

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION (APPRENTICESHIP)

The Programme Specification is designed for apprentices, academic staff and employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes.

SECTION A: DETAILS OF THE PROGRAMME AND AWARD

Programme Title	Senior Leader Master of Business Administration leading to the award of Master of Business Administration
Apprenticeship Standard (s)	Senior Leader Master of Arts Degree Apprenticeship
Awarding Body	Buckinghamshire New University
Teaching Institution	Buckinghamshire New University
School	Business, Law & Computing
Name of Final Award	Other (please give details) Master of Business Administration, MBA
NQF/FHEQ Level of Qualification	Level 7: Master's degree
QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) or alternative benchmark statement	QAA Subject Benchmark Statement, Master's Degrees in Business and Management, January 2015
Course Code(s)	MB7MBA9
Mode of Delivery	Part-Time
Length of Study	2 Years
Regime of Delivery	Work-Based Learning
Language of Study	English
Month and Year valid from	14 May 2018
Publication & Revision Dates	14 May 2018

In this document, “apprentice” and “student” are used interchangeably.

Programme Introduction

Degree Apprenticeships combine university study and work-based learning to enable apprentices to gain a full Master of Business Administration. This provision of an academic postgraduate degree is integrated with experience, practice and learning in the workplace. An apprentice has paid employment status and does not pay any training costs or student fees. Degree Apprenticeships are co-designed by employers ensuring that apprentices are equipped with the skills employers need and for their own future career.

The Standard and End Point Assessment Plan (EPA)

As well as containing on programme training and assessment, all apprenticeship standards must contain an end-point assessment (EPA). All apprentices must undertake an independent end-point assessment, which is a synoptic assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that have been learnt throughout

the apprenticeship. The purpose of the assessment is to make sure the apprentice meets the standard set by employers and are fully competent in the occupation. It is taken by apprentices at the very end of the on-programme phase of training when their employer (and in some cases their training provider) is satisfied that they have met the “gateway” criteria to undertake the assessment. End-point-assessments are graded and an apprenticeship certificate is only awarded after end-point assessment is successfully completed.

End-point assessment must be administered by an assessor from an approved, independent Apprenticeship Assessment Organisation, and not by Bucks New University as the training provider for the on-programme part of the apprenticeship programme.

The EPA for the Senior Leader Master’s Degree Apprenticeship has been designed by employers from across the sector. The Degree Apprenticeship for senior managers leads to a Master of Arts of Business Administration.

The trailblazer group have specified that the EPA for this apprenticeship is:

- *Retains a separate independent EPA and follows the recommended process*

Distinguishing Features of the Programme

The Senior Leader Master of Arts of Business Administration (Senior Leader MBA) plays to the strengths of our diverse and practice-based institution by introducing teaching and learning that promotes resilient, sustainable organisational leadership within a connected commercial context. The student apprentices will gain hands-on experience that directly relates to their workplace setting. The three recurring themes throughout the course are:

- **Responsibility:** Embed a sense of personal and organisational responsibility to a larger ecosystem;
- **Relevancy:** Develop leadership skills so that the individual and organisation will remain relevant in a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous) workplace environment;
- **Reflection:** Utilise and develop the higher cognitive skills of reflection in order to help them remain relevant and responsible through periods of uncertainty and volatility.

Our programme focuses on preparing organisational leaders to actively engage with, and navigate, fluid, interconnected and (often) disruptive factors converging and colliding within a competitive market place. These student apprentices will learn to read and translate uncertainties and disruptive factors and quickly adapt these circumstances to their organisation’s competitive advantage to ensure sustainability. Existing approaches to business management, relevant case studies, diverse isomorphic scenarios, new and upcoming organisational risks and new business innovations will all be examined and critiqued.

A team of colleagues who retain close links with external organisations and employers has developed the Senior Leader MBA – we make use of external speakers and industry contacts to develop relevant course materials.

Admission Requirements

Under UK Government rules, Degree Apprentices must be employed for a minimum of 30 hours per week and must have the right to live and work in the UK (applies only in England). A Degree Apprentice cannot be self-employed. The employer must enter into an Apprenticeship Agreement with the student.

