BSc (Hons) Applied Software Development
Frequently Asked Questions

1. **How will I study my course?**

   Designed around the career path of a junior developer, this degree focuses on working in teams, using software development to solve problems. From day one, you will learn through work-related scenarios and develop work-ready soft skills in business and project management.

   The course is developed around a model which is commonly used across today's software industry, where many software teams embrace 'remote working'. This concept is discussed by the programme team in this video.

   An induction week is held at the start of each academic year, when you will enrol and be introduced to the course documentation and facilities available to you. During this time, you will also be required to complete an online induction which focuses on familiarising you with the tools and resources that you will be using during the course, for example: using the university's virtual learning environment; video conferencing; Git hosting; Agile project management; Cloud services etc.

   You should be prepared for a 40-hour week, during which you will spend a significant amount of your time on project work and in communication with your team.

2. **Do I need previous experience or knowledge of computing?**

   No, there is no specific subject requirement or previous experience expected for entry. You will learn and build the required skills as you progress through the course.

3. **How will I be assessed?**

   Assessment is based on a portfolio of work that you will build throughout the course. This work will evidence your subject knowledge, technical skills and the learning process you have gone through. Using industry standard tools, you will have access to a personalised dashboard which will allow you and the academic team to track your contributions to projects throughout the year, giving you continuous feedback on your progress.

   At the end of each semester, you will be able to choose which pieces of your portfolio you wish to present for marking. While you will be working in groups throughout the year, it is your individual contribution to the project work that will be assessed.

4. **Are there scheduled sessions that I must attend?**

   There will be regular scheduled tutorials that you will need to make yourself available for. Details of these will be provided prior to the commencement of each semester.

5. **Are there any other attendance requirements?**

   You must attend the online induction held at the start of each academic year, the week prior to commencement of the course. These sessions introduce you to your fellow-classmates and focus on building team-working and leadership skills.

6. **With it being entirely online, what sort of support is available for me?**

   You will have several tutorials per week with lecturing staff. You will have dedicated times where members of staff are available to offer support via video call/screensharing and will have support via Slack (a communications platform from industry that we will be using). You will also have access to industry mentors and will be given the opportunity to go into your nearest campus to meet with staff.

7. **What resources/equipment will I need?**

   You must have access to a computer that you have administrator rights for, to enable you to install the required software (all software required for the degree is free or open source; you will not be required to pay for any software, but you must be willing to sign up to a range of industry-standard tools located online). A good broadband connection will be required with particular attention to the upload speed.

   The following minimum system requirements are required:

UHI minimum system requirements (https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/lis/buying-your-own-device/)		
	Windows	**Mac**
Operating system	Windows 7, 8 or 10	Mac OS 10.10.x or newer
Processor	2 GHz or better, INTL or AMD is recommended (Must support virtual machines)	
Graphics	OpenGL version 1.2 or later compatible	
RAM	8GB or more	
Monitor	17" or larger (the bigger the better) (Laptop: 15" or larger screen)	
Microphone / headphones	USB headset with microphone	
Webcam	Built-in or external (it is easier to adjust the camera angle with an external)	
Broadband	Reliable connection required 1.0 Mbps (receive) 1.5 Mbps (send) (Cisco recommendations for good quality video calls)	

8. **Are there any additional costs?**

   You may have the opportunity to visit industry partners: these visits will be self-funded but are not compulsory.

9. **What does 'Agile' mean?**

   Agile is a term used widely in the software industry. It describes a way of managing projects that focuses on small teams working in an iterative (repetitive) way to solve problems and develop new products. Good communication skills, transparency, motivation, and accountability are important to this way of working.

10. **What programming languages/products will I gain experience in?**

    In business, the programming languages and tools that are used to develop products depend on the problem being solved. Businesses tell us that they are looking for graduates who are flexible enough to keep up with the latest trends and adapt to new technologies that are introduced.

    In the first year of the course, you will be introduced to a range of programming languages, The focus will be on their similarities and differences, and how to effectively move from one to another. As you progress through the degree, the languages that you use for your projects will depend on the problems that employers are bringing in.

    Throughout all years of the degree, IBM are supporting students with access to the IBM Cloud. This will provide the infrastructure that will be the foundation for many of the projects that students will be working on, no matter the language used.

11. **Do I need to be based in the UK to take the course?**

    No, the course has been approved for international delivery, so you can study from your own location. However, you will need to make yourself available for any scheduled meetings, discussions or tutorials, some of which may take place outside of a normal working day.

12. **Is the course available to international applicants to study on-campus with a visa?**

    No. Due to the nature of the delivery model, students will not be eligible for a Tier 4 visa.

13. **How does this course differ from some other software development programmes?**

    This course focuses on teaching you to use existing code and tools that are used in industry. There is a focus on giving you the skills to move between technologies confidently and developing an attitude of life-long learning, which is required to keep up with the pace of change in the industry. There is limited mathematics and theory and a greater emphasis on business skills experience such as project management, teamwork and communication wrapped around working on larger software projects.

Employer quotes

James Brentley, CEO of AgileCadence:

"AgileCadence has actively promoted remote working for a number of years. In fact, I'd say it's an industry norm for both permanent staff and contractors. Over 4 million people already work remotely in the UK, and we've found that there are huge benefits for both our business and our staff. We employ a team from across the globe and offer flexible hours and remote working to everyone. Whether you're a parent who wants to work around childcare commitments, or you simply find that you work better at different times of the day, it all fits into a modern way of working that we fully support."

Fraser Gregor, Computer Scientist at Adobe:

"I'm fortunate that Adobe is a company with a supportive and flexible culture; a place where people are empowered to do the good work that needs to be done, even if that means varying hours and work locations to fit around individual circumstances. I certainly appreciated this flexibility while studying for a Master's degree over a thousand miles from the rest of my team! We make effective use of online collaboration tools to keep in touch, with lots of screen sharing, video calling and instant messaging - although it's perhaps hardly surprising that people working in tech would have learned to use the internet to break down barriers between different remote locations. With the best and brightest from around the globe, working across time zones, it's stimulating to be part of a tight-knit engineering community that is busy innovating for our customers around the clock."