	ATHE Level 7 Extended Diploma in Strategic Management	Master's Degree



## Command Verbs used in Units and Assignments

The verbs used in the assessment criteria in ATHE units and assignments are very important. The evidence you provide via your assignment needs to show that you have met the standards set by the assessment criteria, so it is important that you understand what the criteria expect you to do.

Here is a list of verbs used in ATHE assessment criteria and assignments. The explanations for the verbs provide alternative words or phrases that help to clarify the verb used. It is also important to take into account the level of the unit when reviewing the command verbs.

For example, analyse at level 7 will be different to analyse at level 5 – you can use the summary of the qualification level indicators in the previous page to establish the correct standards.

Verbs	Explanation
Agree	Have the same opinion about something; concur
Analyse	Break the subject or complex situations into separate parts and examine each part in detail; identify the main issues and show how the main ideas are related to practice and why they are important; reference to current research or theory may support the analysis
Apply	Explain how existing knowledge, practices, standards etc. can be linked to new or different situations Use information to determine outcomes/conclusions /recommendations
Appraise	Assess the value or quality
Assess	Use available information to make a judgement; produce a convincing argument for this judgement
Calculate	Determine or ascertain by mathematical methods
Carry out	Implement; do; execute
Close	Bring to an end
Collaborate	Work jointly with
Collate	Collect and present information arranged in sequence or logical order which is suitable for purpose
Communicate	Convey or exchange spoken or written information



Compare	Examine the subjects in detail looking at similarities and differences
Compare and contrast	Examine the subjects in detail, identify similarities and differences, consider these from different perspectives
Conduct	Carry out
Consider	Ponder, contemplate, or study in order to make a decision
Construct	Form by bringing together various elements
Convey	Communicate (information)
Create	Bring something into existence
Define	State or show clearly and accurately
Demonstrate	Clearly show by giving proof or evidence; give a practical exhibition and explanation
Describe	Provide an extended range of detailed factual information about the topic or item in a logical way
Design	Decide on the look and function of something by making a detailed visual or written document of it
Determine	Ascertain or establish exactly by research or calculation
Develop	Identify, build, and extend a topic, plan, or idea
Devise	Plan or invent (a complex procedure, system, or mechanism) by careful thought
Differentiate between	Discuss identified differences between more than one entity, item, product, object, or activity
Discuss	Give a detailed account including a range of views or opinions which includes contrasting perspectives
Distinguish between	Discuss identified differences between more than one item, product, object, or activity
Document	Record something in written, photographic or other form
Draw conclusions	Arrive at judgements or opinions by reasoning
Establish	Set up; show something to be true by determining the facts



Evaluate	Examine strengths and weaknesses, arguments for and against and/or similarities and differences; Judge the evidence from the different perspectives and make a valid conclusion or reasoned judgment; Apply current research or theories to support the evaluation when applicable
Examine	Inspect (something) thoroughly in order to determine its nature or condition
Explain	Make something clear to someone by describing or revealing relevant information in more detail
Explore	Investigate or examine a range of issues from different perspectives
Formulate	Draw together; put together in a logical way; express in systematic terms or concepts
Identify	Ascertain the origin, nature, or definitive characteristics of
Illustrate	Explain or make something clear by using examples, charts, graphics etc.
Interpret	Explain the meaning of something
Investigate	Carry out a systematic or formal inquiry to discover and examine the facts
Justify	Give a comprehensive explanation of the reasons for actions and/or decisions
Lead	Be responsible for taking people, organisation, or a piece of work in a direction
Make recommendations	Use conclusions to suggest ways forward. Revisit and judge the merit of; endorse a proposal or course of action; advocate in favour of
Manage	Be in charge of; control or direct people/resources
Match	Correspond or cause to correspond (something with something else)
Measure	Assess the importance, effect, or value of something
Monitor	Maintain regular surveillance
Negotiate	Discuss with a view to finding an agreed settlement
Outline	Identify accurately and describe clearly – the main points
Plan	Decide on something and make arrangements for it in advance; Design or make a plan of something
Prepare	Make something or someone ready for use



Present	Show for others to scrutinise or consider; Formally deliver (e.g., in verbal, written or graphical format)
Produce	Make, create, or form something
Propose	Put forward (a plan or suggestion) for consideration by others
Provide	Identify and give relevant and detailed information in relation to the subject
Recommend / Make recommendations	Use conclusions to suggest ways forward. Revisit and judge the merit of; Endorse a proposal or course of action; Advocate in favour of
Record	Set down in writing or some other permanent form for later reference
Reflect	Consult with oneself or others, recognising implications of current practice with a view to changing future practice
Reflect critically	Learners should consider their actions, experiences or learning and the implications of these in order to suggest significant developments for future action, learning or practice, producing a convincing argument to support the conclusion or judgement.
Report (on)	Give a spoken or written account of something that has been observed, heard, done, or investigated
Request	Politely or formally ask for
Research	Conduct a detailed study of a subject to discover new information or reach a new understanding
Review	Revisit and analyse in detail the positive and negative aspects
Select	Make informed choices
Self-analyse	Examine methodically in detail to explain and interpret oneself and one's actions
Set up	Establish; place something in position
Specify	Identify clearly and definitely
Suggest	Put forward for consideration
Summarise	Give the main ideas or facts in a concise way
Synthesise	Combine into a coherent whole
Translate	Convert
Validate	Demonstrate or support the truth, accuracy, or value of something



## The Assessment Process

### Assessment

Assessments can be both formative and summative. In both cases your centre will assess your work to ensure it has met the learning outcomes at the standard set by all the assessment criteria. In the assessment process, assessors provide feedback to learners on why they have met the standards or if not, what needs to be done to achieve success. In summative assessment a final judgement is made on whether your work meets the standard and at what grade, where this is applicable.



### Internal Quality Assurance

After the assessment has been completed, Internal Quality Assurers at your centre will check the assessment decisions made by the original assessor to ensure they are valid and reliable. Changes to assessment judgements can be made.



### External Quality Assurers

Upon completion of the internal quality assurance at your centre, the centre will upload learners' results to the ATHE Portal.

ATHE will then arrange for an External Quality Assurer (EQA) to visit your centre (onsite or remotely). The purpose of this visit is to make a judgement on whether the assessors have assessed the learner work to the correct standards and the internal quality assurance is appropriate.

Once the visit is completed, the EQA will provide the centre with a report. If the centre has met ATHE requirements for assessment and internal quality assurance, certificates will be issued for learners within 10 working days.



## Suggested Resources

The suggested resources below provide useful theory, statistics, and case studies relevant to management, healthcare management, law, computing and accounting. These resources can supplement the resources provided by your college and resources suggested by ATHE for each unit. Always ensure you reference correctly when using information from any source.

- Please note this list of resources is not exhaustive, however, ATHE have a wide range of suggested resources that are provided to your centre. Please speak to your centre representative for access to these.

