

## **MSc in Facilities Management (for External Students)**

Awarding Institution:	<b>The University of Reading</b>
Teaching Institution:	<b>The College of Estate Management</b>
Relevant QAA Subject Benchmarking Group:	<b>Business and Management (2007)</b>
Faculty:	<b>Faculty of Science</b>
Board of Studies:	<b>Postgraduate Courses, CEM</b>
Accreditation:	<b>Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)</b> <b>British Institute of Facilities Management (BIFM)</b>
Programme length:	<b>30 months</b>
Date of Specification:	<b>February 2011</b>

### **Summary of Programme Aims**

The Programme aims to provide a combination of academic skills and advanced professional skills commensurate with the Masters level award. It provides the opportunity to attain these skills to those who cannot, or choose not to, give up their full-time career status. As such it enhances on-going career prospects. This is achieved in a structured programme that still provides flexibility to the student.

### **Transferable Skills**

The Strategy for Teaching and Learning deployed by the University has identified a number of generic transferable skills which all students are expected to develop during their degree programme. By the end of this Programme, students will have developed their skills relating to communication, information handling, numeracy, problem-solving and use of information technology. Oral presentation skills and team working will be encouraged within the limited parameters of the face-to-face elements of the distance-taught programme. These transferable skills are developed in tandem with the specific subject skills of the Programme.

### **Programme Structure and Content**

The MSc in Facilities Management for External Students is a three years distance-taught programme.

The thirty-month Programme is designed within a 180 credits modular structure. All students are required to take eleven compulsory taught modules. Of the eleven compulsory taught modules, ten constitute 10 credits (approximately 100 study hours), and one constitutes 20 credits (approximately 200 study hours). The research component of the Programme (*Research Methods* plus *Dissertation*) constitutes one-third of the credits available in the Programme (60 credits: approximately 600 study hours) and will be undertaken in Part 3 of the Programme (Year 3). The *Research Methods* module constitutes 20 credits and will be undertaken in advance of the forty credits *Dissertation*.

## **PART 1**

	<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Weighting</u>	<u>Module Credits</u>
Module 1: H101 FM-The Overview	On-line activities and One assignment	25%	20 credits
	One integrative project	25%	
	One 3-hour exam	50%	
Module 2: H102 The Workplace	On-line activities and One assignment	50%	10 credits
	One 1½-hour exam	50%	
Module 3: H103 Management	On-line activities and One assignment	50%	10 credits
	One 3-hour exam	50%	
Module 4: H104 Financial Management Principles	One assignment	50%	10 credits
	One 3-hour exam	50%	
Module 5: H105 Legal Studies	One assignment	50%	10 credits
	One 1½-hour exam	50%	
<b><u>PART 2</u></b>			
Module 6: H206 Information Technology	One 3-hour exam	100%	10 credits
Module 7: H207 Operational Property Portfolio Planning	One 1½-hour exam	100%	10 credits
Module 8: H212 Procurement and Supply Chain Management	One 3-hour exam	100%	10 credits
Module 9: H209 Corporate Real Estate Management	One 3-hour exam	100%	10 credits
Module 10: H210 The Facilities Support Services	One 1½-hour exam	100%	10 credits
Module 11: H211 Communic8	Four assignments	100%	10 credits

### **PART 3**

Module 12: H301 Research Methods	Two assignments	40% & 60%	20 credits
Module 13: H302 Dissertation	One Research submission	100%	40 credits

Students can pursue a slower track approach by opting to take fewer modules each year. In the event of deferrals or necessary retakes, such slow track students may be constrained by the maximum Programme length of eight years.

#### **Part-time/Modular Arrangements**

As stated above, students have the flexibility of attempting less than the scheduled modules per year. In that sense, a *part-time* option is open to the fully employed students who typically undertake the Programme.

With each module in the MSc allocated credits in multiples of ten, the Programme will be amenable to integration into a wider suite of distance-taught courses, should they be developed in the future.

#### **Progression Requirements**

The table above details whether a module is assessed by examination, assignment, or both and also indicates the weighting allocated to each assessment method. Students must achieve marks of 40% or more in both course-work and examination, but a minimum of 50% is required as the module pass mark. The Dissertation also has a pass mark of 50%. Up to a maximum of 55 credits at *below threshold standard (BTS)* (40-49%) can be carried forward to the calculation of the final master's award. The Dissertation cannot be included in this *below threshold standard* allowance. Failures, below 40 or below 50 for credits beyond the 55 credit allowance, are obliged to retake the module the following year. If such a failure is awarded to Module 11, then the student is obliged to retake that Module the following year before being permitted to progress to Part 3.

