

## **BSc Economics with Information Technology**

**UCAS code: L1G5**

Awarding Institution:  
Teaching Institution:  
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s):  
Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences  
For students entering Part 1 in 2004  
Programme Director:  
Programme Adviser:  
Board of Studies: Information Technology and Business  
Accreditation: None

The University of Reading  
The University of Reading  
Economics  
Programme length: 4 years  
Date of specification: 11 May 2004  
Dr Simon Burke  
Dr Nigel Wadeson

### **Summary of programme aims**

This programme aims to prepare students for responsible professional leadership roles in the Information Technology industry, with a particular emphasis on the business elements. Graduates will be well qualified to play a disciplined and creative part in a research, development or support environment.

### **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, communication (both written and oral), information handling, numeracy, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology.

As part of this programme students are expected to have gained experience in the following transferable skills IT (programming, word processing, databases and use of standard software), technical writing, oral presentations, team-working, problem-solving, use of library resources, time-management, career planning and management, and business awareness.

### **Programme content**

In the first year students spend 50% of their time on Economics and 50% on IT related subjects. More time is spent on Economics in latter years. The third year is spent on an approved placement.

#### **Part 1 (three terms)**

Compulsory modules

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
CS1TQ2	COTS 1	20	C
CS1TS2	Software Engineering 1	20	C
CS1TR2	E-business 1	20	C
EC1F1A	Introductory Economics I	20	C
EC1F1B	Introductory Economics II	20	C
EC1F5	Introductory Quantitative Techniques	20	C

**Part 2 (three terms)** **Credits** **Level**  
 Of the 120 credits in Part 2, 5 are taken up by Career Management Skills (distributed model)

Compulsory modules

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
CS2TX4	Business Programming and Design	20	I
CS2TR3	E-business 2	20	I
EC201A	Microeconomics I.1	20	I
EC202A	Macroeconomics I.1	20	I
EC203A	Introductory Econometrics I.1	20	I
	Any two of		
EC201B	Microeconomics I.2	10	I
EC202B	Macroeconomics I.2	10	I
EC203B	Introductory Econometrics I.2	10	I

**Placement Year**

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
CS3BW4	Placement Work Experience	80	I
CS3BP4	Placement Project	40	I

**Part 3 (three terms)**

**Credits** **Level**

Compulsory modules

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
EC308A	Business Economics 1	20	H
EC3DSI	Dissertation (on a subject relating IT and Economics)	40	H

Optional modules:

Students should take 20 credits of optional material from modules such as:

EC301A	Microeconomics II.1	20	H
EC302A	Macroeconomics II.1	20	H
EC303A	Applied Econometrics II.1	20	H
EC311A	International Economics 1	20	H
EC312A	Economics of Development 1	20	H
EC313A	Business Forecasting & Operations Research 1	20	H
EC314A	Public Economics 1	20	H
EC315A	Economic Issues in Historical Perspective 1 (not currently available)	20	H
EC316A	European Economic Integration 1 (not currently available)	20	H
EC318A	Econometric Methods 1	20	H
EC320A	Money & Banking 1	20	H
EC322A	Economics of Labour 1 (not currently available)	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
EC340A	Corporate Social Responsibility 1	20	H

Students should take 40 credits of optional material from these:

Mod Code	Module Title		
CS3TW4	Software Packages	10	H
CS3TR4	Informatics for E-Enterprise	20	H
CS3C2	Social Legal and Ethical Aspects of IT	10	H
CS3TM4	Management of IT	10	H

### **Progression requirements**

To proceed to Part 2 students must obtain an overall average mark of 40% **and** no mark lower 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 with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the exam without reasonable cause.

To proceed from Part 2 to the placement year students must obtain an overall average mark of 40% **and** no mark lower 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 with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the exam without reasonable cause.

To be eligible for Honours, students must obtain an overall average mark of 40% **and** pass the placement year. Students who pass Part 2 are eligible to transfer to the Business Information Technology BSc (this degree does not include a placement year).