### Management

#### General Management textbooks

Essential Study Skills: The Complete Guide to Success at University, Tom Burns and Sandra Sinfield, Sage Publications, April 2016, ISBN: 978-1473919020

Study skills for business and management students, Barbara Allen, OU Press, April 2009, ISBN 13: 978-0335228546

A Dictionary of Business and Management (Oxford Quick Reference), Jonathan Law, OU Press, 2016, ISBN: 978-0199684984

Fundamentals of Management (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), Mike Smith, McGraw Hill, March 2011, ISBN: 978-0077126933

#### UK Government departments

HM Treasury - [HM Treasury - GOV.UK](#)

Department for Business and Trade (DBT) - [Department for Business and Trade - GOV.UK](#)

#### Other business-related organisations

Confederation of British Industry (CBI) - [Confederation of British Industry - Home | CBI](#)

## **International perspectives**

International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Country information) - <https://www.imf.org/en/Countries>

World Bank (where it works) - <https://www.worldbank.org/en/where-we-work>

World Bank (Open Knowledge Repository) - <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/>

## **Healthcare Management**

### **Healthcare Management textbooks**

Healthcare Management, 3rd Edition, Kieran Walshe and Judith Smith, OU Press, Sept 2016, ISBN: 978-0335263523

Leadership and Management in Healthcare, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Neil Gopee and Jo Galloway, Sage Publications, April 2017, ISBN: 978-1473965027

### **UK healthcare perspectives**

UK Government, Department for Health and Social Care - <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care>

The Health Foundation - <https://www.health.org.uk/>

Health Service Journal - <https://www.hsj.co.uk/>

Skills for Care - <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Home.aspx>

The National Archives, Health and Social Care Information Centre - <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20130513091507/http://systems.hscic.gov.uk/>

### **International healthcare perspectives**

World Health Organisation - <https://www.who.int/en/>

## Law

### Law textbooks

An Introduction to the Study of Law, Simon Halliday, W Green, Sept 2012, ISBN: 978-0414018693

A Dictionary of Law (Oxford Quick Reference), Jonathan Law, OU Press, June 2018, ISBN: 978-0198802525

English Legal System, Emily Finch and Stefan Fafinski, Pearson, April 2021, ISBN: 978-1292295459

Contract Law – The Fundamentals, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, Ryan Murray, Sweet & Maxwell, May 2020, ISBN: 978-0414074910

### UK Law fundamentals

Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) - <https://www.sra.org.uk/>

The Law Society - <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/>

Bar Standards Board - <https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/>

Bar Council - <https://www.barcouncil.org.uk/>

CILEx Regulation - <https://cilexregulation.org.uk/>

Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEx) - <https://www.cilex.org.uk/>

All about law - <https://www.allaboutlaw.co.uk/>

### Law Resources

For a rigorous selection of law subject portals, general resources, national and international law, guides and tutorials, and the legal profession and education - <https://libguides.reading.ac.uk/law/websites>

## Computing

### Computing textbooks

Hello World, Hannah Fry, Black Swan, March 2019, ISBN: 978-1784163068

A Dictionary of Computer Science, Andrew Butterfield, Gerard Ekembe Ngondi and Anne Kerr, OU Press, Jan 2016, ISBN: 978-0199688975

Code: The Hidden Language of Computer Hardware and Software, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Charles Petzold, Microsoft Press, Aug 2022, ISBN: 978-0137909100

The Elements of Computing Systems: Building a Modern Computer from First Principles, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Noam Nisan, MIT Press, July 2021, ISBN: 978-0262539807

Algorithms to Live By: The Computer Science of Human Decisions, Brian Christian, William Collins, April 2017, 978-0007547999

Quantum Computing for Everyone, Chris Bernhardt, MIT Press, Sept 2020, ISBN: 978-0262539531

Artificial Intelligence: A Guide for Thinking Humans, Melanie Mitchell, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, Oct 2019, ISBN: 978-1250758040

### Computing resources

Code Academy - <https://www.codecademy.com/>

Stanford Engineering Everywhere - <https://see.stanford.edu/>

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Open Course Ware - <https://ocw.mit.edu/>

GitHub - <https://github.com/>

W3Schools - <https://www.w3schools.com/>

## Accounting

### Accounting textbooks

Financial Accounting for Dummies (UK Edition), Steven Collings, For Dummies, April 2013, ISBN: 978-1118554371

Introduction to Accounting and Finance, Geoff Black, Financial Times/Prentice Hall, August 2009, ISBN: 978-1408216293

Accounting 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Michael Jones, Wiley, April 2013, ISBN: 978-1119977186

Accounting for Managers: Interpreting Accounting Information for Decision Making, 5th edition, Paul M Collier, Wiley, May 2015, ISBN: 978-1119002949

