

## **BA Business Economics and Organisational Studies**

**UCAS code: LN12**

Awarding Institution:	The University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	The University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group:	Economics; Sociology
Faculty of Economic & Social Sciences	Programme length: 3 years
For students entering Part 1 in 2004	Date of specification: September 2004
Programme Director:	Dr Charles Grant
Programme Adviser:	Dr Charles Grant (Economics) Dr Jeff Hass (Sociology)
Board of Studies:	BA/BSc Economics, Undergraduate Sociology
Accreditation:	Not applicable

### **Summary of programme aims and learning outcomes**

The programme aims to provide a thorough degree level education in business economics and sociology. It focuses on coverage of economic principles (from the perspective of both economic and sociological theories) and their relevant application: the areas of economic principles are compulsory in the second part of the degree, and relevant applications are compulsory in the third part. Students taking the degree will be expected to acquire a good knowledge and appreciation of the basic elements of economic and sociological theories and of relevant uses and applications.

### **Transferable skills**

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills which all students are expected to have developed by the end of their degree programme. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to enhance their skills relating to career management, communications (both written and oral), information handling, numeracy, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology. In addition, the programme encourages business awareness, and understanding of important features of decision making, such as uncertainty, constraints and opportunity cost.

### **Programme content**

The following profile lists the compulsory modules, together with their credit size, for each Part. Students are required to take a total of 120 credits in each Part. Where the compulsory modules in a Part total less than 120 credits, students are required to select options containing sufficient credits to make up the shortfall. Any such options selected must be drawn from the options listed below for Parts 2 and 3; in Part 1 they can be drawn from anywhere in the University subject to any restriction which may be applied to particular module choices. Not all optional modules will necessarily be available in any year. Admission to optional modules will be at the discretion of the Programme Director.

In Economics Part 1 deals with the microeconomic and macroeconomic foundations of the subject. These are developed in more depth in Part 2. In Part 3, choice over a range of options is available to explore specific sub-disciplines and/or applications. In Sociology, Part 1 addresses basic but key sociological concepts and an introduction to research methods. These are developed in Part 2 through core modules and continuing theory and methods training. In Part 3 Sociology the student takes yet more focused modules. Additionally, in

Part 3 the student undertakes a dissertation that involves both economic and sociological issues and theory, combining insights of both disciplines.

<b>Part 1</b>	<b>(three terms)</b>	Credits	Level
	<i>Compulsory modules</i>		
EC1F1A	Introductory Economics I	20	C
EC1F1B	Introductory Economics II	20	C
SO1INT	Introduction to Sociology	20	C
SO1MET	Methods 1: Main Methodological Approaches in Sociology	20	C
	<i>Optional modules:</i>		
SO1CES	Contemporary European Society	10	C
SO1CSI	Contemporary Social Issues	10	C
<b>Part 2</b>	<b>(three terms)</b>		
	<i>Compulsory modules in Economics</i>		
EC201A	Microeconomics I.1	20	I
EC201B	Microeconomics I.2	10	I
EC202A	Macroeconomics I.1	20	I
EC202B	Macroeconomics I.2	10	I
	<i>Compulsory modules in Sociology</i>		
SO2THE	Theory 1: The Classical Tradition	20	I
SO2ECO	Economic Sociology	10	I
SO2STS	Study of Sociology	10	I
	<i>Students must also choose two of the following three modules:</i>		
SO2STR	Social Stratification	10	I
SO2CUL	Sociology of Culture	10	I
SO2POL	Political Sociology	10	I
	Of the 120 credits in Part 2, 5 are taken up by Career Management Skills (distributed model)		
<b>Part 3</b>	<b>(three terms)</b>		
	<i>Compulsory modules</i>		
SO3DIS	Dissertation	40	H
EC308A	Business Economics 1	20	H
	<i>Optional modules in Economics available in Part 3 to total 20 credits</i>		
EC311A	International Economics 1	20	H
EC312A	Economics of Development 1	20	H
EC314A	Public Economics 1	20	H
EC315A	<i>Economic Issues in Historical Perspective 1 (not currently available)</i>	20	H
EC316A	<i>European Economic Integration 1 (not currently available)</i>	20	H
EC320A	Money & Banking 1	20	H
EC322A	<i>Economics of Labour 1 (not currently available)</i>	20	H
EC324A	European Urban & Regional Economics 1	20	H
EC328A	Economics of Land, Development & Planning 1	20	H
EC330	Comparative International Management	20	H
EC334A	Environmental Economics 1	20	H
EC337A	Processes of Long Term Political and Economic Change 1	20	H

### *Compulsory modules in Sociology at Part 3*

Modules summing to a total of 40 credits must be taken. Two of these modules will consist of regular 10-credit options from a list to be provided by the department; the third will be a 20-credit advanced seminar. The topic of the advanced seminar will be selected from the list as well; taught as a seminar, it will be worth 20 credits instead of 10.

