

Programme Title: MSc Business Analysis
For students entering in 2010

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| Awarding Institution | The University of Reading |
| Teaching Institution | The University of Reading |
| Faculty: | Social Sciences |
| Programme Length: | 12 months |
| Date of specification: | September 2010 |
| Programme Director: | Dr. Lynda Porter |
| Board of Studies | MA/MSc Economics |
| Accreditation: | N/A |

Summary of programme aims

The programme provides a thorough postgraduate education in the analysis of business both at firm and industry level. Compulsory modules provide detailed and up-to-date introductions to the relevant literatures on Business Economics, Regulation and Research Methods. These courses (and supporting specialist options) provide the techniques and evidence to understand how industries are structured, how firms behave within them and the impact of these factors on the performance of firms.

Transferable skills

The programme requires a substantial amount of independent reading, research and study and students are expected to take personal responsibility and show initiative in developing their knowledge and understanding of the field of study. They will also need to enhance their skills in communications (both written and oral), information handling, and analysis of context and cases in development. Students will work under pressure of time throughout the programme and will learn to set priorities and manage their time in order to meet strict deadlines. Career planning will be an integral part of the programme, both in the choice of programme and in its elective components.

Programme content

Students register for a 12 month programme comprising taught modules and either a dissertation or an applied research project

| <i>Module Code</i> | <i>Module Title Elective Modules</i> | <i>Credits</i> | <i>Level</i> |
|--------------------|---|----------------|--------------|
| ECM13 | Fundamental Economic Methods | 0 | 7 |
| ECM19 | Business Analysis | 20 | 7 |
| ECM18 | Regulation | 20 | 7 |
| ECM121 | Strategic Diversity and the Political Economy of Multinationals | 20 | 7 |
| ECM85 | Research Methodology | 10 | 7 |
| ECM86 | Quantitative Research Methods* | 10 | 7 |
| | Either ECM96 or ECM97: | | |
| ECM97 | Dissertation** | 40 | 7 |
| ECM96 | Applied Research Project | 20 | 7 |

In addition, 80 credits (60 credits for those doing the dissertation module) of modules chosen from the elective list (appended). Alternative optional modules may be selected with the permission of the Director of Postgraduate Studies.

*Students with substantial previous experience with econometrics, and with the permission of their Programme Director and the Director of Postgraduate Studies, may instead take an alternative postgraduate econometrics module with a weight of at least 10 credits.

**To be eligible to take the dissertation, students must do at least 80 credits of taught modules in the Autumn term, and achieve an average coursework mark of at least 60% in each module in that term. They must also try to obtain the agreement of a member of faculty willing to act as supervisor, though one will be appointed if necessary.

Part-time / modular arrangements

The programme may be studied part-time over two consecutive years with the permission of the Director of Postgraduate Studies. The dissertation will be presented by 5.00pm on the first Friday in September at the end of the second year of study.

Progression requirements

Students wishing to proceed to a higher degree by research should normally have obtained an average of at least 60% in the modules and at least 60% in the dissertation.

Summary of teaching and assessment

Teaching is organised in modules. The delivery of material varies among the modules, especially in the proportion of time allocated to lectures, classes and seminars. All modules involve coursework, (weight 30%) which takes a variety of forms reflecting the aims of the module. Final assessment of the modules involves a 2 hour examination (weight 70%) and coursework (weight 30%). The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

Mark Interpretation

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| 70 – 100% | Distinction |
| 60 – 69% | Merit |
| 50 – 59% | Good standard (Pass) |

Failing categories:

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| 40 – 49% | Work below threshold standard |
| 0 – 39% | Unsatisfactory Work |

To pass the MSc students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked at 40-49% must not exceed 55 credits and no module mark must fall below 40%. 50% or more in the dissertation (if applicable) is also required.

Students who gain an average mark of 70% or above, including a mark of 60% or more in the dissertation (if applicable) and have no mark below 40% will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining a mark of 60%, including a mark of 50% or more in the dissertation (if applicable) and have no mark below 40% may be eligible for a Merit pass.

Those who do not pass the MSc may be eligible for a Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate.

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more over 120 credits. In addition, among these 120 credits, the total credit value of the modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits, and the total credit value of all modules marked below

40 must not exceed 30 credits. Students who, over 120 credits, gain an average mark of 70 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for the award of Distinction. Students who, over 120 credits, gain an average mark of 60 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Merit.

To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more over 60 credits. In addition, among these 60 credits, the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained an upper second class honours degree or equivalent in economics, or in a degree in which economics was a significant component, or have obtained an upper second class honours degree or equivalent in a subject other than economics and have significant work experience in the field of business.

