Award Handbook

PGC/PGD/Masters in Business Administration – MBA (General)

PGC/PGD/Masters in Business Administration - MBA (HRM)

PGC/PGD/Masters in Business Administration - MBA (Finance)

Contents

Welcome to the Graduate School

Dear Student,

It is my pleasure to welcome you as a student to the APIIT Graduate School. I hope that you will find your time with us to be enjoyable and productive. An education in any area is a challenging prospect, but developing your creativity, skills and resourcefulness in such a fast changing disciplines as Computing and Business in this new millennium has many benefits, in the discipline itself, in vocational practice or many other future careers.

By becoming a member of this postgraduate community you will meet other postgraduate students who are also studying for Masters Qualifications in different areas of Computing and Business. We hope that you will benefit academically, socially, and professionally from being a member of the postgraduate community. You will find that there are students within the community who are also working in your area of interest. The Faculty also has staff engaged in research, and these staff will be particularly important to you when you come to undertake your dissertation.

As you have chosen to study a Masters award you will need to develop strong planning skills and dedicate yourself to self-study for long periods of time, as well as attend lectures, tutorials and supervisory meetings as required. Study is at M-Level, so more depth is required compared to undergraduate study. We are committed to support you in your studies as much as we can and aim to provide for you a productive, efficient and friendly atmosphere within the Graduate School and welcome your participation in this. It is my responsibility to manage your award and to help you with your studies whilst you complete your award. I encourage you to study hard and also to enjoy yourself in doing so!

I can be contacted on the following telephone number or email address:

117 675 140 or damith@apiit.lk

Or you can write to me:

APIIT Graduate School, Asia Pacific Institute of Information Technology,

No. 388, Union Place, Colombo 02, Sri Lanka

Alternatively you may contact the Postgraduate Award Administrator:

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Mr Tharaka Soysa,

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Yours sincerely,

Dr.Damith Mudugamuwa,

Programme Leader-Post Graduate Awards

Senior Lecturer-Computing School

1. The Graduate School Team

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2. Educational Aims of the Programmes

Generic aims and outcomes apply for the full range of postgraduate business awards. The following overall programme aims will enhance the employability of all successful students:

- To provide an advanced course of study of management within a rapidly changing business environment which will explore contemporary approaches to the practice of management and develop individuals of high capability who can apply their knowledge and skills within contemporary business organisations;
- To develop participants' understanding and ability to apply a range of learning and research methodologies and strategies that are appropriate to the field of business management;
- To develop critical skills to assess and evaluate the academic literature and other forms of research output that inform current debates within the fields of business and management;
- To develop the capacity for independent, critical and creative thinking;

- To develop the ability to analyse and synthesise differing approaches to the field of business management and to evaluate critically these approaches within the business context;
- To prepare graduates for employment or continued employment by equipping them with a diverse range of business management skills;

Staffordshire University Postgraduate Business awards have the following distinctive features:

- A vocational ethos, with employability, enterprise and entrepreneurial aspects as key aims that will thread through the programme/s;
- 'learning teams' based on multicultural team role profiles, gender and experience enabling students to identify key interpersonal and teamwork skills;
- Learning that will focus on the skills needed to be successful in global business management, including the observation and practice of selected skills that are required for cross-cultural leadership and teamwork;
- Practical management development skills that will foster and improve skills of self-discipline, reflection, analysis, communication, team building and leadership;
- An underpinning spine of management skills development to drive the application of the curriculum in a practical manner;
- Assessments that clearly reflect business contexts;
- Where appropriate, the opportunity to apply for one-year paid industrial placement /internship, thus enhancing employability;
- An internationalised curriculum where students can enhance their ability to think strategically and understand the requirements of the global business environment;
- Business research management or project management techniques enabling students to develop the ability to undertake independent business analysis and to apply solutions to complex business problems.

- The MBA finance award will have more emphasis on the core finance-based tools and techniques that will provide students with the opportunity to develop an in—depth understanding of financial knowledge;
- The MBA Human Resources award will have more emphasis on Human Resource management in the context of global organizations.

3. The Staffordshire Graduate

The Staffordshire Graduate is our commitment, both to potential students and prospective employers that everyone graduating from Staffordshire University will possess more than academic knowledge. They'll have an understanding of the real world and how they can have an impact on it.

As a graduate of Staffordshire University you'll have the key skills of **Employability, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship** – and the ability to stand out in the job market.

As a student you'll get a whole lot more from University than just an understanding of your subject, you'll leave with a set of attributes that prospective employers not only look for but will value and respect.