All candidates must be employed in a role related to the subject matter of the Degree Apprenticeship and be sponsored by their employer. Applications can only be made through the sponsoring employer.

The University will consider all such applications and will have the final decision whether to accept the candidate for entry to the programme.

The recommended minimum entry requirements for Level 7 entry to the programme are:

- Entry qualifications: Hons Degree or academic equivalent or
- Non-academic entry requirements including at least 5+ years of work experience
- Letters of recommendation (if new to the organisation)
- IELTS: 6.0 (if applicable)
- Consideration should also be made for those with qualifications equivalent to an Hons Degree, for instance from Access Certificate courses.

Recognition of Prior Learning

The University APL procedures will be used to accredit prior APCL and APEL.

Employability Statement / Career Prospects

On completion, the apprentice will have the knowledge, skills and occupational competence and professional attributes to enable them to be gainfully employed as a Senior Leader.

Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body Accreditation

There is no explicit regulatory body accreditation.

SECTION B: PROGRAMME AIMS, OUTCOMES, LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

Programme Aims (linked to the standard)

The main educational aims of the programme are to:

- *Give the degree apprentices the opportunity to gain experience in the workplace while earning a degree*
- *Help the degree apprentices to grow practical technology expertise with project management, interpersonal and business skills*
- *Develop in student apprentices a strategic, integrated and holistic perspective of their organisation through a study of leadership and management at:*
 - *An individual, group and organisational behavioural level*
 - *A functional, process and strategic level*
 - *At local, national and (if relevant) international level.*
- *Prepare student apprentices for a senior leader career through the development of enhanced personal and interpersonal skills and, in particular, leadership capability and skills in facilitating organisational change.*
- *Equip student apprentices with an advanced understanding of concepts and current issues in management and leadership.*
- *Enable student apprentices to anticipate and address risks that may adversely affect their organisation thereby helping to ensure future organisational resilience and sustainability.*
- *Develop reflective and critical thinking as well as analytical and research skills needed to make logical arguments and creative contributions to improve management and leadership practice within their organisation.*

Programme Learning Outcomes and Mapping to Modules

On successful completion of a Level 7 MBA, a graduate, will be able to:

Knowledge: Organisational Performance – delivering a long-term purpose	Apprenticeship Standard Learning Outcomes	Core Modules (Level 7)
Knows how to shape organisational vision, culture and values. Critically understands organisational structures; business modelling; diversity; global perspectives, governance and accountability; the external environment, social, technological and policy implications. Understands new market strategies, changing customer demands and trend analysis.	Strategy	BM748, WB701, MG713, BM749
Critically understands innovation; the impact of disruptive technologies (mechanisms that challenge traditional business methods and practices); drivers of change and new ways of working across infrastructure, processes, people and culture and sustainability. Knowledge of systems thinking, knowledge/data management, and programme management.	Innovation & Change	BM748, BM749, MG713, WB701
Critical knowledge of ethics and values-based leadership; regulatory environments, legal, H&S and well-being and compliance requirements; corporate social responsibility; risk management, environmental impact and cyber security. Understands competitive strategies and entrepreneurialism, approaches to effective decision making, and the use of big data and insight to implement and manage change.	Enterprise & Risk	BM748, BM749, MG713, WB702, WB703
Understands financial strategies including scenarios, modelling and identifying trends, application of economic theory to decision making, and how to evaluate financial and non-financial information. Understands financial governance and legal requirements, and procurement strategies.	Finance	BM749
Interpersonal Excellence – leading people and developing collaborative relationships		
Knowledge of organisational/team dynamics and how to build engagement and develop high performance, agile and collaborative cultures. Understands approaches to strategic workforce planning including talent management, learning organisations, workforce design, succession planning, diversity and inclusion.	Leading & Developing People	MG713
Critically understands large scale and inter-organisational influencing and negotiation strategies. Deep knowledge of external political environment and use of diplomacy with diverse groups of internal and external stakeholders. Understands working with board and company structures. Knowledge of brand and reputation management.	Developing Collaborative Relationships	BM749, MG713, WB701
Skills – Organisational Performance – delivering a long-term purpose		
Use of horizon scanning and conceptualisation to deliver high performance strategies focusing on growth/sustainable outcomes. Sets a clear agenda and gains support from key stakeholders. Able to undertake research, and critically analyse and integrate complex information.	Strategy	MG713, WB701, WB702, WB703