### Accounting resources

Institute of Financial Accountants - <https://www.ifa.org.uk/>

Accounting.com - <https://www.accounting.com/>

Accounting Coach - <https://www.accountingcoach.com/>

Principles of Accounting.com - <https://www.principlesofaccounting.com/>

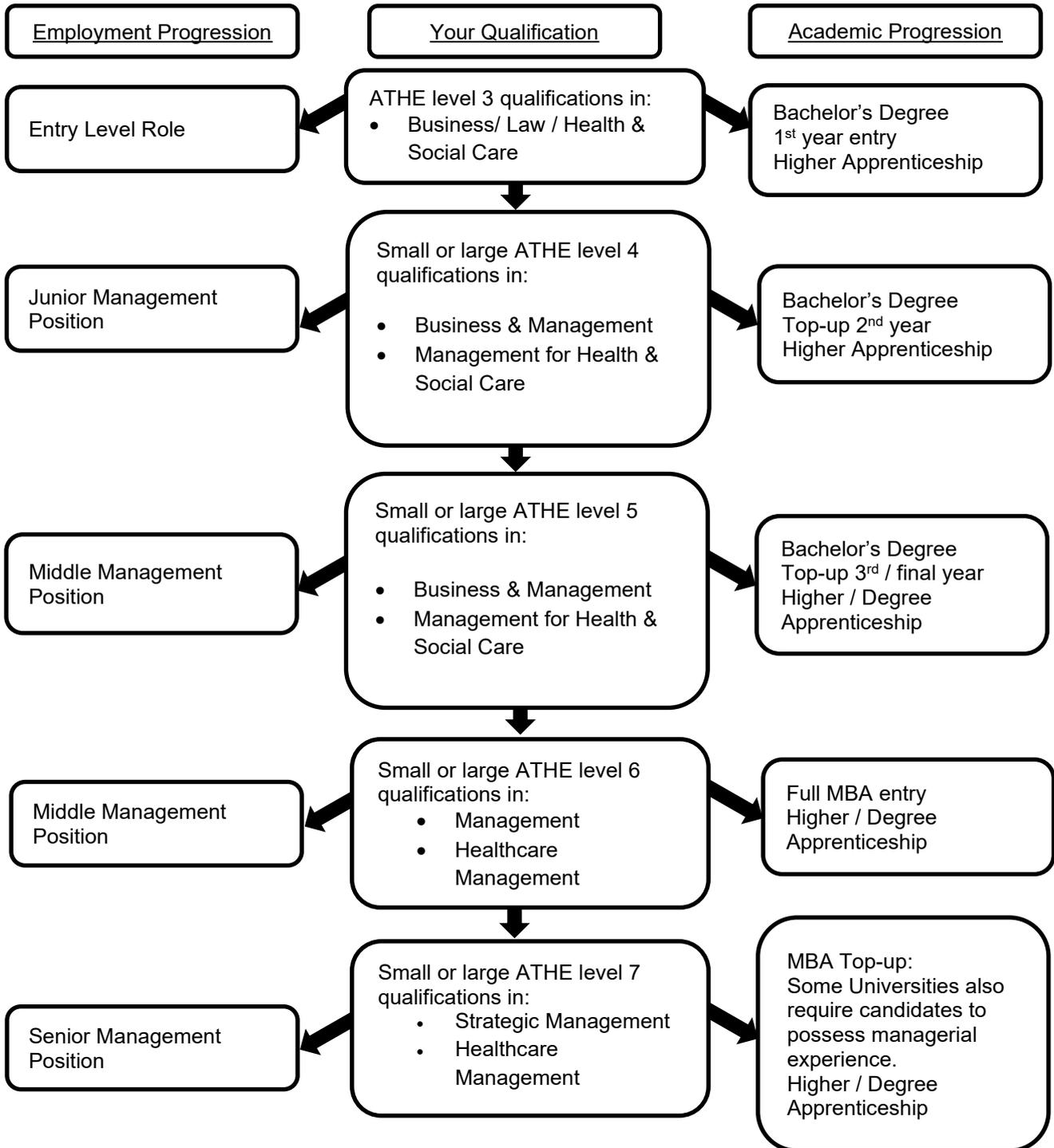
Coursera (not a free resource) - <https://www.coursera.org/>

Course Hero - <https://www.coursehero.com/>



## After Achieving Your ATHE Qualification

There are many options available to you once you have achieved an ATHE qualification. These include going to university or another higher education institution, progressing to an ATHE qualification at a higher level, gaining promotion or starting a new job or business. The table below illustrates the different options open to you when you have achieved an ATHE qualification.



## Going to University, Higher Education or taking a Higher-Level Apprenticeship

If you are interested in progressing to further study either at university or a higher education provider or to a higher-level apprenticeship, then your ATHE qualification and the level of achievement will prove extremely useful as there are a wide range of progression routes.

You could progress to a Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree at a range of UK and international universities with delivery options, which include both online and campus based. You must check the entry grades, subject requirements and the number of credits needed to gain admission to your preferred course of study at the university or higher education provider of your choice. All ATHE qualifications state the number of credits gained from achieving all or part of a qualification. For the Level 3 International Access Programme you can add to the credits gained by studying more than one Diploma. Studying more than one Diploma will also increase the breadth and depth of learning, which is of particular interest to many higher education providers.

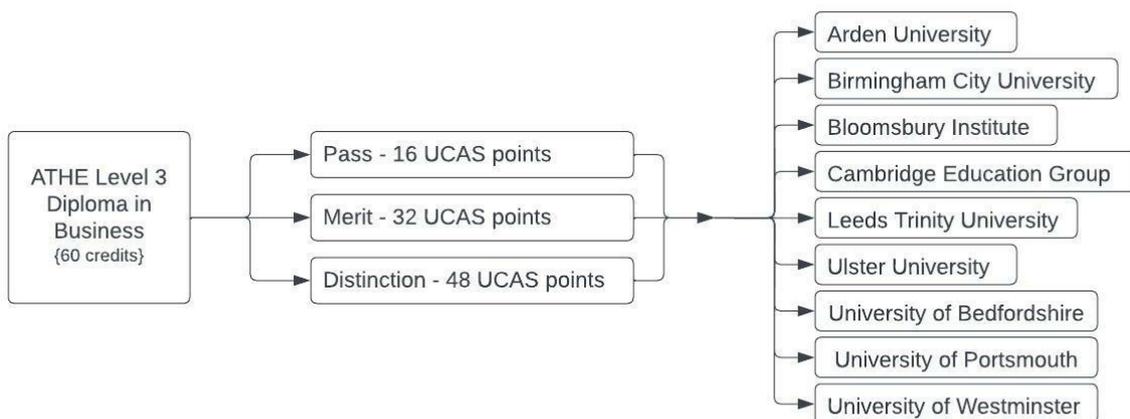
### All ATHE Level 3 qualifications attract UCAS Points

ATHE learners who wish to progress to a university degree programme have the opportunity to not only achieve an ATHE Level 3 qualification, but also gain UCAS points on successful completion. UCAS points support the entry requirements to any UK university for learners.

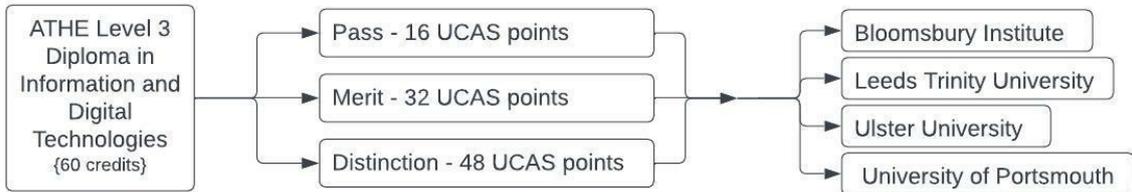
ATHE also have recognised pathways to university degree programmes through our agreed ATHE progression routes.

