

The Royal Agricultural University

Programme Specification:

MSc Business Management

2024-25

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION [ACADEMIC YEAR 2024/25]

This Programme Specification is designed for prospective students, current students, academic staff and potential employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the teaching, learning and assessment methods, learning outcomes and content of each module can be found in the Module descriptors.

Section 1 – Material Programme Information

Validating body	The Royal Agricultural University
Teaching Institution	The Royal Agricultural University
Subject Area	Land and Property Management
Entry Award(s)	MSc Business Management
Final Award and exit route(s)	Postgraduate Certificate in Business Management Postgraduate Diploma in Business Management MSc Business Management
Programme title	MSc Business Management
Location(s) of study	Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester
Full time study	1 year
Part-time study	2 years
Language of study	English
Programme start month	September
Period of validation	September 2020 to August 2026
Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body	CMI Level 7 Diploma in Professional Management and Leadership Practice (603/4116/6)
Type of Accreditation	
Accreditation due for renewal	April each year
Entry requirements (this should be the standard University entry requirements unless otherwise approved by the Academic Board)	An Undergraduate Honours Degree (2:2 or above) from a UK university or overseas equivalent, or a professional qualification and/or experience considered to be equivalent to the above. For information on international qualifications, please, see our country specific pages. For countries not listed please contact admissions@rau.ac.uk
Non-standard application	We welcome applications from applicants with non-standard qualifications who are able to demonstrate knowledge, experience and skills developed in the workplace or elsewhere and which are relevant to the programme of study. Applicants will need to use their personal statement to provide further details supported by a CV. All non-standard applications will be considered by the Programme Manager on a case-by-case basis and applicants can expect that an interview may be required as part of the admissions process.
English language	If English is not your first language, you will need to reach the requirements outlined in our English language requirements for the level of study. For postgraduate taught programmes this is IELTS Academic min. overall 6.5 with no element below 5.5(or equivalent). English language tests usually have a validity of 2 years from the date the test is taken.
Interviews	Interviews are usually required for non-standard applications.
UCAS Code	N/A
Quercus Code	MSB
HECoS Code	100078 - Business Management

QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and other reference points	Business and Management (including Masters) (March 2023)
Academic level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	Level 7
Approval at AQSC	23 rd May 2022 v7 Academic Board: 30 July 2020
Version	V6 – Jan 2022: removal of module 4416 V7 – May 2022: removal of Professional Placement Year, module 4748 and changed 4414 to 4413 V8 – Aug 2022: removal of 4262, replaced with 3317 and removal of 4002, replaced with 4038A V9 – Nov 2023: add 4015 as elective V10 – March 2024: move 4413 to sem1, move 4086 to sem2

Section 2 - Programme Structure

The structure of all University awards complies with the University's [Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes](#) which includes information about the:

- Rules for progression between the stages of a programme;
- Consequences of failure for referrals, compensation and exist awards;
- Calculation and classification of awards.

MSc Business Management (180 credits) – full time

The accumulation of 180 credits through the assessment of programme elements as detailed below:

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
Level 7					
4262	Sustainable Business Strategy	7	15	Core	1
4263	Entrepreneurship and Business Planning	7	15	Core	1
4413	Research Skills	7	15	Core	1
3317	International Marketing	6	15	Elective	1
4038A	Integrated Agricultural Systems	7	15	Elective	1
4744	Organic and Regenerative Systems	7	15	Elective	1
4260	Marketing Strategy	7	15	Core	2
4261	Leadership and Personal development	7	15	Core	2
4086	Financial Management	7	15	Core	2
4414	Dissertation (Summer)	7	45	Core	2
4023	Operations Management	7	15	Elective	2
4722	Climate Change and Sustainability	7	15	Elective	2
4203	Small Scale Farming and Local Food Supply	7	15	Elective	2
4015	Farm Business and Enterprise Management	7	15	Elective	2

	Total credits: MSc Business Management		180		
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MSc Business Management (180 credits) – Part time

The accumulation of 180 credits through the assessment of programme elements as detailed below:

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
Year 1					
4262	Sustainable Business Strategy	7	15	Core	1
4413	Research Skills	7	15	Core	1
3317	International Marketing	6	15	Elective	1
4038A	Integrated Agricultural Systems	7	15	Elective	1
4744	Organic and Regenerative Systems	7	15	Elective	1
4086	Financial Management	7	15	Core	2
4260	Marketing Strategy	7	15	Core	2
4023	Operations Management	7	15	Elective	2
4722	Climate Change and Sustainability	7	15	Elective	2
4203	Small Scale Farming and Local Food Supply	7	15	Elective	2
4015	Farm Business and Enterprise Management	7	15	Elective	2
Year 2					
4263	Entrepreneurship and Business Planning	7	15	Core	1
3317	International Marketing	6	15	Elective	1
4038A	Integrated Agricultural Systems	7	15	Elective	1
4744	Organic and Regenerative Systems	7	15	Elective	1
4261	Leadership and Personal development	7	15	Core	2
4414	Dissertation (Summer)	7	45	Core	2
4023	Operations Management	7	15	Elective	2
4722	Climate Change and Sustainability	7	15	Elective	2
4203	Small Scale Farming and Local Food Supply	7	15	Elective	2
4015	Farm Business and Enterprise Management	7	15	Elective	2
	Total credits: MSc Business Management		180		

Section 3 – Programme overview and Programme Aims

The aim of this programme is to provide students with an academically rigorous and professionally relevant education that will serve their career needs throughout their personal and professional development. The degree combines essential management knowledge with relevant practical and professional skills to prepare students for the challenging business world.

Our range of core business management modules ensures that students receive a solid grounding in the essentials of the discipline.

Our portfolio of elective modules, taught by RAU experts in agricultural, environment, agri-food and land-based disciplines, provides students with the opportunity either to embed their studies in a rural context, or to concentrate their studies in pure business management disciplines.

The objectives of this Educational Programme:

- To provide students, in particular those with a non-business education, with a rigorous grounding in business and management and the required Masters level knowledge, understanding and skills.
- To enhance the scholarship of students by equipping them with a range of transferable, conceptual, analytical and reflective skills which may be applied to the problems of business in the private and public sectors;
- To provide opportunities to develop research skills at master's level;
- To provide a challenging and stimulating framework of study for full time students;
- To facilitate personal, academic and professional development through a coherent programme of study;
- To provide an opportunity for students to identify and analyse the context of the application of their learning;
- To provide opportunities for students to develop critical perspectives on theories and to review and evaluate the appropriateness and potential value of concepts, models and techniques that underpin the constituent business management subjects
- To provide students with both multidisciplinary and integrated perspectives that can be employed in the analysis of business problems
- To provide students with opportunities for blended learning using appropriate information and communication technologies;
- To provide students and in particular students who have not acquired managerial work experience prior to admission to the MSc Business Management, with a recognised qualification which will improve their career development and promotion prospects.

Programme Features

Diverse Range of Electives

This programme provides an opportunity to develop a range of specialisms, which will lead to numerous careers within the rural economy. Students select three electives from the range available. To indicate the scope and scale of what is available, we provide the following examples:

- Agriculture and Farm Business Management specialism using Farm Business and Enterprise Management (4015) and Integrated Agricultural Systems (4038b)
- International Trade specialism using International Marketing (3317) and Operations Management (4023).

- Small Scale Farming specialism using Small Scale Farming and Local Food Supply (4203) and Organic Systems (4278).

Note that it is permitted in the RAU Regulations for postgraduate students to include up to 30 credits of modules at Level 6 in their awards. Module codes starting with 3 (e.g. 3317 above) are Level 6.

Programme Accreditations

Chartered Management Institute

This course is accredited by the [Chartered Management Institute \(CMI\)](#). Students successfully completing the MSc programme will also be awarded the CMI Level 7 Diploma in Management and Leadership and therefore become a Member of the Chartered Management Institute (MCMI). Students who wish to do so may then apply to the CMI for full Chartered Manager status.

The CMI requires its members to abide by its code of practice:

1. Behave in an open, honest and trustworthy manner;
2. Act in the best interests of your organisation, customers, clients and / or partners;
3. Continually develop and maintain professional knowledge and competence;
4. Respect the people with whom you work;
5. Uphold the reputation of the profession and the Institute; and
6. Create a positive impact on society.