Initiates and leads change in the organisation, creates environment for innovation and creativity, establishing the value of ideas and change initiatives and drives continuous improvement. Able to manage conflict. Manages partnerships, people and resources effectively, and measures outcomes. Acts where needed as a Sponsor, championing projects and transformation of services across organisational boundaries.	Innovation & Change	BM748, WB701, WB703, WB702
Challenge strategies and operations in terms of ethics, responsibility, sustainability, resource allocation and business continuity/risk management. Application of principles relating to Corporate Social Responsibility, Governance, Regulatory compliance. Drives a culture of resilience and supports development of new enterprise and opportunities.	Enterprise & Risk	BM748, BM749, MG713, WB701, WB703
Oversees financial strategies/management, results and setting organisational budgets, and challenges financial assumptions underpinning strategies. Is accountable for decisions based on relevant information e.g. Key Performance Indicators/scorecard. Uses financial data to allocate resources. Oversees procurement, supply chain management and contract.	Enterprise & Risk	BM749, MG713, WB701
Interpersonal Excellence – leading people and developing collaborative relationships		
Uses personal presence and “storytelling” to articulate and translate vision into operational strategies, demonstrating clarity in thinking and using inspirational communication. Creates an inclusive culture, encouraging diversity and difference. Gives and receives feedback at all levels, building confidence and developing trust, enables people to take risks.	Engaging Employees	MG713, WB701, WB703, WB702
Enables an open and high performance working, and sets goals and accountabilities for teams and individuals. Leads and influences people, building constructive working relationships across teams, using matrix management where required. Ensures workforce skills are utilised, balancing people and technical skills and encouraging continual development.	Leading & Developing People	WB701, MG713
Manages complex relationships across multiple and diverse stakeholders. Builds trust and rapport, with ability to positively challenge. Leads beyond area of control/authority, and able to influence, negotiate and use advocacy skills to build reputation and effective collaborations.	Building Collaborative Relationships	WB701, MG713
Behaviours – Personal and Interpersonal Effectiveness		
Has high levels of self-awareness, emotional and social intelligence, empathy and compassion, and able to identify mental well-being in others. Works collaboratively enabling empowerment and delegation. Acts with humility and authenticity, is credible, confident and resilient.	Leads by Example	WB701, MG713, WM703

Takes personal accountability aligned to clear values. Demonstrates flexibility and willingness to challenge when making decisions and solving problems. Instils confidence demonstrating honesty, integrity, openness and trust.	Judgement and Challenge	WB701, MG713
Is confident and brave, willing to innovate, seeks new ideas and looks for contingencies. Manages complexity and ambiguity, comfortable in uncertainty, and is pragmatic.	Courage & Curiosity	WB701, MG713, BM748
Engaging with all – is ethical and demonstrates inclusivity, recognising diversity, championing, and enabling cultural inclusion. Empowers and motivates to inspire and support others.	Valuing Differences	WB701, MG713, BM748
Reflects on own performance, demonstrates professional standards in relation behaviour and ongoing development. Advocates the use of good practice within and outside the organisation.	Professional	WB701, MG713

Exit awards may be awarded where the full set of credits have not been achieved, as described below. Where the full award is not being given, this will result in non-completion of the apprenticeship.

1. On successful completion of the **PG Cert Business Administration**, a graduate will have successfully passed 60 credits.
2. On successful completion of the **PG Dip Business Administration**, a graduate will have successfully passed 120 credits.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Methods to achieve the Programme Learning Outcomes

How will students learn

This programme utilises the learning, teaching and assessment methods that demonstrate learning and assessment in the workplace. The programme is developed to:

- Enable apprentices to negotiate the focus of their learning (self-review)
- Relate theory to practice through (critical) reflection
- Require learners to focus on a specific 'occupational' role (normally their own but may be an aspirational role) and the workplace or professional field as the context of their learning.
- Promote innovative teaching, learning and assessment strategies applicable to the workplace and apprenticeship standard
- Promote professional and personal development of learner (functional skills)

The structure of the programme runs across 2 years with 180 credits being attained over this period for the full course.

