



MA Sales Management

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose

Course management and quality assurance.

Secondary Purpose

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

Disclaimer

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification; however, changes may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, review and update of units and courses. Where this activity leads to significant changes to units and courses, there will be prior consultation of students and others, wherever possible, and the University will take all reasonable steps to minimize disruption to students. It is also possible that the University may not be able to offer a unit or course for reasons outside of its control, for example; the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the University will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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Course Details

1. Named Awards

MA Sales Management

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

C1491P

3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

4. Teaching Institution

University of Portsmouth

5. Accrediting Body

None

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

Business and Management Type 1 A and B

7. Document Control Information

September 2018

8. Effective Session

2018/2019

9. Author Stacey Li

10. Faculty

Faculty of Business and Law

11. Subject Group

Marketing and Sales

Curriculum

12. Educational Aims

Educational Aims:

- To provide a challenging and stimulating study environment
- To provide students with the opportunity to study an academic programme relevant to their career
- To equip students with the necessary transferable skills for lifelong learning and flexibility
- To help students to develop skills and knowledge required to maximize career opportunities
- To encourage critical, evaluative and strategic ways of thinking

- To enable students to exchange best practice with their peer group

Academic

- The focus of the MA Sales Management programme is to provide an academic perspective - to build on students' experience in professional selling, account management or sales management. The focus of the weekend teaching block is to help students prepare to undertake an academic Dissertation in a sales management topic. They will explore the nature of knowledge and will have a good understanding of research methods.

Practical

- Students will gain an understanding of research management, of numerical and word-based analysis techniques, and how to manage a project.

Appraisal skills

- The development of critical appraisal skills is important for students to satisfy the overall academic aims of the course. Students will, for example learn how to evaluate sources of information for use in their Dissertation.

13. Reference Points

The reference points that have been consulted in the development of this course are:

- University of Portsmouth Curriculum framework
- UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Subject Benchmark Statements Business and Management Benchmark Statements (Type 1 - Specialist Masters programme)
- National Occupational Standards for Sales
- Vocational/professional experience, scholarship and research of academic members of staff

14. General Learning Outcomes

Level 7

Master's degrees/Postgraduate Certificates/Postgraduate Diplomas are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
 - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
 - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
 - decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
- the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development

15. Learning Outcomes

On completion of MA Sales Management, in order to achieve threshold (pass) level students will have had to demonstrate their ability to:

- Identify, define and explain the key aspects of their chosen area of study
- Analyse and evaluate evidence
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills
- Analyse, evaluate and synthesise theories and concepts relating to sales and sales management
- Critically analyse and interpret data from a range of sources
- Communicate complex information clearly in a manner appropriate to the subject and intended audience
- Apply appropriate techniques of analysis to the relevant subject areas
- Take responsibility for their own learning
- Reflect on their own learning
- Identify the assumptions and limitations of data and information.

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

- A.1 The complex range of key influences that impact on sales and account management activities within organisations.
- A.2 Concepts, theories and techniques of professional selling and account management within organisations.
- A.3 Concepts, theories and techniques related to the integration of sales with marketing and other functions.
- A.4 Concepts, theories and techniques of sales management within organisations.
- A.5 Concepts, theories and techniques of leadership within organisations
- A.6 New developments and innovations in sales management and leadership and their implications.
- A.7 Concepts, theories and techniques related to the development and management of research projects.
- A.8 Academic and professional literature relating to sales management and its applications.