3.1. Staffordshire Graduate Skills

'The Three Es' – Employability, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship – play an important part in our courses. Key attributes of The Staffordshire Graduate, the skills you will gain include:

Employability

We will help you develop the talents, knowledge and personal qualities necessary to be more likely to gain employment, have the capacity to be effective in the workplace and successful in your chosen career.

Enterprise

Employers value enterprising people. Being enterprising involves having the skills and ability to identify opportunities and even find new solutions to old problems. With enterprising skills, you will be creative in your approach and understand both risk-taking and innovation.

Entrepreneurship

Being entrepreneurial often involves calling on enterprising skills to create new businesses and ideas and bring them to market. Being entrepreneurial also involves thinking and behaving in a way that enables you to come up with new methods of doing things well - and having the foresight to change career direction.

3.2. Staffordshire Graduate - Attributes

Discipline Expert - Have an understanding of the forefront of knowledge in your chosen field

Professional - Be prepared to be work-ready and employable, and understand the importance of being enterprising and entrepreneurial

Global Citizen - Have an understanding of global issues – and their place in a globalised economy

Communication & Teamwork- Be an effective communicator and presenter and be able to interact appropriately and confidently with a range of colleagues as well as develop the skills of independence of thought and, where appropriate, social interaction through teamwork

Reflective & Critical - Have the ability to carry out inquiry-based learning and critical analysis and be a problem solver and creator of opportunities

Life Long Learner Be technologically, digitally and information literate and be able to apply Staffordshire Graduate attributes to a range of life experiences – to facilitate life-long learning and life-long success

4. Programme Outcomes (M-Level)

Knowledge & Understanding: Demonstrate a systematic understanding of key areas of your discipline and acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge from its forefront of the discipline.

Learning: Demonstrate an independent learning ability required to advance knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level for continuing professional development. Demonstrate an understanding of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge.

Enquiry: Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding and critical evaluation of methodologies and techniques applicable to their own research and, where appropriate, propose new hypotheses/solutions.

Analysis: Demonstrate a critical awareness and evaluation of current research, advanced scholarship, contemporary problems and or/new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of professional practice in an area of management.

Problem Solving: Evaluate complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgments in the absence of complete data, and employ appropriate decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations.

Communication: Communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

Application: Demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge within the professional practice of the discipline.

Reflection: Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility, self-

direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level

5. Programme Structure

All Postgraduate programmes are offered on a Part-time basis. The programme takes 2 years to reach M-level. Each programme is structured into 6 terms of 16 weeks each. In each term, 2 taught modules are offered (each 15 credits worth) and last two terms students attend to the Masters Dissertation. The maximum time allowed to complete a Masters program is 5 years.

For each postgraduate programme, the structure and the contents (modules) are shown in the following sections.

5.1. MBA (General)

Dissertation Stage

Dissertation	45 CATS
This module develops broad knowledge of business research principles to provide a systematic understanding of an award appropriate topic. The dissertation must have a strategic and integrative focus.	

Block 2

Managing Strategy	15 CATS
This module provides a general grounding in the tools and processes of strategic analysis, evaluation, selection and implementation.	
Managing Risk	**15 CATS**
This module covers key issues related to the management of business risk under uncertainty.	
Operations Management	**15 CATS**
This module develops a variety of management themes then focuses on operations management through to the ultimate delivery of products and services to consumers.	
Corporate and Global Strategy	**15 CATS**
The module extends strategic thinking into the global economy, allowing an in depth analysis of corporate strategy in a global context	

Block 1 - FUNCTIONAL CORES & BRM

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Professional & Academic Support Skills	**15 CATS**
This prepares students for qualified management careers in an increasingly interdependent world, e.g. communication, presentation, and interpersonal skills.	

Managing Change and Leadership	**15 CATS**
This module combines the bases of Human resource management, including effective people management policies and techniques.	

Managing Through Information	**15 CATS**
This module focuses on the needs and requirements of management for accounting and other quantitative information and its use to promote effective management	

Economics and Marketing	**15 CATS**
This module explores the effects of the external business environment on the performance and functions of the business, particularly the marketing function.	

Business Research Methods	**15 CATS**
The module appraises key developments and methodological discussions in the developing fields and disciplines of business management research.	

5.2. MBA (Finance)

Dissertation Stage

Dissertation	**45 CATS**
This module will develop a broad knowledge of the principles of researching the business environment in order to provide a systematic understanding of a chosen topic of research appropriate to this award. The dissertation must have a strategic finance focus.	

Block 2

Managing Strategy	**15 CATS**
This module provides a general grounding in the tools and processes of strategic analysis, evaluation, selection and implementation.	