A comprehensive Induction Programme will be held in the first month to ensure student apprentices have the necessary base and study skills to benefit fully from the course. During the induction students are made aware of opportunities/resources to support their learning including, but not limited to library resources, the Learning and Development Unit, and disability services. Student apprentices will also be assigned a work-based mentor who will provide weekly one-on-one sessions. This mentor will help prepare the student for the professional conversation that forms part of the end-point assessment. This mentor will also help the student apprentice navigate his or her organisation to help

find resources needed for work-based learning activities that form part of the programme, such as job shadowing and visits to other areas of the organisation.

Student apprentices study 4 modules, which carry 30 credits and a final self-managed Negotiated Work-based Learning Project that is broken into two sections; the first is Work-based Research Methods (30 credits) and the second is the final Negotiated Work-based Project (30 credits). Personal development as it relates to their work environment is taught formatively throughout the entire programme through shadowing, reflection, group discussion, networking and problem solving.

As this is a part-time course, student apprentices will study one module at a time. The four modules do not follow a prescribed order as they are independent modules and do not build on each other. However, all contribute to the self-managed Negotiated Work-based Project.

FDL class sessions comprise of a range of activities including multimedia lectures, online discussions, recorded presentations and workshops. These relate to topics that are set in a scheme of work for each module. Learning outcomes for the programme and specific modules are applied to the content under discussion at each session. A consistent approach in this is the relationship of theory to practice. Student apprentices are introduced to theories and content; discussion then applies these concepts to their work environment and to case studies. Student apprentices will be required to undertake specific work-based learning activities which do not form part of the scheduled learning activity but reinforce what has been taught. (For example, a student apprentice may be required to seek out how budgeting is managed within their organisation after studying about finance and budget planning.) They will be required to go learn how it is done within their organisation and report back to their peer cohort as part of a formative peer-to-peer learning exercise.

Core texts, which are available as e-books are recommended for each module, but sometimes a text is not available as the material is very topical, and blogs or articles are more effective. Student apprentices are directed to further reading in the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and Library databases. This provides them with continuous access to learning materials and discussion boards as well as the full range of library facilities.

Throughout the programme the objective is to enhance the knowledge, skills and analytical ability of student apprentices as it relates to their work environment, while embedding a sense of responsibility and reflection to their leadership style. Learning outcomes are met by a combination of self-study; directed research and investigation, link tutor support, workplace mentorship and VLE. Input is not limited to tutor input as the programme team make regular use of recorded guest speakers from respected organisations. Workshops and student presentations are also used to help develop personal research and reflection skills as well as learning to express oneself by portraying a commanding presence. All of these help student apprentices develop important personal skills needed to progress in their organisation.

The assessment tasks include individual assignments, case study analysis, job shadowing, reflective portfolio creation, personal presentations and postings to online discussion forums in a combination designed to assess and meet the stated aims and the required learning outcomes of the apprenticeship standard.

The Negotiated Project modules have a regular discussion forum, which will be facilitated by the tutor to check understanding, give formative feedback and allow peer assisted learning. Even though the project is a highly individual piece of work, some students benefit from online forums and these will be facilitated by the tutors in addition to individual supervision meetings. These allow for peer-to-peer learning as well formative assessment. Such interactive activities help students to gain from different perspectives as well as develop their abilities to work collaboratively in a multi-cultural group.

