

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

for the award of**MSc Accounting****Managed by Oxford Brookes Business School**

Date approved:	February 2017 (Programme first validated in March 2010)
Applies to students commencing study in:	September 2018

RECORD OF UPDATES

Date amended*	Nature of amendment**	Reason for amendment**

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Awarding body:	Oxford Brookes University
Teaching institution and location:	Oxford Brookes University, Oxford
Language of study:	English
Final award:	Master of Science (MSc)
Programme title:	Accounting
Interim exit awards and award titles available:	PGD-ACC: PG Diploma in Accounting PGC-ACC: PG Certificate in Accounting
Brookes course code:	BH64 / MSC-ACC
UCAS code:	33329
JACS code:	N400
HECoS code:	See guidance note G2.2, section 1
Mode of delivery:	Full-time (face to face/on-campus) Part-time (face to face/on-campus)
Mode/s and duration of study:	1 Year for full time 2 Years for part time Maximum duration is 5 years.
QAA subject benchmark statement/s which apply to the programme:	Master's degrees in Business and Management (2015)
Professional accreditation attached to the programme:	ACCA http://www.accaglobal.org.uk/
University Regulations:	The programme conforms to the University Regulations for the year of entry as published/archived at: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/ Specific Regulations for http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/current/specific/

SECTION 2: WHY STUDY THIS PROGRAMME?

2.1 Rationale for/distinctiveness of the programme

This programme offers students the opportunity to learn about the theoretical and practical aspects of accounting. They will study a broad range of accounting topics and this will give them a good foundation for a career in the accounting profession or in financial management roles in a range of organisations.

Whilst having a primary focus on the practice of accounting, the programme will also give students the chance to develop the skills required by professional accountants in organisations. It is no longer sufficient for practitioners to be technically expert they also need to be able to communicate with colleagues, work productively in teams and make linkages between their specialist field and the wider organisational context. Students will be taught by staff with both an academic and professional background. Staff profiles can be found on the university website <http://business.brookes.ac.uk/about/staff/>.

This is a conversion course for graduates from all disciplines. Students typically will have little or no work experience in this area and little academic background in accounting. This course is designed to give them a broad understanding of accounting techniques and how these are applied in a range of situations and contexts. This involves both a grasp of quantitative techniques but also the ability to undertake analytical and critical evaluation of key issues in accounting and to express the results in writing. Students will also develop the skills necessary to research particular issues in accounting and to apply the results of the research to specific professional problems.

This programme offers an opportunity to gain relevant knowledge, skills and competencies of value for a career in the accounting profession or closely related fields. The syllabus has been designed to encompass the key disciplines that form the basis of professional education and included in the training programmes of professional bodies in the field. As such the programme will prepare students for eventual membership of a professional body whilst also equipping students with the critical, analytical and research skills appropriate for reflective practitioners. This programme aims to offer exemptions for up to 7 ACCA papers.

2.2 Aims of the programme

- To prepare graduates from a range of backgrounds for careers in or closely related to the accounting professions. This foundation prepares them both for further study towards a full accounting qualification and for posts in organisations.
- To give students a broad knowledge of accounting principles and techniques across the three accounting themes of management accounting, financial accounting and financial management.
- To give students the opportunity to develop work related skills such as teamwork, verbal and written communication and research skills.

To develop the skills of critical enquiry so as to engage with current research and analyse issues from a variety of perspectives.

SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the programme, graduates will demonstrate the following Brookes Attributes:

3.1 ACADEMIC LITERACY

1. Evaluate accounting and finance theories in their organisational contexts drawing on current research.
2. Critically appraise the role of accounting standards in financial accounting and the relationship between standards and the IASB Conceptual Framework.
3. Apply International Financial Reporting Standards to produce organisational accounts from financial data using the standards and show critical awareness of the limitations of accounting information.

4. Undertake critical analysis of published financial information using appropriate financial ratios and analysis techniques (also see 3.4).
5. Critically review management accounting techniques and their application to organisational management.
6. Select and apply appropriate management accounting techniques to produce information useful to managers for planning, controlling and decision making, showing critical awareness of the limitations of these techniques.
7. Evaluate a range of corporate finance concepts and models and discuss how they impact on financial decisions taken by organisations.

3.2 RESEARCH LITERACY

8. Apply established research techniques in accounting and finance to analyse specific organisational and theoretical problems.
9. Show ability to critique academic literature in accounting.

3.3 CRITICAL SELF-AWARENESS AND PERSONAL LITERACY

10. Apply quantitative and qualitative skills that are appropriate for the postgraduate level in practical contexts.
11. Communicate complex financial information effectively both in writing and verbally (also 3.4.19).
12. Use a variety of forms of written academic and professional communication according to context.
13. Demonstrate skills of oral presentation, debate and academic discussion.
14. Demonstrate an ability to independently and self critically manage their own time in the completion of several tasks in the same time frame.
15. Take a strategic, analytical and a creative approach to problem solving.
16. Work in groups as a member of a team using a range of academic skills of research, analysis and enquiry and manage multi-task, problem solving projects to a successful conclusion.
17. Set personal objectives and relate coursework to longer term career objectives.

