MBA (with Business Placement)

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose

Course management, monitoring 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 and believes it to be correct. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification but reserve the right to change the content, timetabling and administration of the course whilst maintaining equivalent academic standards and quality.

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Programme Specification

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1. Named Awards

Master of Business Administration (with Business Placement)

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

C2424F

3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

4. Teaching Institution

University of Portsmouth

5. Accrediting Body

Association of MBAs (AMBA)

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

Master's degrees in business and management (Type 3: MBA type degrees)

7. Document Control Information

Version 1.3, August 2013

8. Effective Session

2016-17

9. Author

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10. Faculty

Portsmouth Business School

11. Department

Business Management and Generalist Business (BMGB)

12. Educational Aims

To provide a general management education that promotes an holistic view of management, organisations and their global environment. Advanced level knowledge, and critical awareness, of theoretical frameworks are combined with an active, problem-solving approach using both previous and newly acquired knowledge and skills. In groups and individually, the programme seeks to develop course members' abilities and skills in strategic thinking, and innovation, and in dealing with complexity and uncertainty. The programme seeks to develop the application of models, ideas and approaches in an extended work-based placement to complement the taught elements of the MBA.

As their careers progress, course graduates in senior roles will be able to provide effective leadership through strategic management, and make a valuable contribution to their organisation, thus also enhancing their own career prospects.

The programme aims to build a foundation of knowledge and skills in business and management. This includes the largely discipline based subjects such as Marketing, Finance, OB/HRM along with the opportunity to apply and integrate the knowledge gained in small group work. The programme also focuses on strategic management in complex and uncertain environments, exploring the managerial competencies required to lead and facilitate strategic change and to understand contemporary organizational challenges. The three themes of, applied problem solving; continuous professional development, and mastering the latest knowledge, run through the programme.

Whilst all MBA programmes may be expected to reflect the international nature of management and organisations, this programme emphasises the international context and management through selected Master Classes as well as in other units.

Whilst there are a number of practical elements in all MBA programmes, this programme facilitates the personal development of managers through the managed experience of an extended Business Placement.

13. Reference Points

The programme and outcomes have been developed taking into account:
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- The scholarship and research expertise of academic members of staff
- QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education - Masters Awards in Business and Management Benchmark Statement – Programme Type 3, MBA type (career development)
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- National Qualifications Framework
- Requirements of AMBA Accreditation

14. Learning Outcomes

Note: BS identifies where a learning outcome is mapped against the QAA Benchmark Statement

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

A1.   types of organisations and their internal and external environments, including the complex inter-relationships between and within these environments (BS);
A2.   systematic knowledge of contemporary strategic management concepts, theories, models and analytical frameworks, including where appropriate, those at the forefront of academic knowledge (BS);
A3.   the critical evaluation of contemporary strategic management research and academic scholarship (BS);
A4.   appropriate qualitative and quantitative techniques for the analysis of information and the evaluation of research (BS);
A5.   the application of knowledge to different types of organisations and contexts (BS).

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Lectures provide the course member with fundamental knowledge and understanding and encourage critical engagement with the literature (A.1-A.4). The embedding of the knowledge and its applications (A.5), as well as further critical engagement with the literature, is via small group (or syndicate) work based on academic exercises, problem-solving exercises, case studies, business simulations and company visits. In the groups, course members will be encouraged to reflect on their learning and apply the knowledge to uncertain situations.

The excellent quality and extent of research activity at Portsmouth Business School (evidenced by RAE Research at Portsmouth was rated as 35% internationally excellent or world-leading, and 70% internationally recognized or above, with 56 active researchers) enables research to inform teaching throughout the programme. Specific mechanisms by which results from research, consultancy and contact with the organisational corporate world are incorporated into MBA provision include:
- MBA Master Classes
- Consultancy and Business Innovation project (part of Consultancy and Research Methods)

- Guest speakers and visits to organisations, during the weekly programme and during the two residential periods
- Extended Business Placement

<u>Assessment</u>

Seen and unseen written examinations and coursework assignments are used to assess knowledge and understanding (A.1-A.5). Coursework assignments, the Consultancy Assignment (Consultancy and Research Methods Unit), and the MBA Research Project are directed to the integration of theory and practice in the application of knowledge to different types of organisations and contexts (A.5) based upon the course members' experience, case studies and company visits.