The assessment strategy is designed to ensure that learning outcomes from the apprenticeship standard are achieved. Independent learning as it relates to the apprentices' place of work is embedded within the programme and students develop a depth of understanding via synthesis, critical analysis, reflection and evaluation. Assessments are by coursework and presentation with some modules being assessed by coursework only. Coursework takes several forms such as individual report or reflective portfolio. The importance of the notion of learning from personal reflection is emphasised by the inclusion of the need for personal reflection in many of the assessments; even

though not necessarily contributing to the mark awarded, the team believe that such reflective skills are an important habit to develop. Such assessment tasks, then, help to prepare student apprentices for similar challenges in their careers – with managers at all levels and in all types of organisations increasingly needing to be able to communicate ideas in different ways: face-to-face or remotely, with or without planning time, solo or with colleagues.

Formative assessment is provided in each module – students learn from feed forward as well as feedback. Such support is provided in a number of different ways such as: online forums, job shadowing, student discussions with tutors or peers, formative assessments, tutor guidance and comment on draft work. The programme team also offer remote help through, for example, email, Skype or similar.

More detailed teaching and learning strategies for each module can be found in the individual module descriptors.

Work-Based Learning

The principles for WBL are:

- *Emphasis on learning that takes place in the workplace rather than in educational institutions.*
- *It is intrinsically different from mainstream higher education and for some is more demanding than more traditional didactic learning.*
- *The nature of learning at work moves the focus of responsibility firmly into the hands of the learner.*
- *Individual learners are required not only to take responsibility for identifying their learning needs and aspirations but also for managing the learning process.*

WBL has the following characteristics;

- *management through a three-way partnership between the HEI, employee and employer*
- *programmes and curricula derived from the needs of the workplace and the learner, as well as the subject itself as outlined in the standard*
- *delivery in part in the workplace*
- *assessment by both workplace assessors and HEI*

SECTION C: PROGRAMME STRUCTURE(S) AND HOURS

Table 1: Programme Structure Table

Programme Title	Senior Leader Master of Business Administration leading to the award of Master of Business Administration				
Apprenticeship Standard	Senior Leader Master's Non-integrated Degree Apprenticeship				
Course Code	MB7MBA9				
Mode of Study	Work-based Learning				
Credit Value	UK	180	ECTS	90	
Module Title	UCLES	UCLES	UCLES	UCLES	Assessment Regime

						Written Exam %	Coursework %	Practical %
Level 7								
BM748	Ethics, Change & Innovation	7	1	C	30		100	
BM749	Financial Operational Excellence While Minimising Risk	7	1	C	30		100	
MG713	Performance Leadership	7	1	C	30		60	40
WB701	Developing Professional Knowledge, Skills & Behaviours	7	2	C	30		100	
WB702	Work-based Research Methods	7	2	C	30		70	30
WB703	Negotiated Work-based Project	7	2	C	30		100	

Add or delete rows as appropriate.

Table 3: Breakdown of Contact Hours

Note: Hours are worked on the basis of full-time study. 1 Academic Credit is equated to 10 notional learning hours. An undergraduate student will normally study 120 credits in an academic year which is therefore equated to 1200 notional hours. A full time postgraduate student will normally study 180 credits in an academic year which equates to 1800 hours. Module Descriptors provide detailed breakdowns of the categories given below.

Year of course	Scheduled Learning and Teaching Activities	Work based learning	Guided Independent Study	Total
Year One	90	720	90	900
Year Two	72	768	60	900
Total	162	1,488	150	1800

*These hours should be calculated based on the hours stated in the module descriptors.

SECTION D: ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

This programme complies with the approved University regulations the Academic Assessment Regulations and procedures as detailed on the University website.

The following modules will be non-compensable:

- Negotiated Work-based Project

The calculation of this award will be based on Level 7 weighted at 100%.

Exit Awards Available

Exit Award Type	Award Title	Credits Achieved
Postgraduate Certificate	PGCert Business Administration	60 Credits
Postgraduate Diploma	PGDip Business Administration	120 Credits

Where exit awards are made, this would result in non-completion of the apprenticeship.