The award of a Postgraduate Diploma will be dependent upon the successful completion of 120 credits at level 7 of the Masters Programme. A Postgraduate Certificate will be awarded to students who achieve 60 credits at level 7. In each case, the award is only made if the course member leaves the programme after Year 2 or Year 1 respectively, or fails to achieve a pass grade in the following year and subsequently leaves the programme without being awarded the MSc.

For those retaking modules or postponing their course, it should be noted, as mentioned above, that there is an eight year maximum course duration.

## Summary of Teaching and Assessment

The Programme is distance-taught and, as such the pedagogic and assessment methods vary. However, there are optional face-to-face (F2F) teaching and learning days allocated to each of the Programme Parts. They are positioned at the beginning, middle and near-end of the year and total: Part 1 teaching comprises a total of 5.5 days, Parts 2 and 3 comprise a total of 4 days. These F2F sessions offer the opportunity for group work and student presentations as well as more conventional lectures (including guest speakers) and seminars.

The material across all modules are delivered and assessed at Level 7 (M-level) with emphasis upon independent research, critical evaluation and analysis.

With reference to the table above, the course-work for Part 1 comprises one substantial assignment and an integrated project for taught Module 1, an assessed on-line activity for Modules one to three, and one substantial assignment for each of taught Modules two to five; the course-work for Part 2 comprises four substantial assignments based on a case study for taught Module 11. The course work is designed to test the understanding of the syllabus content that is prescribed in a *programme of studies*. Formal examinations comprising either one-and-a-half hours or 3 hours depending on the Module (see table above) are held in the November of the academic year and the Dissertation, submitted at the end of the third academic year, is double marked and subject to External Examiner review.

As prescribed by the University of Reading, final awards will be based upon the following criteria:

**DISTINCTION:** [A Weighted Average Mark of 70 or more over 180 credits  
AND  
a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation  
AND  
no credits below 40.] .....**OR :**  
[A Weighted Average Mark of 68 or more over 180 credits  
AND  
a mark of 70 or more in at least 90 credits  
AND  
a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation  
AND  
no credits below 40.]

**MERIT:** [A Weighted Average Mark of 60 or more over 180 credits  
AND  
a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation  
AND  
no credits below 40.] .....**OR :**  
[A Weighted Average Mark of 58 or more over 180 credits  
AND  
a mark of 60 or more in at least 90 credits  
AND  
a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation  
AND  
no credits below 40.]

**PASS:** [A Weighted Average Mark of 50 or more over 180 credits  
AND  
a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation  
AND  
no more than 55 credits below 50  
AND  
no credits below 40] .....**OR :**  
[A Weighted Average Mark of 48 or more over 180 credits  
AND  
a mark of 50 or more in at least 90 credits  
AND  
a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation  
AND  
no more than 55 credits below 50  
AND  
no credits below 40.]

**FAIL:** A performance which fails to fulfil the criteria for the above classifications.

(Weighted average means the average of a student's module marks weighted according to the number of credit points for that module)

In addition, any requirement to retake a module disqualifies the student from gaining either merit or distinction awards. For fuller details of the assessment regulations consult the VLE.

### **Admission Requirements**

Entrants to this Programme are required to have obtained either:

- An undergraduate degree in any cognate or non-cognate discipline; or
- A relevant examined professional institute membership; or have
- Sufficient relevant professional experience.

Applicants who do not hold a first degree may be required to submit a 2000-word essay on facilities management topic selected by the Course Director as part of the submissions procedure.

Admissions Tutor: Dr Andrew N Green (subject to Admissions Committee recommendations)

### **Arrangements for transfer between programme routes**

The programme allows for two routes to the award of either a University or a College awarded qualification, as follows:

- Students will initially register at Part 1 for study within the College Post-graduate Diploma in Facilities Management programme. During Part 1, students who wish to study for the MSc will request registration with the University for masters' status from the start of Part 2. Also at this time a fee will be payable for registration.
- If during the first two months of their Part 2 studies a student wishes to register for the MSc, then they may apply to the Admissions Officer, who will consult with the Course Director and the University before allowing the registration to be made. A registration fee will be payable to the University, together with an adjustment to agreed *per capita* fees.
- A student who does not request masters' status will continue through to the end of Part 2 and, upon successfully completing the required number of credits, will be awarded a College Post-graduate Diploma in Facilities Management.

- A student who registers for the MSc during Part 1 but subsequently decides not to pursue the masters' degree may relinquish their masters' status and revert to study for the College Diploma in Facilities Management.
- A student who completes the College Post-graduate Diploma Programme and subsequently wishes to study for the MSc will be required to register for Part 2 and complete all modules in accordance with the progression rules before proceeding to Part 3. A Registration fee will be payable to the University together with an adjustment to agreed *per capita* fees.
- An MSc student who wishes to leave the programme with a Postgraduate Diploma in Facilities Management at the end of Part 2 may, within 3 years, return their diploma and

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### ***Knowledge and Understanding***

commence the Part 3 research study to gain the MSc award.