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

B1. synthesise, analyse and interpret information from a variety of sources, including the integration of theory and practice (BS);
B2. analyse and diagnose complex and uncertain situations (BS);
B3. solve problems taking an holistic approach and demonstrating independence of thought in the development of creative solutions which reflect originality in the application of knowledge (BS);
B4. distinguish between short-term resolution of problems and the longer-term strategic view (BS);
B5. formulate and test hypotheses (BS).

<u>Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods</u>

Lectures are the starting point for the development of cognitive skills via explanation and review. Small group work is the main vehicle for promoting these skills. Activities such as academic exercises, problem-solving exercises, case studies, business simulations, company visits, are designed so that course members enhance their skills (B.1-B.5) via the facilitating role of the lecturer and the interaction with peers and practitioners. Feedback, both informally and formally (including for coursework), encourages the development of all the cognitive skills listed, especially independence of thought and creativity (B.3). This group work is scheduled separately in order to emphasise the holistic, integrative approach being adopted (B.3).

<u>Assessment</u>

Seen and unseen written examinations assess the cognitive skills B.1 to B.5. However, the emphasis of the assessment is on coursework assignments, the Consultancy Assignment, and the MBA Research Project, which provide greater scope for course members to demonstrate their cognitive skills.

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

C1. retrieve, sift and select appropriate information from diverse sources (BS);
C2. apply appropriate qualitative and quantitative techniques to analyse information and evaluate research (BS);
C3. undertake effective decision-making in complex and uncertain situations (BS);
C4. implement decisions through the selection and use of appropriate interpersonal skills (BS);
C5. plan, conduct and report a programme of original research (BS).

<u>Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods</u>

Induction includes initial guidance on the use of library and other (electronic) sources of information (C.1). This, together with skill C.2, is promoted in the Consultancy and Research Methods and the MBA Research Project units of study. The 'role-play' nature of the small group work based on case studies, live cases, and business simulations provides the opportunity for the development of skills C.1 to C.4. Whilst lectures establish the frameworks and guidance, groups and individuals are challenged to make decisions (C.3), demonstrate how these decisions are translated into a plan and how the plan is to be implemented (C.4). Specific attention is given to skill C.5 in the research methods element of the MBA Research Project unit and during the supervision of the MBA Research Project or the supervision of the MBA Work-Based Learning Project and the MBA Business Placement Preparation unit. Feedback, both informally and formally (including for coursework) encourages the development of all the skills listed.

Skills C.1 and C.2 are partly assessed by seen and unseen written examinations. Skills C.1 to C.4 are assessed by coursework assignments. Skill C.5 is assessed by coursework assignment and the final report of the MBA Research Project unit and the MBA Work-Based Learning Project. All skills are assessed by the Consultancy Assignment.

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

D1.   structure and communicate complex ideas effectively;
D2.   use information technology to collect and analyse information;
D3.   apply appropriate numerical skills;
D4.   identify and provide innovative and credible solutions to complex problems;
D5.   monitor learning including managing time and working to deadlines;
D6.   work independently demonstrating self-direction;
D7.   develop interview, self-presentation negotiation strategies for different situations;
D8.   proactively conduct an own-job-search.

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

The programme as a whole is a general management degree; consequently, the programme is geared towards the generic skills needed to work in an organisation. Students are directed to ASK the University's academic skill support unit for development of critical reflection, academic writing, time management and other specialist learning support.

