MBA (GLOBAL)
PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Founded in 1495, the University of Aberdeen is the third oldest university in Scotland and part of an elite group of six ancient British universities, which includes Oxford and Cambridge. The University has a proud tradition of academic excellence and is consistently ranked in the top 200 universities in the world, boasting 82,500 alumni across 192 countries. Alumni include five Nobel Prize Winners.

The University of Aberdeen Business School enjoys an enviable reputation for excellence in research and Business and Management Studies; placing it within the top three universities in the UK. The Business School currently hosts students from 45 countries. Students learn from innovative tutors and leading experts with research and professional management expertise who are at the cutting edge of contemporary, global business practice. In addition to academic excellence, the Business School is focused on forging strong links with industry to ensure its students gain the specialised knowledge that a competitive business and employment market demands.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The MBA (Global) is among the first of a new breed of online MBAs which will transform executive education in the years to come.

There are four key underlying principles which we believe are the driving force in how businesses run today. These are embedded in our MBA:

DISRUPTIVE INNOVATION

We often see businesses struggling when challenging competitors emerge from different sectors, and take over. Therefore, the need to constantly drive for change and challenge the status quo is extremely important in the modern business leader. During the MBA, you will be encouraged to think of the business world in new and innovative ways; thinking beyond established business models and taking into account concepts such as Corporate Social Responsibility.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

Many companies are actively solving problems using unique technological innovations, and using technology to harness talent, experience and expertise from around the world. The MBA (Global) programmes online delivery uses various different technologies to encourage you to communicate and collaborate together. We will work with you to explore how these technologies influence the way we work as human beings, how we support each other, how we co-create and how we compete. So the entire online learning experience will become an integral part of learning to do business in the modern business world.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING

We are seeing that the best and most successful companies are increasingly creating teams made up of people from different geographies, professional and cultural backgrounds. This fusing together of different kinds of individuals creates some of the most vibrant and exciting businesses we see in the world today. On the MBA (Global) Programme, you will use technology to work with your fellow students from various backgrounds, professional cultures, and geographies and who have different expectations and experiences, in an environment where you can easily co-create new ideas and share experiences, alongside our distributed faculty. Through putting you together in a learning environment designed to invite collaboration, we can explore the challenges of working in a very rich, cross-cultural, multi-dynamic environment, which mirrors how you will work in business today.
SALES FOCUSED

Many MBAs do not focus on the concepts of sales, selling, promoting or how to win business. In the current business world, you cannot survive unless you can clinch that deal, can win that customer, secure that first contract, or get your first sale. A very important part of our MBA, is learning about and getting comfortable with the whole sales process. This does not just involve winning new contracts, or winning new business – it also teaches you how to sell your own ideas within an organisation, how you sell the philosophy of your company to a competitor or potential new business partner, and how you develop relationships with others.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

- The programme includes traditional business practice, but also reflects current ideas and theories and is informed by the latest thinking; it deals with management issues that reflect the real-life challenges facing business
- The programme incorporates disruptive thinking as a core element
- The programme recognises the growing impact of digital technologies on global business, and embeds that in the learning experience
- The programme enables its students to build their digital footprint, and integrate their work and learning
PROGRAMME DELIVERY

The programme allows you to develop skills in all areas of business from leadership, through project management and marketing to strategy development. The programme is split into four blocks, each covering a different aspect of leading and building successful organisations.

BLOCK 1: UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF, YOUR BUSINESS AND THE MARKET

This block explores what is arguably the most important element in securing a sustainable business or organisation: how individuals and organisations develop innovative ideas and approaches.

To do so, you will examine:

- Your own leadership behaviour and how it impacts on others
- How to identify customer value and market opportunities
- How to identify and create business models

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

You cannot lead if you do not understand yourself or the impact that you have on others.

In this course you will investigate the underlying theories which underpin the popular views about leadership and explore why understanding your own leadership style, competency and behaviour is the key to encouraging followership.