### **Progression requirements**

To progress to Part 2 a student must:

- (i) obtain an average mark of 40% across all Part 1 modules;
- (ii) obtain at least 40% in all compulsory Part 1 modules;
- (iii) achieve not less than 30% in any module except that marks of less than 30% in a total of 20 credits may be condoned, provided that the candidate has pursued the course for the module(s) with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

To progress from Part 2 to Part 3 a student must:

- (i) achieve an overall weighted average of at least 40% across all Part 2 modules totalling 120 credits;
- (ii) achieve an overall weighted average of at least 40% in Economics modules totalling 60 credits;
- (iii) achieve not less than 35% in any Economics module at Part 2 (i.e. no marks of less than 35% will be condoned). A mark (or marks) of 35 – 39% will be permitted in Economics modules totalling a maximum of 20 credits;
- (iv) obtain at least 40% in all compulsory Sociology modules;
- (v) achieve not less than 30% in any Sociology module except that marks of less than 30% in a total of 20 credits may be condoned, provided that the candidate has pursued the course for the module(s) with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

### **Summary of teaching and assessment**

Teaching is organised in modules. The delivery of material varies among modules, especially in the proportions of time allocated to lectures, and to classes and seminars. All modules involve coursework, which takes a variety of forms. Final assessment normally involves a written examination, and may also incorporate coursework marks; in Economics the maximum proportion of a final module mark allocated to coursework is 20%, other than in special cases. The conventions for classification are included in the Programme Handbook but you should note that the weighting between Part 2 and Part 3 for classification purposes is 33% and 67% respectively.

### **Admission requirements**

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:

Grade C or better in English in GCSE; and achieved:

UCAS Tariff: 280 points from 3 A Levels or 300 points from 3 A Levels and 1 AS Level

International Baccalaureate: 31 points

Irish Leaving Certificate: BBBB

Two AS grades are accepted in place of one A Level.

*Mature applicants* Applications from mature candidates are welcomed. A mature applicant is more likely to receive an offer of a place if he or she has undertaken recent study, for example 2 or more A levels or an Access course, but each case is assessed on its individual merits.

*International applicants* Applications from international candidates are welcomed. If you are

not offering A levels we advise you to contact either the EU or international admissions tutor before applying in order to discuss the acceptability of your qualifications.

Admissions Tutor: Dr. G.R. Crampton

### **Support for students and their learning**

University supports for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

The Department of Economics and Department of Sociology both provide handbooks that outline programme and module content. In addition to lecture and class time, each module lecturer in both departments has appointed office hours during which they may be consulted without prior appointment. Both Departments are also making use of Blackboard to facilitate interaction between students and staff.

### **Career prospects**

In recent years graduates from this programme have entered a variety of careers in both the private and the public sectors. Examples include jobs in banking and finance, accountancy, the civil service, and universities.

### **Opportunities for study abroad or for placements**

There are no formal arrangements but informal arrangements are possible and may be discussed with the programme director.

### **Educational aims of the programme**

The programme provides a thorough degree level education in economics and sociology, with an emphasis on the economic analysis of business and the sociological analysis of business related structures.

## **Programme outcomes**

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and abilities in the following areas:

### ***Knowledge and Understanding***

#### **A. Knowledge and understanding of:**

1. The fundamental concepts and techniques of microeconomics and macroeconomics, and of sociological theories (general but especially as applied to business economics).
2. the fundamental concepts and techniques of business economics and organisational analysis, and of sociological research methods.
3. a selection of more specialist options on business, management or organisational topics, drawn both from economic and sociological approaches to the subject at hand.

#### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

The knowledge required for the basic topics is discussed in formal lectures supported by smaller group discussions on set questions.

This pattern is also followed in the more specialist options with the non-assessed work required varying according to the nature of the subject matter.

#### *Assessment*

Most knowledge is tested through a combination of coursework and unseen formal examinations. Short tests and oral presentations also contribute.

### ***Skills and other attributes***

#### **B. Intellectual skills – an ability to:**

1. think logically
2. apply analytical principles to a range of problems
3. organise tasks into a structured form
4. assess the impact of recent and current changes on business and organisational circumstances
5. transfer appropriate techniques and knowledge from one topic within the subject matter to another
6. plan, organise and write a report on an independent project

#### **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

The need to think logically and analytically permeates the compulsory modules in the programme. The quality of the analysis depends on a strict focus on the central features of a problem.

The more specialist topics provide many opportunities to apply this core approach to a range of problems in a wide variety of contexts.

#### *Assessment*

1-3 are covered extensively in the core modules in economics and sociology; 4-5 are given wide scope in the optional modules in economics and sociology; 6 is assessed directly by means of the large number of essays prepared in Parts 2 and 3 in all modules, as well as in the dissertation.

**C. Practical skills – able to:**

1. understand and develop a chain of reasoning that employs insights both from economic and sociological theory
2. formulate and analyse business economics and organisational problems from varying perspectives
3. evaluate economic policies towards business
4. write critical analyses of business economic questions
5. undertake a set of tasks associated with improving their career prospects
6. develop and carry out a research project involving primary and secondary data

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

The core subjects concentrate on formal economic reasoning. Problem solving forms an important part of class work especially in Parts 2 and 3.

The specialised options involve writing detailed assessments of set topics.

*Assessment*

Most skills are tested through a combination of coursework, including both problem solving and essays, and through unseen examinations. 6 is addressed and assessed in methods modules as well as through the dissertation.

The career skills component at 5 will be assessed according to the module description of the Careers Advisory Services CMS module for the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, distributed model.

**D. Transferable skills – able to:**

1. use IT (word-processing)
2. communicate ideas in a logical way
3. give oral presentations
4. contribute to group discussions of a business problem
5. use library resources both on- and off-line
6. manage time
7. plan career strategy

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

The use of IT is required throughout the Part 2 and 3 modules. Seminars in Parts 2 and 3 involve group discussions and oral presentations. Library resources have to be used continuously in the preparation of essays and project work. the highly structured system of deadlines for assessed work requires good time management

*Assessment*

Most skills are tested indirectly through the preparation of course and project work.

*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 expect to achieve and demonstrate if he/she 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 module and programme handbooks.