Assessment

Transferable and employability skills are not assessed separately as they are addresses through subject assessment.

15. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

The programme is offered in a full-time mode over 24 months. In the first year, one taught developmental unit of study is completed in the first teaching block; one taught unit of study (30 credits) is completed in the second teaching block; with a further three taught units completed across teaching blocks one and two (90 credits). The major activity on the Consultancy and Research Methods (30 credits) commences in the second teaching block (after completion of the taught element of the Consultancy and Research Methods unit), and is completed by the end of July. The MBA Work-Based Learning Project commences at the beginning of the second year and continues for a maximum of 52 weeks (including holidays).

The Master Classes offer participants the opportunity to study several topical issues in research and practice with experts in the specific areas.

16. Employability Statement

By definition MBA (with Business Placement) students have a minimum of three years experience, employability skills are therefore less key to the programme; however, the purpose of the MBA is to develop the critical and practical skill that will enable the individual to enhance their performance and career development. The MBA is designed to enhance Scholastic capital, Social capital, Cultural capital (prestige), Inner value capital (personal efficacy) and Market value capital. This is developed through casework, group work, business simulations, business consultancy project, guest speakers and subjects that focus on organisational leadership and strategic management. A key element of the programme is the international nature of the students that offers scope for cross-cultural experience and networking. CV's are developed for the consultancy process and career development sessions are integral to the programme.

17. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader
- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course

- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK)
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC)
- Excellent library facilities
- The University of Portsmouth has consistently been awarded an excellent rating for student support and guidance in a number of Quality Assurance Agency inspections
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations etc
- Feedback is provided for all assessments
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all awards
- The Placement Office
- Links with local organisations for practitioner and company visits

18. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

A good honours degree (or equivalent, including professional qualifications), not necessarily in a business related subject, plus a minimum of three years appropriate and relevant postgraduate managerial/professional experience. Applicants may also be asked to offer a satisfactory score in the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT).

Applicants whose first language is not English must provide evidence of English language ability (equivalent to a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 or TOEFL at 590, or 240 computer-based). This evidence may include a recent degree from a UK university, University of Portsmouth pre-sessional English course, interview, examples of written work, and employer references. Where IELTS is used a minimum score of 6.0 (6.5 in the written element) in any one element is normally expected in addition to the 6.5 overall.

In the interest of cohort integrity, admission with credit, advanced standing and exemptions will not be allowed on this programme.

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.

19. 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 Postgraduate Taught Programmes' Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review
- Unit, Business Placement and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme
- Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review 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
- Staff Performance and Development Review
- Peer Review and Development Framework

- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee
- Business School Advisory Board
- AMBA accreditation every 5 years

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course
- MBA Programmes Director for overall course evaluation and development
- 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
- Student meeting with External Examiner(s)
- Personal contact with tutors and course leader
- University participates in external student surveys, eg National Student Survey (NSS), 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 PgCert Learning and Teaching in Higher Education
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership
- Academic staff new to teaching required to undertake Initial Professional Development Programme (iPROF)
- Support Staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages
- Academic staff are supported by the Placement Office when undertaking placement visits and supervision

20. Assessment Strategy

The programme assessment strategy reflects both the vocational nature of the subject area and the developmental needs of the students. The assessment strategy is in general terms pluralistic with a balance between individual and group assessments, case-based or work-based, written and oral/visual presentational assessment with students working on structured and independently developed assignments. The variation in the assessment reflects the types of projects and reporting media that manager encounter in their workplace.

All units within the programme use at least one designed formal formative assessment that is not weighted towards unit grading and further informal formative work may occur as part of summative assessments. The purpose of this approach is to use assessment as an integral and supportive axis of the student's development.

Examinations are used in five units (predominantly taught units) the rubrics of which vary depending on subject – unseen or seen, semi-open-book or closed-book and vary in duration. Examinations are an AMBA requirement and are used to assess knowledge, application and criticality on an individual basis.