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

Teaching is organised in modules that typically involve both lectures and practical work. Most modules are assessed by a mixture of coursework and formal examination. However, some modules are assessed only as coursework. While others are assessed solely by examination. Details are given in the relevant module descriptions.

### **Admission requirements**

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have achieved:

UCAS Tariff: 320 points, from three A2's with:

(i) Maths either at A level or GCSE grade A; and (ii) either an essay-based A or AS level, or GCSE Grade A English

Equivalent qualifications are acceptable.

Admissions Tutor: To be confirmed.

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

University support 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.

Within the School of Business each module lecturer has appointed office hours during which they may be consulted without prior appointment. A resources room is also available for private study.

Within the School of Systems Engineering additional support is given through practical laboratory classes. The development of problem-solving skills is assisted by appropriate assignment and project work. Both Schools provide general handbooks provides general information about the staff and facilities within the respective school.

There is a Course Adviser to offer advice on the choice of modules within the programme. Course handbooks are provided for each Part of the course: these give more details about the modules which make up the degree.

### **Career prospects**

This new degree is designed to be industry oriented. It is expected that graduates will work both within the IT industry as a manager. Graduates in Economics with Information Technology could be expected to have the following generic job titles:

- systems analyst
- analyst/programmer
- software engineer
- applications developer
- web developer
- project manager
- software/hardware trainer.

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

Compulsory part of the programme

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

To develop the students' knowledge of the practice and underlying theory of Information Technology and Business, necessary for them to secure employment as a professional in a wide variety of industries; to encourage their critical and analytical skills; and to develop their skills in applying practical concepts to the design of computer systems, and the development of Management Information Systems. The programme provides an education in economics, with compulsory elements in the economic analysis of business, while also providing the key building blocks in the core areas of the subject, including quantitative methods, allowing both empirical and theoretical analyses of economic behaviour in a business setting.

## Programme Outcomes

### *Knowledge and Understanding*

A. Knowledge and understanding of:  
In Information Technology

1. Software including:
  - 1a) Programming languages
  - 1b) Software tools
  - 1c) Packages
  - 1d) Computer Applications
  - 1e) Structuring of data and information
2. Practice
  - 2a) Problem identification and analysis
  - 2b) Design, development and evaluation
  - 2c) Management and organisation
  - 2d) Professionalism and ethics
  - 2e) Commercial and industrial exploitation
3. Hardware
4. Communication and interaction
5. Theory

Note these are the five areas identified in the Computing benchmark.

In economics:

6. The fundamental concepts and techniques of microeconomics, macroeconomics and quantitative methods.
7. The fundamental concepts and techniques of business economics and policy.
8. A more specialist application in economics.

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

The course concentrates on aspects 1. and 2. with teaching of all aspects involving an introduction of the aspects in theoretical manner and re-enforcement by related practical work, with the first year providing the core, subsequent years involve deeper study, with the student concentrating on a single theme in their final year.

Aspects 3 and 4. feature within the COTS themes particularly from a practical perspective. Aspects 3, 4. and 5. are presented as supporting material and taught in the context of aspects 1. and 2. as and when they are needed.

**Assessment**

Knowledge is tested through a mixture of formal examinations and practical work.

In Economics, 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 – able to:

In Information Technology:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding related to aspects outlined above.
2. Apply such knowledge and understanding to the modelling of computer systems.
3. Recognise and analyse criteria and specifications appropriate to a specific problem.
4. Critically evaluate and test a computer based system.
5. Deploy appropriate methods and tools for creating computer systems.
6. Reflect and communicate
7. Recognise and conform to appropriate professional, ethical and legal practices

In Economics:

8. Think logically
9. Apply analytical principles to a range of problems
10. Organise tasks into a structured form.
11. Assess the impact of recent and current changes on business and economic circumstances.
12. Transfer appropriate techniques and knowledge from one topic within the subject matter to another
13. Plan, organise and write a report on an independent project

## *Teaching/learning methods and strategies*

1. and 2. As above.