Managing Risk	**15 CATS**
This module covers key issues related to the management of business risk under uncertainty.	

Managerial Finance	**15 CATS**
This module scrutinizes sources and uses of funding by investigating financial and operational gearing decisions, interest cover and dividend policy, stock market ratios and business valuation, operational capital investment appraisal decisions, working capital management, culminating in financial strategy management.	

International Finance	15 CATS
This module studies the financial operation of the multinational corporation in an environment of open and integrated financial markets, including international mergers and acquisitions, management of country risk.	

Block 1 - Functional Cores & BRM

Professional & Academic Support Skills	15 CATS
This prepares students for qualified management careers in an increasingly interdependent world, e.g. communication, presentation, and interpersonal skills.	
Managing Change and Leadership	15 CATS
This module combines the bases of Human resource management, including effective people management policies and techniques.	
Managing Through Information	15 CATS
This module focuses on the needs and requirements of management for accounting and other quantitative information and its use to promote effective management	
Economics and Marketing	15 CATS
This module explores the effects of the external business environment on the performance and functions of the business, particularly the marketing function.	
Business Research Methods	15 CATS
The module appraises key developments and methodological discussions in the developing fields and disciplines of business management research.	

5.3. MBA (HRM)

Dissertation Stage

Dissertation	45 CATS
This module will develop a broad knowledge of the principles of researching the business environment in order to provide a systematic understanding of a chosen topic of research appropriate to this award. The dissertation must have a strategic HRM focus.	

Block 2

Managing Strategy	15 CATS
This module provides a general grounding in the tools and processes of strategic analysis, evaluation, selection and implementation.	

Operations Management	15 CATS
This module develops a variety of management themes then focuses on operations management through to the ultimate delivery of products and services to consumers.	
International HRM 15 CATS	
This module includes Strategy and international HRM, the internationalization process and the shifting IHRM agenda.	
Managing a Diverse Workforce 15 CATS	
This module explores a wide range a of diversity and equal opportunity issues.	

Block 1 - Functional Cores & BRM

Professional & Academic Support Skills	15 CATS
This prepares students for qualified management careers in an increasingly interdependent world, e.g. communication, presentation, and interpersonal skills.	
Managing Change and Leadership 15 CATS	
This module combines the bases of Human resource management, including effective people management policies and techniques.	
Managing Through Information 15 CATS	
This module focuses on the needs and requirements of management for accounting and other quantitative information and its use to promote effective management	
Economics and Marketing 15 CATS	
This module explores the effects of the external business environment on the performance and functions of the business, particularly the marketing function.	
Business Research Methods 15 CATS	
The module appraises key developments and methodological discussions in the developing fields and disciplines of business management research.	

6. Award Structure

There are three awards available: Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma, and Masters within each programme.

You are eligible for the <u>Postgraduate Certificate</u> when you have successfully passed any four taught modules and earned 60 Credits. You are eligible for the <u>Postgraduate Diploma</u> when you have successfully passed four further modules giving you eight in total amounting to a total of 120 Credits. The <u>Masters</u> is awarded on passing the final Masters Dissertation and earning 180 credits in total.

Further details on your award structure can be found in <u>Graduate Awards</u>.

7. Award Learning Outcomes

7.1. MBA (General)

On completion of the MBA participants will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

1. Demonstrate a systematic awareness, understanding and knowledge of contemporary business and management theory, research and professional practice within a local and global context **(Knowledge and Understanding)**

2. Demonstrate intellectual and entrepreneurial skills in the application of business and management knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of business and management strategy are used **(Application)**

3. Generate innovative and enterprising solutions and applications of knowledge which inform judgments, develop ideas and propose business solutions taking into account the needs of stakeholders in a competitive and challenging global environment. **(Problem Solving)**

4. Demonstrate the ability to learn independently and to take responsibility for continuing professional development. Contextualise, analyse and learn from experience or simulated environments taking a global perspective upon contemporary developments and research in the field of business. **(Learning)**

5.   Devise and apply valid research and investigative methods to access existing data and information, and also where necessary generate new data. Demonstrate understanding of the location of chosen methodologies within major business research paradigms. **(Enquiry)**

6.   Demonstrate conceptual understanding and critical awareness of current business and management research and advanced scholarship. Evaluating the rigour and validity of research and its relevance to contemporary situations. **(Analysis)**

7.   Articulate complex information based on critical awareness and knowledge, adapting to different audiences and circumstances using a variety of communication tools and methods. **(Communication)**

