

Programme Specification

BSc Agricultural Business Management with International Foundation Year

For students entering Foundation year in September 2027

**UCAS Code:
D4N3 D4N4**

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This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	4 years
Length of Programme with placement/year abroad	
Accreditation	N/A
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Food, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences

Programme information and content

The BSc in Agricultural Business Management will provide students, through an appreciation of rural business management and agriculture, with the ability to pursue careers in commercial and practical management within agriculture and related industries. Moreover, the degree will build the skills needed to prepare students for a more autonomous and sustainable approach to farming that considers alternative forms of production and enterprises. It trains the students to discover new problems and use their entrepreneurial skills to reposition their current business, reveal potential niche opportunities and innovate. In addition, the programme provides several opportunities to discuss the importance of natural resource use efficiency, technology adoption and precision farming, and other farm management practices associated with the goal of sustainable agriculture and food security. The objectives of the degree are to:

- Develop the student's understanding of the evolving economic, technological and organisational principles that underlie the practice of business management and its risks, particularly in the agricultural and rural sectors
- Enable the students to learn how to apply such principles to the management of agricultural and rural and urban farming based businesses
- Train students to develop effective decision making and become active entrepreneurs in a constantly changing rural environment and economy
- Develop a critical appreciation of the techniques and concepts available to assist effective execution of the business management function; and
- Develop the range of personal and transferable skills that are expected from 'Reading Graduates' to become successful managers, leaders, rural entrepreneurs, advisers and communicators

Foundation year:	In the Foundation year you will have the opportunity to develop transferable skills through the provision of two compulsory 20-credit modules: Academic
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	Literacy and Skills, and Academic Communication and Inquiry. If your level of English is below the standard specified for undergraduate study, these modules will ensure those English Language Entry Requirements are met. The key skills in these modules relate to Critical Thinking, Academic Writing, Research, Referencing and avoiding plagiarism, Group Work and Projects, Presentations, and Assessment and Examination techniques. You will also take a further 80 credits of subject modules as specified in the module information. These modules are aligned to the 'A Level' entry requirements for the degree and provide the knowledge and skills required for further undergraduate study at Part 1. Students who start the International Foundation year in January will join Part 1 in the September of that year.
Part 1:	Introduces you to core skills and knowledge required for examining the social, economic and environmental factors influencing agricultural businesses and the future sustainability of the sector. In addition, it builds the basis for learning about the rural economy and entrepreneurial environment that businesses function, and the issues surrounding food production and security. Furthermore, students will be given training in economics and the mathematical and statistical ideas used by applied economists and business managers working in the agricultural, food and rural sectors. Learning will be delivered via lectures, practical sessions, case studies and a programme of farm visits and consultancy exercises. Students will also go on a field study tour to see a range of farming types, businesses and systems, particularly those not common in the area of Berkshire, and to encourage team building amongst students.
Part 2:	Provides you with the more demanding aspects of business management and agricultural economics science building on the learning from Part 1. Students will be equipped with effective problem solving and numeracy skills via a series of practical examples and case studies. During a practical exercise in collaboration with a well-established agri-business consultancy company, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate entrepreneurial capacity and to develop opportunity awareness. Furthermore, students are introduced to research methods and data analysis; developing their ability to analyse and interpret data in the context of agricultural businesses and the rural economy. Learning will be delivered via interactive lecture sessions, practical examples within the classroom, case studies (real farm studies or derived from the literature) and a programme of farm visits and consultancy exercises.
Part 3:	Gives you the opportunity to develop your understanding of business planning and strategy and apply it via case studies developed in collaboration with partner agribusinesses. Engagement with the industry and challenges derived from the real farming and rural business world, provides a unique opportunity to further enhance your ability to design, evaluate and assess a business plan. This ensure that students have the professional skills and knowledge required for the workplace. Students choose and develop a final year research project of their choice culminating in the writing of a dissertation which develops their project management and research skills in an area of interest.