### Look how the ATHE L3 Qualifications can provide you with a route to university:

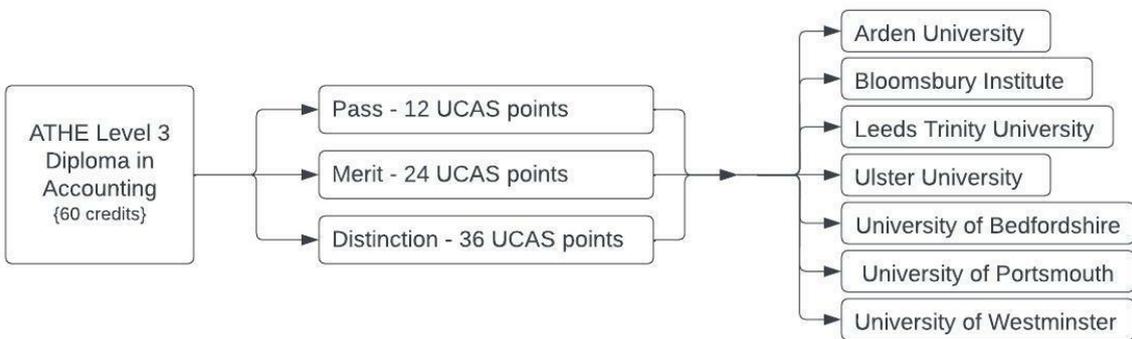
#### Model for Level 3 Business



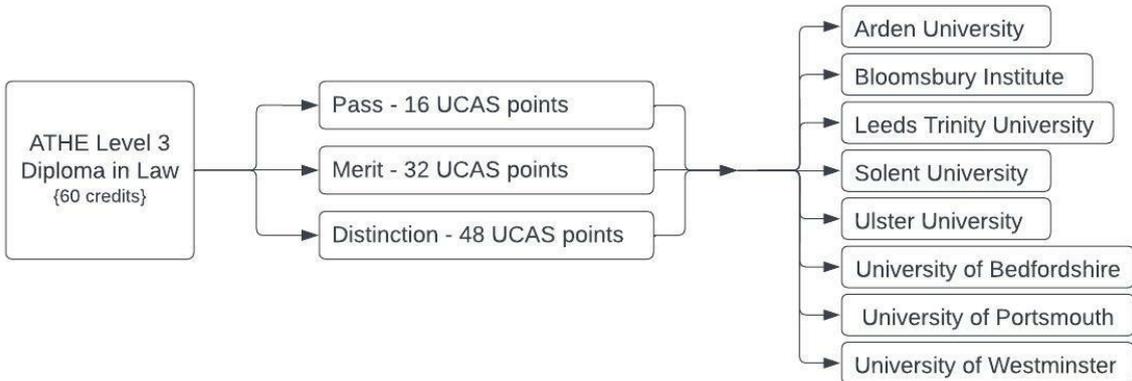
**Model for Level 3 Computing**



**Model for Level 3 Accounting**



**Model for Level 3 Law**



In addition to the above examples, other ATHE Level 3 qualifications attract UCAS points – please follow the link for further details:

[Calculate your UCAS Tariff points | UCAS](#)



To see our agreed progression routes with our university partners on completion of your ATHE qualification, please view here:

<https://athe.co.uk/progression-routes/>

Are you interested in studying one of our ATHE qualifications? Please click here to find an educational provider near you (or online) that delivers the qualification you wish to study:

[Find an ATHE Centre – Centre Portal](#)



## Preparing a CV

If you are venturing into the world of work after achieving an ATHE qualification, then preparing a good CV is important to give you the best chance of success in gaining employment.

**Here are ATHE's top tips for CV writing:**

1. Keep it short - most employers only spend a small amount of time looking at any one CV, so to ensure it gets read make sure that it is well presented and written in chronological sections for ease of understanding. Normally, this means starting with the present date and working back in time. Two pages are normally suitable.
2. Your CV should normally include:
  - Personal details e.g., your name, contact details
  - Personal profile and career objectives
  - Education experience and achievements
  - Business or other experience including positions of responsibility and achievements in these roles
  - Personal interests
  - Names of referees



These sections should provide evidence for how and when you have demonstrated the skills you possess. Saying that you have a skill, or you are good at something is not enough.

3. Keep it up to date - even if you are not looking for employment, it is a good idea to keep your CV relevant and up to date, so you do not forget important details later on.
4. Check for errors – most employers receive a large volume of CVs so do not give them an excuse to dismiss yours by not checking for grammatical or spelling errors. Ask a friend or relative to review for document for any errors.
5. Do not leave unexplained gaps – employers may get suspicious if there are gaps in dates. If you have been out of work for a period, explain what you did during this period to keep up to date. Were you doing voluntary work, a course or working on a personal project?
6. Make it look good – make sure it is laid out correctly and a clear font like Arial is used.



7. Ensure you attach a personal statement to the CV which shows how your experience, skills and qualities make you an ideal candidate for the job. This statement will also show that you understand the specific role for which you are applying. In addition, the statement should demonstrate that you have researched the company and wish to work there. In preparing this personal statement, pay particular attention to the person specification attached to the job description.

## Drafting a Covering Letter

Employers may expect job applicants to complete a form for a specific post and to send a covering letter. These kinds of letters are also important if you decide to send some speculative job applications. Finally, you may send a covering letter with your CV.



There is clearly little point having an excellent CV which is well constructed if you then produce a poor covering letter, almost as an afterthought. The employer may read the letter and decide to go no further.

The CV and covering letter must complement one another. Keep the letter short, ideally no more than one page and ensure it does not simply repeat what is in the CV. Produce about 4 paragraphs and use the following as a guide.

### Points to consider for inclusion in the Covering Letter:

1. A clear statement about the job you are applying for. If you have a name of a relevant person with whom you discussed the post or who referred, you to the role include it here.
2. Identify key aspects of the job and provide some examples of work you have done which meet these requirements. You may wish to refer to grades you have achieved in certain units as this will help to show your aptitude for certain areas of knowledge and skill.
3. You may refer to the personal skills and qualities you possess which are particularly relevant to this role.
4. Ensure the tone of the letter is positive but do not come across as being arrogant. You need to show that you are an interesting and personable individual.
5. Sum up by re-stating your interest in the post and the business and thank the person reading the letter for their time in considering your application.



## Preparing for Interviews

An interview is one of the most common ways used to recruit staff and its purpose is to assess the applicant's suitability for a role. Interviews take many different forms, for example they may be staged with an informal interview first or there may be structured interviews with all candidates being asked the same questions.

These structured interviews may in themselves lead to a second stage of the selection process, reducing the number of candidates down to those which are deemed particularly suited to the role. Interviews are normally done face-to-face but telephone or online interviews may be used sometimes at an early stage in the selection process.

In addition, some employers will ask candidates to complete tasks at the interview, which are directly related to the job role. You should be prepared for a range of different types of selection processes and the employer will not always inform you what to expect beforehand.



Employers will note your level of professionalism in all communications they have with you. Always use a formal style in your responses irrespective of whether this is by telephone, letter, or email. Ensure you respond promptly and to the named person who has contacted you.

### Top ten tips:

1. Ensure you are clear about the venue, date, and time for the interview, and you are there in good time.
2. Decide what to wear and ensure this is reasonably formal and typical business wear. If employers have planned any specific tasks at interview which require any other types of clothing, they will have informed you.
3. Take relevant information with you to the interview. This should include the job description and person specification, your CV, and any notes you have prepared for the interview. Switch your mobile off when you enter the building.
4. Be clear about the job role including the person specification. Some interview questions will be directly linked to this information. If you have not received a job description please request this information.
5. Consider what other questions you may be asked. In addition, questions which emerge from the job role and the person specification, you may also be asked questions on information you have provided in your CV. Note down key points you wish to make.