3.4 DIGITAL AND INFORMATION LITERACY

18. Use a range of learning resources competently and appropriately.
19. Develop facility in using spreadsheets to analyse complex financial information (also see 3.3.11).
20. Critically assess the validity of information derived from a variety of sources.

3.5 ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

21. Critically appraise the ethical issues faced by accounting professionals and the standards expected of them.
22. Evaluate the relationship between financial decisions and the operation of an organisation as a whole and its stakeholders.
23. Gain critical insight in the role of accounting in society.

Note: The Postgraduate Certificate in Accounting and the Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting are awarded on the basis of passing 60 or 120 CATS credits respectively, with no requirement to pass specific modules. The Learning Outcomes for these awards therefore vary, depending on the modules passed, but will be a subset of the Learning Outcomes for the MSc award.

SECTION 4: CURRICULUM CONTENT & STRUCTURE

4.1 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS:

Code	Module Title	Credits	Level	Status	Coursework: Exam ratio
P57301 / ACFI-7001	Managerial Accounting & Performance Management	30	7	Compulsory	50% CW 50% Written Exams
P57302 / ACFI-7002	Financial Accounting & Reporting	30	7	Compulsory	30% CW 20% Practical Exams 50% written Exams
P58323 / ACFI-6002	Business Concepts and Skills	20	6	Compulsory	50% CW 50% Written Exams
P58328 / ACFI-7009	Corporate Finance Concepts	20	7	Compulsory	30% CW 70% Written Exams
P58836 / ACFI-7015	Finance and Accounting Research Project	60	7	Compulsory	100% CW
P58331 / ACFI-7010	Audit and Assurance	20	7	Optional	30% CW 70% Written Exams
P58820 / ACFI-7011	Finance in Context	20	7	Optional	100% CW
P58823 / ACFI-7013	International Finance	20	7	Optional	100% Written Exams
P58827 / ACFI-7014	Financial Modelling B	20	7	Optional	30% CW 70% Practical Exams
P58837 / ACFI-7016	Financial Modelling A	10	7	Optional	40% CW 60% Practical Exams
P58838 / ACFI-7017	Corporate Governance	10	7	Optional	100% CW
P58839 ACFI-7018	Corporate Social Responsibility	10	7	Optional	100% CW
P58840 / ACFI-7019	Corporate Governance & Social Responsibility	20	7	Optional	100% CW
P58860 / BMGT-7036	Independent Study	20	7	Optional	100% CW
U70313 / ELSS-4001	Academic English for Postgraduate Studies	0	4	Optional	100% CW
U70314 / ELSS-4002	Academic English for Postgraduate Research	0	4	Optional	100% CW

4.2 PROGRESSION AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

The Postgraduate Certificate in Accounting and Finance and the Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting and Finance are awarded on the basis of passing 60 or 120 CATS credits respectively, with no requirement to pass specific modules.

4.3 PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Up to 7 exemptions may be obtained from ACCA foundation level paper.

SECTION 5: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

5.1 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Teaching and learning approaches

The teaching and learning methods include:

- Lectures & seminars led by individual members of Faculty and visiting specialists;
- Workshops for teaching a range of research and quantitative skills including appropriate research methodologies and on-line research skills;
- The use of case study and practical exercises;
- Student-led seminar activities facilitated by members of Faculty.
- Support for independent research and study through workshops and tutor support

Prior knowledge of the subject of Accounting is not required, but students are expected to start the programme with graduate-level skills of research, analysis, critical evaluation and writing, which can then be applied to the subject of Accounting. The course will commence with a look at the skills required in accounting, namely book-keeping. The modules will build on this foundation to develop knowledge and understanding in the various subject areas. Critical evaluation of fundamental and current research will also be developed through research methods workshops which will culminate in the research project.

Class time and independent learning time

Module title	Approximate class time (hours)	Expected independent learning time (hours)
Managerial Accounting & Performance Management	80	220
Financial Accounting & Reporting	80	220
Business Concepts and Skills	36	164
Corporate Finance Concepts	48	152
Audit and Assurance	48	152
Finance in Context	30	170
International Finance	34	166
Financial Modelling	35	165
Finance & Accounting Research Project	45	555
Financial Modelling A	16	84
Corporate Governance	18	82
Corporate Social Responsibility	18	82
Corporate Governance & Social Responsibility	36	164

Postgraduate attributes are developed in the following way:

Academic literacy is the primary concern of the MSc programme, as students from different backgrounds are expected to be proficient in most areas of accounting within a relatively short period of time. The expectations are not only drawn from the teaching staff but also the requirements of the professional accounting body who offer the requisite accreditation. The development of criticality is at the heart of the programme, particularly in the core taught modules Financial Accounting and Reporting, Managerial Accounting and Performance Management and Corporate Finance Concepts.

