



Student Handbook 2015/2016

Executive MBA

Coventry University and  
International Business Academy

## **Handbook**

### **Section 1**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a user-friendly guide to the IBA MBA Programme,

Executive MBA General Management

It also signposts additional sources of key information for you. This may be in traditional printed form or on the IBA website.

#### **Other sources of important information**

This course has a set of rules that are contained in the Programme Specification. This document includes details of the approved course structure, including which modules you will be required to study, the arrangements for progressing through the course and the regulations for the award. The Programme Specification for the part-time MBA programmes can be found in your course web.

#### **Course Management**

The part-time MBA is managed by IBA, Skamlingsvejen 32, 6000 Kolding. Most of the teaching will take place at Skamlingvejen 32.

The management of the programme is taken care of by:

Programme Manager Lars Jespersen

Course Secretary Robert Whittle

#### **Frequently Asked Questions (and Answers)**

##### ***What are the teaching dates?***

The semester are:

Semester 1: September - November

Semester 2: January - March

Semester 3: April - June

Exact dates will be given app. 3 months before semester start. All classes will take place on a Friday and Saturday from 9.00-17.00

Please note that attendance during these term dates is important and is essential for the completion of certain parts of the program. Special provision can not be made for students who are absent other than in exceptional circumstances. (See details on extenuating circumstances). Coursework submission may be outside of these dates.

***Other important dates to remember!***

Dissertation Submission Date: To be announced

Exam Dates: November/December, March and June

Please check IBA's Black Board for the exact dates.

***What is the duration of the course?***

The MBA programmes normally last 24 months.

***Can I apply for advanced prior experience and learning (APEL) or credits for a module?***

Entry to a programme can be facilitated through APEL, by a review of an applicant's qualifications and experience profile. It is not policy to grant exemptions or credits for specific modules within the MBA programme.

***What is the next stage after completing this course?***

After completing the course MBA graduates seek employment or proceed to further study.

***How will tutor/administrators contact me?***

IBA's Learning Management System, Black Board, is the preferred way in which we will contact you. The MBA programme has its section. Important information will be posted up there for you. Students should use Black Board to communicate with lecturers, but personal messages should be sent directly via email.

Your results will be released through Black Board at the end of each semester or by personal mail.

***What do I do if I need more information or have an administrative enquiry?***

The administrative support team for MBA is located at IBA's administration.

To discuss specific modules - see the relevant lecturer.

To discuss your overall progress, or personal circumstances or ask questions about the course - see your Course Tutor/Programme Manager in the first instance. They will tell you if you need to see anyone else.

In cases of extreme urgency when you cannot contact your tutor you should contact the administrative support team.

Changes to your personal details, such as change of home/term/correspondence address, should be informed to IBA's administration.

## **Section 2**

### **2.1 Program rationale**

The philosophy of the all the courses in the MBA program is to provide broad based postgraduate study, which prepares students for employment in managerial positions. This rationale requires the courses to provide students with a sound knowledge of management and an understanding of management theory which will enable students to analyze and interpret management issues in various contexts/situations. An essential component of MBA studies is the development of a strategic perspective which draws on the analysis and understanding of business functions and integrates this within its own models and frameworks. It is also equally important that students are exposed to the development of personal skills and reflective practice as this is at the heart of effective management practice.

The MBA need not be solely a generalist qualification. It is becoming quite commonplace that managers are expected to have some particular area of expertise. To maintain the broad approach which gives students maximum flexibility in the future market place, a choice of routes has been provided with specific modules which extend and build on a sound knowledge and skill base developed in the mandatory modules.

Another consideration which affects the program is the intention to prepare students for employment in a wide range of managerial careers. This requires students to obtain a thorough understanding of managerial structures and analytical techniques to be able to take part in analyzing and interpreting issues and cases. Such knowledge is essential for the development of the critical understanding of current business and financial issues, which is an important attribute for management in today's globalized economy.

The rationale is reflected in the academic organization of the courses, which consists of 9 modules plus dissertation. These mandatory modules provide an understanding of theoretical frameworks and their application within a situational context. They provide the student with a breadth of study, which covers all the main functions of management. This ensures that a good basis is provided for the more specialized study which is available in the named award routes.

The courses have a strong skills emphasis, which complement the academic content. The ability to integrate, to work with others, to interpret and present numerical information, to make use of IT, and to undertake realistic self appraisal are seen as essential to students achieving their full potential in management.