Benchmark Statements: 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7 apply

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:

- B.1 Critically appraise the main influences on and characteristics of sales/account management strategies
- B.2 Critically evaluate sales/account management concepts, strategies and theories in the context of organisational practice
- B.3 Discuss and reflect upon one or more aspects of an organisation's sales/account management activity using appropriate theoretical models and frameworks from academic literature

- B.4 Evaluate the effectiveness and potential of sales/account management in the context of business strategies and plans
- B.5 Critically evaluate sources of information for research purposes
- B.6 Evaluate research methods and design a research project accordingly

Benchmark Statements: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 apply

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:

- C.1 Access, evaluate, synthesise and present information from a variety of sources
- C.2 Construct and write reports, critically evaluating alternatives and drawing logical conclusions and supporting recommendations
- C.3 Select and apply relevant models to support high quality decision making
- C.4 Analyse, interpret and present complex strategic arguments to individuals and groups
- C.5 Applying relevant models, organise and control resources to meet output targets
- C.6 Undertake a substantial independent research project involving in-depth critical analysis of information sources

Benchmark Statements: 3, 6, 8 and 9 apply

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to:

- D.1 Work with others on the academic evaluation of concepts and cases
- D.2 Work independently on substantial projects
- D.3 Communicate complex ideas orally to a group
- D.4 Communicate effectively in writing according to academic convention
- D.5 Analyse and propose solution to complex problems
- D.6 Demonstrate competence in business applications of IT

Benchmark Statements: 6 and 9 apply

16. Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Knowledge and understanding of key principles, theories and techniques relevant to sales management and research methods will be provided by means of tutor delivered lectures and in-class exercises. This is supported by online materials. Students will also be expected to reinforce class-based activities with reading and evaluation of current literature and research as it affects all aspects of knowledge and understanding of sales management and research methods.

Lectures will provide the starting point for developing students cognitive skills by means of encouraging students to think about the evaluation and application of theories, principles etc in different situations. Class- based activity sessions, the use of academic papers and online material will provide the main vehicles for developing intellectual skills. Students will be encouraged to interact with lecturers and peers making use of relevant examples, new developments and current research. Creativity of thought and application of theories to the solution of problems will be developed by the proposal and Dissertation.

As part of the development of practical skills all students will be provided with an introduction to the University Library and other key sources of information (including electronic) as part of the course induction programme. A research methods and management workshop, and online research methods and management material will be provided. Practical skills will be further developed within the Dissertation. Students will also be required to display a range of practical skills as an integral part of work undertaken. The research proposal and the Dissertation will require students to make use of all practical skills, collecting and interpreting data, applying relevant models, organising and controlling resources, producing reports, and presenting and justifying results and recommendations.

The acquiring of key skills is integral to all activities within the programme. Students will already have excellent working with others and strong IT skills but the Dissertation will enhance their research design, data collection, analysis and presentation skills to a higher level. The key skills of application of number and problem solving will be emphasised within the Dissertation. Students will be encouraged to monitor and improve their own learning and performance throughout the course, including the Dissertation which will be based within a sales management or account management context.

17. Assessment Strategy

Assessment is via a Dissertation to enable students to transfer theory and apply and reflect upon the effectiveness of different theories and concepts and their applicability in the workplace environment. The Dissertation is designed to enable students to integrate theory and practice in relation to the application of sales management knowledge. Formative feedback is provided on the research proposal and on draft Dissertation chapters.

All cognitive skills will be assessed by means of the Dissertation, which will necessitate the use of creative thinking, application and critical evaluation skills.

Practical skills will be assessed within the research methods/sales management teaching block and research proposal (formative) and the Dissertation (summative). As part of the Dissertation, students will be required to present and justify complex arguments and to provide evidence of their ability to organise and control resources in order to meet output targets.

The research proposal and Dissertation will all contribute towards assessing the key skills listed.

Students prepare a 2,000 research proposal and are provided with formative feedback to help them in the preparation of the Dissertation. The ability to demonstrate critical thinking and analysis is very important as is familiarity with relevant academic papers. Through the Dissertation students are rigorously tested on a range of complex skills, not least the ability to conduct an independent piece of research.

18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

See [Unit Web Search](#)¹ for full details on the course structure and units

120 credits are achieved through Recognition of Prior Learning which may include the Institute of Sales and Marketing Management (ISMM) Diploma or the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) Diploma in Sales.

The remaining 60 credits are achieved through the Dissertation.