6. Research the organisation thoroughly. Employers will expect that you have checked the website as a minimum. Be clear about the mission and vision of the organisation, the contents of annual reports. Know why you wish to work there and be able to explain this clearly.
7. When you are asked questions listen carefully; give concise answers which directly address the question asked, providing relevant examples where necessary. Sometimes, the questions may come from different people in the room and be in different parts – answer all sections. If you are unclear about the question, ask for clarification. Take a little time to think about the question before you respond but you should not appear hesitant.
8. Always speak clearly and at a pace which ensures the interviewer is able to understand what you are saying. Often interviewers take notes while the interviewee is speaking, so keeping to a moderate pace is important.
9. Be aware of the effects of your body language, be friendly and positive; keep good eye contact with the person asking the question and other interviewers. Most people get nervous before and during interviews but try to keep as calm as possible.
10. Think about any questions you wish to ask the interviewer(s) before you attend for the interview. It is not compulsory to ask questions, but candidates frequently seek clarification on something about the role or the organisation.



## Appendix 1: Developing Study Skills

The development of a range of generic Study Skills is part of your personal development, which is referred to earlier in this Handbook. These Study Skills are important for success in all ATHE qualifications, and they provide a basis for successful learning and achievement at higher level study, whether at university or as a part of a higher-level apprenticeship. The development and application of these generic skills are also valued by employers. It is, therefore, essential that you think carefully about the Study Skills you possess and those that require further development. The self-assessment audit tool provided below is designed to help you. It is based on ATHE's Study Skills Framework so you can see the kinds of skills that ATHE considers essential to successful study.

Before you begin your studies towards an ATHE qualification, you should complete the self-assessment tool and discuss your responses with your tutor. This will then provide evidence to show you have considered your personal Study Skills and identified strengths and areas for improvement.

### ATHE Study Skills Framework

ATHE's Study Skills Framework consists of seven skills areas. These are identified below along with the meaning of the skill and what the skill requires. Consider the statements that relate to each of these skill areas and grade yourself using the criteria below to identify your existing study skills levels and the areas you may wish to develop further.

Appendix 2 contains an example Action Plan for Study Skills development based on this self-assessment and Appendix 3 a blank Action Plan for you to complete once you've undertaken your own Study Skills self-assessment.

### Grading Criteria

1. I use this skill, but I am not competent, so I need more practice
2. I am able to do this but sometimes I need to seek assistance
3. I am competent without any assistance
4. I am competent and sufficiently confident to be able to help others

Study skill	What the skill means ...	What the skill requires ...	Statements	1	2	3	4	Examples to support your judgment
1) Self-organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thinking through your approach to study is important if you are to fully benefit.</li> <li>Being self-organised requires that you think about where you study, when you study, how you will study and with whom you will study.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding a suitable place to study without distractions, which is clean, light and enables access to all relevant resources</li> <li>Identifying when it is best for you to study, maintaining a balance between responsibilities and ensuring you are in the right frame of mind</li> <li>Organising your study materials to ensure that they are clear to access and easy to use</li> <li>Ensuring that your study is supported by others so that help is available should you need it</li> </ul>	<p><i>I can plan my day to manage my time more effectively</i></p> <p><i>I can manage multiple tasks and balance competing priorities effectively</i></p> <p><i>I am able to identify the resources required to complete a set task</i></p> <p><i>I structure the information for my revision at the appropriate level of detail to be manageable</i></p> <p><i>I understand the structure of different types of assessments and tests and can prepare for each type</i></p>					

<p>2) Time management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing time to maximise study and derive a good work-life balance is important.</li> <li>Good time management can ensure that larger study activities are broken down into more manageable bite-size tasks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning helps to organise time around regular activities and other commitments, and helps avoid distraction</li> <li>Developing a study timetable to ensure that your work is structured, priorities are addressed and that there is a healthy work-life balance</li> <li>Identifying and sticking with the objective or instruction at hand so that you can set yourself regular and realistic goals</li> </ul>	<p><i>I can set myself realistic objectives, priorities and standards</i></p> <p><i>I take responsibility for my own learning, evaluating, and adapting how I work in order to achieve my goals</i></p> <p><i>I can prioritise my work</i></p> <p><i>I am able to apply suitable approaches to meet deadlines</i></p> <p><i>I am able to monitor the progress of projects towards completion</i></p> <p><i>I plan my revision time effectively and know how to prepare for tests or exams</i></p>					
---------------------------	---	--	---	--	--	--	--	--

<p>3) Using sources of information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using research, materials and information is an important aspect of effective study.</li> <li>You need to know where to look for information and how to access it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying available sources of information, e.g. online, radio, television, library, people</li> <li>Accessing information, i.e. choosing current, sufficient, relevant and reliable sources; noting key info - page nos., URLs, key dates; recording sources clearly and logically</li> </ul>	<p><i>I am able to devise my own approaches to research projects</i></p> <p><i>I understand the range of information sources available and am able to select the most appropriate for my research</i></p> <p><i>I can identify the scope for a given research project and work within it</i></p> <p><i>I am able to identify, collect, store and maintain data on research output</i></p>					
<p>4) Reading Skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sufficiently broad and deep reading must take place to both effectively understand the subject of study and use information to achieve your objectives.</li> <li>There are different reading materials, different purposes to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying different reading materials, e.g. course notes/texts, books, journals, articles, reviews, guides, statistics, online materials, VLEs</li> <li>Reading with a purpose, e.g. to understand an idea/concept, to retain information for revision,</li> </ul>	<p><i>I understand the different types of reading material available when researching for an assignment</i></p> <p><i>I always keep in mind the purpose of my reading</i></p>					

	reading and different reading styles.	<p>to research, to make notes, for pleasure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding reading styles, e.g. skimming, scanning, extensive reading of longer texts for overall meaning (e.g. understanding the development of an argument), intensive reading of shorter texts for detailed meaning (e.g. learning a language)</li> </ul>	<p><i>I know how to read relevant reference sources to find information</i></p> <p><i>I know when I have read enough about a topic to start formulating my assignment response</i></p>				
5) Writing Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of the study activity will determine the way in which something is written.</li> <li>There are a variety of writing styles and forms of writing that you need to understand and practise to study and learn effectively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the purpose of writing, e.g. note-taking, revision, essay writing, report writing, organising one's thoughts – mind maps</li> <li>Understanding writing styles (and forms), e.g. Personal (e.g. a blog), Narrative (a short story), Explanatory (a 'How-To'), Persuasive (marketing copy), a Response to Literature (book review), Research (research paper),</li> </ul>	<p><i>I can take notes in a clear and logical manner, at the appropriate pace and level of detail</i></p> <p><i>While I am taking notes, I think about how I will use them later</i></p> <p><i>I am able to produce a variety of written documents using appropriate formats</i></p>				