## **2.2 Aims, objectives and outcomes**

The aims, objectives and expected outcome of the MBA are.

### **2.2.1 Aims**

#### **General Aims:**

To provide an educational experience which enables students to achieve an integrated understanding of the operation and strategy of management and to develop appropriate intellectual and personal skills.

#### **Specific Aims of the named MBA General Management:**

To provide participants the opportunity to develop their managerial and leadership skills, and through additional disciplinary modules to supplement their knowledge base as preparation for general management career roles.

### **2.2.2 General Objectives of the Executive MBA Programme**

General Objectives are to:

- provide the framework within which students can develop an analytical understanding of both the functional nature of business and the holistic nature of management;
- foster in students a commitment to lifelong learning and personal development, a reflective style of management and a responsibility for their own learning.
- provide students with the opportunities to develop a range of skills and the ability to apply a variety of management tools and techniques;
- stimulate a proactive approach to organisational issues which illustrate an understanding of the impact of the changing environment and the context within which managers and organisations operate;
- encourage students to demonstrate their capacity to enact the principles of change management and become effective change agents in organisations;
- support students as they prepare for and carry out a sustained piece of research namely the MBA project.

### **2.2.3 Outcomes of the MBA Program**

After completing the program, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a systematic understanding of relevant knowledge about organizations, their external context and how they are managed;
- Apply relevant knowledge to a range of complex situations taking account of its relationship and interaction with other areas of the business;
- Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate techniques sufficient to allow detailed investigation into relevant business and management issues;
- Communicate effectively both orally and in writing using a range of media;

- Be creative in the application of knowledge, demonstrating a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to develop and interpret knowledge in business and management;
- Acquire and analyse data and information, to evaluate their relevance and validity, and to synthesise a range of information in the context of new situations;
- Evaluate the rigour and validity of published research and assess its relevance to new situations;
- Demonstrate a critical awareness of current issues in business and management which is informed by leading edge research practice in the field;
- Extrapolate from existing research and scholarship to identify new or revised approaches to practice;
- Conduct research into business and management issues that require familiarity with a range of business data, research sources and appropriate methodologies, and for such to inform the overall learning process.

*The programme therefore conforms to the QAA benchmark statements for Masters awards in Business and Management and the Coventry University's Code of Practice for Academic and Professional Skills Development.*

### **2.3 Pattern and mode of attendance**

These courses are semester based and, for cohorts entering in September, are divided as follows: -

Semester 1	September to November
Semester 2	January to March
Semester 3	April to June

The MBA conform to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) points, with each single module bearing a minimum of 5 ECTS points, and the entire MBA course comprising a total of 90 ECTS points. The ECTS points allocated per module can be found in the appropriate tables showing the course structure.

### **2.4 Course structure**

All students are required to take all the modules. The topics included ensure that students develop an understanding of the main functional areas and certain other areas, which are important for all students to experience. In addition, students are encouraged to develop a holistic approach to management through the medium of the Strategic Analysis modules which provides students with a critical understanding of theoretical frameworks and analytical models. KOLM25BSS (Research Methods) prepares the student for undertaking the research dissertation, and incorporates analytical methods and techniques in management research. The third part of the education will involve either the completion of the dissertation or the undertaking of the internship.

The structure of the part-time MBA programme is identified in the table below. All modules on the programme are mandatory for the MBA award including the MBA Dissertation which is completed during the last semester of study.

Module Code	Module Name	Semester	CATS
KOLM04 MKT	Principles of Marketing	1	15
KOLM26 BSS	Strategic Management	1	15
KOLM05 EFA	Financial analysis and decision making	2	15
KOLM11 HRM	Human Resource Management	2	15
KOLM41 BSS	Innovation Management	3	15
KOLM25 BSS	Research Methods	3	10
KOLM03 EFA	Economic Environment of Business	4	15
KOLM33 BSS	Principles of Strategic leadership	4	15
KOLM42 BSS	Management Consulting	5	15
KOLM99 BSS	Dissertation	6	50
	Total		180
Please note that the sequence of modules shown in the table can be subject to change in the list of staffing and resource decisions			

**Note:** Students must pass at least 45 credits from these modules to be eligible for the Postgraduate Certificate in Business Administration (Total credits required = 60) or the Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration (Total credits required = 120) A student who obtains 180 credits at M-level with all the mandatory modules will be eligible for the award of the University's MBA General Management

M= mandatory modules for the MBA Degree.