This course will focus on five main themes:

- An Introduction to Leadership
- Leadership and Culture
- The Authentic Leader
- Leadership in Practice
- Understanding My Leadership

The global nature of this MBA will allow you to gain a greater understanding of your own leadership behaviour in the context of your geographical culture, professional context and gender.

You will carry out an insights analysis of your personality and leadership type before working to complete an online leadership simulation that requires you plan and execute strategy with limited resources to overcome challenges. You will then explore a range of leadership cases to see how and why different decisions are made depending on situation, context and past experience.

MARKETING AND SALES MANAGEMENT

This course investigates how firms across a range of sectors identify and prioritise opportunities in the marketplace through the delivery of compelling value propositions.

This course will focus on five main themes:

- The Customer Journey
- Segmenting, Targeting and Positioning Markets
- Products and Services
- Relationship Marketing
- The Sales Cycle

BUSINESS MODEL INNOVATION

This course investigates the concept of the business model and how and why organisations need to regularly challenge the way in which they do business in order to remain relevant and competitive.

This course will focus on five main themes:

- The Business Model and Its Component Parts
- The Ten Types of Innovation
- Business Model Patterns
- Disruptive Thinking
- Testing and Evaluating New Business Models
BLOCK 2: PREPARING, IMPLEMENTING AND EVALUATING

The modern business person must have an understanding of the processes and approaches required to successfully plan, manage and deliver a strategic business project, which also takes into consideration the financial and people dimensions. However, in order to be successful, it is important be able to deliver sustainable organisational change.

LEADING AND MANAGING PROJECTS

The focus of this course is not people but processes. The application of processes, methods, knowledge and skills allows us to achieve our objectives.

This course will focus on five main themes:

- Planning for Success
- Work Breakdown
- Estimation: Time, Resources and Cost
- Scheduling
- Project Delivery and Evaluation

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE FOR MANAGERS

Accounting and Finance for Managers investigates the importance of understanding the role of finance in ensuring the sustainability and growth of organisations.

This course will focus on five main themes:

- Assets and Liability: Understanding the Balance Sheet
- Presenting and Analysing Financial Statements
- Sourcing Finance and Managing Cashflow
- Managing Risk and Uncertainty
- Linking Finance to Strategy and Operations

MANAGING CHANGE

The concepts of change have never been more topical, especially given the commercial context of fierce business competition, shorter product life cycles and more demanding customers. Increasingly, long-term commercial success is based on an ability to manage change, to act creatively and to promote innovation.

This course will focus on five main themes:

- The Dimensions of Change
- Change Models
- Frameworks for Managing Change
- Measuring Success
- Sustaining Change
BLOCK 3: SCOPING, PLANNING AND MOTIVATING

In this block you will explore the environment in which business decisions must be taken. This includes exploring the local, national and international parameters which influence business strategy, as well as the global nature of the digital economy. You will review and apply techniques for spotting and evaluating future trends, as well as evaluate the ingredients that go into making high performance teams.

STRATEGY AND PRACTICE IN A DYNAMIC WORLD

This course investigates the theories, concepts and techniques of investigation that are essential for analysis of where the organisation is, where it wants to be and how it will get there.

This course will focus on five main themes:

- Planned versus Emergent Strategy
- Strategy Tools
- Strategy and Competition
- Implementation
- Re-thinking Markets: Blue Oceans and White Spaces

FUTURE THINKING

Future Thinking investigates the international, economic and business environments in which modern day businesses and policymakers have to operate.

This course will focus on five main themes:

- The Futurist’s Toolkit
- Consumer Decision Making and Industry Analytics
- Understanding the Dynamics and Interdependence of National and Global Economies
- Technological and Societal Trends
- Future Foresighting: Techniques for Spotting and Evaluating Future Trends

LEADING AND MANAGING HIGH PERFORMANCE TEAMS

This course explores how to motivate, manage and lead people through nurturing and building high performance teams.