Programme Learning Outcomes - BSc Agricultural Business Management with International Foundation Year

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

	Learning outcomes
1	Compare a range of farming systems in relation to their physical, social and economic attributes
2	Critically evaluate the impact of different crop management and animal husbandry practices into the production performance of the farming systems
3	Develop formative, well argued views on topical issues affecting agriculture, rural communities, and the countryside
4	Understand the breadth and diversity of farming systems and how they fit into the rural economy and business environment
5	Apply key economic concepts to real world problems at the individual, business, and country level
6	Appreciate the relevance of basic business concepts (planning, organising, leadership and control)
7	Recognise the value of leadership and human resource management, and understand differences in organisational structures and behaviour
8	Understand the role of financial control and accounting as well as the importance of marketing to the attainment of organisational goals and the strategic management.
9	Outline the main features of contemporary environmental challenges and summarise contrasting viewpoints on causes of sustainability problems and responses.
10	Demonstrate the ability to apply management tools to decision making and business development e.g. identification of opportunities, threats etc. in the wider environment, labour and machinery management, financial planning including enterprise and partial budgets, sensitivity analysis
11	Demonstrate the ability to develop alternative strategies for a business. This will include understanding how to develop appropriate plans for the introduction of new enterprises / major changes to a rural business and presenting a coherent proposal for investment to a potential lender (i.e. a bank)
12	By the end of the Placement Year programme, students will have contextualised their academic learning in a placement role relevant to their programme of studies and developed their professional experience, skills and knowledge, contributing significantly towards their continuous learning and career prospects as graduates

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

In addition to the learning outcomes stated above if you are on a placement or study abroad programme you will have the opportunity to develop the following learning outcome:

Additional Learning outcomes	
N/A	

Module information

Each part comprises 120 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Foundation modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
IF0ACI	Academic Communication and Inquiry	20	0
IF0ALS	Academic Literacies and Skills	20	0
IF0BM	Principles of Business and Management	20	0
IF0FDA	Foundation Data Analysis	20	0
IF0FIS	Foundation Information Systems	20	0
IF0MOB	Principles of Marketing and Organisational Behaviour	20	0

Students entering the programme in January will take the following compulsory modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
IF0ALSJ	Academic Literacies and Skills	20	0
IF0ACIJ	Academic Communication and Inquiry	20	0
IF0BMJ	Principles of Business and Management	20	0
IF0MOBJ	Principles of Marketing and Organisational Behaviour	20	0
IF0FISJ	Foundation Information Systems	20	0
IF0FDAJ	Foundation Data Analysis	20	0

Part 1 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AD1AGP	Agriculture in Practice 1	20	4
AD1APS	Agricultural Production Systems	20	4
AD1EEN	The Economic Environment	20	4
AD1FMM	The Fundamentals of Management and Marketing	20	4
AD1GLS	Global Sustainability: Challenges and Prospects	20	4
AD1RBM	Research and Professional Skills for Business and Marketing	20	4

Part 1 comprises 120 credits and offers no optional modules. The aim is to engage students with a core set of skills and knowledge to prepare them effectively for Part 2 and Part 3 of the degree.

Part 2 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AD2AGP	Agriculture in Practice 2	20	5
AD2FBM	Farm Business Management	20	5
AD2RDA	Research Methods and Data Analysis	20	5

Your remaining credits will be made up of optional modules from selected modules from the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development and from an approved list, subject to timetabling constraints. The optional modules provide a choice of subjects or a guided selection of topics such that the student can tailor the programme to match their interests and career aspirations. Students also have the option to select a language module.

If you take a year-long placement or study abroad, Part 3 as described below may be subject to variation.

Part 3 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AD3BME	Business Management and Entrepreneurship	20	6
AD3BPC	Business Planning and Control	20	6
AD3RES	Independent Research Project	40	6

Your remaining credits will be made up of optional modules from selected modules mainly from the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development and from an approved list, subject to timetabling constraints.

The optional modules provide a choice of subjects or a guided selection of topics such that the student can tailor the programme to match their interests and career aspirations.

