Aston University

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

2013-14

Programme Title	Information Systems and Business Analysis
UCAS/JACS Code	N100
School/Subject Area	Aston Business School Mainly Operations & Information Management Group, plus contributions from others
Final Award	MSc
Interim Award(s)	Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma
Mode(s) of Study	Full-time and part-time on campus, flexible credit accumulation.
Normal Length of Programme	FT: 12 months PT: 24 months minimum, up to 3 years allowed by the University FCA: up to 3 years
Total Credits	Certificate 60, Diploma 120, MSc 180
Programme Accredited By	None
Dates Programme Specification Written and Revised	January 2010, 30/08/10, 27/05/11, 15/06/12, 21/06/13

Educational Aims of the Programme	• To equip students with the skills and competencies which enhance their international employability and prepare them for a range of careers in management, consultancy and business analysis • To provide an environment for graduates with business and/or computer science backgrounds to develop specialist knowledge and experience of how information systems support the business and its operations • To equip students with the appropriate theoretical principles, concepts and methods for developing information systems which meet business needs, and to develop the necessary technical, organisational and people skills to carry out such projects in practice • To gain hands-on experience of running projects and dealing with clients in practice, through the taught modules, the MSc Project and corporate involvement across the programme • To develop graduates who practise corporate, social and environmental responsibility, and who are sensitive to working in an inter-cultural environment • To produce managers of the future and life-long ambassadors of Aston Business School
Relevant Subject benchmark Statements and other External and Internal Reference Points used to inform programme outcomes	• Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) in Business and Management for Masters level programmes • UK Quality Code Part A.1 (2011) • Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Codes of Practice

TAUGHT STAGE

Programme Structures and Requirements: Levels, Modules and Credits

Module Title	Credits	Level	Module Code	Core/Option	Condoneable Y/N	Pre-requisite(s) Y/N
Developing Business Systems Workshop	15	7	BNM803	Core	Y	N
Foundation in Business Systems	15	7	BNM805	Core	Y	N
Managing Projects	15	7	BNM808	Core	Y	N
Learning, Skills and Career Development	30	7	BNM807	Core	N	N
Select 3 Optional Modules:						
Simulation for Managerial Decision Making	15	7	BNM802	Optional	Y	N
Enterprise Resource Planning	15	7	BNM804	Optional	Y	N
Information Systems Management	15	7	BNM806	Optional	Y	Y
Operations Management	15	7	BNM810	Optional	Y	N
Advanced Spreadsheets & Databases	15	7	BNM819	Optional	Y	N
Data Mining & Business Intelligence	15	7	BNM842	Optional	Y	N
TOTAL	120					

DISSERTATION STAGE

Programme Structures and Requirements: Levels, Modules and Credits

Module Title	Credits	Level	Module Code	Core/Option	Condoneable Y/N	Pre-requisite(s) Y/N
MSc Project	60	7	MSCPROJ	Core	N	N
TOTAL	60					

Programme Outcomes and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies			
A. <u>Knowledge and Understanding</u>			
	On successful completion of their programme students, are expected to have knowledge and understanding of:	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies to enable outcome to be achieved and demonstrated	
		Learning and Teaching Methods	**Assessment Methods**
A1	The core functions of a business and how information systems/ technology supports the business and its operations	• Through a combination of specialist core and optional modules • Learning is facilitated by lectures, group work and practical workshop sessions involving clients both simulated and real • There is a strong emphasis on working in teams to deliver projects • The MSc project is an opportunity to put accumulated knowledge into practice in a live setting, often involving a corporate client • Throughout the programme students work on a Personal Development Portfolio through reflective practice facilitated by specialist classes and individual mentoring	Student learning is assessed by mixed methods, including: • Individual examinations and coursework • Group coursework and presentations in many cases based around a practical problem • Combinations of the above • MSc Project • Personal Development Portfolio incorporating formative assessment
A2	How to run projects and develop systems which meet the needs of the business and the client		
A3	Tools, techniques and methods for analysing business and system requirements		
A4	Theoretical principles, models and methodologies for developing business systems and managing IS projects		
A5	Competencies and skills which are valued by employers recruiting for careers in related fields, and knowledge of how to demonstrate these competencies		

B. Intellectual Skills			
	On successful completion of their programme, students are expected to be able to:	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies to enable outcome to be achieved and demonstrated	
		Learning and Teaching Methods	**Assessment Methods**
B1	Critically assess, examine and apply information acquired from various sources, published and unpublished, formal and informal	• Students are exposed to range of academic expertise from within the Business School, complemented by expertise from the University's Library and Information Service, Careers and Employability Centre, and Learning and Skills Centre • Modules combine theory and practical application • Practical experience is gained both in classroom simulation and through corporate engagement • Theory is learned in the classroom and applied through the practical work, thus enabling students to reflect on the usefulness of the theory	• As above
B2	Generate data and information for the purpose of analysing business and system requirements		
B3	Use appropriate conceptual frameworks for interpreting, explaining and informing practice		
B4	Base decisions upon firm evidence and analysis		
B5	Initiate and carry out problem solving enquiries		
B6	Communicate learning on the programme through a range of media		