8.   Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility, self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level. Demonstrate their personal effectiveness through own critical self awareness, personal reflection and self management and a keen desire to learn through reflection on practice and experience. **(Reflection)**

7.2. MBA (Finance)

On completion of the MBA (Finance), participants will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

1.   Demonstrate a systematic awareness, understanding and knowledge of contemporary business and management theory, research and professional practice within a local and global context with specific emphasis on financial context. **(Knowledge and Understanding)**

2.   Demonstrate intellectual and entrepreneurial skills in the application of business and management knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of business and management strategy are used within a global and financial context. **(Application)**

3. Generate innovative and enterprising solutions and applications of knowledge which informs judgements, develops ideas and propose business and financial solutions taking into account the needs of stakeholders and the changing and possible competing business drivers. **(Problem Solving)**

4. Demonstrate the ability to learn independently and to take responsibility for continuing professional development. Contextualise, analyse and learn from experience of international business strategy or simulated environments taking a global perspective upon contemporary developments and research in the field of business and corporate finance. Respond continuously to the global and financial challenges of changing technologies and opportunities of business drivers. **(Learning)**

5. Devise and apply valid research and investigative methods to access existing data and information, and also where necessary generate new data. Demonstrate understanding of the location of chosen methodologies within major business research paradigms. **(Enquiry)**

6. Demonstrate conceptual understanding and critical awareness of current business and management research and advanced scholarship. Evaluating the rigour and validity of research and its relevance to contemporary financial situations. **(Analysis)**

7. Articulate complex information based on critical awareness and knowledge, adapting to different audiences and circumstances using a variety of communication tools and methods. **(Communication)**

8. Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility, self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level. Demonstrate their personal effectiveness through own critical self awareness, personal reflection and self management and a keen desire to learn through reflection on practice and experience. **(Reflection)**

7.3. MBA (HRM)

On completion of the MBA (HRM), participants will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

1. Demonstrate a systematic awareness, understanding and knowledge of contemporary business and management theory, research and professional practice within a local and global context with specific emphasis on HRM. **(Knowledge and Understanding)**

2. Demonstrate intellectual and entrepreneurial skills in the application of business and management knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of business and management strategy are used within a global and a local context. **(Application)**

3. Generate innovative and enterprising solutions and applications of knowledge which inform judgments, develop ideas and propose business solutions taking into account the needs of stakeholders in a competitive and challenging global environment. **(Problem Solving)**

4. Demonstrate the ability to learn independently and to take responsibility for continuing professional development. Contextualise, analyse and learn from experience or simulated environments taking a global perspective upon contemporary developments and research in the field of business. **(Learning)**

5. Devise and apply valid research and investigative methods to access existing data and information, and also where necessary generate new data. Demonstrate understanding of the location of chosen methodologies within major business research paradigms. **(Enquiry)**

6. Demonstrate conceptual understanding and critical awareness of current business and management research and advanced scholarship. Evaluating the rigour and validity of research and its relevance to contemporary business situations. **(Analysis)**

7. Articulate complex information based on critical awareness and knowledge, adapting to different audiences and circumstances using a variety of communication tools and methods. **(Communication)**

8. Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility, self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level. Demonstrate their personal effectiveness through own critical self awareness, personal reflection and self management and a keen desire to learn through reflection on practice and experience. **(Reflection)**

8. Masters Dissertation

8.1. Dissertation approval and management

For the dissertation you will need to write a proposal for approval. If your proposal is considered weak, resource hungry or in general inappropriate you will be required to improve it before starting the dissertation.

You are prepared for your dissertation in a Research Methods module which is taken at the Diploma stage of your course.

Dissertation proposals from students should:

- ✓ identify the area of study;
- ✓ show how the area of study relates to the award;
- ✓ include a project development plan, project milestones and development schedule;
- ✓ identify appropriate research areas and development methods;
- ✓ discuss relevant ethical issues related to the project
- ✓ identify the resources necessary for the successful completion of the dissertation; and provide evidence that the student will have adequate access to these resources;
- ✓ Describe the anticipated results and the products.

Apart from completing the proposal at the same time you will fill out an academic ethical approval form. This will review all aspects of an ethical nature associated with the project, e.g. issues associated with users and testing.

On completion of your proposal the Project Manager in consultation with the Program Leader will assign you a dissertation supervisor. During the dissertation period you will be in regular contact with your supervisor (normally a weekly meeting).Their role is to specifically guide you academically, advise on literature to review, keep you progressing on schedule, provide regular feedback on your work, and guide you on ethical issues associated with the dissertation. Please note that it is your responsibility to attend meetings regularly.

