



## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

### Master of Business Administration (MBA)

**This document applies to students who commence the programme in or after September 2017**

1.	<b>Awarding institution/body</b>	University of Worcester
2.	<b>Teaching institution</b>	University of Worcester
3.	<b>Programme accredited by</b>	N/A
4.	<b>Final award</b>	Post Graduate Certificate Business Administration, Post Graduate Diploma Business Administration, Master of Business Administration
5.	<b>Programme title</b>	Master of Business Administration
6.	<b>Pathways available</b>	N/A
7.	<b>Mode and/or site of delivery</b>	Standard taught programme or block delivery
8.	<b>Mode of attendance</b>	Part time or Full Time
9.	<b>UCAS Code</b>	N/A
10.	<b>Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement</b>	<a href="#">Subject Benchmark Statement: Master's Degrees in Business and Management (2015)</a>
11.	<b>Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision</b>	July 2015 - Approved Audit and Review Committee; October 2015 – General update and inclusion of new Subject Benchmarks; August 2016 - Regulations/Section 20 amended. August 2017 – AQU amendments

#### 12. Educational aims of the programme

The MBA is a career development generalist programme. The Worcester MBA is aimed at graduates, of any discipline, who have an interest in developing their understanding of the practices of leading a business, have aspirations to run their own business, or are keen to move away from a functional specialism into general management.

The MBA is based on the philosophy that management education and development should provide a thorough introduction to and grounding in the disciplines related to the functional aspects of management. The modules have been developed with international context throughout to allow the students to explore and investigate the core module content in multicultural and global settings.

Specific exposure to the business context will be provided through links to live case studies (within BUSM4304) to enable students to gain an appreciation of this subject in its application. Further such exposure to relevant practice will be through two “Future Weeks” (one each

Semester) and through students attending Future Leaders events.

Additionally, the programme will use the diverse student backgrounds to encourage cross-learning within the cohorts in terms of business and management practices from around the world. The programme will examine management decision making at a strategic level, stressing the integrative nature of the various factors, which come into play in the development of a well-rounded business leader of the future.

The aim is to encourage students to develop their skills and competencies as managers by providing opportunities to apply the knowledge and skills they gain, culminating in an individual, business related research dissertation in one of three formats; research dissertation, consultancy project dissertation, or incubation project dissertation.

The aims of the programmes are to:

1. Provide an intellectually challenging and vocationally relevant learning experience where participants can develop and demonstrate a critical knowledge and understanding of the theoretical concepts of business and management and their utility in improving business and management practice.
2. Provide participants with relevant knowledge and systematic understanding in the functional areas of management, and their interaction with the contextual forces which impact on organisations.
3. Progress participants' understanding and development towards a strategic view of management emphasising the complexity and dynamics of business and management in the international context and alongside a critical awareness of current issues.
4. Provide participants with the opportunity to focus on particular aspects of business and management relevant to their backgrounds, cultures, interests and career aspirations, culminating in a business research dissertation in one of three formats; research dissertation, consultancy project dissertation, or incubation project dissertation
5. Facilitate the development and demonstration of participants' intellectual skills of information processing, analysis, synthesis, critical appraisal, creativity and innovation and the ability to manage and make decisions in situations of ambiguity and uncertainty.
6. Deepen understanding and broaden awareness of international cultural issues through working within international student groups.
7. Provide aspiring managers with the practical competencies necessary to allow them to cope effectively within, and lead, the organisations of the future.
8. Produce managers who are able to improve the quality of management decision-making, leadership and business practice across a range of organisations and in a variety of contexts, including international settings.

**13. A. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods: Master of Business Administration**

The Masters programme comprises of three stages of study and separate awards relate to each stage. Each stage stands alone as a coherent educational and vocationally-relevant experience. At the same time each stage builds on the last and prepares for the next. The programme gives participants the opportunity to achieve and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

**On successful completion of the PG Certificate in Business Administration students will be able to:**

1. Apply relevant knowledge and develop a critical appreciation of organisations, how they operate and how they are managed in multinational contexts.
2. Apply a range of relevant knowledge of the generic “functional” aspects of business (marketing, finance, people management, operations) and how these dovetail with the running of an organisation as a whole including communications, IT and knowledge management, and business process innovation.
3. Demonstrate problem solving and decision making abilities: including identifying and then solving business problems; evaluating options; implementing and reviewing decisions.
4. Demonstrate the practical competencies and skills necessary to succeed in business and management in complex environments.