3., 4. and 5. will be taught as part of the themes; Software Engineering; Programming and Design and COTS. The taught element will be reinforced by practical work.

6. will be taught as part of COTS 1 and E-Business 1, throughout the course the students will be expected to use these skills and they will be particularly exercised in the individual Project.

7. will be pervasive throughout the course but be covered specifically in the Software Engineering theme and the compulsory material in the final year.

Assessment

These skills are tested through a mixture of formal examinations, presentations, reports and practicals. The individual project provides a major piece of work in which among other things the student will be assessed on their abilities to reflect and communicate. Oral presentations will be required in the Software Engineering and COTS themes and the projects

In Economics, 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

8-10 are covered extensively in the core modules; 11-12 are given wide scope in the optional modules; 13 is assessed directly by means of essays prepared in Parts 2 and 4 in all modules.

C. Practical skills – able to:  
In Information Technology:  
1. Specify, design and construct computer-based systems.  
2. Evaluate systems  
3. Recognise Risks and Safety aspects  
4. Effectively deploy software tools  
5. Operate computing equipment effectively

In Economics:  
6. Understand and develop a chain of economic reasoning  
7. Formulate and analyse business economics problems  
8. Interpret and assess econometric results  
9. Write critical analyses of business economic questions  
10. Undertake a set of tasks associated with improving their career prospects

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

1. will be covered both theoretically and practically, particularly in the Programming and Design themes.
2. will be particularly covered as part COTS themes.
3. Theoretical aspects of risk and safety, the compulsory material in the final year will also cover managerial aspects. Practical aspects will be presented in the IT themes.
4. will be covered theoretically and practically as part of the COTS, Programming and Design and Software Engineering themes.
5. will be covered as part the COTS theme in a theoretical and practical manner.

***Assessment***

Skills 1. to 5. will be assessed by a mixture of practical work and examination.

In Economics the compulsory subjects concentrate on formal economic and econometric reasoning. Problem solving forms an important part of class work especially in Parts 2 and 4. 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. 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 Letters and Social Sciences, distributed model.

D. Transferable skills – able to:

In Information Technology:

1. Effectively retrieve information
2. Present cases in a quantitative dimension.
3. Manage own learning and development.
4. Appreciate the need for continuing professional development (CPD), be able to plan and execute their own CPD
5. Organise and work as part of a team.
6. Plan and manage their own careers.
7. Communicate in a manner appropriate to the situation.
8. Effectively use Information Technology.

In Economics:

9. Communicate ideas in a logical way
10. Give oral presentations
11. Contribute to group discussions of a business problem
12. Use library resources both on- and off-line
13. Manage time
14. Plan career strategy
  
15. Ability to function in the work place

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

1. Information retrieval will be covered theoretically and by practical work necessitating the use of browsers and search engines. It will be first introduced in COTS 1 but exercised extensively elsewhere.
2. Numerical skills will be introduced as needed and used in Programming examples and Project Planning. They will also be exercised in the COTS 1.
3. Time management and organisational skills will be taught as part of Software Engineering. The students will also be expected to use a number of on-line learning tools. Tutorial support for self managed learning will be provided in COTS 1.
4. Professionalism will be an important issue throughout the course. Students will be encouraged to join the BCS and participate in local meetings.
5. The theory of team work will be covered, in Software Engineering, and the students required to undertake a piece of group work
6. The University's Careers Management Skill module component will be included in the second year of the Software Engineering theme.
7. The role of written and verbal communications will be covered in the COTS and Software Engineering themes.
8. Information Technology will be used throughout the course. The COTS theme will specifically include the use of Information Technology.

***Assessment***

1. to 3., 5. to 8. will be assessed by a mixture of practical work, presentations, reports and examinations. 4. will be assessed by formal examination. Communication skills (7.) will also be assessed with the Individual Project.

In economics, 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.

15. Is provided by the work placement and assessed through reports and oral examination.

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.