

BSc Business Economics
For students entering Part 1 in 2009/0

UCAS code: L113

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	Economics
Faculty:	Social Sciences Faculty
Programme length:	3 years
Date of specification:	15/Mar/2011
Programme Director:	Dr Simon Burke
Programme Advisor:	Dr Graham Crampton
Board of Studies:	Economics
Accreditation:	

Summary of programme aims

The programme aims to provide a thorough degree level education in economics in general, and in business economics in particular. It focuses on principles of economic analysis and accompanying quantitative methods, adopting a technical approach: these core areas are compulsory in all three parts of the degree. Students taking the degree will acquire a thorough knowledge and appreciation of core economic theory and of its uses and applications especially in a business environment.

Transferable skills

During the course of their studies at Reading, all students will be expected to enhance their academic and personal transferable skills in line with the University's Strategy for Learning and Teaching. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop such skills, in particular relating to communication, interpersonal skills, learning skills, numeracy, self-management, use of IT and problem-solving and will have been encouraged to further develop and enhance the full set of skills through a variety of opportunities available outside their curriculum.

Economics encourages business awareness, and an 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. Each Part consists of 120 credits. In Parts 1 and 3, compulsory modules total less than 120 credits, and students are required to select options containing sufficient credits to make up the shortfall. In Part 1 the remaining credits can be drawn from anywhere in the University subject to any restriction which may be applied to particular module choices.

Part 1 introduces the basic underpinnings of modern macroeconomics and microeconomics, and supplements this with an introduction to quantitative techniques used in economics. Part 2 consists entirely of compulsory modules developing the fundamental tools of economic analysis, including econometrics. Part 3 compulsory modules deepen the theoretical treatment of economics with an emphasis on the economic analysis of business related issues, while the options provide the opportunity to diversify into specific applications, or concentrate further on central subject matter. There is also an opportunity to research a topic independently through a dissertation.

Not all optional modules will necessarily be available in any year. Admission to optional modules will be at the discretion of the Programme Director.

Part 1 (three terms)

Compulsory modules

EC101	Principles of Microeconomics	20	4
EC102	Principles of Macroeconomics	20	4
EC105	Introductory Quantitative Techniques	20	4
EC107	Introduction to Economic Institutions and Policy	10	4
EC109	Mathematics for Economics: Introductory Techniques for BSc	10	4

Part 2 (three terms)*Compulsory modules*

EC2CMS	Career Management Skills	5	5
EC201	Intermediate Microeconomics	20	5
EC202	Intermediate Macroeconomics	20	5
EC221	Economic Theory	20	5
EC225	Introductory Econometrics (BSc)	20	5
EC226	Mathematics for Economists	20	5
EC227	Mathematics for Econometrics	20	5

Part 3 (three terms)*Compulsory modules*

EC301	Advanced Microeconomics	20	6
EC302	Advanced Macroeconomics	20	6
EC303	Applied Econometrics	20	6
EC308	Business Economics	20	6
EC340	Corporate Social Responsibility	20	6

Optional Modules to total 20 credits

EC311	International Economics	20	6
EC312	Economics of Development	20	6
EC313	Business and Financial Forecasting	20	6
EC314	Public Economics	20	6
EC243	Economic History	20	5
EC316	European Economic Integration	20	6
EC318	Econometric Methods	20	6
EC320	Money & Banking	20	6
EC324	European Urban & Regional Economics	20	6
EC328	Economics of Land, Development & Planning	20	6
EC337	Processes of Long term Political & Economic Change	20	6
EC3DIS	Dissertation	20	6

Progression requirements

To progress to Part 2 a student must:

- (i) obtain an average mark of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1, where all the credits are at level 4 or above; and
- (ii) obtain a mark of 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits taken in Part 1; and
- (iii) obtain at least 40% in all compulsory Part 1 modules.

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

- (i) achieve an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (ii) achieve a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits taken in Part 2.

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; 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:

320 points from three A2 levels or 340 points from three A2 levels and one AS level (including at least grade C in AS level Mathematics).

International Baccalaureate: Pass Diploma and achieve 6, 6, 6 in three higher level subjects (including Mathematics).

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 Lynda Porter

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support is provided by wide array of services across the University, including: the University Library, the Careers Advisory Service, In-session English Support Programme, the Study Advice and Mathematics Support Centre teams, IT Services and 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, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and the Student Services Directorate. The Student Services Directorate is housed in the Carrington Building and includes the Careers Advisory Service, the Disability Advisory Service, Accommodation Advisory Team, Student Financial Support and Counselling. Student Services has a Helpdesk available for enquiries made in person or online (www.risisweb.reading.ac.uk), or by calling the central enquiry number on (0118) 378 5555. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions on everything from accommodation to finance. The Carrington Building is open between 8:30 and 17:30 Monday to Thursday (17:00 Friday and during vacation periods). Further information can be found in the Student website (www.reading.ac.uk/student).

The Department of Economics provides handbooks that outline programme and module content. In addition to lecture and class time, each module lecturer has appointed office hours during which they may be consulted without prior appointment.

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

Students may be permitted to undertake a study abroad year or a one-year work placement at an approved institution (e.g. the Government Economic Service) between Part 2 and Part 3 of the programme. In such cases students will transfer to a 4-year programme. Students interested in either of these opportunities should consult the Director of Undergraduate Programmes, whose approval is required. Approval by the Faculty Director of Teaching & Learning must also be obtained.

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, macroeconomics and quantitative methods
2. the most frequently used mathematical techniques in economics: calculus and linear algebra
3. the fundamental concepts and techniques of business economics and policy
4. a selection of more specialist options on business or economic topics

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 - *able 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 economic 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; 4-5 are given wide scope in the optional modules; 6 is assessed directly by means of the large number of essays prepared in Parts 2 and 3 in all modules.

C. Practical skills - *able to:*

1. understand and develop a chain of economic reasoning
2. formulate and analyse business economics problems
3. interpret and assess econometric results
4. write critical analyses of business economic questions
5. undertake a set of tasks associated with improving their career prospects

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The core subjects concentrate on formal economic and econometric 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. The career skills component at 5 will be assessed according to the module description of the Careers Advisory Services CMS module for the Department of Economics, distributed model.

D. Transferable skills - *able to*:

1. use IT (word-processing and econometric software packages)
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 be expected 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 the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.