**On successful completion of the PG Diploma in Business Administration students will be able to:**

5. Apply strategic and contemporary management concepts and models to deal with issues in simulated real world contexts.
6. Apply relevant knowledge of the contextual perspectives for examining how the Macro environment impacts on business organisations in a range of different contexts and how this then influences organisational decision-making.
7. Critically examine the nature of leadership and organisational change and to evaluate the impact of this change on management/leadership approaches and actions.
8. Critically analyse and evaluate entrepreneurial opportunities and activities, and to apply entrepreneurship theory to the management of innovation.
9. Demonstrate advanced practical competencies necessary to succeed in business and management, including research and analytical skills, and the ability to be able to articulate thoughts and solutions clearly to others.

**On successful completion of the Masters in Business Administration students will be able to:**

10. Demonstrate critical thinking and creativity: managing creative processes in self and others; dealing with uncertain and unfamiliar situations, organising thoughts and analysis.

11. Conduct research into business and management issues at postgraduate level dealing with real and current business issues and demonstrate the ability to apply these skills in real organisational settings.

12. Communicate findings and implement agreed solutions effectively and efficiently.

13. Critically examine the nature of international markets, how decisions are made based upon this understanding, and apply concepts and models to deal with issues in simulated international contexts.

**Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:**

- A programme of interactive seminars and group work sessions driven by the VLE, course materials, and set readings
- Assessment is by a variety of means including papers, essays, oral presentations, group work, and research-driven tasks
- All modules require learners to engage in discussion of key issues and the critical application of key concepts

The programme is designed to develop an independent learning culture that will allow the student to be able to take learnt process from their programme of study and apply it systematically in a range of work and organisational settings. In this way the MBA is very focussed on the workplace and, where possible, students are expected to ground their learning with any experience of the workplace.

The learning & teaching strategies employed demonstrate this synergy. They include case studies on real organisations to examine problem based learning, blended learning from the Virtual learning Environment and, where appropriate, MOOCs to bring in an external learning perspective to modules. These provide an effective link between theory, its application, and the development of well-rounded future business leaders capable of working internationally in a range of organisational contexts.

Part of this grounding may be gained through the optional placement (up to 6 months in duration) which will occur at the end of the taught element of the programme (June). This placement, which will be typically completed within the United Kingdom, will not be credit rated activity but will form part of the Dissertation and will allow the student to contextualise their dissertation (which can take the form of a consultancy project) to an organisation in the UK, gain access to primary data, and apply their understanding of theories and principles discussed within their programme to a live organisational setting.

Additionally, grounding is gained through the dissection, discussion, and interpretation of case studies; opportunities to work on live client projects/briefs; interaction with guest speakers and networking events with business leaders provided at local venues and at the Business School and other Universities.

Additionally, students on the MBA will have the choice of completing a Dissertation as a research thesis; Consultancy Project (based upon internship, or 'client' brief) or may complete an incubation project which will consist of a feasibility study on a proposed new venture that the student will be free to pursue once their studies have been completed.

## 14. Assessment Strategy

The Assessment strategy has been designed to provide students with challenges appropriate for Master of level modules. The programme is assessed through a range of summative coursework including presentations, case study, and assignments. Formative feedback will be provided by a range of approaches coherent with the peer focused nature of the programme; it will include feedback from tutors and students.

The overall purpose of the assessment strategy is to enable students to:

- Demonstrate that they have the intellectual rigour commensurate with a course of this nature and have developed the analytical skills expected of Master of Level study.
- Demonstrate the ability to synthesise appropriate theories, models and concepts from a range of modules studied on the course and apply them to critically evaluate real world scenarios
- Gain experience in working individually and as part of a team
- Maximise the opportunity to utilise and share their own experience(s) and studies to produce concise documents of the kind used in the management decision making process
- Receive continuous, regular and appropriate feedback throughout the course
- Develop the intellectual and practical abilities required of leaders and managers
- Undertake assessments that are relevant to the students' organisation and role.

