

BA Business Economics

UCAS code: L114

Awarding Institution:	The University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	The University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group:	Economics
Faculty of Economic & Social Sciences	Programme length: 3 years
For students entering Part 1 in 2003	Date of specification: September 2004
Programme Director:	Dr. Phoebe Koundouri
Programme Adviser:	Dr. Phoebe Koundouri
Board of Studies:	BA/BSc Economics
Accreditation:	Not applicable

Summary of programme aims and learning outcomes

The programme aims to provide a thorough degree level education in economics in general, and in business economics in particular. It focuses on coverage of economic principles and of quantitative techniques: these core areas are compulsory in all three parts of the degree. Students taking the degree will be expected to acquire a thorough knowledge and appreciation of core economic theory and of its uses and applications especially in a business environment.

Transferable skills

The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning has identified a number of generic transferable skills which all students are expected to have developed by the end of their degree programme. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to enhance their skills relating to career management, communications (both written and oral), information handling, numeracy, problem-solving, team working and use of information technology. The programme lays particular emphasis on numeracy and the use of IT. In addition, it encourages business awareness, and an understanding of important features of decision making, such as uncertainty, constraints and opportunity cost.

Programme content

The following profile lists the compulsory modules, together with their credit size, for each Part. Each Part consists of 120 credits. In Parts 1 and 3, compulsory modules total less than 120 credits, and students are required to select options containing sufficient credits to make up the shortfall. In Part 1 the remaining credits can be drawn from anywhere in the University subject to any restriction which may be applied to particular module choices. Options for Part 3 are listed following the Part 3 compulsory modules.

Part 1 introduces the basic underpinnings of modern macroeconomics and microeconomics, and supplements this with an introduction to quantitative techniques used in economics. Part 2 consists entirely of compulsory modules developing the fundamental tools of economic analysis, including econometrics. Part 3 compulsory modules deepen the theoretical treatment of economics while the options provide the opportunity to diversify into specific applications, or concentrate further on central subject matter. There is also an opportunity to research a topic independently through a dissertation.

Not all optional modules will necessarily be available in any year. Admission to optional modules will be at the discretion of the Programme Director.

		Credits	Level
Part 1	(three terms)		
	<i>Compulsory modules</i>		
EC1F1A	Introductory Economics I	20	C
EC1F1B	Introductory Economics II	20	C
EC1F5	Introductory Quantitative Techniques	20	C
Part 2	(three terms)		
	<i>Compulsory modules</i>		
EC201A	Microeconomics I.1	20	I
EC201B	Microeconomics I.2	10	I
EC202A	Macroeconomics I.1	20	I
EC202B	Macroeconomics I.2	10	I
EC203A	Introductory Econometrics I.1	20	I
EC203B	Introductory Econometrics I.2	10	I
EC238A	Contemporary Economic Policy 1	20	I
EC238B	Contemporary Economic Policy 2	10	I
	Of the 120 credits in Part 2, 5 credits are taken up by Career Management Skills (distributed model)		
Part 3	(three terms)		
	<i>Compulsory modules</i>		
EC301A	Microeconomics II.1	20	H
EC302A	Macroeconomics II.1	20	H
EC308A	Business Economics 1	20	H
EC308B	Business Economics 2	10	H
	<i>Optional modules</i>		
EC301B	Microeconomics II.2	10	H
EC302B	Macroeconomics II.2	10	H
EC309A	Business Finance 1	20	H
EC309B	Business Finance 2	10	H
EC311A	International Economics 1	20	H
EC311B	International Economics 2	10	H
EC312A	Economics of Development 1	20	H
EC312B	Economics of Development 2	10	H
EC313A	Business Forecasting & Operations Research 1	20	H
EC313B	Business Forecasting & Operations Research 2	10	H
EC314A	Public Economics 1	20	H
EC314B	Public Economics 2	10	H
EC315A	<i>Economic Issues in Historical Perspective 1 (not currently available)</i>	20	H
EC315B	<i>Economic Issues in Historical Perspective 2 (not currently available)</i>	10	H
EC316A	<i>European Economic Integration 1 (not currently available)</i>	20	H
EC316B	<i>European Economic Integration 2 (not currently available)</i>	10	H
EC318A	Econometric Methods 1	20	H
EC318B	Econometric Methods 2	10	H
EC320A	Money & Banking 1	20	H
EC320B	Money & Banking 2	10	H
EC322A	<i>Economics of Labour 1 (not currently available)</i>	20	H
EC322B	<i>Economics of Labour 2 (not currently available)</i>	10	H
EC324A	European Urban & Regional Economics 1	20	H

EC324B	European Urban & Regional Economics 2	10	H
EC328A	Economics of Land, Development & Planning 1	20	H
EC328B	Economics of Land, Development & Planning 2	10	H
MM330	Comparative International Management	20	H
EC334A	Environmental Economics 1	20	H
EC334B	Environmental Economics 2	10	H
EC337A	Processes of Long Term Political and Economic Change 1	20	H
EC337B	Processes of Long Term Political and Economic Change 2	10	H
EC340A	Corporate Social Responsibility 1	20	H
EC340B	Corporate Social Responsibility 2	10	H
EC3DSO	Dissertation	30	H

Progression requirements

To progress to Part 2 a student must:

- (i) obtain an average mark of 40% across all Part 1 modules;
- (ii) obtain at least 40% in all compulsory Part 1 modules;
- (iii) achieve not less than 30% in any module except that marks of less than 30% in a total of 20 credits may be condoned, provided that the candidate has pursued the course for the module(s) with reasonable diligence and has not been absent from the examination without reasonable cause.