		Creative (poem) and Business (email)	<p><i>I can use appropriate language in a range of different documents with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar</i></p> <p><i>I know how to cite and reference appropriately in line with recognised good practice</i></p> <p><i>I check written work for errors before submission</i></p>				
6) Thinking Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Without a number of key thinking skills, we will not be able to find, read, understand and express our ideas.</li> <li>We use analytical skills to collect and analyse information relevant to the problem.</li> <li>We use critical thinking skills to help us think in an</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using analytical skills, e.g. research skills, handling information, consulting multiple sources, categorising information</li> <li>Using critical thinking skills, e.g. listening to/reading all information, identifying and interpreting others' positions, arguments and conclusions, weighing up opposing</li> </ul>	<p><i>I can identify solutions to research issues and plan and implement a course of action to overcome them</i></p> <p><i>I can evaluate the effectiveness of different information sources and select the most appropriate</i></p>				

	<p>organised and rational way to understand connections between ideas/and/or facts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We apply reflective thinking at the conclusion of a task to ensure we understand our own performance and our feelings towards it.</li> </ul>	<p>arguments (avoiding jumping to conclusions, spotting fake ideas/news), drawing conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring we allow time and space to listen and read feedback; to review and learn from our study, so that we become more self-aware, constantly improve, and are empowered in our learning</li> </ul>	<p><i>I am able to compare and contrast data or information from different sources</i></p> <p><i>I am able to break down a complex problem into simple parts</i></p> <p><i>I can review a range of different points of view and select the most appropriate conclusion</i></p> <p><i>I can identify issues and obtain relevant information to reach conclusions</i></p> <p><i>I can use a range of skills such as analysis, synthesis and evaluation</i></p> <p><i>I monitor, review and adapt my own performance based on feedback and other experiences</i></p>					
--	---	--	---	--	--	--	--	--

			<p><i>I take time to reflect on my strengths and development areas</i></p> <p><i>I set my own goals and review these systematically and regularly</i></p>				
7) Digital Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital Skills are the skills needed to use digital devices, communications applications, and networks to access, create and manage information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using appropriate digital devices (computer, laptops, tablets etc) and relevant applications, software, systems and getting online</li> <li>Creating online information</li> <li>Handling and judging the reliability of information</li> <li>Problem-solving (e.g. online research, presenting data)</li> <li>Applying relevant numeracy skills to explore and organise data appropriately</li> </ul>	<p><i>I am comfortable using computers and common peripheral devices</i></p> <p><i>I understand how to use different software applications effectively</i></p> <p><i>I can access, input, manipulate and extract data from IT devices effectively</i></p> <p><i>I am able to present information clearly and competently</i></p> <p><i>I can use charts, diagrams and other illustrations to support verbal and</i></p>				

			<p><i>written communication</i></p> <p><i>I am able to handle large amounts of information and data, effectively interpreting results</i></p> <p><i>I am able to interpret and use appropriate numerical information</i></p> <p><i>I can solve problems and find solutions using information and digital technologies</i></p>				
--	--	--	---	--	--	--	--

## Appendix 2: Example Action Plan

Area for improvement	Action(s) to be taken	By when	Monitoring of progress	Evidence of improvement / success	Further Action
<p><i>I lack confidence with oral communication skills and get very nervous. I usually read the notes / slides rather than referring to them and I speak too quickly.</i></p>	<p><i>Ask the tutor for some advice on presentation skills.</i></p> <p><i>Practice the presentation before delivering it to the rest of the class</i></p> <p><i>Prepare a feedback sheet for the class so I can make further improvements</i></p>	<p><i>Presentation scheduled for 6 weeks.</i></p> <p><i>Ask tutor for advice this week.</i></p> <p><i>Practice presentation at least 4 days before event.</i></p>		<p><i>I was more confident with this presentation and the speed was good. The feedback sheet was very useful. The main feedback was that I had poor eye contact with the audience, and I relied too heavily on the notes.</i></p>	<p><i>Prepare notes with key headings and bullet points.</i></p> <p><i>Know what I plan to say for each heading.</i></p>



### Appendix 3: Action Plan

Area for improvement	Action(s) to be taken	By when	Monitoring of progress	Evidence of improvement/ success	Further Action



## Appendix 4: Learner Achievement Tracking Sheet

You can use the tracking sheet to make sure you have completed work at the right standards for each of the learning outcomes.

*How to use the tracking sheet:*

An electronic copy of this sheet is available on the ATHE website for you to download. You will find it at [ATHE Student Hub – ATHE Student Hub](#) .

Then:

1. Check the unit specification and/or the assignment for the number of learning outcomes in the unit. You should also take account of the assessment criteria.
2. Delete or insert rows in the grid so that there is one row for each learning outcome.
3. Number each row with the number of learning outcomes, as shown in the example below.
4. Look at the assignment and note the kind of evidence you are required to produce for each task, and which assessment criteria the evidence relates to. The type of evidence might be for example a report, a presentation, a handbook, or a brochure. Fill in the type of evidence you will produce next to the relevant learning outcome and note the assessment criteria it covers.
5. If your tutor asks you to complete a first draft or conduct prior research, fill in the date you completed this in the third column. If you do not need to do this, fill in 'Not applicable'.
6. In the fourth column, fill in the date you passed the work to your tutor for formal assessment.
7. When your assessor has assessed your assignment, read the assessor's feedback, and find out if your work has achieved the learning outcome at the right standards.
8. Check the grid to see if there are any learning outcomes which have not been achieved. If this is the case, use the sixth column to note the action required to amend or re-do that part of your assignment, so that it can meet the standards.

### Learner Achievement Tracking Sheet

Learner name:	ATHE Learner ID:
Centre:	
Qualification:	
Unit:	
Unit number:	
<i>Guidance: Delete/insert further rows in the table below as required so there is one row for each Assessment Criterion.</i>	

Learning Outcome	Evidence	If appropriate: Date first draft completed, or prior research conducted	Date work formally submitted	Date assessor/IV judged work (assessed evidence) has met Assessment Criteria	Action for work which does not meet the standards
e.g., LO1	1.1/1.2  <i>Brochure for clients</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	16.05.14	30.05.14	<i>Not applicable LO achieved</i>
LO2	2.1/2.2/2.3  Report	12/11/14	1/12/14	16/12/14	LO achieved at the required standards
LO3					
LO4					

Before submitting your work check you have:

- ✓ Completed the tasks or activities as required by the assignment
- ✓ Labelled or numbered each task or activity
- ✓ Understood and responded to the command verbs in the Assessment Criteria
- ✓ Produced the tasks or activities in the required format
- ✓ Presented your work clearly
- ✓ Referenced sources you have used and cited from
- ✓ Put cited material in quotation marks
- ✓ Checked for any spelling or grammatical errors
- ✓ Added a footer with page numbers and your ATHE learner ID number



## Appendix 5: Example Learner Assignment

Here you can see an assignment task completed by a learner for a unit within the ATHE Level 3 Diploma in Business (2020 version). The work meets the standards for pass and merit grades as set out in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria below:

### Unit 3.25 Academic and Research Skills for Business

Learning outcomes. The learner will:	Assessment criteria. The learner can:		
	Pass	Merit	Distinction
1. Be able to assess own academic competence	1.1 Assess own academic strengths and weaknesses including academic English language skills 1.2 Set targets for improvement using the self-assessment	1M1 Develop a plan to show how targets will be achieved	

These are the related assignment tasks:

#### Task 1

Throughout this course you are encouraged to reflect on your learning, set your own targets and monitor your progress towards these.