There is no choice offered in modules for the Executive MBA General Management route.

## Section 3

### 3.2.1 Course Specific Aim

To give students a good grounding in general management and to allow them some degree of subject customisation in specific areas of managerial activities.

### 3.2.2 Course Specific objective

To give students a good grounding in general management and to allow them some degree of subject customisation in specific areas of managerial activities.

### 3.2.3 Course specific outcomes

After completing the MBA General Management students should be able to:

- Evaluate and appraise the context within which business operates and recognise the key strategic issues that business managers have to address;
- Analyse and synthesise the complexity of business decisions and be able to apply business and management techniques to business tasks.

## **Section 4**

### **4.1 Teaching and Learning**

#### **4.1.1 Teaching and Learning Philosophy**

Management education has long since moved away from the traditional approach in which the student plays a passive role, to an approach in which student participation is crucial. As a result, focus is placed on learning rather than teaching and it is intended that this should be particularly developed in this scheme through assignments, targeted study and activities which will take place inside and outside class. Student centered activities are designed for students to acquire and consolidate the designated knowledge and skills.

It is recognised that this approach requires a considerable cultural adjustment for some students. In all modules, therefore, students are encouraged to:

1. identify their preferred learning style;
2. fully utilise all the learning resources available to them;
3. take responsibility for their own learning and development;
4. recognise elements of the learning cycle particularly the need for reflection that will lead to deeper learning;
5. commit to a lifelong learning process.

The teaching and learning methods will encourage the use of theoretical frameworks to understand business situations and case studies. They will develop transferable intellectual skills, the ability to communicate using a variety of media, the ability to argue rationally, analytically and critically and the ability to work as a team member or leader.

#### **4.1.2 Teaching and Learning Methods**

To achieve the overall aims of the teaching and learning strategy course designers have ensured that the methods employed on each module place a continuing emphasis on student centered learning. Activities are designed that are realistic, relevant, rigorous and appropriately sequenced. A variety of teaching and learning methods including lectures, seminars, presentations, reports, case studies, phase tests and learning sets are used. A carefully considered balance of group and individual activity is provided that promotes independent learning, but also

encourages shared experiences and knowledge and establishes interpersonal skills. Substantial emphasis is given to the clarity of feedback to enable students to analyse their own development and identify their own learning needs.

### **4.1.3 The Role of IT in Teaching and Learning**

The role of IT within the teaching and learning strategy is based on the following principles:

- the provision of a rich mix of approaches;
- the recognition that some material is best suited to IT delivery and other material to face to face delivery;
- the use of IT to deliver the basic material (handouts, notes, etc) efficiently and effectively;
- the use of IBA's Black Board Learning Management System to enrich the tutor-student and student-student interaction on an ongoing basis;
- the development of the mandatory and core-option modules to a high specification within IBA's Black Board
- the use of the school's audio visual facilities.

The strategy recognises that staff time is an increasingly valuable and scarce resource that must be used to: -

- facilitate workshops, case studies and the like;
- provide support, encouragement and advice to students;
- engage students in discussion and debate;
- provide added value;
- enhance education as a social activity.

The Faculty uses IBA's Black Board Learning Management System as the organisational framework for the delivery of materials. This is best used to: -

- provide basic information;
- permit students and teachers to keep in touch no matter where they are;
- create a means of ongoing communication and discussion.

## **4.2 Student Experience**

Students will receive a balanced mix of delivery methods that offer the maximum opportunity to demonstrate and apply academic principles, models, theories and techniques. Whenever possible therefore, over-dependence on the formal lectures will be avoided by the use of:

- Readings
- Handouts
- Case studies
- Discussion groups
- Videos
- Guest speakers

- Interactive case materials
- Project work

Learning will be a mixture of formal class teaching and experiential learning. Emphasis will be given to networking, learning and the experience of others. Coursework will be both of an individual and group nature.

Course design, policies and practices are consistent with and operate within the Coventry University Policy on Equal Opportunities.

Students are advised to consult the section on course delivery and resources in the Postgraduate Student Handbook.

### **4.3 Assessment Strategy**

All modules will incorporate coursework and/or time-constrained assessments. Overall assessment and preparation for assessment will be expected to account for at least 30 hours of student effort per single module or equivalent.