19. Employability Statement

Students of MA Sales Management are already employed as sales managers or account managers. The course is offered on a part-time, blended learning basis. The assessment requires students to conduct in-depth research into a sales management topic, and is therefore expected to contribute to their career prospects within their organisations. Endorsements from alumni suggest that the Dissertation can be used to examine change plans and projects. Several have earned promotions as a result. The teaching staff assist students with personal development planning, and also have contact with sponsoring employers.

Course Management

20. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader

¹ www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch

- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance
- Each Dissertation student has a dedicated Supervisor
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing and counselling
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK)
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC)
- Excellent library facilities
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations
- Feedback is provided for all assessments
- Extensive online support provided by the University's virtual learning environment, Moodle
- Academically qualified staff with relevant experience including research, consultancy and links with industry and professional institutions
- Links with companies and organisations willing to provide opportunities for guest speakers and live case studies
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all awards

21. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

The MA Sales Management programme has been designed for applicants already working in a sales environment. They will be expected to have a first degree or vocational qualifications at Level 7, such as Diplomas from the Institute of Sales and Marketing Management, Chartered Institute of Marketing or Chartered Management Institute. To support widening participation, applicants without one of these would be expected to complete a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) portfolio.

Students for whom English is a second language will be required to have attained an IELTS score of at least 6.5 with a minimum score of 6 in each component, or to provide evidence of studying in English at Higher Education level for a minimum of 3 years.

All candidates must have suitable personal references, be prepared to satisfy an interview panel (or its equivalent) as to their eligibility and suitability for the programme and be able to use word processing, spreadsheet and database software.

Credit Accumulation and Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning

The MA Sales Management course is at Masters level in terms of the credit accumulation and transfer scheme (CATS). In all cases University regulations concerning CATS/RPL will be observed. Applicants may be given credit for prior learning and/or experience. The process of applying for prior (experiential) learning is defined by the university and essentially this requires the applicant to identify prior learning and experience and describe the type and level of knowledge, skills and abilities gained by the learning. They should then relate the learning to the objectives of the course and verify the learning by documented evidence. The application will then be reviewed by the Director of Postgraduate Marketing Curriculum (or nominated representative) and a recommendation is made. It should be noted that exemption from Masters level units is not given on the basis of undergraduate level credits.

B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

22. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review
- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports
- Periodic Programme Review
- Student Representatives and Student/Staff Consultative Committees
- National Student Survey
- National Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey
- Staff Performance and Development Review
- Peer Review and Development Framework
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course
- Head of Department
- Associate Dean (Academic)
- Associate Dean (Students)
- Quality Assurance Committee
- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners

C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback

- Student Representation on Board of Studies
- Student Staff Consultative Committees
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires
- University participates in external student surveys, e.g. National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and International Student Barometer (ISB)

D. Staff Development Priorities

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes
- New academic staff required to undertake appropriate University of Portsmouth learning and teaching programmes
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership
- Academic staff undertake initial and continuing professional development within the Academic Professional Excellence Framework (APEX) programme which is aligned with the Higher Education Academy (HEA)'s UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)
- Support staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages

23. Assessment Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth academic regulations will apply to this programme (see [Assessment and Regulations²](#)).

24. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- Oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards
- Review unit assessment strategy
- Sample assessment artefacts
- Present report to Unit Assessment Boards

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:

- Oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards
- Scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment
- Ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom

25. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

None.

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

November 2016 - the fitness of purpose of curriculum was confirmed and the annual monitoring and review processes were found to be effective.

C. Quality Assurance Agency

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (*for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015³](#)*).

D. Others

None.

26. Further Information

Further information may be found in:

- Student Handbook
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Prospectus
- [University of Portsmouth⁴](#) and [Subject Group⁵](#) websites

² www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/assessmentandregulations/

³ www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf

⁴ www.port.ac.uk/

⁵ www.port.ac.uk/marketing-and-sales/