



MBA (Top-Up) Programme Handbook



Published March 2020

Version 5

Introduction to the Programme

Welcome to the MBA (Top-Up) programme. This handbook provides you with information about the structure of your programme and a description of each of the modules that you will study.

The programme is made up of the core modules listed in the table below. An outline of the content of each of the modules and the assessment methods used can be found in the Module Descriptor section of iLearn.

MBA (Top-Up) Modules

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Module Type (Core/Option)
BUS7003	Implementing Strategy	20	Core
RES7001	Research Project	60	Core

Arden University Assessment Regulations

Students will be assessed in accordance with the standard Arden University assessment regulations which can be found on the Arden University website <http://arden.ac.uk/>

What is CMI?

CMI is *The Chartered Management Institute* and is an awarding body that delivers qualifications for managers. They are the only chartered professional body dedicated to promoting the highest standards in management and leadership excellence. CMI offers practical, proven solutions for individual managers, employers, and education providers alike. Their mandate is to create better led and managed organisations.

What does the student need to do?

Once the student has enrolled onto the programme and completed the induction, Arden University will register their membership with the CMI. This will provide the student with a wide range of resources that may help them during their studies. CMI offers practical help, fast advice, new ways to learn, handy tools and techniques, regular newsletters, access to events, and mentoring services. Once the student has completed the programme they will receive a Diploma at the relevant level, which is a qualification that is valued by employers making them more marketable.



Programme Specification

ARDEN UNIVERSITY QUALITY ASSURANCE DOCUMENT QA3 - PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Target Award	Master of Business Administration (MBA)
2. Programme Title	MBA Top-Up
3. Exit Awards	
4. Programme Leader(s)	Matthew Cooper
5. Delivery Model Restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online P/T • PT/FT campus based delivered at approved delivery centres
6. Start date	October 2016
7. Programme Accredited by <i>(PSRB or other, if applicable)</i>	CMI
8. UCAS Code <i>(If applicable)</i>	
9. Relevant QAA subject benchmark statement	QAA Masters Degrees in Business and Management (2015): Type 3 programme Master's Degree General Characteristics Sept 2015

10. Programme Aims

The aim of the Arden MBA Top-Up is to allow students who can demonstrate the attainment of 120 credits at level 7, within the field of business, the opportunity to move forward to a full master's qualification. The prospect of studying a cross cutting 'strategic' module which includes academic currency in terms of CSR, Corporate Governance and Ethics ensures that students will gain an appreciation of Arden University values and their importance to contemporary business practices.

In addition students will be required to complete a 'Research Project' which will allow them to demonstrate expertise within a specific subject area and also to exercise transferable skills, for example time management, planning, research and communication.

Online teaching materials are derived from established academic research in order to develop critical powers of analysis, reflection and the further development of interpersonal skills in preparation for key positions in industry, commerce and the public sector.

Programme participants will build on their existing understanding of management and organisations within a framework that enables them to relate their experience to contemporary ideas and practice within a global context. This is achieved through critical thinking, creativity and personal development.

In particular, the purpose of the programme is to provide participants with:

- A critical and detailed understanding of the role of **ethical and innovative** management within organisations.
- A critical understanding of issues pertaining to **business ethics**.
- An ability to critically analyse and apply knowledge of management theory and models to complex issues to improve **ethical business and management practices**;
- A stimulating online academic environment, which is based upon the values of academic openness and critical appraisal.
- The opportunity to study an issue of their own choosing within the research project phase and to demonstrate excellent self-management skills in the achievement of this.

Arden Values Mapping: the table below identifies how programme outcomes (listed within section 11) meet provide for full coverage of Arden University Values.

	Knowledge & Understanding	Intellectual Thinking	Practical Skills	Transferable Skills
We Support People		B2		D6
We Do The Right Thing	A2, A4,	B2		
We Innovate	A1	B3	C3	
We Take Ownership		B2	C1	D6, D8

11. Intended programme learning outcomes and the means by which they are achieved and demonstrated

MBA (180 credits)