¹To progress from Part 2 to Part 3 a student must:

- (i) achieve an overall weighted average of at least 40% across all Part 2 modules totalling 120 credits;
- (ii) obtain a mark of at least 40% for each module in modules totalling at least 90 credits;
- (iii) achieve a mark of not less than 35% for each module in modules totalling not more than 30 credits.

Summary of teaching and assessment

Teaching is organised in modules. The delivery of material varies among modules, especially in the proportions of time allocated to lectures, and to classes and seminars. All modules involve coursework, which takes a variety of forms. Final assessment normally involves a written examination, and may also incorporate coursework marks; the maximum proportion of a final module mark allocated to coursework is 20%, other than in special cases. The conventions for classification are included in the Programme Handbook but you should note that the weighting between Part 2 and Part 3 for classification purposes is 33% and 67% respectively.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:

Grade C or better in English in GCSE; and achieved:

UCAS Tariff: 280 points from 3 A Levels or 300 points from 3 A Levels and 1 AS Level

International Baccalaureate: 31 points

Irish Leaving Certificate: BBBB

Two AS grades are accepted in place of one A Level.

Mature applicants Applications from mature candidates are welcomed. A mature applicant is more likely to receive an offer of a place if he or she has undertaken recent study, for example 2 or more A levels or an Access course, but each case is assessed on its individual merits.

¹ Revised progression rules are subject to the approval of the Faculty Director & Teaching & Learning, which is expected in October 2004.

International applicants Applications from international candidates are welcomed. If you are not offering A levels we advise you to contact either the EU or international admissions tutor before applying in order to discuss the acceptability of your qualifications.

Admissions Tutor: Dr. G.R. Crampton

Support for students and their learning

University supports 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 Personal Tutors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

The Department of Economics provides handbooks that outline programme and module content. In addition to lecture and class time, each module lecturer has appointed office hours during which they may be consulted without prior appointment.

Career prospects

In recent years graduates from this programme have entered a variety of careers in both the private and the public sectors. Examples include jobs in banking and finance, accountancy, the civil service, and universities.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

There are no formal arrangements but informal arrangements are possible and may be discussed with the programme director.

Educational aims of the programme

The programme provides a thorough degree level education in economics, with an emphasis on the economic analysis of business. It provides an intermediate level of quantitative competence allowing both empirical and theoretical analysis of economic behaviour in a business setting.

Programme outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and abilities in the following areas:

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. the fundamental concepts and techniques of microeconomics, macroeconomics and quantitative methods.
2. the fundamental concepts and techniques of business economics and policy.
3. a selection of more specialist options on business, economic, or management topics.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The knowledge required for the basic topics is discussed in formal lectures supported by smaller group discussions on set questions.

This pattern is also followed in the more specialist options with the non-assessed work required varying according to the nature of the subject matter.

Assessment

Most knowledge is tested through a combination of coursework and unseen formal examinations. Short tests and oral presentations also contribute.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – an ability to:

1. think logically
2. apply analytical principles to a range of problems
3. organise tasks into a structured form
4. assess the impact of recent and current changes on business and economic circumstances
5. transfer appropriate techniques and knowledge from one topic within the subject matter to another
6. plan, organise and write a report on an independent project

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The need to think logically and analytically permeates the compulsory modules in the programme. The quality of the analysis depends on a strict focus on the central features of a problem.

The more specialist topics provide many opportunities to apply this core approach to a range of problems in a wide variety of contexts.

Assessment

1-3 are covered extensively in the core modules; 4-5 are given wide scope in the optional modules; 6 is assessed directly by means of the large number of essays prepared in Parts 2 and 3 in all modules.

C. Practical skills – able to:

1. understand and develop a chain of economic reasoning
2. formulate and analyse business economics problems
3. evaluate economic policies towards business
4. write critical analyses of business economic questions
5. undertake a set of tasks associated with improving their career prospects

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The core subjects concentrate on formal economic reasoning. Problem solving forms an important part of class work especially in Parts 2 and 3.

The specialised options involve writing detailed assessments of set topics.

Assessment

Most skills are tested through a combination of coursework, including both problem solving and essays, and through unseen examinations.

The career skills component at 5 will be assessed according to the module description of the Careers Advisory Services CMS module for the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, distributed model.

D. Transferable skills – able to:

1. use IT (word-processing)
2. communicate ideas in a logical way
3. give oral presentations
4. contribute to group discussions of a business problem
5. use library resources both on- and off-line
6. manage time
7. plan career strategy

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The use of IT is required throughout the Part 2 and 3 modules. Seminars in Parts 2 and 3 involve group discussions and oral presentations. Library resources have to be used continuously in the preparation of essays and project work. the highly structured system of deadlines for assessed work requires good time management

Assessment

Most skills are tested indirectly through the preparation of course 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 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.