Aston Business School

Course Structure & Organisation

Business Week

Your course will commence on 16 September 2019 with an intensive week of activities designed to prepare you for the year ahead and what follows after. As well as meetings with your Programme Director, introductions to our learning platforms and support services, you will undertake a series of skills workshops which will provide you with the tools to enhance your learning experience and support your academic, personal and professional development.

Our Business Engagement event will showcase the wide range of business and employability-related activities that you will have the possibility to take part in during the course of the year including, among others, our Business Clinics, Prince's trust e-mentoring, Enactus and CitizensUK projects, TedX, Formula Student Challenge and Double Degree options. During the event, you will be able to connect with the stakeholders responsible for these opportunities, register your interest and start tailoring your professional journey. You will also discover the challenge that you will need to work on for the first six weeks of your course and deliver in Week 7, Business Challenge Week.

The course comprises 180 credits as follows:

Six 15 Credit Core Modules:

BFM234	Accounting for Non-Financial Managers
BHM357	People & World Organisations
BMM601	Marketing Management
BMM629	Applied Research
BNM810	Operations Management
BSM949	Strategic Management

Two 15 credit Optional Modules:

Students are required to select 2 optional modules. Students must select both optional modules from the same group (subject to timetabling constraints and pre-requisites).

GROUP A
BSM930	Entrepreneurial Strategies
BSM932	Management of Innovation
BSM936	International Business Strategy
BSM940	Economic Environment of Business

GROUP B
BFM205	Business Finance
BFM207	International Finance

GROUP C
BMM637	Marketing Channels & Strategic Sales Force Management
BMM658	Digital Marketing
BMM645	International Marketing Management

GROUP D
BNM748	Strategic Global Outsourcing & Offshoring
BNM804	Enterprise Resource Planning
BNM808	Managing Projects
BNM861	Data Mining & Web Analytics

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GROUP E
BHM349   Employee Relations in Context
BHM351   Learning & Talent Development

GROUP F
BHM328   Strategic Business Sustainability
BSM944   Public Policy, CSR & Sustainable Development

GROUP G
BLM137   Intellectual Property Strategy & Management
BLM113   Corporate Governance Regulation & Compliance

You can select your optional modules as soon as you have enrolled with the University. The deadline for you to select your choice of optional modules on MAP is the end of Business Week, FRIDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2019.

For further details of all modules, including the module content and assessment methods please use the University Module Database (UMD): copy and paste the link below into your browser and replace the MODCODE (e.g. BLM171) with the module number as shown above:

http://modspec.aston.ac.uk/e-docs/20190_mod_spec_MODCODE.pdf

example:- http://modspec.aston.ac.uk/e-docs/20190_mod_spec_BLM171.pdf

A provisional timetable of when each module will be taught is available on the University website:
https://www2.aston.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/taught-programmes/abs/pre-arrival-information/provisional-course-timetable

When making your module selections, you should note that some options will assume knowledge of topics covered in other modules. If you have not studied these pre-requisites you will not be able to follow the module. The responsibility for ensuring that any stated pre-requisite modules have been completed lies with you. Information on pre-requisites can be found in the Module Specifications on the UMD.

MODULE SELECTION ON MAP

In order to select your choice of optional modules on MAP, logon, and from the home page go to 'Student Homepage' and then to 'On-line Module Selection for 2019/20'. Choose 'select' and pick your choice of optional modules, then press submit. A list of both optional and core modules will be displayed and you must then press 'confirm selections' to finalise your optional module choices.

CHANGING YOUR CHOICE OF OPTIONAL MODULES

Once the Lectures have started you may change your selection only up to the end of the first week of the relevant Term.   Requests to change optional module selections can be done via MAP.

In the case where numbers for individual modules are either very high or very low, we reserve the right to either limit numbers (on a first come, first served basis) or to withdraw a module from the timetable.

One 10 credit PDP Module:

BPG125   Professional Development Programme

The PDP is a skills based module. To complete the PDP you must attend 8 workshops and undertake an experiential learning stream. There are 5 core workshops that all students attend and you then select an additional 3 workshops, from a wide range of options, which you can tailor to your individual development needs.

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There are 4 Experiential Streams to choose from:
Stream 1 – Study Abroad
Stream 2 – Work Experience
Stream 3 – Business Simulations
Stream 4 – Product Intellectual Property and Entrepreneurship (PIPE)

A 50 credit MSc Business Project BDM164:

The MSc Project consists of:

Introduction
Literature review
Method/Methodology
Findings
Analysis
Recommendations/Conclusions

Length: up to 20,000 words.

Please see the Business Project Guidelines for more information on the MSc Project.

Teaching Methods

Fifteen credit modules consist of 150 learning hours and 10 credit modules 100 learning hours. Modules are typically taught and assessed entirely in one teaching period. The remaining learning hours involve a combination of pre-reading, directed reading, team working activity, tutorials, case-study work, directed exercises and class preparation.