- a) To start this ongoing process, you need to assess your own strengths and weaknesses. Think about your:
  - personal skills
  - your academic skills (e.g. research, note taking, summarising, paraphrasing)
  - your academic English language skills.

Write up your assessment in note form.

- b) Using this information, set targets for self-improvement. These could include short term targets (for completion during this course), as well as long term targets. Once you have drafted your targets check them to make sure they are SMART (**S**pecific, **M**easurable **A**chievable **R**ealistic and **T**imed). This is important as you will need to monitor your progress against these targets in Task 5.

#### Extension activities:

To gain a merit grade you must also:

- develop a plan which shows how you will achieve your targets.

LO1 AC 1.1, AC 1.2, AC 1M1



## Sample Learner Work

Learner name: *John Smith*

Centre: *ABC Centre*

Unit: *Academic and Research Skills for Business*

Unit number: *3.25*

### AC1.1

Self-Assessment can be described as a process of taking a detailed outlook about oneself to identify own identity. It is an activity of evaluating the individual strengths and weaknesses so to work and grow in the areas where there is scope of improvement. If conducted appropriately, self-assessment can help a person to grow personally as well as professionally. This practice of assessing self can be done at any level of life, academic as well as professional (Harris and Brown, 2018). There are various methods to assess oneself, however using a skills audit test can be an easy way out as an individual can give ranking to self and judge own strengths and weakness.

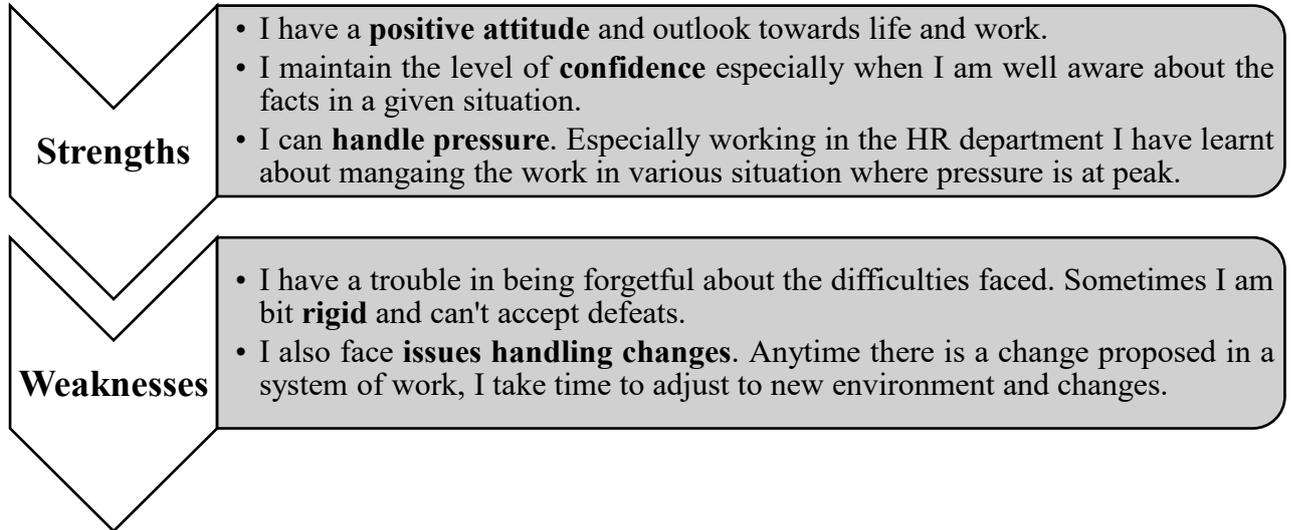
Using a skills audit ranking, following are the points of my strengths and weaknesses:

#### Personal Skills

Soft Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Positive Attitude					✓
Confidence				✓	
Resilience		✓			
Flexibility			✓		
Ability to handle pressure				✓	
Handling Changes		✓			



Based on the above defined skills audit structure, following are my core strengths and weaknesses



**Academic Skills**

Academic Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Time Management			✓		
Researching Skills	✓				
Critical Thinking		✓			
Technological Skills (Microsoft Office Use)				✓	
Presentation Skills				✓	
Note Taking Skills		✓			

Based on the above defined academic skills audit structure, following are my core strengths and weaknesses



Strengths

- I am generally good at **managing time**. However, sometimes I get distracted and now I am trying to work on it.
- I have a **good handhold on technology**. Being responsible for handling the data tracking at the workplace, and the presentations at the school, has got me to a good level of understanding of technology
- I also have **presentation skills**, I know and understand how to make my work look presentable and appealing to the eyes of readers. It is not only in PowerPoints but also in the reports that I write.

Weaknesses

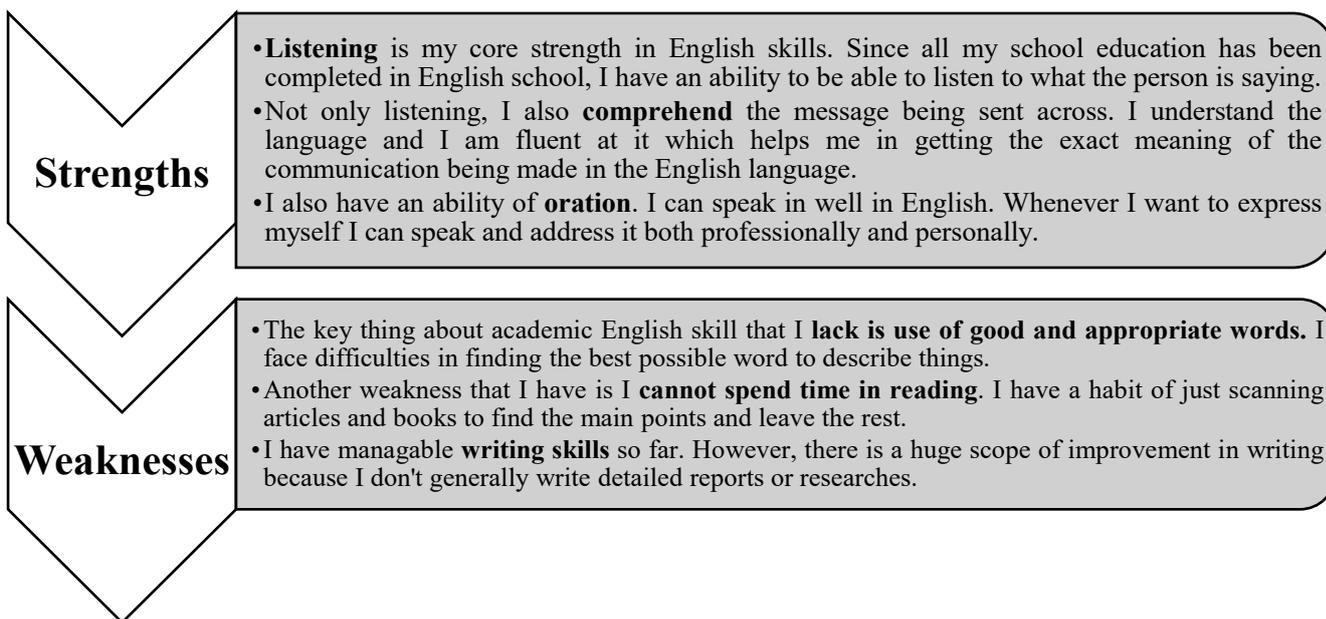
- Since I am new to the world of research, I believe that **my researching skills** are my core weakness. Just starting with business management studies had got me to a realization about importance of this skill.
- I also have a **problem with critically understanding** and thinking in the situation. I get occupied with alot of things and start to feel everything is important, losing out the focus from core factor.
- I also **don't** have a habit of **taking notes**. I tend to remember everything, but end up forgetting it. Academically this skill is valuable and I need to work on it.

