

MSc Business Research

Awarding Institution: The University of Reading

Teaching Institution: The University of Reading

Faculty of Social Sciences

For students entering in 2003

Programme Director: Dr K.R. Dark

Board of Studies: School Board for Research and Research Training

Accreditation: The University of Reading

Programme length: 12 months

Date of specification: 15.01.04

Summary of programme aims

The principal aim of the Masters in Business Research (hereafter MBR) is to equip and train postgraduate students for doctoral research in preparation for subsequent careers as researchers and teachers in HE institutions as well as in non-academic careers. The programme aims to provide a strong foundation in core social science research methods and advanced research methods relevant to the five subject-specific 'Pathways' defined below in this specification. It will also develop a range of non-subject-specific transferable skills. The programme aims to attain ESRC recognition of its suitability for doctoral training in the social sciences.

Transferable skills

For all students these include innovative and lateral thought (including problem-solving skills), writing skills, oral presentation skills, critical skills, bibliographical skills, data and information handling, interpersonal skills and time- and project- management, and an awareness of relevant ethical issues. Where appropriate (see programme context, below) enhanced mathematical and computing skills are also learnt.

Programme content

Study on the MBR Programme will be divided into five distinct 'pathways', reflecting the diversity of research fields covered by the School. These pathways are: International Business, International Accounting, International Business History, Industrial Dynamics and Real Estate. Each pathway will consist of two required modules and one optional module. Advice will be provided to the student as to the most relevant optional modules for the pathway to be followed.

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
	<i>Required modules – all pathways:</i>		All Modules listed here are at 'M' Level
EDMES2	Research/Transferable Skills for Social Sciences	10	
EDMES1	Research Methods in the Social Sciences	20	
BSM01	Research Papers and Case Studies	10	
BSM02	Developing Research Methods	20	
BSM03	Dissertation	60	
	<i>Core Modules (two per pathway)</i>		
	<i>International Business Pathway</i>	20	
ECM20	Theoretical Approaches to the MNE	20	
ECM21	Global Strategy & Implications of the MNE	20	
	<i>International Accounting</i>	20	
MMM21	International Accounting	20	
MMM25	MNE Financial Reporting and Analysis	20	
	<i>International Business History</i>		
MMM014	The Emergence and Growth of International Business	20	
MMM04	Strategy, Policy & Impact of MNES	20	
	<i>Industrial Dynamics</i>		
ECM24	Technology, Trade and Growth	20	
ECM31	Technological Innovation and Industrial Competitiveness	20	
	<i>Real Estate</i>		
REMF03	Capital Project Analysis and Investment	20	
REMF06	Real Estate Investment	20	
	<i>Options (one per pathway and including any of above outside specified pathway):</i>		
ECM10	Econometrics	20	
ECM09	Financial Markets and Corporate Governance	20	
ECM07	Comparative Management	20	
ECM05	Business Strategies & Policies	20	
ECM14	Entrepreneurship & Economic Theory	20	
ECM30	Managing Innovation	20	
ECM38	Regional Economics	20	
ECMIRM	International Real Estate Markets	20	
REMF08	Real Estate Portfolio Analysis	20	
REMF09	Real Estate Finance and Funding	20	

Part-time/Modular arrangements

Part-time students will normally study modules making up to either 80 or 100 credits in the first year, (which must include EDMES2, EDMES1, Developing Research Methods, Research Papers and Case Studies, and either one core module and one option or both core modules on the specified pathway), and the balance of either 100 or 80 credits in the second year (which must include the dissertation and either the remaining core module or an optional module).

Progression requirements

There will be no internal progression stages within the Programme. Pass (normally at an overall average in excess of 60%) in final examination required to progress to doctoral research in the School.

Summary of teaching and assessment

Teaching methods vary between modules but include formal lectures, seminars led by a member of staff, oral presentation by students, on-line delivery, and individual supervision with the appropriate PhD supervisor. Assessment processes will include course work, presentation and written examinations as well as a 12,000-15,000 word dissertation on a subject relevant to the student's specialist 'Pathway', to be submitted in September.