You will be assessed in relation to how well you complete the work set out in your proposal. Your supervisor and a second marker will read the dissertation. After this, you will also undertake a 'Viva', where you will present your dissertation and you yourself will have the opportunity to discuss and clarify aspects of your work. The dissertation will be graded in the form of grade points.

8.2.   What if I am referred in the dissertation?

You will be given the opportunity to re-submit on one subsequent occasion and to a time-scale determined by the award board at the time of initial failure, usually within the period of two calendar years from the date of the examination board, either in a revised form or based upon a new title. Any new title must be approved by the Faculty. A second failure will result in the student failing the Masters stage of the award.

9. University Postgraduate Modular Framework

All Awards at APIIT Lanka are regulated by a set of rules, common across all Faculties in Staffordshire University. The rules are set out in the Staffordshire University Postgraduate Modular Framework.

9.1.Minimum Threshold Marks

In order to achieve a pass in a postgraduate module, a minimum of 40% is required in each component of assessment (separate components being those identified in the weighting between assessments shown in the module descriptor) and an overall aggregate mark of >= 50%. If any component of an assessment is less than 40% a grade point of 1 is awarded and you need to recover the failed component(s) with less than 40%. If all

assessment components are above 40% and achieved a grade point of 5 or 6 (i.e. overall module mark is below 50%) for the module, at the discretion of the award board the module failure will be compensated and given a grade point of 7C.

10. Transfer within the Scheme

If you wish to transfer from one award to another within the Scheme or between honours and ordinary degrees, then you should talk to your Program Leader for guidance and he/she will take you through the process involved. The following section sets out the award specific rules governing such transfers.

10.1. Transfer between award titles within the Scheme

You may transfer between different awards within the Scheme provided that the set of modules that you have passed match the award structure of the award onto which you wish to transfer and provided that you are able to demonstrate that you will be able to study at the level required by your new award. Transfers between awards are subject to the approval of the Program Leader. Where your set of modules does not match the requirements of your new award then your Program Leader will advise you which modules you will be required to pass in order to qualify for the award to which you wish to transfer. You may be allowed to transfer onto the new award before you have a complete set of modules that map onto the new award structure. However, any such transfer is strictly on the condition that you should complete such modules as are necessary in order to make your set of modules conform to the requirements of the award structure of the award you have transferred onto.

Appendix – Glossary of Terms

Module	A unit of study with defined learning outcomes, curriculum and assessment. The module definition is to be found in the module specification for the module. Each module has a number of Credits, associated with it. A single module is worth 15 Credits and notionally requires 150 hours of learning activity to complete. This learning activity being divided between time for class contact hours with staff, independent study and assessment. The number of allocated learning hours rises in proportion to the number of Credits attributed to a module at the rate of 10 hour per credit. All modules are multiples of the basic unit of 15 Credits. So, for example, a double module will be worth 30 Credits and will have a learning time of 300 hours.
Core module	This is a module that you must take and pass to qualify for a given award title or range of titles.
Specific Option	This is a module chosen from a list of Award Specific Option modules. Award Option modules are studied in conjunction with the core modules and form the prescribed set of modules for a particular named award.
General option	This is a slot where modules can be chosen from the full list of Business modules at the relevant level offered at APIIT Lanka (See **Error! Reference source not found.**), provided the modules have not already been taken and any module specific admission requirements are met.
Curriculum	The subject content of your studies. This may refer to the content of a single module or to the content of a package of modules.
Grade (Point)	On completion of the assessment of a module, you will be assigned a grade for that module in the range 0 to 15. In considering your performance at the end of a Level, grades will be averaged to produce a grade point average for the Level (weighted by the size of the modules).
Level	This indicates the academic level at which study is to be undertaken – Certificate level (module level 1), Intermediate level (module level 2) and Honours level (module level 3). Normally it corresponds to one year of study for full-time students. However, students may take modules from different levels at the same time, provided that they meet the requirements for their award.
Learning Time	The total time needed to complete the classes, private study and assessments for a module.
Programme of Study	This refers to the collection of core and option modules which make up your Award.
Pre-requisites	A pre-requisite is defined as a specific requirement that you must meet before you can take a module. In a similar way as entry to an Award was dependent on your achieving A-Level passes for example, for some modules you will have to be 'qualified' to take them. This will normally mean studying for a module at an earlier level in the Award. Pre-requisites are specified to make sure that you have the knowledge and skills you will need to be successful in your chosen modules.
Scheme	The term Scheme is used to refer to a collection of awards that belong together academically. Schemes define a structure of study which ensures coverage of fundamental knowledge and skills within a particular academic area, while permitting some specialisation within the area.