### Academic English Language Skills

English Language Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Listening Ability					✓
Comprehension Ability				✓	
Oration Ability				✓	
Use of Correct Words		✓			
Reading Ability		✓			
Writing Skills			✓		

I have given IELTS which has assisted me with my academic English skills. Furthermore, based on the above defined academic English language skills audit structure, following are my core strengths and weaknesses.





### AC1.2 Targets for Improvements

Any objectives that an individual sets should follow a simple rule of SMART. SMART is an acronym for

- S – Specific  
This means that any objectives that are set by the individual should be direct and to the point with the problem.
- M – Measurable  
The individual goals being set in any situation should also be measurable. This means that before and after conducting the activities for a particular situation, the individual should be able to evaluate the results. The goals should be trackable (Boogaard, 2019).
- A – Achievable  
Every goal or objective being designed should also be realistic and well within the reach of attainment. Sometimes individuals become over optimistic and set goals that stretch the limits too much to let go of the goal.
- R – Relevant  
It means that the objectives should give some meaning to the individual and should be related to the objectives that have been set.
- T – Time Bound



A deadline with the objective is must. Without setting a target to attain the goal the person will start to lose interest and would begin procrastination.

Based on the weaknesses I found in the assessment, these are the objectives for improvement in the future.

<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
<b>Resilience</b>	I would be developing a good social network that can help me become more open about the mistakes I am doing. This will also help me in taking all defeats as a new lesson.
<b>Change Management</b>	I would be more open to the opportunities, and would try my best to give ideas. This will help me become resistant to change as I will be initiating the changes with my ideas.
<b>Research Skills</b>	To get hold of this skill I will practice reading skills, observe data from quality sources by taking help and support from my tutors.
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	I will discuss as my questions as possible with classmates and professors. I would try to learn it through case studies and see how I can solve it and if the solution is good or no.
<b>Note Taking</b>	I would start writing everything on a copy instead of laptop. As learned in the presentations, I will try to use charts and figures instead of jotting down every word being told.
<b>Choice of Words</b>	To improve this skill, I will slowly start learning 5 new words each day and will try to use them appropriately in the lines.
<b>Reading</b>	I would start by reading smaller articles of my interest. I will try to keep a track of the books, articles that I have read so that I don't get distracted.
<b>Writing</b>	I will try to write small blogs/emails/letters each day. I will discuss my writings with the tutor to have thorough guidance on the writing style. I would start by first designing the framework to have a clear understanding of requirements and writings.

**AC1M1**



## Personal Development Plan

A personal development plan is a framework that individual designs to frame a path or blueprint towards the improvements that are needed. It is a structured way of putting down the ideas and actions that would be taken in small and long term for developmental purposes.

Appropriate planning for objectives and goals helps in framing right strategies and tracking things properly that can ensure development and success in future (Spruce, 2020).

Below given is a personal development plan for my objectives:

Sno.	Objectives	Actions	Measuring Points	Time Required
1.	<b>Develop Social Network and Brainstorm Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up a profile on LinkedIn.</li> <li>Have more open discussions with colleagues and classmates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of discussions or blog posts done and reactions received.</li> <li>The ability to handle the situation even if everyone is against my own thoughts.</li> </ul>	6 Months (Feb. 2022)
2.	<b>Learn about change management and take new opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read blogs, books and take sessions to understand the importance of change.</li> <li>Look out for opportunities and try new things to be giving ideas as and when needed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of books that I have read and used it in work and life.</li> <li>The greater number of discussions I will have and the more ideas I provide will help in realizing if I can adapt to change or no.</li> </ul>	1 Year (Aug. 2022)
3.	<b>Observe data from quality sources.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Get involved in more discussions in classrooms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedbacks from the tutors and the number of sources chosen will help in understanding</li> </ul>	6 Months (Feb. 2022)



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Search internet sources</li> </ul>	<p>about the research skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Also, I will try to publish some articles with references to prove the research skills</li> </ul>	
4.	<b>Read and understand case studies and do discussions.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find case studies of known businesses in my home country.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The answers provided for case studies and the feedback provided by tutors would help in this scenario.</li> </ul>	3 months (Nov. 2021)
5.	<b>Take copy and start writing things in form of notes.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always carrying a copy.</li> <li>• Try to jot down important things instantly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of things remembered and discussed appropriately.</li> </ul>	6 Weeks (Oct. 2021)
6.	<b>Learning new words</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start by reading or learning 5 words and their usage in sentence format.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate use of words and a structural formulation of sentences being used.</li> </ul>	4 Weeks (Oct. 2021)
7.	<b>Improve on reading skills.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take books, articles or web content that is brief and is of interest.</li> <li>• Take one topic in class and search information and read about it.</li> <li>• Join a book club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More and more discussions with classmates and tutors will give an understanding about the level of reading.</li> <li>• The feedback from book club and regularity at it will also be a point of measurement.</li> </ul>	3 months (Nov. 2021).



8.	<b>Improve on writing skills.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start by writing small blogs or paragraphs daily.</li> <li>• Be participative and develop content for academic as well as professional level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of reads and appreciation provided on the written content.</li> </ul>	6 months (Feb. 2022)
----	-----------------------------------	---	---	----------------------

All the targets given above would contribute somewhere or the other in the personal and professional growth for me. Therefore, each would be considered as equally important in short and long-term both.

The methods for collecting data for this study is a mix of primary as well as secondary sources.