Admissions Tutor: Programme Director

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, 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, Counselling and Study Advisors. 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 Programme Director acts as personal tutor to the students and also interviews every student before the beginning of term to offer advice on the operation of the degree programme and on the choice of options. Many of the students are from countries outside the UK and tutors are therefore careful to ensure that students settle down in their new surroundings and understand the requirements of the MSc programme. All 20 credit modules have a test set at the end of the term with the primary purpose of familiarising students with the UK examination system and the requirements of the programme. Students who fail overall on their modules are identified and invited to discuss their problems with their tutor. In addition to lecture and class time, each module lecturer has appointed office hours during which they may be consulted without prior appointment. The Department of Economics also

provides a Handbook with details of each module and a Handbook covering the MSc programmes as a whole, including details of the method of assessment of programmes.

Career prospects

The course provides understanding of firm's behaviour and would provide a very strong foundation for employment in small, medium and large firms as well as in institutions that invest in these firms. Since it is concerned with the behaviour and performance of firms, candidates undertaking the programme would also be ideally suited to employment in government, anti-trust bodies. It is also expected to provide the foundation necessary for further education by research.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

None

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

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| A. Knowledge and understanding of: 1. Economic models of the firm and industry. 2. Most recent theoretical and applied analyses of the behaviour of firms. 3. The institutional environment affecting firms and industry. 4. Alternative competition policy scenarios in a European and a British context. 5. Explicit addressing of issues at the interface of (1-2) and (3-4). | Teaching/learning methods and strategies Formal lectures, discussions, individual and group presentations, guided reading and guidance on key sources of reference material. Feedback and guidance are important elements complementing an emphasis on self-study. <i>Assessment</i> Unseen examinations and coursework comprising long essays, projects and tests as appropriate for the module. |
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Skills and other attributes

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| B. Intellectual skills – able to: 1. Structure, analyse and evaluate theoretical and policy issues and problems. 2. Think logically and analytically and to understand the difference between normative and positive statements. 3. Identify key economic relationships and to test these against the evidence. 4. Comprehend the rapidly evolving state of knowledge and institutional environment in the subject area. | Teaching/learning methods and strategies Students are frequently challenged in all teaching situations to complete logical arguments, analyse problems and alternative policies, and justify statements. Long essays, debate and presentations provide the principal vehicles for developing intellectual skills. <i>Assessment</i> Unseen examination and coursework with 3. being assessed mostly in essays and project work. |
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| <p>C. Practical skills – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draw on the knowledge base in the field of study to suggest policies and strategies to achieve social and economic objectives. 2. Evaluate alternative policies. 3. Evaluate current theoretical and empirical research in the field of study. 4. Identify potential sources of information and analysis relevant to the issue and problems in the field of study. | <p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>Students are required to undertake a wide amount of reading, both of specific references and through researching their own sources of information. Discussion in lectures and seminars emphasises formal economic reasoning, the use of statistical and empirical evidence and the strengths and weaknesses in alternative theories and methodologies.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>Long essays and unseen examinations are the principal methods of assessment.</p> |
| <p>D. Transferable skills – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate orally and in writing 2. Use IT, including word processing and website searches. 3. Use library and web based resources. 4. Organise extended pieces of work from planning to completion. 5. Manage time and prioritise work to achieve goals. | <p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>The presentation of well-researched written work is a fundamental element of the programme and requires the application of all of the skills listed in 1-5. This is reinforced by the breadth and depth of the syllabuses for each module and the highly structured system of deadlines for assessed work, and examinations, which develop the students' skills of time management. Oral skills are developed through lecture and seminar discussions and individual and group presentations.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>Unseen examination and coursework with 3 being assessed mostly in essays and project work.</p> |

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 processes or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.

ELECTIVE MODULES LIST

Please note that not all the modules will be available every year

| <i>Module Code</i> | <i>Module Title Elective Modules</i> | <i>Credits</i> | <i>Level</i> |
|--------------------|---|----------------|--------------|
| ECM09 | Financial Markets and Corporate Governance | 20 | 7 |
| ECM10 | Econometrics | 40 | 7 |
| ECM15 | Small Business Economics | 20 | 7 |
| ECM61 | New Issues in Globalisation | 20 | 7 |
| ECM68 | The WTO and the Developing Countries | 10 | 7 |
| ECM69 | Regional Integration and Development | 20 | 7 |
| ECM94 | Urban Economics | 20 | 7 |
| ECM120 | The Economics of the Multinational Enterprise | 20 | 7 |

Alternative optional modules can be selected with the permission of the Director of Postgraduate Studies.