C. Professional Skills			
	At the end of the first term students select one of three specialisms, giving professional knowledge and skills specific to three career pathways: • Enterprise systems • Business analysis • Information systems management Students gain professional skills which are generic to careers in the field and specific to the three specialisms		
	Generic skills	**Learning and Teaching Methods**	**Assessment Methods**
C1	Dealing with clients and managing relationships	• Students gain practical experience of doing client based projects and analysing business requirements • The MSc Project is a major opportunity to put this learning into practice	• As above
C2	Organising and managing projects		
C3	Interpreting and meeting business requirements		
	Specific skills	**Learning and Teaching Methods**	**Assessment Methods**
C4	Enterprise systems Develop knowledge of enterprise systems and their application in organisations	• Optional modules are combined to form specialisms. All specialisms have a strong applied element, where students gain practical experience of applying tools, techniques and principles to real-life and simulated business cases • Modules make strong use of practical workshops and guest lectures	• As above
C5	Business analysis Gain experience of business analysis techniques for the purposes of improving business processes and developing business systems		
C6	Information systems management Feel confident to address the issues and challenges associated with creating, introducing and managing IS within organisations		

D. Transferable Skills			
	On successful completion of their programme, students are expected to show:	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies to enable outcome to be achieved and demonstrated	
		Learning and Teaching Methods	**Assessment Methods**
D1	Proficiency in using IT for personal effectiveness and collaborative technologies for knowledge work	• Generic or transferable competencies are covered in all aspects of the programme – see the curriculum map for the balance • There is a strong emphasis on putting into practice and reflecting upon skills and competencies developed during the programme • The personal development portfolio (PDP) provides a framework for reflecting upon the transferability of skills and how these relate to career planning • Students work in a collaborative environment, where inter-personal skills, communication skills and inter-cultural competence are essential for getting on	• As above
D2	Time management and organisational skills		
D3	Communication skills, including written and oral communication and presentation skills		
D4	Ability to work in a team and be effective in a collaborative environment		
D5	Interpersonal skills, including ability to work with people and communicate at different levels		
D6	Sensitivity to cultural differences and ability to work in an international environment		
D7	Reflective practice and ability to improve personal effectiveness		
D8	Career planning and ability to recognise and demonstrate the competencies which enhance employability		

Entry Requirements	**Direct Entry:** • A UK honours degree or an overseas degree recognised by Aston or • A degree-equivalent professional qualification • GCSE or equivalent standard in mathematics **English Language Requirements (for candidates whose first language is not English):** • A TOEFL score of 100 (internet-based with minimum 23 in writing and speaking and 22 in reading and listening). • An IELTS score of 6.5 overall with no less than 6.5 in writing and speaking and 6.0 in listening and reading. • A Pearson Academic score of 61 overall with 61 minimum in writing, speaking, reading and listening • Candidates with TOEFL 85 or above (internet-based) with 21 minimum in writing and reading, 20 in listening and 22 in speaking, or IELTS 6.0 overall with 6.0 or above in all sections, or Pearson Academic 59 overall with a minimum score of 59 in each section are offered the opportunity of attending an 8-week pre-sessional course. • Candidates with TOEFL 75 overall (internet-based) with minimum 18 in reading and writing, 17 in listening and 20 in speaking, or IELTS 5.5 overall with 5.5 or above in all sections, or Pearson Academic Pearson Academic 51 overall with a minimum score of 51 in each section are offered the opportunity of attending a 12 week pre-sessional course. • Candidates with TOEFL 70 overall (internet-based) with a minimum score of 17 in reading and writing, 16 in listening and 19 in speaking, or IELTS 5.0 overall with 5.0 or above in all sections, or Pearson Academic 47 overall with a minimum score of 47 in each section are offered the opportunity of attending a 16 week pre-sessional course. • Candidates with TOEFL 65 overall (internet- based) with a minimum score of 16 in reading, 17 in writing, 15 in listening and 18 in speaking , or IELTS 5.0 overall with a minimum of 5.0 in writing and 4.5 or above in speaking, listening and reading, or Pearson Academic 42 overall with a minimum score of 42 in each section are offered the opportunity of attending a 20 week pre-sessional course. • A GMAT of 550 minimum may be required

Programme Regulations	**Attendance requirements:** Students are required to attend all sessions as specified for the course. **Flexible Credit Accumulation – Receiving an award:** The Programme Examination Board will consider students on this mode of attendance at least annually. The Board will agree the options open to students accept a Postgraduate Certificate and withdraw from the programme or continue w programme. Students will receive a 'statement of progress' letter at least once per year usually after a Programme Examination Board indicating: which credits have been passed, whether the credit passed entitles the student to an award and the period of study remaining until the time-limit for FCA programmes is reached (5 years from the start of the programme). If a student wishes to accept an award and leave before the end of the programme they must respond to the statement as soon as possible indicating they wish to receive an award
	Specific assessment requirements for modules / module pass marks: The Board of Examiners may apply condonement to allow one or more assessments marked at 49% or below (but not normally below 40%) as passes. The Board of Examiners will normally condone a maximum of 30 credits of taught modules. The module BNM807 Learning Skills & Career Development is not condonable.
	Project Requirements: It is a requirement of the MSc Information Systems and Business Analysis that students undertake a major project worth 60 credits.
General Regulations (http://www1.aston.ac.uk/registry/for-staff/regsandpolicies/general-regulations/) and the Regulations for the programme (above) take precedence over other information sources such as student handbooks if there is a conflict. If there is a conflict between General Regulations and Programme Regulations then General Regulations take precedence unless an exemption has been approved.	

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the threshold learning outcomes that a student might normally be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. **The individual modules included in the programme may differ from those included in this programme specification as our programmes are subject to continuous review.** Information on admissions requirements and career opportunities is available in the relevant prospectus. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the appropriate module guides and programme handbook(s) which are available to students on enrolment.