Part of the assessment will be formative assessments for which the tutor gives feedback but which is not graded for inclusion in the final mark for the module. Formative assessment is designed to:

- help students in their learning
- develop participants' knowledge, understanding and skills
- allow participants to judge their own progress.
- provide an opportunity for feedback on progress

Formative assessment may take the form of:

- case studies
- seminar papers
- tests
- exercises
- reports and/or
- presentations

in groups or as individuals with feedback from tutors or peers

Summative assessments will be used to establish marks for awards. Possible methods of summative assessment include:

- essays and literature reviews
- reports and plans
- case studies
- unseen tests (closed or open book)
- examinations

Coursework will consist of a variety of methods ranging from individual assignments to group work.

At the commencement of each module the module leader should make clear the exact assessment criteria for their module. This will include the division between coursework and tests, the number of courseworks and their weighting in overall assessment and any other considerations relevant for assessment, e.g. whether you are required to pass all components of assessment individually to pass the module.

Students should consult the section on assessment in the description of each module. See Module Information Directory (MID) for more detailed information on assessment for specific course modules.

#### **4.4 MBA Dissertation KOLM99 BSS**

##### **Objective of the Assignment**

The dissertation forms the major single part of the MBA programme. This dissertation/project provides an opportunity for students to develop their interests in a particular area and to demonstrate their ability to undertake individual research. It is seen as a 'capstone' module as it draws upon many of the previous modules studied and integrates these separate areas of knowledge in a holistic manner.

##### **Nature of the Assignment**

The dissertation is an independent piece of academic research that should involve the selection, and application of research methodologies studied in the prior Research Methods module (KOLM25BSS) and should build upon the knowledge acquired therein. Students are expected to identify and investigate an appropriate research problem. Their evaluation of this problem should result in the statement of appropriate conclusions (and possibly recommendations). The dissertation accounts for 50 CATS/25 ECTS points and should be between 12,000 and 15,000 words excluding appendices.

It should be noted that a pass in KOLM25BSS is a pre-requisite to being allowed to proceed to the dissertation stage. Students are also normally required to have completed the taught stage of the programme in order to be eligible to proceed to the dissertation stage.

Dissertations can be based on primary or secondary data or a mixture of the two. Rigorously re-analysing data that have already been collected for some other purpose (i.e. secondary data) can form the basis for an excellent dissertation. New data collected specifically to address the research question (i.e. primary data) must demonstrate validity, reliability and transparency.

##### **4.4.2 Important notes**

Non-submission by students on this date without having applied and been granted a deferral/extension, will be recorded as absent, and will result in a failure in the

module, and therefore the MBA. Students seeking a deferral should read the notes regarding extenuating circumstances, provided during induction week. Deferral requests must be accompanied by supporting evidence as outlined in the notes.

Masters dissertations must be accompanied by a copy in the prescribed electronic format to be submitted on Black Board. These may be used to check for suspected cases of plagiarism. Dissertations submitted without such copy will not be marked.

Students are advised to consult the information posted on IBA's Black Board system regarding the definition of and penalties for plagiarism.

## **Section 5**

### **5.1 Regulatory issues (See also full Regulations online on IBA's Black Board)**

The following course regulatory stipulations apply:

- the pass mark in all modules is 40% in the module mark with minimum component marks also required, where specified. All mandatory modules must be passed to gain the MBA award
- candidates must pass all modules to gain the MBA;
- where a module is passed at a second attempt (resit or retake) the original module mark or a mark of 40%, whichever is the greater, will be recorded;
- students must submit their dissertation by the date designated by the Faculty, at the end of their course. Failure to do so without having sought and been granted an extension or deferral will result in the student failing the module, with no resit opportunity being granted.
- candidates on all Faculty of Business MBA awards who at the first attempt score at least 70% in the modules taken in the masters programme will be eligible for the award of MBA with Distinction. Exceptionally, candidates scoring less than 70% in the modules taken in the masters programme will be considered for a Distinction. Students who at the first attempt score at least 60% in the modules taken in the masters programme will be eligible for the award of MBA with Merit;
- all assessments are expected to be completed in a good standard of business English.

### **5.2 Assessment boards/appeals/extenuating circumstances**

The structure and functions of the various assessment boards, your rights of appeal against assessment board decisions and your rights to have extenuating circumstances taken into account in your assessment are outlined in the Postgraduate Student Handbook from Coventry University