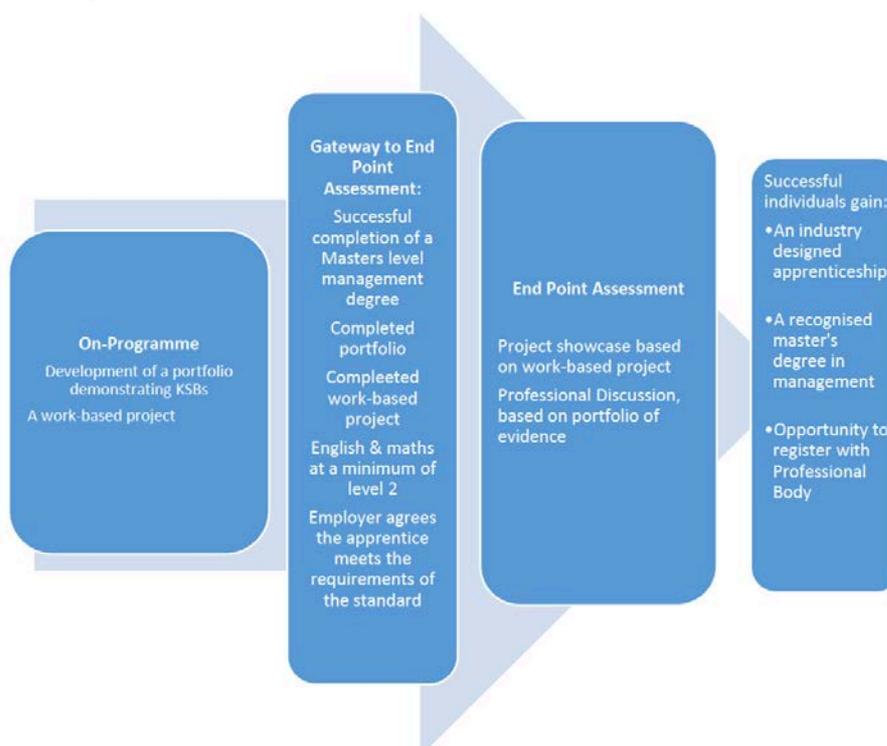
END POINT ASSESSMENT:

The End-point Assessment (EPA) must be administered by an assessor from an approved, independent Apprenticeship Assessment Organisation, and not by Bucks New University as the training provider. The EPA for the Academic Professional Degree Apprenticeship has been designed by employers from across the sector. The trailblazer group have specified that the EPA for this apprenticeship retains a separate independent EPA and follows the recommended process.

Prior to taking the EPA the apprentice must meet the following criteria:

- Apprentices without level 2 English and maths will need to achieve this level prior to taking the end-point assessment;
- Completed all workplace learning and off-the-job training as evidence of the potential to demonstrate professional competence in relation to the required knowledge, skills and behaviours of the standard;
- Completed a portfolio;
- Complete work-based project.

The EPA for this apprenticeship is as follows:



As part of the “on programme assessment” and in preparation for the EPA, apprentices will formatively have a professional discussion with their mentor. In addition, assessments completed throughout the

programme will form evidence in their portfolio. Finally, their work-based project (module WB703) can be used as their work-based project for the EPA.

The EPA includes:

Assessment Method	Area Assessed	Assessed By	Weighting
Project showcase, based on work-based project; including report, presentation and questioning	Knowledge, skills and behaviours	Apprentice Assessment Organisation	50%
Professional discussion, based on review of portfolio of evidence	Knowledge, skills and behaviours	Apprentice Assessment Organisation	50%

SECTION E: FURTHER INFORMATION

Reference Points

The following reference points were used when designing the programme:

- Trailblazer Standard
- University Strategy 2016-2021
- Buckinghamshire New University Approval of Academic Provision policy and procedure
- QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for:
- QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (2014)
- Apprenticeship standard
- Work-based and Placement Learning Policy
- University Academic Qualifications Framework
- Recommendation and feedback from external subject academic and industry professional

Annual Review and Monitoring

This programme will be monitored annually through the University's formal processes, which involves a continual cycle of review and enhancement. This process is supported by both the periodic review of subject areas and the periodic re-approval process for individual programmes. All processes are completed in consultation with students via the Students' Union or student representatives.

The re-approval of this programme is scheduled for academic year: 2023

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