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

<u>Mark</u>	<u>Interpretation</u>
70 – 100%	Distinction
60 – 69%	Merit
50 – 59%	Good standard (Pass)
<u>Failing categories:</u>	
40 – 49%	Work below threshold standard
0 – 39%	Unsatisfactory Work

For Masters Degrees

To pass the Masters, students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall in modules worth 180 credits including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 50 must be less than 60 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall including a mark of 70 or more for the dissertation will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more overall including a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation and will be awarded eligible for a Merit.

For PG Diplomas

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more in modules worth 120 credits and have no mark below 40. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 50 must be less than 60 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more will be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more will be awarded eligible for a Merit.

For PG Certificate

To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more in modules worth 60 credits and have no mark below 40.

Career prospects

The most immediate way in which this programme will lead to career development is through doctoral research in the School of Business. This will, in turn, produce highly qualified specialists across the range of the School's activities. Subsequent career opportunities include government, business and public services management, as well as academic posts. However, the skills gained

through the MBR will also have a ‘stand alone’ value, opening a wide range of potential career paths (especially in business and management) in combination with the first degrees that all student who obtain this will necessarily hold.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

None.

Educational aims of the programme

The MBR will provide a social science research training, suitable for preparation for doctoral research and enabling students to understand and evaluate research conducted outside their own research area. It will enable students to understand and evaluate differing research paradigms in the social sciences, particularly the relationship between the quantitative and qualitative approaches and to understand a wide range of research methods, from which they may later select the most appropriate to their own research. In addition, students will acquire a detailed knowledge of the specialist sub-field in which they hope to work subsequently.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

<p>A. Knowledge and understanding of:</p> <p>The underlying assumptions, skills and objectives of doctoral research. Key mainstream social scientific debates. Debates over the relative strengths and applicability of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. Research methodologies specific to relevant fields and their broader context within academic research. The ethical dimensions of conducting doctoral (especially business) research will also be explored and the relevance and merits of particular research methods discussed. Specific research methods examined include mathematical analysis, questionnaires, interviews, archival research, textual analysis, ethnographic study (including participant observation), computer simulation and secondary data processing.</p>	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>The subject-specific modules are mostly lecture-based, but seminars and computer workshops are used where appropriate to the material being taught.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i> Written examinations, assessed coursework and dissertation.</p>
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Skills and other attributes

<p>B. Intellectual skills – able to:</p> <p>Evaluate academic work produced by other scholars, and to offer logical criticisms of this.</p> <p>Combine data drawn from disparate or scattered sources relation to an argument or discussion (especially in seminar presentations, essays and dissertation).</p> <p>Think laterally about the issues and problems raised by the material covered and to formulate and present original contributions to these in written and verbal formats.</p> <p>Conduct independent academic research (especially in dissertation work) and present this with the full apparatus of scholarly study.</p> <p>Access, assess and re-structure data through publications and electronic means.</p>	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>Lectures, seminars, workshops and on-line delivery and individual supervision.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>A variety of assessment types are used, including essays, written examinations, presentations and dissertation.</p>
<p>C. Practical skills – able to:</p> <p>Use innovative, critical and lateral thought to identify and solve practical problems.</p> <p>Employ time-management and team-working skills.</p> <p>Utilise bibliographical skills to access information (including library work and Internet searches).</p> <p>Appreciate the relevance of ethical issues to research.</p> <p>Where relevant, enhanced mathematical and computing abilities.</p>	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>Lectures, seminars, workshops and on-line delivery and individual supervision.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>A variety of assessment types are used, including computer tests, mini-project, personal portfolio and dissertation. Oral presentations are also evaluated, with formal feedback given.</p>
<p>D. Transferable skills</p> <p>Students will learn to think through problems and apply existing knowledge and skills in different contexts.</p> <p>They will learn critical and presentational skills, and an ability to access and evaluate information from libraries and the Internet.</p> <p>Time-management and team-working skills also have a general applicability, especially in the potential work environments of most MBR graduates.</p>	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p>Lectures, seminars, workshops and on-line delivery and individual supervision.</p> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>This is as part of assessments mentioned above.</p>

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 expect 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 and programme handbooks.