All assessment of student work is in cognisance of postgraduate assessment criteria and corrective developmental feedback is on an individual or group basis as appropriate to enhance the learning experience and allow individuals and groups to gauge their development.

21. Assessment Regulations

Standard university rules apply (see Assessment and Regulations).

22. 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

23. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

Association of MBAs (AMBA) Accreditation

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

September 2012 – one year period of accreditation, with a forthcoming AMBA reaccreditation visit in November 2013.

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 2015

D. Others

The national Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008): Business and Management Studies (56 research active staff) rate research at Portsmouth as 35% internationally excellent or world leading, and 70% internationally recognized or above. The research is based in the Business School, incorporating work in Economics, Accounting and Law, Human Resource and Marketing Management and included contributions from the Department of Mathematics, the School of Computing and the Institute of Criminal Justice Studies. Funding increased by over 70%. The Centre for Economics & Management of Aquatic Resources (CEMARE) was assessed as world leading. Portsmouth is the highest ranked south coast university and top new university in this subject area.

24. Other Sources of Information

Other sources of information may be found in

- Course Approval Document
- Student Handbook
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- MBA Brochure
- Assessment Regulations
- [University of Portsmouth](#) web page
- [The Portsmouth MBA](#) web page

Unit Assessment Map

Level	Name	Code	Credit	Delivery	Core/Option	Total %	Type of Artefact	Duration/Length	Weighting %	Total %	Open/Closed	Duration (hrs)	Weighting %
UNITS						**COURSEWORK**				**EXAMINATION**			
7	**Developing Organisational Capability**	**P22699**	30	Sep-Jan	C	40	Report	4500 words	40	60	Closed	1.5	20
											Closed book	2	40
7	**Sustaining Organisational Value**	**U22698**	30	Jan-Mar	C	40	Group Presentation	25 minutes	40	60	Closed-seen	2	40
											Closed	1.5	20
7	**Strategic Management and Master Classes**	**U20600**	30	Sep-Jul	C	65	Case Analysis	2000 words	25	35	Closed	1	35
							Integrative Report	3000 words	40				
7	**Strategic Leadership, Culture and Change**	**U20599**	30	Sep-Mar	C	40	Group Presentation	20 minutes	40	60	Closed-Seen	3	60
7	**Consultancy and Research Methods**	**U20567**	30	Sep-Aug	C	75	Project Proposal	2000 words	25	25	Closed	1	25
							Consultancy Report	3000 words	50				
7	**MBA Professional Development**	**U22904**	0	Sep-Mar	C	100	Company Profile	2500 words	100				
7	**MBA Work-Based Learning Project**	**U22661**	30	Sep-Aug	C	100	Reflective Log	2000 words	20				
							Project Report	6000 words	80				

Unit Learning Outcomes Map[1]

	UNITS					LEARNING OUTCOMES																						
Level	Name	Code	Credit	Delivery	Core/ Option	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8
7	**Developing Organisational Capability**	**U22699**	30	Sep-Dec	C	X			X	X	X								X				X					
7	**Sustaining Organisational Value**	**U22698**	30	Jan-Mar	C	X			X	X	X		X	X					X				X					
7	**Strategic Management and Master Classes**	**U20600**	30	Sep-Jul	C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X		X		
7	**Strategic Leadership, Culture and Change**	**U20599**	30	Sep-Mar	C	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X								
7	**Consultancy and Research Methods**	**U20567**	30	Sep-Aug	C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
7	**MBA Professional Development**	**U22904**	0	Sep-Mar	C											X		X	X	X		X					X	X
7	**MBA Work-Based Learning Project**	**U22661**	30	Sep-Aug	C		X	X	X		X		X			X	X		X	X	X		X	X			X	

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[1] A = Knowledge and Understanding; B = Cognitive (Intellectual) Skills; C = Practical (Subject Specific) Skills; D = Transferable Skills