Programme Specification

Programme award and title: Master of Business Administration (Human Resource Management)

SCQF Level: 11  SCQF Credit Value: 180

Educational aims of the programme:
Concise (e.g. a few sentences), general statement of aims and broad purposes of the programme

- The MBA (Human Resource Management) provides students with the opportunity to acquire awareness, knowledge, tools and techniques for dealing with business challenges in their parts of the world.
- It provides a solid grounding in aspects of human resource management (HRM), and aims to develop a critical understanding of recent and current academic debates in work and employment. Given developments globally in responsible management education (UN PRME) especial attention is paid to understanding issues of responsibility and sustainability in work and employment. Overall, the programme is designed especially for students with experiences or interests in emerging economies, and it focuses on environmental, cultural, economic and social responsibility.
- The programme is taught with an emphasis on student experience and using clear illustrations. The need for reflective practice, personal development and social awareness is embedded in the programme. It reflects research and teaching strengths across the School and market demand for MBA programmes, besides being consistent with the general focus on the development of decision-making skills in the context of responsible businesses.

Intended programme learning outcomes:
Outline (e.g. one or two paragraphs) of what the student will know, understand and be able to do as a result of their learning, expressed in the categories below. Please consider the contribution made to the student’s personal development planning (PDP) and future employability.

Knowledge and understanding
- By the end of the programme, students will be in a position to:
  - Understand the nature of business, its strategies, operations and impacts;
  - Appreciate the latest challenges and benefits of responsible management education;
  - Understand business in the context of emerging economies, contrasting it with business elsewhere;
  - Master broad and critical knowledge of functional areas in management, economic analysis and project research, including: an overview and understanding of all areas of business; an appreciation of relevant economic arguments; an awareness of how particular projects might be managed and researched;
  - Appreciate different forms of doing business and managing people within organisations
  - Appreciate and understand the meaning of responsible and sustainable business as well as the ways in which business can achieve such outcomes;
  - Recognise the relevant issues, understand decision-making processes, and identify supporting knowledge;
  - Assess the allocation of resources in a complex and mutating environment;
  - Articulate knowledge of business features and operations;
  - Design and implement decision-making processes;
  - Depict future business scenarios within an evolving society and emerging economies.
  - Critically identify and understand the significant contextual influences that shape work and employment.

Subject-specific skills and other attributes
- By the end of the programme, depending on the choice of electives, students will be in a position to acquire:
  - In-depth appreciation of the importance of social enquiry and social science research for assessing contemporary issues in HRM, with implications for strategic management and governance; as well as skills to understand and evaluate the role and impact of leadership in workplaces, communities
and contemporary society.
- Analytical skills in: business in emerging economies, responsible business in society, accounting and finance, economic context policy (including quantitative tools) economic sustainability, marketing, people management, strategy and leadership, research project management.
- The ability to understand and evaluate key factors that shape the economic environment, identifying strategic challenges and opportunities in both emerging and Western economies; as well as a thorough understanding and appreciation of the complex interconnections between business decisions and their supportive environment, including issues of sustainable resources management, stakeholder engagement, responsibility and accountability, and institutional challenges for management.
- A comprehensive understanding of the social, political and economic context of doing business, including the meaning and implications of major macroeconomic concepts and elements; as well as the capacity to analyse and apply relevant measures, choices and policies that foster sustainable development.
- In-depth understanding of the theories and concepts informing responsible and ethical business practices; as well as the ability to critically reflect upon the significances of individual, organisational and institutional factors that respectively impede and support responsible management and ethical leadership in a global, multicultural and interconnected setting.
- A comprehensive understanding of the context and practice of financial analysis in an international economy; as well as an appreciation and rigorous understanding of the fundamentals of financial transactions, financial markets and their respective risks and importance for trade and strategic management in a globalised economy.
- A comprehensive understanding of the foundational principles of accounting and corporate finance, leading to the capacity to identify and appreciate in a logical and structured way major issues in financial decision-making, reporting and corporate investment.
- The ability to appreciate the strategic role and relevance of marketing in emerging global economies, including skills to evaluate customer characteristics and market forces, as well as in exploring the role of innovation and communication in supporting sustainable economic development.
- A comprehensive understanding and critical appreciation of key issues, processes and functions of people management, in light of the ethical, cultural, social and environmental challenges and opportunities that define the international business context; as well as the ability to apply theoretical knowledge to real-life cases and activities by engaging with decision-makers in the socio-economic arena.
- Skills to understand and enhance motivation and individual satisfaction and wellbeing in the workplace; as well as the ability to assess how HRM can impact on organisational development and business performance.
- The ability to carry out an independent research project based on some aspects of the business environment.