Placement opportunities

If there is an opportunity to undertake a credit-bearing placement as part of your Programme, this would normally be in-year and not for a additional full year. You will be required to find and secure a placement opportunity, with the support of the University

Study Abroad:

You may be provided with the opportunity to undertake an in-year Study Abroad placement during your Programme. This is subject to you meeting academic conditions detailed in the Programme Handbook, including obtaining the relevant permissions from your School, and the availability of a suitable Study Abroad placement. If you undertake a Study Abroad placement, further arrangements will be discussed and agreed with you.

Optional modules:

The optional modules available can vary from year to year. An indicative list of the range of optional modules for your programme can be found online in the Course Catalogue. Details of optional modules for each part, including any additional costs associated with the

optional modules, will be made available to you prior to the beginning of the Part in which they are to be taken and you will be given an opportunity to express interest in the optional modules that you would like to take. Entry to optional modules will be at the discretion of the University and subject to availability and may be subject to pre-requisites, such as completion of another module. Although the University tries to ensure you are able to take the optional modules in which you have expressed interest this cannot be guaranteed.

Teaching and learning delivery:

You will be taught through lectures, seminars/tutorials, PC laboratory and field practical exercises/trials/visits and supervised project work.

Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology.

The International Foundation Year will include at least 18 hours of classroom-based teaching each week.

The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for your programme will depend upon your module combination. In addition, you will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which give some flexibility for you to choose when to complete them. You will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details

N/A

Assessment

The programme will be assessed through a combination of written examinations, coursework (including class tests) and oral examinations. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Progression

Foundation Year

The University-wide rules relating to 'threshold performance' as follows

- (i) obtain an overall weighted average of 50% over 120 credits taken in Part 0; and
- (ii) obtain a mark of at least 40% in all individual modules.

In order to progress from Part 0 to Part 1 and be eligible for transfer to BSc Agricultural Business Management, a student must achieve a threshold performance; and

(iii) and 50% in each of Academic Literacies and Skills (IF0ALS) or (IF0ALSJ) and Academic Communication and Inquiry (IF0ACI) or (IF0ACIJ).

Part 1

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 1, a student will normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain an overall weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1; and
- (ii) Obtain a mark of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits taken in Part 1; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in modules amounting to 120 credits. (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree.)

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 1 qualifies a student for a Certificate of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Students considering transferring to another programme should seek guidance from their designated Support Centre in the first instance.

Part 2

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 2, a student shall normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain a weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (ii) Obtain marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to at least 80 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to at least 120 credits. (A Fail in a Pass/Fail module will be treated as not meeting the minimum threshold requirement for progression or classification. Pass/fail modules are excluded from weighted average calculations but must be passed to avoid failure of the Part or degree.)

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 2 qualifies a student for a Diploma of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Classification

Bachelors' degrees

The University's honours classification scheme is based on the following:

Mark Interpretation

70% - 100% First class

60% - 69% Upper Second class

50% - 59% Lower Second class

40% - 49% Third class
35% - 39% Below Honours Standard
0% - 34% Fail

The weighting of the Parts/Years in the calculation of the degree classification is:

Three year programmes:

Part 2: one-third

Part 3: two-thirds

Four year programmes, including Study abroad / Placement year

Part 2: one-third

Study abroad / Placement year: Year abroad / Placement year not included in the classification

Part 3: two-thirds

Details of the classification method is given in detail in the [Assessment Handbook](#) under:

- Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's), or
- Section 18: Awards (Integrated Master's programmes). Students who do not progress to Part 4 of the Integrated Master's will normally be subject to the method detailed under Section 17: Awards (Bachelor's)

Please note that there may be a specific version of the above for your year of entry.

Additional costs of the programme

Additional costs of the programme You should ensure that you bring with you to University a pair of wellington boots (£10) and/or sturdy footwear e.g. walking boots (£50 – 100) for farm visits.

Students should also have a waterproof jacket (£15-35) and trousers (£10-15) (should you need to purchase these, approximate costs are in brackets). Costs are indicative, but will vary according to module choice and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2026.

Students may consider purchasing a laptop to help support their learning. Information on recommended device specifications can be found on the [DTS Student Hub](#).

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

BSc Agricultural Business Management with International Foundation Year for students
entering Foundation year in session 2027/28

9 June 2026

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