This course will focus on five main themes:

- People, Personality and Performance
- Coaching Models
- Performance Management
- Appraisal and Mentoring
- Coaching in Practice
BLOCK 4: PERFORMANCE, PRACTICE AND REFLECTION

PERSONALISE YOUR MBA

As part of this block you will be challenged to identify and reflect on your learning from across the programme and put in place a plan for your ongoing professional development including your SMART objectives for the future.

Once you have developed these fundamentals skills, you have the opportunity to personalise the MBA to suit your own aspirations and professional circumstances by choosing one of the following pathways:

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship is a key driver of the global economy and growth. Entrepreneurs create wealth and jobs for society and their success often leads to the development of sustainable businesses. For many, entrepreneurship can also be a ‘lifestyle’ choice and allow you to be your own ‘boss’ and pursue a lifelong goal. In this final course you will be required to design, develop and implement your own business idea.

In this course we will coach you through the stages needs to launch or grow your own business or social enterprise.

CONSULTANCY

Consultancy means advising clients on strategy, planning and problem solving.

Top consulting firms hire more MBA graduates than nearly any other type of employer (Financial Times, 2016). That’s because an MBA cultivates business expertise that empowers you to offer profound business insight. In this final course you will undertake a management consultancy project that will require you to draw on all of the skills and expertise you have developed over the course of our MBA. You can apply your learning to either: a business you are working with or apply for one of our virtual consultancy internships.

ENTERPRISE

You will compete alongside your peers in one of our versatile, experiential business simulation programmes. Our simulations will challenge you to use the knowledge and expertise you have developed to deliver and implement a strategy to address one of three business challenges:

- Starting a new business venture
- Growing a small business
- Planning and managing international expansion
YEAR SCHEDULE

The two-year MBA (Global) programme is divided into four blocks that cover key business themes. Each block of 24 weeks consists of three courses. Each eight-week course bears 15 credits, except the final course, which is 45 credits.

Online Induction opens one week before the start date. Students can access the resources in Induction throughout their studies.

Please note, there may be additional holidays in your programme delivery schedule depending on your start date.

BLOCK 1

The Leadership Challenge
Marketing and Sales Management
Business Model Innovation

BLOCK 2

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BLOCK 3

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Future Thinking
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BLOCK 4

Personalise Your MBA:
• Entrepreneurship
  or
• Consultancy
  or
• Enterprise
HOW DOES IT WORK?

Learning and teaching are delivered in an innovative way via the University of Aberdeen Online bespoke online study environment. The study environment is carefully designed to be secure, reliable and user friendly, where all of the learning materials are stored and where communication with their tutors and fellow students takes place. Our state of the art learning environment is fully compatible with your laptop, smartphone and ever other mobile device. This means you can access your learning materials, communicate with your tutors and interact and collaborate with your fellow students from around the world whenever you want and wherever you are located.

The style of learning is asynchronous, meaning there are no set times to log in, or ‘live’ lectures or tutorials, although there may be occasions where you are required to participate in group meetings or activities at fixed times. There is a course structure to the programme, with fixed course start dates and assessment deadlines, but when you study is up to you – for example, if you are in full time employment it may be that you prefer to work in the evenings or at the weekend.

Each course is split into learning materials and activities. A student’s progress through the activities, they may be required to upload examples of their work to folders within their tutorial area. Tutors provide critical advice and feedback to students on a one to one basis within this area. Online learning materials take many forms. They can include text, visual step-by-step guides, videos, documents, animations, PDFs, links to online resources including journals and other relevant publications, as well as links to useful websites.

While studying online you will be fully supported by tutors and our student support service. Your tutors will be available to provide feedback, offer unlimited, one-to-one guidance and to discuss topics in greater depth. You can send a private message to your tutor, Technical Support or Programme Coordinator quickly and easily via our in-built messaging system and receive a response within 24 hours; Monday to Friday.