Research literacy is addressed throughout this MSc programme in different modules and is fully developed in the Finance and Accounting Research Project. In the taught modules, students are expected to engage with current research including critically evaluating the methods used and the validity and generalisability of the arguments presented.

Critical self-awareness and personal literacy is envisaged to be an outcome of part of the experiential learning supported by this MSc programme. Students will have ample opportunities to present information to fellow students and defend their arguments and positions. The development of criticality is at the heart of the programme,

Digital and information literacy is developed by applying a two-pronged approach. All students are required to become proficient in sourcing research articles by using the University's library resources or other means. Students are also required to process financial/accounting data throughout this MSc programme.

Active citizenship issues arise through working both in and outside class in a diverse student cohort, with representatives from around the world. The world-wide nature of accounting and finance as an industry, profession and a commodity and its consequence is a theme running through the programme, particularly in Corporate Finance Concepts and Financial Accounting and Reporting.

Assessment is initially designed at programme level, to ensure an appropriate mix of methods, such as coursework and examinations. Overall, of the 160 compulsory credits, 100 credits are partially assessed by examination. Assessment at module level has to measure the achievement of all of the module learning outcomes, and for each component of assessment, the particular module learning outcomes which are being assessed are identified. The module learning outcomes have been designed so that when all modules have been passed, the programme learning outcomes have been achieved. The relationship between modules and programme learning outcomes is recorded in a mapping document.

The assessment strategy is informed by the Brookes Assessment Compact, with an emphasis on assessment for learning, and hence the importance of learning from feedback – both formal and informal. Within induction, students receive a schedule showing when coursework is due, and when formal feedback can be expected. They also take part in a marking exercise, wherein they have to mark real exam answers from previous students, using the examiner's criteria. Thus they gain insight into the meaning of terms such as 'critically evaluate' and see how it can be done well, or not so well.

Examination as a form of assessment is used in several modules. This is because it is important to ensure that students obtain a broad knowledge of the subject area covered by modules as the various topics are interlocked in complex ways, so that a coursework task covering just one aspect of the whole can only provide a partial view. Examinations use a variety of different kinds of question; including short answer questions, calculation based questions and essay questions; in order to achieve different learning outcomes. Learning outcomes can be grouped into three main areas; those covering knowledge (assessed through short answer and brief essay questions), those covering application of formal methods to accounting and financial theory and data (assessed through calculation questions) and those covering critical appraisal of accounting and financial theories and empirical studies (assessed through longer essay questions).

5.2 Assessment regulations

The programme conforms to the University Regulations: section B4 **Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programme** <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/current/specific/b4/>

The programme also embeds the principles and practices within the **Brookes Assessment Compact**. https://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocslid/resources/assessment/assessment_compact_09.pdf Assessments are carefully designed to contribute to formative developmental feedback and can incorporate peer feedback as well. All module guides include specific assessment criteria which are clearly communicated and an assessment calendar is also produced.

SECTION 6: ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAMME

6.1 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of a second class honours degree (2:2) in any academic discipline, or equivalent overseas degree from a recognised institution or equivalent professional or other qualification.

Applicants who possess a diploma rather than a good degree may be eligible for entry provided they have compensatory work experience and can demonstrate career development.

This course attracts students from a wide range of backgrounds and nationalities. Applications are welcome from those in work and seeking continuing professional development.

Entry will also be subject to two satisfactory references (one of these must be an academic reference).

Please note: MSc Accounting programme is a conversion degree and as such is not suitable for applicants who have studied an undergraduate degree in accounting.

Please also see the university's [general entry requirements](#).

English language requirements

If English is not your first language you will need to satisfy the university's English language requirements:

- IELTS minimum level 6.0 (with a minimum of 6.0 in reading and writing, and 5.5 in listening and speaking) or equivalent
- If you have completed your undergraduate degree in the UK (at least one full year of study) you will automatically meet our English language requirements

Please also see the university's [standard English language requirements](#)

6.2 DBS AND OTHER PRE-COURSE CHECKS REQUIRED

Not applicable

SECTION 7: PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

This programme offers an opportunity to gain relevant knowledge, skills and competencies of value for a career in the accounting profession or closely related fields. This programme is especially suited to those who have decided on a change of career. Graduates can potentially work in many accounting related roles. For those who choose to work in part-qualified roles, the MSc Accounting programme will prove to be an excellent foundation in preparing them both for further study towards a full accounting qualification and for positions in organisations.

The design of the programme content is driven by the needs and views of employers, informed by the consultation between ACCA and the business world. Most of the staff team who worked in industry and who previously practised accounting professionally are able to bring to the programme authentic work experience and insights. The link with businesses is further strengthened by guest lectures conducted by visiting speakers from relevant industries and the accounting profession. Some students are eligible to take part in individual meetings with local prospective employers from the accounting profession.

The University Careers Service offers guidance on career planning as well as practical advice on CV writing, mock interviews and assessment centres, tutorials and careers counselling. Its online vacancies database Talent Bank details internship and graduate job opportunities plus volunteering and project work.