11a. Knowledge and understanding	The means by which these outcomes are achieved	The means by which these outcomes are demonstrated
<p>A1 - Apply and synthesise knowledge and understanding relevant to innovation management</p> <p>A2 - Advise an organisation on appropriate ethically sound strategies to assist their management functions.</p> <p>A3 - Critically analyse the context in which an organisation operates, and understand the impact that this may have on management activities</p> <p>A4 - Demonstrate a critical understanding of current thinking and research within the domains of ethical leadership and management.</p>	<p>Learning and Teaching methods and strategy:</p> <p>Acquisition of knowledge and understanding (A1 – A4) at all levels is through an integrated learning and teaching pedagogy that includes both asynchronous and synchronous activity. That is:</p> <p>Asynchronous Independent and directed student study, supported throughout by comprehensive online multi-media teaching materials and resources accessed through our VLE Guided group / project based work.</p>	<p>Knowledge and understanding are assessed through in-module assessments of portfolio submissions, presentations, time-constrained examinations, and report based assignments.</p> <p>Formative assessments are the precursor to the summative assessments. Appropriate and diverse formative assessments are provided for students and are communicated to them via a clear overview to be found in the assessment brief for each module.</p>

	<p>Discussion forums where students discuss and critically engage with themes emerging from the materials they engage with, following the posing of questions or propositions, case studies or similar by either tutor or students themselves</p> <p>Podcasts and narrated PowerPoint's</p> <p>Synchronous</p> <p>Online seminars facilitated by VOIP's where theory and practice are integrated.</p> <p>Live chats</p> <p>Blended delivery is facilitated by a combination of synchronous face to face classroom based delivery and Asynchronous Independent and directed student study, supported throughout by comprehensive online multi-media teaching materials and resources accessed through our VLE</p> <p>Based upon the profile of our typical student body, our strategy enables students to engage with a variety of learning tools that best meet their learning styles, overall objectives and personal circumstances.</p> <p>Independent study is the cornerstone of the learner experience supported by engagement with the specialist tutor and peer engagement.</p> <p>There is a requirement for written work at all levels including reports, essays,</p>	
--	--	--

	practical tasks, developed targeted plans etc., and our formative assessment policy informs how feedback is supplied by tutors at the draft assessment phase.	
11b. Intellectual (thinking) skills	The means by which these outcomes are achieved	The means by which these outcomes are demonstrated
<p>B1 - Apply and where appropriate synthesise management models and theories to meet the needs of a range of situations of differing complexity.</p> <p>B2 – Take ownership of / undertake research on a topic relevant to a management function and report the research making ethically and sustainability sound recommendations.</p> <p>B3 – Apply various metrics in order to best evaluate a management related issue.</p> <p>B4 - Critically analyse secondary and primary data.</p>	<p>Intellectual skills (B1 – B4) are developed throughout the programme by the methods and strategies outlined in section A, above. Intellectual development (B3 & B4) is further encouraged via formative assessment tasks including set briefs, in-module activities, case studies, self-initiated briefs, and discussion with tutors and peers (in online forums/debates).</p> <p>Specific modules support the development of quantitative and qualitative analysis, and the development of criticality and self-reflective skills. In addition, the student’s thinking skills will be evident in a summative assessment process which requires and rewards learners for the demonstration of creative thinking and problem solving, analysis, judgement and self-reflection in the development of contextually relevant solutions, and a willingness to explore and engage with a range of media.</p> <p>Throughout, the learner is encouraged to develop intellectual skills further by undertaking further independent study and research.</p>	<p>Intellectual skills are assessed through a combination of in-course formative exercises and summative assignments, including the submission of portfolios, self-reflective evidence, statistical analyses, qualitative judgements, and research reports/research project.</p>

11c. Practical skills	The means by which these outcomes are achieved	The means by which these outcomes are demonstrated
<p>C1- Develop personal skills to increase effectiveness of management strategies.</p> <p>C2 - Identify practical solutions to theoretical and practical management related problems, thereby demonstrating praxis.</p> <p>C3 - Select effective information collection methods and select appropriate analytical tools.</p> <p>C4 - Select and utilise analytical tools and innovative methods in the support of informed / effective decision-making.</p> <p>C5 - Plan effectively for successful management</p> <p>C6 – Demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate a data set.</p>	<p>Practical and professional skills (C1-C6) are employed in the production of solutions to real life situations developed through set briefs, exercises and practical activities. The important modern day skills of managing projects, working within differing organisational and national cultures are provided by specific modules, as are specific inputs with an emphasis upon practical functional decision making skills related to market planning and strategy, market intelligence and communications; managing others; and managing knowledge.</p> <p>Practical skills are further developed and integrated through a series of in-course online activities and projects intended to test skills acquired. Group forums provide opportunities to discuss ideas, progress, the work of others and the strengths and weakness in the work presented and particularly support the development of C4. Activities are provided so that students can work independently to consolidate their knowledge and grasp of practical skills. The in-course activities and assessment process in the final year particularly emphasise the acquisition of C5 with specific modules devised to highlight the practical differences in management skills required in differing contexts.</p>	<p>To support the development of practical skills students must supply worked materials and evidence in support of their assignments. Critical reasoning, good presentation and sound evidence trails in all assignments are rewarded. Assessment briefs include a variety of commercial and geographical contextual setting. Students receive feedback on all activities and assignments which includes practical examples for improvement in the application of theory to practice to help them improve both aspects of their skill base.</p>

