

MSc Accounting and Financial Management For students entering in 2010

Awarding Institution:	The University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	The University of Reading
Faculty:	Henley Business School
Programme Length:	12 months
Date of specification:	June 2010
Programme Director:	Verna Care
Board of Studies:	Management (Postgraduate)
Accreditation:	None
Total number of credits required:	180

Summary of programme aims

The programme aims to provide a thorough postgraduate education in accounting and finance for graduates who wish to particularly understand how businesses use financial information for decision making purposes and how the results of those decisions are communicated and evaluated in an international and institutional context. The compulsory modules provide an analytical and integrated study of accounting and finance combining a conceptual and theoretical approach with an emphasis on application to relevant practical problem-solving scenarios. Students will learn to evaluate alternative theories and methodologies and to make judgements on their applicability to complex issues where there is incomplete information.

As a result students will enhance their employability in their related first-degree discipline or in any general business management role. The programme will also add to students' employability in the more specialised accounting or finance function of a business, or in an accounting and finance institution. The programme will also serve as a basis for further academic study in the discipline.

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, numeracy, problem-solving, and the use of information technology. 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.

Programme content

Compulsory Modules

		<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
MMM001	International Strategic Management	20	7
MMM026	Study Skills (non- credit bearing)	-	7
MMM040	Management Decision-Making and Performance Evaluation	20	7
MMM041	Business Finance	20	7
MMM049	Accounting and Finance Project	20	7
MMM054	Cases in Financial Management and Control	20	7
MMM062	International Financial Reporting 1	20	7
MMM063	International Financial Reporting 2	20	7

Plus: Students must choose **TWO** option modules to the value of 40 credits. A complete list of options is available from the Programme Administrator, and a list of current options can be found in the relevant Handbook. There is no guarantee that in any one year all modules will be available. New option modules may also be added.

Alternatively, students may choose to substitute MMM049 (Accounting and Finance Project, 20 credits) with a dissertation, 40 credits plus **ONE** option module only, to the value of 20 credits in the Spring term.

MMM023	Dissertation	40	7
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Part-time/Modular arrangements

The programme is not normally offered part-time

Progression requirements

Assessment of taught modules in the Summer Term; Re-assessment of failed modules in August/September; submission of Accounting and Finance project/dissertation by Friday of the second week of September, or by a month thereafter if there are re-sits.

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 Accounting and Finance Project or 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, which takes a variety of forms reflecting the aims of the module. Final assessment of the modules normally includes an examination (normally weighted at 70%) and coursework (normally weighted at 30%). However, there are exceptions, with some modules based only on coursework. An Accounting and Finance project supervisor is appointed for each student.

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

Mark Interpretation

70 – 100% Distinction

60 – 69% Merit

50 – 59% Good standard (Pass)

Failing categories:

40 – 49% Work below threshold standard

0 – 39% Unsatisfactory Work

For Masters Degrees

To pass the MSc students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall in 180 credits including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 in modules MMM049 Accounting and Finance Project. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall including a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more overall including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Merit.

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/Exams/pgaward08-09.pdf>

For PG Diplomas

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more in 120 credits and have no mark below 40 in modules MMM049 Accounting and Finance Project. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Merit.

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/Exams/pgaward08-09.pdf>

For PG Certificates

To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more in 60 credits and have no mark below 40 in modules MMM049 Accounting and Finance Project. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 10 credits.

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/Exams/pgaward08-09.pdf>

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained a first degree the equivalent of a British upper second class honours degree. Applicants whose degree result is below the required level, or whose degree is from a university where the standard is not likely to be well known to the admissions committee, will require GMAT 600. International students whose native language is not English should either have a university degree taken in English, an IELTS score of 7.00 or an equivalent qualification. References are also taken into account. Acceptance is at the discretion of the Director of Studies.

Admissions Tutor:

The Programme Director is responsible for admissions.

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).

Career Prospects

Graduates from this programme will enhance their employability in a range of careers related to their first-degree discipline or in a general business management role. Graduates will also be equipped to move into the more specialised accounting or finance function of a business or into an accounting and finance institution. As the programme offers an international perspective, career prospects are likely to be international. The programme would also serve as a basis for further academic study in the discipline

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

None

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. Theory and practice of accounting and financial management.
2. The main current technical language and practices of financial and management accounting and finance and financial management
3. The theoretical underpinnings of the above
4. The application, practical use and limitations of the above to real world structured and unstructured scenarios.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Core knowledge and understanding is normally delineated in formal lectures, class discussions, workshops, case studies, guided reading and guidance on key sources of reference material. A deeper and broader knowledge and understanding is obtained through independent study. Feedback and guidance are important elements complementing an emphasis on self-study.

Assessment

Unseen examinations, coursework comprising essays, cases, exercises and tests and project

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - able to

1. Think logically and analytically about ideas and scenarios presented.
2. Identify, analyse and solve or draw reasoned conclusions relating to structured and unstructured problems.
3. Locate and extract relevant data and evidence from multiple sources and identify and present its salient features.
4. Evaluate and critically assess arguments and evidence and marshal independently derived arguments towards a conclusion.
5. Integrate theory and practice

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Intellectual skills are embedded in the knowledge and understanding of the theories, principles and practices of accounting and finance found within the programme. They are also fundamental to the successful display of the practical and analytical skills detailed below. Intellectual skills are promoted throughout the teaching and learning programme. In lectures, workshops, classes and independent study students are regularly challenged to construct logical arguments, locate data, analyse problems and alternative policies, justify statements and integrate theory with practice. Essays, cases, reports, exercises and the project provide the principle vehicles for developing and reflecting on intellectual skills.

Assessment

Unseen examinations, case studies, coursework and project

C. Practical skills - able to

1. Prepare financial analyses, projections and other numerically-based analytical documents
2. Analyse and interpret financial data and documents relating to accounting and finance aspects of the business.
3. Draw on knowledge and understanding to present critically considered arguments and solve structured and unstructured problems in accounting and finance
4. Independently plan, undertake and research bibliography-based pieces of work.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Practical skills are embedded within the knowledge and understanding of accounting and finance concepts, principles and techniques. These skills are promoted via formal lectures, workshops, classes and independent study. Learning to apply these skills is achieved via numerical exercises and case studies, coursework essays and reports and the project.

Students are required to understand a wide amount of reading, both of specific references and through researching their own sources of information.

Assessment

Unseen examinations, case studies, coursework and project

D. Transferable skills - able to

1. Communicate ideas effectively and appropriately to different intended audiences.
2. Apply statistical and numerical skills to data.
3. Apply problem-solving skills to a variety of scenarios
4. Use IT, including word processing and Website searches.
5. Use library and Web based resources.
6. Work in teams.
7. Independently manage a variety of pieces of work.
8. Manage time, manage change, and prioritise work to achieve goals.
9. Take responsibility for personal and professional learning and development.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The communication of information is embedded throughout the programme in workshops, seminars and case sessions and in assessment. The vehicle for communication may be oral or written and may include the use of computer software. It may also be achieved independently or as part of a team. The presentation of well researched written work is a fundamental element of the programme and requires the application of all of the skills listed. 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.

Assessment

Unseen examination, case studies, coursework and project.

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.