# MSc International Business and Economic Development
**For students entering in 2006**

Awarding Institution: The University of Reading
Teaching Institution: The University of Reading
Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences Programme length: 12 months
Date of specification: June 2006
Programme Director: Mr Robert D. Pearce
Board of Studies: MA/MSc Economics
Accreditation: N/A

## 1. Summary of programme aims

The programme provides a thorough postgraduate education in the areas of investigation relevant to an understanding of the very significant interdependence between International Business and Economic Development. Compulsory modules provide detailed and up-to-date introductions to the relevant literatures on the Multinational Enterprise (MNE) and the processes of economic growth, development and transformation. These courses (and supporting specialist options) provide the techniques and evidence to understand how dynamic globally-competing entities (MNEs) interface with national (or regional) economies with specific needs in structural and economic change.

## 2. 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.

## 3. Programme content

Students register for a 12 month programme comprising taught modules and a dissertation

| Compulsory Modules | | *Credits* | *Level* |
|---|---|---|---|
| ECM20 | *Theoretical Approaches to the Multinational Enterprise* | 20 | M |
| ECM21 | *Global Strategy and Implications of the Multinational Enterprise* | 20 | M |
| ECM72 | *Microeconomics Analysis for Industrial Development* | 10 | M |
| ECM64 | *Trade Policies for Developing Countries* | 10 | M |
| ECM65 | *Industrialisation and the Multinational Enterprise* | 20 | M |
| ECM66 | *Research Methods* | 10 | M |
| ECM70 | *Dissertation* | 30 | M |

60 credits of modules selected from:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ECM02 | *International Management and Business Culture* | 20 | M |
| ECM10 | *Econometrics* | 40 | M |
| ECM24 | *Technology, Trade and Growth* | 20 | M |
| ECM30 | *Managing Innovation* | 20 | M |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ECM31 | *Technological Innovation and Industrial Competitiveness* | 20 | M |
| ECM61 | *New Issues in Globalisation* | 10 | M |
| ECM68 | *The WTO and the Developing Countries* | 10 | M |
| ECM69 | *Regional Integration and Development* | 10 | M |

Alternative optional modules may be selected from the elective list with the permission of the Director of Postgraduate Studies - Economics.

**4. Part-time / modular arrangements**

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

**5. 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.

**6. 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 involves a 2 hour examination and coursework. A supervisor is appointed for each student selecting a dissertation.

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 |

To pass the MSc students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall *and have obtained at least 50 in modules ECM20, 21 and 65.* In addition the total credit value of all modules marked between 40-49% must not exceed 40 credits and no module mark must fall below 40%. A mark of 50% or more in the dissertation is also required.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or above, including a mark of 70% or more in the dissertation and no mark below 50% will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60%, including a mark of 60% or more in the dissertation 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.

**7. 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 international development.

Admissions Tutor: Mr Robert D. Pearce

**8. 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 Programme Directors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

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. The initial interview is also useful in detecting whether students have some language problems (despite obtaining an IELTS score of 7.00), in which case they are strongly advised to register for language tuition. 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.

**9. Career prospects**

The course addresses the interdependency (collaborative or confrontational) between two key players (MNEs and National States) in the global economy. It therefore provides vital understanding for entrants into either the firms' or governments' administrations. The course material would also provide a very strong foundation for employment in international institutions or for a valuable role in higher education (especially in developing countries).

## 10. Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

None

## 11. Educational aims of the programme

The programme provides a thorough postgraduate training in the economics and organisation of MNEs and in economic development in the context of a globalising environment. It seeks to emphasise the ability to apply the analytical constructs to a range of context and time-specific issues (i.e. to acknowledge a differentiated and dynamic basis). It thus seeks to inculcate an understanding of the relevance of the central institutional environments (firms, markets, economies, governments) and to produce economists with knowledge and expertise that can be applied valuably in these institutions.

## 12. Programme Outcomes

### *Knowledge and Understanding*

| **A. Knowledge and understanding of:** | **Teaching/learning methods and strategies** |
|---|---|
| 1. Economic models of the multinational enterprise.<br>2. Most recent conceptualisations of MNEs as organisations and competitive entities with global perspectives.<br>3. The international institutional environment affecting the economic development of the less-developed countries.<br>4. Alternative trade and industrialisation policies for countries at different levels of development and with different resource endowments and priorities.<br>5. Explicit addressing of issues at the interface of (1-2) and (3-4). | 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.<br><br>*Assessment*<br>Unseen examinations and coursework comprising long essays, projects and tests as appropriate for the module. |

### *Skills and other attributes*

| **B. Intellectual skills** – able to: | **Teaching/learning methods and strategies** |
|---|---|
| 1. Structure, analyse and evaluate theoretical and policy issues and problems.<br>2. Think logically and analytically and to understand the difference between normative and positive statements.<br>3. Identify key economic relationships and to test these against the evidence.<br>4. Comprehend the rapidly evolving state of knowledge and institutional environment in the subject area. | 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.<br><br>*Assessment*<br>Unseen examination and coursework with 3. being assessed mostly in essays and project work. |

**C. Practical skills** – able to:

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.

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

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.

*Assessment*

Long essays and unseen examinations are the principal methods of assessment.

**D. Transferable skills** – able to:

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.

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

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.

*Assessment*

Unseen examination and coursework with 3 being assessed mostly in essays 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 processes or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.**