11c. Transferrable skills	The means by which these outcomes are achieved	The means by which these outcomes are demonstrated
<p>D1 - Identify and critically analyse issues in order to generate contextually relevant and workable solutions.</p> <p>D2 - Undertake effective skills commensurate with a management position</p> <p>D3 - Effectively use CIT to communicate and evaluate in a variety of settings.</p> <p>D4 - Work independently and to take responsibility for own learning</p> <p>D5 - Undertake multidisciplinary research through the acquisition of skills relevant to the context of management</p> <p>D6 - Effectively plan for success using appropriate techniques.</p>	<p>(D1-D6) Personal responsibility becomes an increasingly important skill as students Progress, culminating in the writing of the Research Project.</p> <p>As the programme progresses work becomes more complex and students are tested on their abilities to respond positively to feedback from a variety of audiences, as well as to manage increasingly large workloads. Students are required to complete a number of assignments and a 'research artefact' that rewards independence originality, and critical enquiry, and which further enhance communication and self-reflective skills.</p>	<p>To develop transferable skills all assignments must meet time deadlines and word count guidelines. All assessed work must be submitted independently even where group activity has been an element of the process. Students must take responsibility for their own work. All assignments require students to adopt a spirit of critical enquiry and self-reflection which is rewarded in marking guides. These guides are shared with students.</p>

12. Graduate Attributes and the means by which they are achieved and demonstrated

Graduate Attributes

The concept of the Arden University Graduate, based upon the definition of 'graduate attribute' by Bowden et al (2000) has been developed around 6 attributes.

Lifelong Learning: Manage employability, utilising the skills of personal development and planning in different contexts to contribute to society and the workplace.

Reflective Practitioner: Undertake critical analysis and reach reasoned and evidenced decisions, contribute problem-solving skills to find and innovate in solutions

Professional Skills: Perform effectively within the professional environment. Work within a team, demonstrating interpersonal skills such as effective listening, negotiating, persuading and presentation. Be flexible and adaptable to changes within the professional environment

Discipline Expertise: Knowledge and understanding of chosen field. Possess a range of skills to operate within this sector, have a keen awareness of current developments in working practice being well positioned to respond to change.

Responsible Global Citizenship: Understand global issues and their place in a globalised economy, ethical decision-making and accountability. Adopt self-awareness, openness and sensitivity to diversity in culture.

Effective Communication: Communicate effectively both, verbally and in writing, using a range of media widely used in relevant professional context. Be IT, digitally and information literate.

Discipline Expertise: Knowledge and understanding of chosen field. Possess a range of skills to operate within this sector, have a keen awareness of current developments in working practice being well positioned to respond to change

The means by which these outcomes are achieved and demonstrated

During a full MBA, students would be expected to demonstrate each of the ‘Graduate Attributes’ as identified above. However, given that the ‘**Arden MBA Top Up**’ consists of one 20 credit module plus the ‘Research Project’ it will be impossible to completely imbed them all.

It is envisaged that students will have gained several of these skills in their previous study and in addition will be able to achieve the following whilst studying for the ‘Arden MBA Top Up’:

Module	Graduate Attribute
Implementing Strategy	Responsible Global Citizenship: Understand global issues and their place in a globalised economy, ethical decision-making and accountability. Adopt self-awareness, openness and sensitivity to diversity in culture.
Research project	Discipline Expertise: Knowledge and understanding of chosen field. Possess a range of skills to operate within this sector, have a keen awareness of current developments in working practice being well positioned to respond to change

13. Learning and teaching methods and strategies

Distance Learning

Acquisition of programme outcomes is via engagement with the online module learning material and the online tutoring and programme participant support mechanisms, both of which are delivered via Arden University’s ilearn platform (a Moodle-based system). The learning material comprises purpose-written self-contained lessons with frequent activities and feedback to generate learning and reinforce the knowledge acquisition through frequent application of learning to specific examples.

Embedded within the text are links to further reading and appropriate websites. Feedback within the learning material is provided to allow programme participants to check their understanding with that of the tutor. Additionally, group learning activities direct programme participants to the tutor-facilitated discussion forums where they engage in discussion with their peers and receive formative feedback from the module tutor.