A typical term structure is:

Teaching Period 1 is structured (September – January):

Weeks 1 – 6	Taught lectures (2 hour lecture and 1 hour seminar)
Week 7	Business Challenge Week: Innovation, Presentation and Team Working. During this week you will deliver the results of your work on the Business Challenge that you were assigned in Business Week. This will be done in front of a panel. To support the exercise, you will receive additional training on pitching and presenting as well as tailored support on Team Working.
Weeks 8 – 11	Taught lectures
Week 12	Independent revision
Weeks 13 - 14	Assessments

Teaching Period 2 (January - May)

Weeks 15 – 24	Taught lecturers (2 hour lecture and 1 hour seminar)
Week 25	Assessments

From May to September you will undertake your PDP Experiential Learning Stream and the MSc Business Project.

Module Assessment

Modules are assessed either by an examination or by the submission of coursework, or a combination of both examination and coursework. In some cases assessment will include a percentage mark for group and/or individual presentations.

All Postgraduate exams and coursework are blind marked except where this is impractical, e.g. presentations. You will be issued with a candidate number for use in exams and for submission of coursework at the beginning of your course. Your candidate number is printed on your student ID card. You must bring your ID card with you to all examinations and place it where it is clearly visible on your exam desk.

For modules that are assessed by examination, you should note that the exam will not necessarily take place in the same time-table slot as that of the lectures. The exam may be at a different time and/or on a different day.

SUN Number (Student University Number)

Other sources of information may require you to use your SUN number. This number is a 9 digit number on your student ID card prefixed Postgraduate.

On-line Learning Resources

All course materials are provided on-line via Blackboard and consist of a schedule of weekly lectures, lecture/powerpoint slides, reading lists and essential readings, case-studies and past sample papers.

Working Teams

At the beginning of your course you will be allocated to a working team for the purpose of teamwork, presentations and supportive learning. Teamwork is an important part of your Aston MSc Programme. You are likely to work in a number of teams, often with students from a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures. This can be challenging and sometimes difficult, particularly at the beginning of the course. It is important that you remember, as the international managers of tomorrow that the time spent studying with fellow students from all over the world at Aston, will provide you with invaluable experience when you return to work at the end of your course. In the second term you will be allocated to new working teams for core and optional modules.

Please refer to the BPG125 Professional Development Programme Blackboard module for more information on working in teams in a multi-cultural environment. For help and assistance with team working, please consult the guidelines for resolving working team disputes on Blackboard.

Regime of Condonable failures

The course has a regime of condonable failures which allow students to carry marks between 45% and 49% whilst remaining eligible for the award of MSc. The Board of Examiners will normally condone a maximum of 30 credits of modules. All other modules must be passed at 50% or above.

Additional passes between 45 – 49% will mean that candidates are referred in the appropriate module(s) or, if the maximum number of referrals has been exceeded, it will result in the award of Diploma or Certificate, or a requirement to withdraw from the course.

Candidates may be referred once only in a maximum of 60 credits, excluding the MSc Project. Referred assessments will be capped at 50%.

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Requirements for the award of qualifications

The requirements for awards are as follows:

The minimum pass mark for modules and for the Project is 50%.

Masters degree: 180 credits in total. The Project (60 credits) must be passed and 120 credits must be gained from taught modules.

Diploma: 120 credits in total.

Certificate: 60 credits in total.

Award of Degree

Once your Business Project has been submitted, it will be assessed by your Supervisor, together with a second assessor and you may be required to attend a viva voce examination. The mark will be presented to the next scheduled Board of Examiners meeting and the result will be made available to you via MAP.

Any student who wishes the Board of Examiners to take into account exceptional circumstances that have affected their performance whilst on the course, when considering the final award of their degree, must make this request in writing to the Examinations Manager.

Award with Distinction / Merit

The MSc may be awarded 'with Distinction' or 'with Merit'.

- To achieve the award of distinction students must achieve a mark of at least 70% in the Project and an average mark of at least 70% over the other taught modules.

- To achieve the award of merit students must achieve a mark of at least 60% in the Project and an average mark of at least 60% over the other taught modules.

A Master's candidate will be promoted to the higher grade if they achieve the minimum average mark for the Taught and the Project Stages given below:

- To achieve the award of distinction students must achieve an average mark of at least 70% over 180 credits. A minimum average mark of 67.5% is required for both the taught and Project stages of the programme.

- To achieve the award of merit students must achieve an average mark of at least 60% over the 180 credits. A minimum average mark of 57.5% is required for both the taught and Project stages of the programme.

Degree Congregations / Re-enrolment

Students who successfully complete the course will be formally recommended for the award of a degree by the Board of Examiners. These students will have their degrees conferred at a University Congregation, held each year in March and July.

All students are required to re-enrol with the university each year. Re-enrolment is not for the purpose of issuing invoices, but is to maintain the student records until such time as the student graduates from the University. All students need to remain enrolled with the University until their degree is conferred.

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Re-enrolment is undertaken via the Student Portal (MAP - My Aston Portal). You need to log on to the web using your user name and password which you were given at the start of your course, follow the steps through and make the necessary amendments to your address, email telephone number etc. Any changes will be automatically updated. Please ensure that you keep your details up to date.

Students should note that receipt of degree congregation information from the University Registry does not necessarily indicate that the course has been successfully completed. Such information has to be issued prior to the publication of results due to the time-scale requirements for the organisation of the degree congregation, and students will be confirmed or withdrawn, as appropriate, shortly before the congregation ceremony.