In designing the assessment strategy for the programme, the course team have been careful to align with the University's [Assessment Policy](#). For guidance on the assessment of Group Presentations please the Post Graduate Taught Handbook section 3.3.

## 15. Programme structures and requirements

All modules are mandatory for each stage of this programme with the exception of the Independent project where one version of the module (either with, or without, placement) is required to make up the necessary 180 credits for the award. Students who are studying part time will have the option of selecting up to 100 credits of study per year, with the Independent Project being the final module taken. The maximum registration period is 5 years.

### **Award map for Post Graduate Certificate of Business Administration – 60 credits from the following**

<b>LEVEL 7</b>				
<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credits (Number)</b>	<b>Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)</b>	<b>Prerequisites (Code of Module required)</b>
BUSM4306	Strategy and Sustainability in the Global Economy	20	O	None
BUSM4307	Strategic Resourcing and Talent Management	20	O	None
BUSM4304	International Operations Management	20	O	None

BUSM4302	Strategic Marketing in the Digital Economy	20	O	None
BUSM4305	Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Delivering Change	20	O	None
BUSM4308	Financial Decision Making for Managers	20	O	None

**Award map for Post Graduate Diploma of Business Administration – 120 credits from the following**

<b>LEVEL 7</b>				
<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credits (Number)</b>	<b>Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)</b>	<b>Prerequisites (Code of Module required)</b>
BUSM4306	Strategy and Sustainability in the Global Economy	20	O	None
BUSM4307	Strategic Resourcing and Talent Management	20	O	None
BUSM4304	International Operations Management	20	O	None
BUSM4309	Business Investigation and Discovery	20	O	None
BUSM4302	Strategic Marketing in the Digital Economy	20	O	None
BUSM4305	Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Delivering Change	20	O	None
BUSM4308	Financial Decision Making for Managers	20	O	None

**Award map for Master of Business Administration – 180 credits from the following**

<b>LEVEL 7</b>				
<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credits (Number)</b>	<b>Status Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)</b>	<b>Prerequisites (Code of Module required)</b>
BUSM4340	Dissertation	40	O	None
BUSM4341	Dissertation (with placement)	40	O	None
BUSM4306	Strategy and Sustainability in the Global Economy	20	M	None
BUSM4307	Strategic Resourcing and Talent Management	20	M	None
BUSM4309	Business Investigation and Discovery	20	M	None
BUSM4304	International Operations Management	20	M	None
BUSM4302	Strategic Marketing in the Digital Economy	20	M	None

BUSM4305	Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Delivering Change	20	M	None
BUSM4308	Financial Decision Making for Managers	20	M	None

## 16. QAA and Professional Academic Standards and Quality

The Master of Business Administration is located at Level 7 of the FHEQ and is informed by:

- [Subject Benchmark Statement: Master's Degrees in Business and Management \(2015\)](#) which recognises that there is a wide diversity of Level 7 courses in Business and Management available with different orientations and specialities. The Master of Business Administration is designed to offer a type III award which provides a career development approach to the teaching of business and management subjects in a generalist area but with a strong practical and professional orientation to the curriculum.
- Students will be able to reflect on and learn from any prior experience and thus be able to integrate new knowledge with past experience and apply it to new situations. However, management experience is not a pre-requisite and students will be provided with a variety of inputs in order to develop them as business leaders of the future. They will be able to challenge preconceptions and to remove subject and functional boundaries so as to handle complex situations holistically. They should also have particular strengths in analysing, synthesising and solving complex unstructured organisational problems. In addition to being able to communicate their findings, they should have developed the skills to implement agreed solutions effectively and efficiently. They should therefore have strongly developed interpersonal skills and to be able to interact effectively with a range of specialists.