As future CMI members, students are expected to adhere to this code during their time on the programme.

Section 4 – Programme Sustainability

Our modules are mapped against the UN Sustainable Development Goals to ensure that at each stage of the programme we are identifying how these goals can be developed as part of business strategy and managed within a business.

Section 5 – Programme intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

The aim of this programme is to provide students with an academically rigorous and professionally relevant education that will serve their career needs throughout their personal and professional development. The degree combines essential management knowledge with relevant practical and professional skills to prepare students for the challenging business world.

Knowledge and Understanding

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Synthesis trends and opportunities in growth businesses and design ventures to capitalise on these through the application of a range of tools and techniques.	4086, 4262 4263, 4278
2.	Manage and develop of people within organisations: organisational theory and behaviour, employee relations, HRM and the management of change.	4261, 4263 4023
3.	Demonstrate a systematic understanding of contemporary strategic management concepts, theories, models and analytical frameworks and their application to the development of appropriate business policies and strategies.	4261, 4262 3317, 4263
4.	Systematically evaluate the financing of business operations: sources, uses, analysis and management of financial resources.	4086, 4263
5.	Systematically and creatively analyse and evaluate markets and customers including the development and operation of markets, the expectations of customers and other stakeholders and the importance of adopting a market orientation.	4260, 4263, 4023 4278
Intellectual, Professional, Key skills		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Apply critical and creative thinking to the analysis and evaluation of business problems and management issues, including the ability to identify assumptions, and implicit values, evaluate evidence, appraisal the logic of arguments and the ability to generalise appropriately.	4260, 4261 4262, 3317 4023, 4278
2.	Synthesise, analyse and interpret information from a variety of sources, including the integration of theory and practice.	4086, 4262 4263, 4413
3.	Make appropriate use of numeracy, quantitative and qualitative skills including the use of models and conceptual frameworks for business situations and management issues.	4086, 4263 4023, 4413
4.	Assess the uses and limitations as well as strengths and weaknesses of different research methods and techniques (qualitative and quantitative) for conducting and evaluating business research.	4262, 4263 4413, 4414
5.	Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level	4261, 4278 4413, 4414
6.	Critically and competently, employ a range of management skills including negotiation, delegation and coordination of tasks.	4261, 3317 4414
7.	Demonstrate proficiency in IT skills, including the competent use of different applications for business purposes.	4260, 4262 4263, 4023, 4278
8.	Demonstrate sufficiency in numeracy skills including the processing and analysis of financial and other numerical data and the appreciation of statistical concepts at an appropriate level.	4086

9.	Plan, conduct and report a programme of original research or project design.	4263, 3317 4413, 4414
10.	Understand comprehensively techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship	4278 4413, 4414
Programme specific skills		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Interpret financial and economic data using statistical and financial functions and procedures such as those, which are routinely available in spreadsheets and other statistical/econometric software packages.	4086, 4263
2.	Apply knowledge and understanding to complex issues, both systemically and creatively, so that theory is converted into practice from a critical and informed perspective, thereby enhancing organisational effectiveness and competitiveness.	4260, 4261 4413, 4414
3.	Apply problem solving and decision-making techniques, including establishing criteria, identifying, formulating and solving business problems, identifying and evaluating options and implementing and judging the effectiveness of solutions.	4262, 4263 3317, 4023
4.	Demonstrate assurance, confidence and self-awareness in your ability to apply the skills and knowledge learned in the degree to real world problems.	4261, 4263, 3317, 4414
5.	Appraise the industry, market and business climate to evaluate the current opportunities for business growth.	4086, 4260 4262, 4263, 3317, 4023

Section 6 – Approach to Learning and Teaching delivery

The programme is normally of one-year duration of full-time taught study (approximately 28 weeks per year). Study is undertaken at Level 7 of the FHEQ. However, it is possible to follow the programme on a part-time basis, over a longer time period, by gaining credits for the modules taken and achieved year-by-year. The time limits appropriate to part-time study are indicated in the [University Academic Regulations](#) available from the RAU website.