All students will have access to:

- Student Handbook
- Programme Specification
- Course Guides
- Resources area which includes both academic and study skills resources
- Access comprehensive learning materials within the Learning Paths
- Specialised tutor interaction
- A dedicated person from our support team for pastoral issues
- Access to a personal assessment area where they upload their submissions
- Two collaborative spaces to communicate with their fellow students
- Access to the University online library portal

GROUP WORK AND DISCUSSION

The study site offers two areas for group interaction tailored to the two key areas of group work and group discussion.

STUDIO

This is a shared area within the study site where you will collaborate with your fellow students to complete group activities set in the learning path of each course.

You can upload work into shared albums (Word documents, images, PDFs), create and work on shared documents together, as well as view, comment and provide feedback on each other’s work.
FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

All assessments are coursework based – there are no formal exams. Students are assessed through a combination of formative activities designed to help to develop and consolidate their learning and set Summative Assessments, which contribute to their course grades. Students are made aware of their Summative Assessments submission dates at the start of each course. Work selected for assessment is uploaded within an assessment area. Our tutors assess the work submitted and the University of Aberdeen carries out a moderation process for assessments, assessment feedback and grades to ensure parity. Following scheduled Examination Boards student results are formally released.

Each course will have two assessments which could consist of one of the following:

- **THEORY INTO PRACTICE**
  You will be asked to demonstrate that you can take, critique and adapt a new theory or framework for application in your own professional context, for example exploring how a new innovative theory might add value in the retail sector.

- **GROUP CHALLENGES**
  Working in a small team, you will be required to address a business challenge, for example a change management plan for a specified organisation.

- **REFLECTIVE PRACTICE**
  Reflective practice is an essential part of developing your management and leadership capability. Therefore, for each course we will ask you to reflect on how the learning experience has shaped your thinking about the topic and what else you plan to do to develop your expertise and knowledge in this area.

FORUMS

You also have the opportunity to network and discuss ideas within the forums. You can create a new ‘topic’ at any time for general group discussion, but will also be required to participate in forum debates more formally within activity work.

The forums provide a valuable method of group contact which allows students to express opinions openly and interact freely with each other and tutors. By participating in forum discussions, you can develop a global network of like-minded students worldwide by discussing and debating ideas. This global MBA community ethos is reflected through a sense of camaraderie, and meaningful conversations between students and tutors.

Regular participation in the studio and forums provides many benefits, including:

- The opportunity for intellectual exchanges
- Learning new ideas and refining old ones
- Enjoying community membership
- Learning about other cultures
- Building key business contacts and network
TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

COMPUTER
Mac or PC
While we recommend that you use a PC or Mac, the study site is also mobile and tablet compatible.

BROWSER
Firefox or Chrome

BROADBAND
8Mbps download/ 5Mbps upload

EQUIPMENT
Webcam
Microphone and speakers
You may also be asked to download specific software such as GoToMeeting desktop app throughout the programme.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS
We consider all applicants on an individual basis and welcome applications from those with non-standard qualifications and from a variety of backgrounds.

However, normally to be eligible to enrol on a MBA you would have a good first degree (equivalent to a British Second-class Honours degree) in any discipline and a minimum of two years’ worth of experience.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS
If English is not your first language you are required to prove your competency. English skills are assessed throughout the admissions process using the application form and, if requested, an interview. If, after assessing your application, we need more evidence that your English ability is strong enough to be successful on the MBA programme, we may ask you to take one of the recognised English language tests such as IELTS.

The overall minimum IELTS score is 6.5. The minimum in each band is as follows:

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<th>LISTENING</th>
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<tr>
<td>SPEAKING</td>
<td>5.5 or above</td>
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<tr>
<td>WRITING</td>
<td>6.0 or above</td>
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<tr>
<td>OVERALL</td>
<td><strong>6.5</strong></td>
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