#### **Support for Students and their Learning**

The College uses the *Moodle* software package as a means of delivering courses on-line. This *Virtual Learning Environment* has been developed as a means of providing course content and information to students. It is also used to expand the interaction between students and tutors as well as students and their colleagues. The *Gateway to Learning* portal on the VLE sites provides access to thousands of property related texts, including University of Reading research materials. Students can also access hyperlinks to *Athens*, iSurv, EGi and *Amazon* academic booksellers. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by the Programme Director and Programme Administrator. In addition the College has a *Special Needs* advisor.

#### **Career Prospects**

Nearly 100% of Programme students to date have been employed during their studies and have been seeking the award for various reasons including: personal development, career prospects improvement, and access to membership of one of the professional institutes.

#### **Opportunities for Study Abroad or for Placements**

Graduates from more than a dozen countries have been registered on both the Post-graduate Diploma in Facilities Management Programme and the MSc Programme. Overseas students gain the opportunity to study in the UK for up to two weeks during the 3-year Programme. This demonstrates the true global attraction and nature of the international Programme. Students wishing to change their employment or location during the Programme may do so without penalty.

#### **Programme Outcomes**

The College of Estate Management and the University of Reading both have a worldwide reputation for delivering education of the highest quality. This programme will continue this tradition by earning recognition and respect as a premier global programme for students working within the facilities management profession.

The programme provides a combination of academic skills and advanced professional skills commensurate with the Master's award. It provides an opportunity for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge, understanding and analytical techniques in the following areas.

**A. knowledge and understanding of:**

1. The contexts, people, relationships and activities involved within the FM industry and profession.
2. The management function within the organisation and the sources, measurement, interpretation and presentation of data/information.
3. The principles that influence the design, construction and performance of buildings.
4. The principles of law and the legal framework that underpins practice in the facilities management profession.
5. The practices and procedures involved in the procurement, execution and delivery of facilities management services.
6. The economic and financial frameworks relevant to the facilities management industry.
7. The specific principles of law or statute that affect facilities management issues, particularly in relation to contract law, employment law and Health and Safety at Work.
8. The philosophy and methodology of aspects of management relevant to business, projects, professional practice, strategy, facilities or estates.
9. The professional and personal skills required by managers in formulating strategies/plans to manage human/physical resources.
10. The research process, research methods and presentation of results for facilities management issues.

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies:**

- The acquisition of knowledge is accomplished in each module of the Programme through the provision of designed distance learning resources including tailored reference material, research reports, textbooks, web based resources and materials sourced through the student's workplace.
- Development of understanding and intellectual skills will occur through engaging the student in interactive learning activities designed for a problem-based learning approach. Exchanges with tutors and peers and access to resources will be enabled through the Moodle virtual learning environment. A significant proportion of activities will require the student to undertake research and reflection within their own workplace.
- Additionally, support, advice, guidance and real time activity will occur through tutorials, guest lectures, seminars and team project work in face-to-face sessions.
- In the dissertation module, self-directed learning and supervisor consultation will further extend the student's knowledge and understanding.

**Assessment:**

- Students are required to complete at least one piece of coursework and/or examination in each module which is assessed within strict time frames.
- Coursework will require students to prepare analyses, calculations, critical evaluations, designs, summaries, simulations etc. in the form of extended essays or reports.
- Coursework will be assessed against defined criteria communicated to students beforehand.
- Modules in Years 1 and 2 are examined using an unseen closed book approach and are assessed on major pieces of coursework.
- Integration of concepts and principles between modules will be encouraged

	<p>throughout the Programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dissertations are assessed according to strict guidelines and a common marking scheme.</li> </ul>
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***Skills and other Attributes***