Generic skills (e.g. information skills, communication skills, critical, analytical and problem solving abilities) and other attributes
- The ability to process information based on reason and analysis;
- Their own critical thinking and imagination;
- An awareness of the relevance of debate and discussion, based on respect for different views and perspectives;
- Specific skills at a masters level in research design, data collection and analysis;
- Intercultural competence;
- The ability to work individually as well as in groups;
- Their presentation and communication skills, including multimedia skills;
- The capacity to adapt and transfer the critical methods of the discipline to a variety of working environments;
- Confidence in their ability to interact in business environments;
- Time management and organisational skills;
- Networking skills;
- Lifelong learning skills, such as self-reflection and creative inquiry for personal development.
- By the end of the programme students will have developed skills and acquired knowledge that will allow them to work in the full range of private, public and third sector (e.g. cooperatives, social enterprises, NGOs) organisations at local and international level.
Learning, teaching and assessment strategies:
Outline (e.g. one or two paragraphs) on overall approach taken to develop and assess learning outcomes, including any distinctive features

- The students have an active role in their learning experience, which challenges them to increase their knowledge, develop critical and analytic abilities, present their ideas and arguments coherently by combining practice and theory, and develop choice-making skills under critical circumstances. Moreover, the programme allows students to shape their learning environment through debate and discussion, an exploratory process which is aimed at uncovering the students’ main business-related, social and economic concerns.

- In order to provide these opportunities the programme is informed by a learner-centered approach to teaching and learning, which gives special attention to how and why people learn, sees learning as a process involving emotional factors, such as motivation and satisfaction, and considers the learner’s needs throughout the whole process. This approach, supported by teaching techniques such as group-work, role-play, problem-solving, case studies, and individual reflection and presentations, gives students the opportunity to sharpen their presentation and communication skills, and enhances their confidence to interact in complex and demanding environments after graduation.

- The programme offers a unique space for participants to enhance their learning experience. As an aspect of this, students on the programme are involved in a number of curricular and other activities for active engagement, communication, reflection and analysis as part of the personal development of each student. Personal and career development begins at the very start of the programme and it is followed throughout, culminating with the possibility of undertaking an internship. Activities currently being considered for development or inclusion in the programme are explained in more detail in the main document.

- As part of learning the skill of communication and debate, and to facilitate interaction, curiosity, and a spirit of inquiry, the programme makes use of dedicated blogs, where possible, to support specific workshops.

- The programme aims to attract students from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. Given that the pedagogical focus is very much on exchange of ideas and experiences in a process of co-operative learning, there will be significant time dedicated to participant interaction around particular issues. The purpose of such interaction is twofold. On the one hand it aims at encouraging students to contribute their own ideas and perspectives, while learning from and integrating the points of view and experiences of others. This is expected to support each student in developing his/her own line of thought. On the other hand, interaction facilitates the nurturing of relations amongst the students, and indeed amongst the students and lecturers, in a way that fosters cultural awareness and the acquisition of intercultural skills. Moreover, students have the opportunity to be part of a wider multinational network that includes the programme team, alumni, leading academics, policy makers and business people.

- The programme integrates the international dimension into all areas of the learning experience by resorting to an approach to internationalisation in higher education which considers it as a process - not as an end in itself. Such process highlights the relevance of intercultural exchange and multinational networking, takes into account the needs and interests of the different people involved, is based on certain values - such as respect for different ideas and opinions, social responsibility, inclusiveness, integrity - and acknowledges the links between the international and the local environment.

- Assessment will be explicitly linked to the teaching/learning experience. Students will be encouraged to pursue originality and to develop their own line of thought. They will be provided with feedback that will allow them to advance progressively within the programme. The course modules will be assessed by various methods which include essays, presentations, individual and group projects (including the production of a di-gi-essay - a digital essay combining academic reasoning with narrative, images and music) and final examinations. The period of assessed study (lectures, tutorials, seminars) is followed by a period of supervised research resulting in a dissertation or alternative form of project. Through the dissertation students’ capacity to logically argue and to undertake an independent piece of research is assessed.

- Overall, assessment will look at: knowledge and understanding of core issues in the programme; use of reason and analysis; academic rigour, practical relevance for managerial action and society, creativity and originality in developing independent lines of thought; communication skills
Further details:

Entry requirements: http://www.stir.ac.uk/postgraduate/how-to-apply

Programme structure: http://www.calendar.stir.ac.uk/

Relevant Subject Benchmark statement (if applicable):  
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework: http://www.scqf.org.uk/The%20Framework/

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