Study is in modular units, each typically representing a value of 15 credits, although modules are sometimes grouped in specific cases into larger units according to the subject or the nature of the learning. The programme consists of 180 credits:

- 90 credits of **core** 15 credit modules (6 x 15 credits each)
- 45 credits of **core** 45 credit project (Dissertation)(1 x 45 credits)
- 45 credits of **elective** modules (3 x 15 credits each).

Each 15-credit unit represents approximately 150 hours of student learning, endeavour and assessment up to a maximum of 40 hours of teaching.

A summary of the overall structure of the programme showing elective choices where appropriate, can be found in section 2. Students registered on the programme must choose three electives from the list shown in section 2. The choice of electives will depend

on the timetabling of active sessions not clashing and also the module meeting the minimum number of registered students.

Real Business Experience

As part of the full-time programme students will be encouraged to become a member of the management team of our social enterprise, Cotswold Hills Wine, which provide a practical and highly interactive context for student learning.

Cotswolds Hills Wine

URL: <http://www.cotswoldhills.org.uk/>

Our award-winning Cotswold Hills wine is produced by the Royal Agricultural University, grown on a sunny south-facing slope of the Cotswold Hills near Cirencester. The 2.6-hectare vineyard was planted in 2010 near Down Ampney with Ortega, Bacchus, Chardonnay and Seyval grape varieties and is leased from Farmcare Trading Ltd.

Cotswold Hills is a social enterprise project providing support for students, helping them to develop employability skills and experience. In addition, proceeds from the wine goes into the RAU Enterprise Programme to help support RAU students wanting to start their own businesses.

The wine is sold in bottles and cans through a wide range of stores, including Co-op store across five counties - Gloucestershire, Shropshire, Oxfordshire, South Staffordshire and Buckinghamshire.

Work-based learning is embedded in the programme through teaching and assessment strategies, which strive to ensure the practical work-based relevance of disciplinary theory and academic research. Case-based learning and authentic assessments require students to apply their knowledge and understanding to real-life scenarios, to make and justify business decisions, to offer managerial recommendations and to reflect critically on the value of theoretical concepts and theory in professional practice.

The MSc Business Management programme is accredited by the Chartered Institute of Management (CMI), which provides further resources to prepare students for the workplace and to support them during their business careers. These include networking and idea sharing opportunities at regular CMI events and access to the latest management thinking via CMI Insights.

Students are encouraged to become involved in RAU's social enterprises and to attend events and activities provided by the Enterprise and Entrepreneurship programme to further develop their industry understanding, to expand their networks and to enhance their CV.

Here at the RAU we are always looking for ways to support our students. We recognise that a number of our UK domiciled students may be working or have caring responsibilities alongside studying which can sometimes make it difficult to attend all lectures in person. As such we have the ability for you to join lectures and seminars through a live stream, and if you are unable to do this recordings of lectures will be available after they have been held. Please note that this type of study participation is only available to registered UK based students due to UKVI visa restrictions.

Section 7 – Approach to Assessment

Assessments are designed to appraise individual capabilities fairly and consistently. We use clear, descriptive assessment guidelines (made available to students) to grade coursework and examinations and to aid classification. Lecturers communicate their expectations clearly to students and use explicit schema to facilitate consistency of marking within and between modules and to ensure good feedback on individual performance. All examinations and coursework assessments that contribute to degree classifications are subject to scrutiny by the External Examiners.

Assessments are designed to test analytical and other cognitive capabilities in relation to particular module aims and content. Coursework assignments such as individual essays, reports, case study analyses, individual and group-based reports, presentations, and various technique-oriented assessments are used to test these skills.

The Dissertation is the capstone demonstration of postgraduate skills, requiring students to conceive, justify, design in detail and execute a substantial piece of academic research. For the most able postgraduate students, the Dissertation can generate work of a standard appropriate for submission to practitioner and academic journals in business and management.

In every module, we place high value on students being able to demonstrate effective communication in its various forms. This priority is reflected not only in how assignments are specified, but also in how they are marked - good command of written and spoken English is vital for work-based projects and for graduate employment.