The 20 credit module provides programme participants with an understanding of key theoretical and practical management issues, debates and academic informed literatures.

Teaching/learning methods adopted include online class discussions, exercises/case studies and group discussions.

Structured online learning activities using both formative and summative assessment are applied. The emphasis is on action learning through the mediation of the module leader for each module.

Learning and Teaching activities are:

Asynchronous

Independent and directed student study, supported throughout by comprehensive online multi-media teaching materials and resources accessed through our Virtual Learning Environment

Guided group / project based work

Research tasks

Discussion forums where students discuss and critically engage with themes emerging from the online materials they engage with, following the posing of questions or propositions, case studies or similar by either tutor or students themselves

Podcasts and narrated PowerPoints

Synchronous

Online seminars facilitated by VOIP's (voice over internet protocol) where theory and practice are integrated

Live chats

Based upon the profile of our typical student body, our strategy enables students to engage with a variety of learning tools that best meet their learning styles, overall objectives and personal circumstances. Independent study is the cornerstone of the learner experience, supported by subject specialist engagement with the tutor and peer engagement.

Blended Learning

A strategy which incorporates elements from the above criteria plus the support of face to face input will be utilised.

A-synchronous learning will be supported by in class face to face lectures, seminars and workshops. Students will have full access to the ilearn platform and all programme resources within it. Formative opportunities will be available in class and also via 'Adobe' hosted seminars.

Students will also have access to learning resources at each partner institution.

Student learning will be supported and nurtured at our partner institutions by our tutor team and dedicated centre administrator and on line via our student support team.

Summative submissions will all be made via the 'Turn it In' platform.

14. Assessment methods and strategies

The assessment process involves both formative and summative elements and is continuing in nature.

There will be a focus on encouraging students to apply their knowledge to practical situations. A significant part of this comes from the Research Project module. Here students will be required to identify a topic of interest to them, which falls within the encompassing field of management. Students will explore this, and will apply their research to the topic, putting forward recommendations which are of practical benefit to the organisation.

The assessment designed for the 'Sustaining the Business' module reflects the intentions of that module and will measure the identified learning outcomes. Students will be required to undertake a Strategic Audit with a Strategic option evaluation and present a final decision justification based upon the supplied case study. This assessment is 5000 words in length.

Assessment questions and cases are seen to be dynamic and are reviewed quarterly in order to maintain rigour and reflect changes in professional focus and practice. There are multiple opportunities for formative feedback within the module materials and also in the form of a draft outline submission.

15. Employability

Entrants to this programme are highly likely to be in work, (be it Full or part Time). The MBA programme is designed to offer the degree of flexibility required to ensure that even those employed in full time positions have the maximum opportunity to fulfil their programme of study. The programme aims to develop skills, behaviours and knowledge such that graduates can confidently enter the project management environment or can improve their existing career prospects within it. The degree develops a range of transferrable skills and provides opportunities for these to be evidenced. In particular the final research project provides the ability to demonstrate higher level academic skills.

Arden values are imbedded within the programme as a whole and these values will be instilled in students as they progress through their studies, thus ensuring that graduating students are fully equipped with highly current, appropriate and ethically sound knowledge, procedures and processes.

The distributed nature of Arden University student's makes conventional careers support difficult but the use of the '**Abintegro provider**' allows us to offer a range of support in career development and there are opportunities for students to purchase more specialist support if required.

The addition of imbedded graduate attributes adds value to the qualification in terms of providing 'industry ready' graduating students.

16. Entry Requirements

Arden University is keen to ensure that the programme is available to all those who can benefit from it.

Entry requirements:

120 credits at level 7 in a broadly based business/management award, for example a Post Graduate Diploma in Business or ILM level 7 Diploma in Leadership & Management plus a minimum of two years work experience.

IELTS 6.5 minimum: (no less than 6.0 in any element)- where the underpinning award was not studied in English

The must have covered elements of all the functional areas associated with that subject area (Marketing, Finance, HRM, and Strategy & Operations Management). Where there are significant gaps the applicant will be assessed for APCL against the full programme or re-directed towards a specialist degree.

17. Programme Structure

Level 7

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Module Type (Core/Option)	Assessment Method
BUS7003	Implementing Strategy	20	Core	Assignment
RES7001	Research project	60	Core	Research Proposal & Dissertation or Journal Formatted Article & Viva

18. Subject: *Select from:* n100 (Business Studies)