



Course information 2011–12

MN1107 Introduction to business and management

This is a level 100 course, which is designed to engage students with the key concepts, models, debates and problems in the study of business and management. Students will learn about the workings of business organisations, how they function, and how they interact with the environment. The course also considers how these business organisations are managed, including the strategies used to guide them and the decisions involved in the role of the manager. Developing this foundation will be beneficial to the subsequent study of specialised subjects. It is helpful to view this introductory course as an opportunity to develop a solid framework of knowledge, as well as a critical academic approach.

Prerequisite

None apply.

Aims and objectives

This course has three main aims which directly relate to the major themes that will be emphasised throughout the course. These are to:

- provide a comprehensive introduction to the key elements of the business organisation, and to competing theories and models of the firm and its environment, and to provide a critical perspective on the main functional areas of management
- build a foundation of knowledge on the different theoretical approaches to management and decision making
- develop analytical skills to identify the links between the functional areas in management, organisations, management practices and the business environment.

Essential reading

For full details, please refer to the reading list.

Mullins, L.J. *Management and Organisational Behaviour*. (Essex: Pearson Education)

Daft, R.L. *New Era of Management*. (Mason, Ohio: South Western: Cengage)

An alternative text which covers the course

syllabus in most areas is: Boddy, D.

Management: An Introduction. (Harlow: FT Prentice Hall)

Learning outcomes

At the end of this course and having completed the essential reading and activities students should be able to:

- ✓ understand the evolution of the business organisation and management thought, identifying the interconnections between developments in these areas
- ✓ evaluate alternative theories of management critically, recognising the centrality of decision making and strategic thinking to the managerial role and functions
- ✓ discuss and compare different models and approaches to understanding the firm, evaluating these in the context of the business environment,
- ✓ explore the impact of key environmental factors on decision making and organisational behaviour
- ✓ evaluate the significance of contemporary issues in business and management.

Assessment

This course is assessed by a three hour unseen written examination.

Syllabus

This is a description of the material to be examined, as published in the *Regulations*. On registration, students will receive a detailed subject guide which provides a framework for covering the topics in the syllabus and directions to the essential reading.

The syllabus consists of four sections, designed to introduce students to the main theories, debates, and issues relating to the study of business and management. Each section deals with several topics and an indication is given below of the elements that each will include. However this syllabus approaches management and organisations as dynamic topic, so it is important to recognise the interrelationships between each theme. Students should identify links, make comparisons, and consider the implications of the different issues throughout their studies.

Section 1: Development of business and management

Concepts, definitions and origin; Introduction to key concepts; development of organisational theory and management thought, including scientific management and the human relations school of thought.

Approaches to understanding the business organisation; Perspectives of sociology; psychology and economics.

Section 2: Decision making

The management role; Decision making as central to main activities of planning, leading, motivating, controlling.

Theoretical approaches to decision making and organisational change; Game theory; rational choice; strategic management; change management; resistance.

Managing the main functional areas; Human resource management; production; marketing; finance; communication systems.

Section 3: Business and its environment

Key internal elements of the firm; Size; type; structure; ownership; technology; strategy; culture.

Key external elements of the business environment; Political, economic, social, technological and cultural spheres

The diverse and dynamic nature of the business context; International business; cultural diversity; globalisation; MNCs; small business management.

Section 4: Contemporary issues in business and management

Current trends in business development; Knowledge management; e-business; the learning organisation

The social responsibilities of business organisations; Business ethics; managerial integrity; social responsibility; corporate citizenship.

Students should consult the *Programme Regulations for degrees and diplomas in Economics, Management, Finance and the Social Sciences* that are reviewed annually. The Prerequisites, Exclusions, and Syllabus are subject to confirmation in the *Regulations*. Notice is also given in the *Regulations* of any courses which are being phased out and students are advised to check course availability.