The programme conforms to the requirements set out for Master of level qualifications in the [QAA Master's Degree Characteristics \(2015\)](#) and the [QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland 2008](#) (FHEQ), exemplifying the outcomes expected from an award at this level. The Award is also aligned with the Chartered Institute of Management (CMI) and therefore potential for accreditation against the CMI Certificate in Strategic Management could be sought.

The aims and intended learning outcomes of the Master of Business Administration capture an emphasis upon critical awareness of current problems, dealing with complex issues and demonstrating creativity and originality in analysing and solving problems. Similarly, assessments have been selected that will provide students with an opportunity to engage in a critical review and application of theoretical tools, techniques and ideas relevant to the various aspects of leadership and management, and applied to an area relevant to their organisational setting.

## 17. Support for students

The following activities and documents have been put in place to provide support for students:

- Induction to include a brief course overview, introduction to the delivery pattern and assessment for the programme and specific modules, introduction to the VLE and

learning resources

- VLE site to provide learning resources and module information, exchange ideas and information between course members and staff
- Programme Leader as a point of contact for overarching programme questions and concerns
- Course handbook (available via the VLE) incorporating module outlines, key contacts and guidance for assessments
- Allocated Personal Academic Support Tutor to help students' integration into the University, the requirements of the programme and make the best use of learning resources available and to provide a key contact for support
- Access to course information, module results via the student online learning environment (SOLE)
- Student Representation through a staff/student form to provide feedback to the course team and enhance the on-going development of the programme
- Support from ILS staff, through the Information Desk and Study Guides to guide students in effective use of virtual and paper based resources
- Support for disabled students via Student Services and the Disability and Dyslexia Service.
  - <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/student-services/index.htm>
  - <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/student-services/disability-and-dyslexia.htm>

## 18. Admissions

The University aims to be accessible. It is committed to widening participation and encouraging diversity in the student population. Worcester Business School works closely with central student support services including the Admissions Office, the Disability and Dyslexia Service and the International Centre to support students from a variety of different backgrounds. We actively encourage and welcome people from the widest range of economic and cultural backgrounds and value the contribution of mature learners.

### Entry requirements

Targeting individuals with or without direct management experience but with a desire to either run their own business or to lead an organisation in the future:

- A second class honours degree in any subject (or International students holding a qualification recognised as equivalent by the University), plus the recognised ability to be able to hold a future leadership position at an appropriate senior level.
- Candidates may be admitted without a first degree via RPL, with 120 credits at level 7, or provided they have engaged in relevant continuous professional development activity and have at least 2 years business/management experience, at an appropriate senior level. Typically this should include responsibility for human, financial and physical resources and implementation of policy/strategy.
- Students whose first language is not English are required to demonstrate proficiency to a minimum level of 6.5 IELTS or equivalent.

See [Admissions Policy](#) for other acceptable qualifications.

## **Recognition of Prior Learning**

Students with relevant previous study at postgraduate level or with extensive experience may be considered eligible for recognition of prior learning. Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance on 01905 855111.

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm>

## **Admissions Procedures**

Entry to the Master of Business Administration requires all applicants to complete an application form which gives a variety of information about the student's work experience, qualifications and motivation. These will be checked by the Course Leader. Where information on the form is insufficient for a decision to be made the applicant will be requested to attend an interview with the Course Leader.

## **Admissions/selection criteria**

Candidates must be able to demonstrate that they are at the appropriate stage in their management development to benefit from the programme, are capable of undertaking a programme of academic work at postgraduate level and offer evidence of academic ability and motivation.

## **19. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning**

The team will evaluate the programme via the following mechanisms:

- External Examiner feedback
- Student feedback during and on the conclusion of modules
- Course Management Committee/Student forum
- Staff feedback
- Annual Evaluation Report (AER)

Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating quality and standards

Worcester Business School Quality Committee  
Worcester Business School Post Results Moderation Group  
Worcester Business School Board  
Worcester Business School Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee  
Course Management Committee/staff and student forum  
University PG Board of Examiners  
University Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee  
University Ethics Committee  
University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee

Mechanisms for gaining student feedback on the quality of teaching and their learning experience:

- Module feedback questionnaires
- Course Management and Staff/Student Forum
- Meetings with Personal Academic Tutors and supervision

## 20. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#).

### Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

### Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations see Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

### Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student who fails 60 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.

### Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
Post Graduate Certificate in Business Administration	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at Level 7, as specified on the award map in section 15
Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at Level 7, as specified on the award map in section 15

Master of Business Administration	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at Level 7, as specified on the award map in section 15
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PG Cert and PG Dip awards are unclassified. The awards of Masters may be made with Pass, Merit or Distinction.

## 21. Indicators of quality and standards

- The University of Worcester has been recognised as an Investor in People since 1996.
- The Director of Business Development (who has overall responsibility for the quality of the Professional Development programmes offered by the School) is a trained QAA Institutional Auditor.
- Many members of staff engaged in developing the programme are actively engaged in relevant research and consultancy.
- Annual External Examiners' reports have been extremely supportive and complimentary particularly with respect to the quality and consistency of marking, moderation, and the use of marking pro-formas which provide a structure for awarding marks and excellent guidance for students.
- Many members of staff engaged in developing the programme are actively engaged in relevant research, consultancy and professional practice in their discipline. For example over half of the School's research outputs submitted to the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) were deemed of international significance. Over half of our full-time tutors have PhD degrees.
- Positive feedback and satisfaction from students in module evaluations across all post-graduate taught courses indicated an average satisfaction rating in excess of 80%.

## 22. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

The job market for MBA's is strongly affected by the state of the global economy and includes a wide range of employers, with areas such as FMCG, pharmaceuticals, diversified industrial groups and even the public and voluntary sectors currently recruiting more actively than finance and consultancy (which have traditionally been the largest recruiters of MBAs):

- Many MBA students return, at least initially, to their previous employer (who may have sponsored them through the course)
- MBA students returning to family business typically do so to take over a leadership position within 5 years of graduation
- Approximately 12000 MBAs graduate each year from UK business schools and whilst this provides competition for employment, desire for MBA graduates continues to be strong

### Links with employers

The Business School are in contact with a variety of employers in the local area and these contacts can be exploited to allow students to engage in networking opportunities run by the University, the CMI, the IoD, and the local enterprise partnership.

- Worcester Business School aims to promote closer links with employers through the

work of its Business and Professional Development Team, and is supported by the School's [Employers' Advisory Board](#), which meets on a regular basis.

- The School works closely with a number of professional organisations including the Chartered Institute of Management, Institute of Commercial Management, Chartered Institute of Marketing, Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, Chartered Institute of Public Relations, Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales, Institute of Financial Accountants, Chartered Institute of Payroll Professionals, and British Computer Society.
- The School has worked with a number of business clients in developing and delivering its programmes. These include – The NHS (a range of Primary Care and Acute Trusts); Local Government (a range of County, District and Unitary Authorities); West Mercia, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire and Staffordshire Constabularies; Ministry of Defence and The Royal Air Force; Her Majesty's Prison Service; Royal Mail; Financial Services Organisations (e.g. Lloyds TSB, HBOS Plc, Clerical Medical, NFU Mutual and Virgin Money); Housing Associations, Southco, Malvern Instruments, Allpay Limited, G4S Secure Solutions, Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and Hitachi Capital.
- The School has well-developed working relations with the local business community many of whom contribute to postgraduate programmes to give a real-world insight into the future world of work and/or to provide live client briefs to students.
- These professional and business networks also involve external events, many of which are open to students, as well as employers. These include the Annual Business School Lecture, where recent speakers have included the Vice President Global Retail Network of Shell International Petroleum Company; the Director General of the Institute of Directors; and the Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Marketing.
- The School has strong working relationships with external agencies, such as the Institute of Directors, Federation of Small Businesses, Chamber of Commerce and Confederation of British Industry.
- A number of senior managers have been involved in, and advised on the content of this programme. They were particularly complimentary about the logical sequencing of the modules and the use of Business Investigation and Discovery as a vehicle for learning.

**Please note:** This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in associated course documentation e.g. course handbooks, module outlines and module specifications.