Some modules have a teamwork requirement and in some, there are group assignments, assessed via presentations and reports. All group assignments allow for an element of individual assessment, in order to recognise differences in individual performance where appropriate. Peer feedback can also play a significant part in team activities and is encouraged.

Overall, the programme is taught and assessed through*:

	Learning and Teaching			Assessment		
	Directed	Independent	Placement	Exam	Practical	Coursework
Year 1	18.30%	81.70%	0.00%	0.00%	9.20%	90.80%

**based on 4023, 4015, 4038A*

Section 8 – Course work grading and feedback

Assessment is an integral part of the learning experience of students. All University programmes are assessed by a range of assessment activities, each developed to provide the most appropriate means of demonstrating the student's achievement of a specified learning outcome. An assessment may assess more than one learning outcome.

The University operates standard pass criteria which can be found in the RAU Academic Regulations (paragraphs 137 – 153).

The normal basis for awards will be the overall average score in the final assessment, graded as follows:

Distinction weighted average of	70% and above
Merit weighted average of	60% - 69%
Pass weighted average of	40% - 59%
Fail average	0% - 39%

In addition to assigning a percentage mark to the work, tutors provide written feedback for all assessments which normally includes the strengths and weaknesses of the piece as well as advice about improving the work. Individual feedback is provided within 20-working days of the deadline for submission. All assessment decisions are subject to internal moderation and external scrutiny by the programme's External Examiners. Students must ensure they retain all coursework in case the External Examiner(s) wishes to see it.

Section 9 - Progression

The Royal Agricultural University has a strong reputation for developing highly skilled, sought-after, employable graduates from within the rural economy and also from a diverse range of backgrounds.

The University is committed to developing employable graduates and the curriculum has been designed to enhance employability at all levels of study. Employability is seen as an intrinsic aspect of all degree programmes the development of essential postgraduate attributes is embedded in all core modules.

The MSc Business Management core modules emphasise themes of financial competency, organisational change, dealing with opportunities and business planning. We pride ourselves on being able to help our students acquire the skills they need to foster their initiative and creativity as responsible global citizens. Our graduates have gone on to pursue careers within companies worldwide and within the following roles:

- International Development Manager
- Business Owner
- Investment Analyst
- Project Manager
- Marketing Manager

The University has links with a wide range of businesses, through our local Growth Hub, Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise partnership and 175 years of successful Alumni.

Section 10 – Student support, wellbeing and counselling

The [University](#) is offering a wide range of support to all RAU students including practical advice & guidance as well as emotional support.

Disability & neurodiversity support

We support students with a range of disabilities, learning difficulties, and other health and mental health conditions, helping them to access funding via the [Disabled Students Allowance](#).

When you tell us about a disability, you will be offered support based on your specific needs which can include:

- **Alternative exam arrangements** such as extra time, rest breaks, or a smaller room.
- **Access to support workers** such as study skills tutors, specialist mentors, readers and scribes.

Mental health Support

We are also here to support students with the ups and downs of university life, offering drop-in sessions, providing expert advice and support for students in crisis or with more complex needs, and together the team runs events and campaigns throughout the year to encourage positive wellbeing.

We also can help students to access external counselling sessions and these are generally delivered in collaboration with our long-term partners at Cotswold Counselling.

Academic Support Tutor Programme

Students have access to the Academic Support Tutor (AST) programme which provides high quality academic support for students. ASTs provide timetabled group tutorials, and individual support for students most at risk. Group tutorials focus on providing high quality academic support at the appropriate academic level; advice and guidance in relation to the course; and advice about making study choices on the course (commensurate with the supporting AST Handbook). Individual support focus on student continuation (commensurate with The Team around the RAU Student spheres of integration student retention model) and may be in person or online.

Section 11 – Enhancing the Quality of Learning and Teaching

The programme is subject to the University's rigorous quality assurance procedures which involve subject specialist and internal peer review of the course at periodic intervals, normally of 6 years. This process ensures that the programme engages with the applicable national Subject Benchmarks and references the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

All programmes are monitored on an annual basis where consideration is given to:

- External Examiner Reports
- Key statistics including data on retention and achievement
- Results of the Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Feedback from Student Delegates from programme committees
- Feedback from Student-Staff Liaison committees
- Annual Programme Monitoring