<p><b>B: Intellectual skills</b> – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Integrate theory and practice relevant to their particular learning needs including the ability to transfer knowledge, techniques and methods between subject areas.</li> <li>2. Research, collect and synthesise information from a variety of sources.</li> <li>3. Analyse and interpret information in a variety of forms and format.</li> <li>4. Think logically and critically in respect of the appropriate application of knowledge developed experientially.</li> <li>5. Reflect on and critically deconstruct workplace practices and procedures.</li> <li>6. Define, solve and advise on problems, demonstrating powers of critical appraisal and synthesis.</li> <li>7. Select and apply appropriate quantitative techniques of analysis and appraisal.</li> <li>8. Plan, execute and write reports appropriate to an internal and external business client.</li> <li>9. Adapt and apply knowledge and skills in a changing professional environment and within varying contexts.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The problem-based approach to learning will require the student to employ considerable logic and intellectual skills in analysing problems, situations and scenarios before determining the appropriate learning materials to which to make reference in order to arrive at an individual or collective solution.</li> <li>▪ The reference materials to be drawn upon include texts, papers and web-based resources provided with the course, workplace documents and information found locally.</li> <li>▪ The coursework and self-assessment varies across the modules but collectively covers skills 1-9.</li> <li>▪ Feedback includes tutor comments on coursework, e-mailed advice and web-based answer guides.</li> <li>▪ Web-based discussion board with Moodle will facilitate communication between tutors and students.</li> <li>▪ The dissertation process further embraces intellectual skills 1-7.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ • Intellectual skills are assessed through coursework assignments, problems, reports and appraisals and through unseen examination and dissertation submission.</li> <li>▪ • All summative assessment will be made against defined criteria, including demonstration of intellectual skills.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>C: Practical skills</b> – able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Locate information sources, assemble and present information in a variety of contexts and media.</li> <li>2. Collate, manipulate and store data and information electronically.</li> <li>3. Provide advice and guidance,</li> </ol>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All skills will be developed through completing the module learning activities and coursework.</li> <li>▪ In particular, Skills 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are developed through the Dissertation Module.</li> </ul>
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<p>communicating both formally and informally either face-to-face, through e-mail or via discussion forum.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Collect, record, analyse and present statistical data.</li> <li>5. Apply a variety of specialist analysis and appraisal techniques applicable to practice in the facilities management industry and profession.</li> <li>6. Use quantitative techniques as a basis for decision making.</li> <li>7. Write reports in clear standard English and draft comprehensible sketches and diagrams.</li> <li>8. Multitask and prioritise work to meet scheduled deadlines.</li> <li>9. Work collaboratively with other people to complete tasks to deadlines</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Skills 3-6 variously developed in face-to-face tutorial discussions, web-based activities and coursework within the taught modules.</li> <li>■ Skills 4-5 further extend through the dissertation process.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Assessment of these skills is mainly undertaken through module coursework.</li> <li>■ Skills 3, 5, 6, 8 and 9 will be displayed at face-to-face teaching sessions.</li> <li>■ Skills 4-7 are also assessed through unseen examination.</li> </ul>
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**D: Transferable skills** -able to demonstrate the following transferable skills:

1. Communication skills
2. IT skills
3. Literacy
4. Numeracy
5. Problem-solving skills
6. Time management skills
7. Autonomous learning
8. Research skills
9. Business awareness
10. Sustainability awareness

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies:**

- **Communication skills:** Whereas oral communication is limited by the medium of the Programme, written communication is central to the success of students in the programme.
- **IT Skills:** All MSc students are expected to have access to PCs, e-mail and the Internet. The programme is supported by the open areas of the College web-site. More specifically, the dedicated *Moodle* virtual learning environment will be used to make learning activities and reference information available and significant use will be made of the discussion boards. Students submit their coursework via the web. Completion of coursework will necessitate familiarity with Microsoft Word and Excel. Students will also have access to online power-point presentations. Support and advice are available to the students on IT aspects of the Course.
- **Literacy and Numeracy:** These not only relate to desirable minimum requirements for the Programme but are skills that are encouraged and developed through assignment tasks and tutor feedback on style as well as content. Completion of assessment requires a mixture of essays, calculations, reports, graphical presentations as well as dissertation writing. Guidance on the nature of these formats is provided throughout the course.
- **Problem-solving skills:** The fundamental pedagogy underpinning the design and delivery of the programme is centred on problem based learning with the student being introduced to topics through commonly found professional problems for which they must determine appropriate solutions.
- **Time management and autonomous learning:** By its nature distance learning requires students to develop the discipline of independent study. The flexibility on

time, place and pace that it offers still requires students to manage their time to complete the required study and coursework by the milestone dates indicated in the programme of studies.

- **Research skills and business awareness:** The programme is geared to the detailed examination of the facilities management industry and profession. During their study students will be expected to investigate and reflect on business practice and to source key documents and information from within their workplace. This enquiry skills developed to support study during the first two years will be formally converted into academic research skills in Part 3 when the taught research methods module is taken and the dissertation is completed.
- **Sustainability:** Facilities management is primarily concerned with optimising the use of resources in direct support of a business. In this sense, pervades the whole Programme.

**Assessment:**

To a greater or lesser degree all the course work and much of the examination in this course will require student to demonstrate each of these transferable skills. For instance, to complete an assignment they must manage their time, assimilate the problem information forming the assignment, conduct the required research or investigation of their workplace, discuss their findings, generate a solution, create a document with text and calculation, save and send the document electronically.

***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 module descriptions and programme handbooks. 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.