Programme Specification
Definitive Document

1. Basic Information

1.1 Awarding Institution:	Plymouth Marjon University
1.2 Teaching Institution:	Plymouth Marjon University
1.3 Locus of Delivery:	Plymouth Marjon University
1.4 Final Award Title:	MBA
1.5 FHEQ Level:	7
1.6 Programme Title:	MBA
1.7 Mode and Duration of Study:	Full Time – 1 year Part Time – 2 years
1.8 School:	Marjon Business
1.9 HECoS Code:	100078
1.10 Collaborative Provision Arrangement:	N/A
1.11 Admission Criteria:	Normal University entrance criteria apply (please refer to the website for further details). International students will be expected to meet the English language requirements of IELTS 6.0 or equivalent.
1.12 Accrediting Professional Body/PSRB	N/A
1.13 QAA Subject Benchmarking Group(s):	Master's Degrees in Business and Management (2015)
1.14 Other External Points of Reference:	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
	QAA Subject Benchmark Statement, Business and Management
1.15 Language of Study (for learning, teaching and assessment):	English
1.16 Work-Based Learning Arrangements:	N/A
1.17 Arrangements for Distance Learning:	N/A
1.18 Original Date of Production:	July 2021
1.19 Date of Commencement:	January 2022
1.20 Review Date:	December 2028

2. Programme Outline

The Marjon MBA is a programme of broad, analytical and integrated study of business, leadership and strategic management. It is a career development programme for those working in a variety of organisations, including sole traders, SMEs, national and multi-nationals, and not-for-profit.

The programme is forward looking, with a focus on practical leadership and management skills which can be implemented in the workplace. Four core taught modules take the students on a

journey through Strategic Leadership, Finance and Strategy, Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation, and Strategic Management of Data and Information.

The Strategic Leadership module develops theoretical approaches into practical skills in leading change, and setting, delivering and embedding sustainable strategic goals. The Finance and Strategy module is highly practical, and helps senior leaders to understand financial statements, and apply financials tools and analysis techniques in strategy and decision-making. Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation is highly applicable in all organisations, and focuses on ensuring organisations and their cultures are equipped to develop innovation and change. Strategic Management of Data and Information is becoming an ever more important skill for senior leaders. Managers and leaders are presented with 'big data' with increasing frequency, and it is a core skill to ensure that these data can be interpreted and evaluated, with timely and evidence-informed decision making.

Finally, the Strategic Management Project is designed to be highly applicable to the student's own experiences and desired professional trajectory. Starting with a Management Project Methods with project proposal phase, with close supervision and advice; this helps to ensure that students are set on an achievable and realistic path towards successful completion.
The programme has a strong focus on reflective and peer-to-peer learning that draws on learners' prior experience and enables them to integrate their new knowledge within the base of their professional context.

2.1 Integrating Sustainability into the Curriculum

It is widely considered that this coming decade will demand that businesses around the globe step forward to aid a 'green recovery' post-pandemic, drive the corporate and social change necessary to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and propel the planet towards net-zero emissions (Edie, 2020). In part, this programme aims to address the call for strategic leaders who are able and willing to take on the grand challenges that businesses face through skill development for enabling and strategic leaders who can lead change (BUAM01) and alternative forms of finance model (BUAM02).

3. Distinctive Features

- A comprehensive curriculum offering emphasis on strategic leadership, entrepreneurship and innovation, strategic management of data and information, and strategic finance.
- The programme is designed for flexibility, to provide accessibility for potential students who are possibly going to be employed during this programme. The programme uses a hybrid learning model - a combination of online learning with intensive and immersive face- to-face sessions.
- Authentic assessment opportunities with no examinations, enabling learners to embed and apply knowledge and understanding in their professional context, if applicable.

4. Programme Aims

- To foster broad knowledge and understanding of organisations, the external business context in which they operate, and their effective leadership and management.
- To develop a range of skills relevant to business and management: analysis, critical thinking, evaluation, decision-making, ability to communicate and work with others.
- To collect relevant information across a range of areas pertaining to a current situation, analyse that information and synthesise it into an appropriate form in order to evaluate decision alternatives.
- To critically apply theory in real-world business contexts.
- To develop comprehensive understanding and evaluation of research and enquiry techniques required to conduct an independent and original project on a specialised topic of interest and benefit to business practice.
- To equip business leaders and managers to respond to and shape the dynamic and changing nature of business.

5. Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge & understanding:
By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:
1. Relevant knowledge and understanding of organisations, the external context (including environmental and regulatory) in which they operate, and their management/leadership.
2. Conceptual understanding of theoretical and evidence-based principles of business and management.
3. A comprehensive understanding of research methodologies, techniques, tools, and methods used in business and management.
4. Critical awareness of current and emerging issues in business and management, informed by research and practice in the field.

Intellectual skills:
By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:
5. Application of relevant knowledge to a range of complex situations taking account of its relationship and interaction with other areas of the business or organisation.
6. Critical evaluation of recent research and scholarship in business and management
7. Originality in application of knowledge from current research, scholarship, and other relevant evidence in order to propose holistic and innovative solutions to business problems.
8. Critical analysis and synthesis of pertinent data to solve business problems.

Practical skills:
By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:
9. Sound judgement and decision-making skills in complex and unpredictable business situations and in the absence of complete data.
10. An ability to plan for complex and strategic business issues in a systematic, creative and

ethical manner.

11. An ability to use relevant postgraduate techniques of enquiry to create and synthesise knowledge in the field of strategic management and leadership.

12. An ability to reflect and act autonomously in dealing with a range of business issues.

Transferable / key skills:

By the end of this programme students should be able to demonstrate:

13. The ability to communicate conclusions about business clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

14. Self-direction and originality in tackling and solving business problems.

15. The ability to exercise initiative and personal responsibility in business.

16. Self-reflection and independent learning ability to identify and manage their own continuing professional development.

17. The ability to systematically organise and communicate advanced information evidencing appropriate proficiency in English language, using criteria developed for specialist audiences in unpredictably complex contexts (level 7).

6. Learning and Teaching Methods

In accordance with the Learning and Teaching Strategy 2020-2025, delivery of this MBA will follow a blended approach, via Plymouth Marjon's hybrid pedagogical model of on-campus and online teaching and learning. Pedagogies will be holistic and inclusive, and encompass both synchronous and asynchronous learning, face-to-face teaching, and located and connected teaching. Specific teaching and learning methods are listed below:

Method	Description
Blended Learning/ E-Learning	Utilisation of electronic media, normally via the University's virtual learning environment (Canvas) to support learning in a variety of ways. Examples include providing direct access to relevant reading, the development of blogs and interactive discussions for notices and updates. Content and materials are often part delivered through digital and online media, and part delivered through face-to-face interaction.
Case Study	A case study is a research method involving an up-close, in-depth and detailed examination of a subject of study (the case), as well as its related contextual conditions. In doing case study research, the 'case' being studied may be an individual, organisation, event or action, existing in a specific time and place.
Group Work	Students work in small online groups (or in local clusters where feasible) to achieve a goal or carry out a task. There is usually a feedback session, or a chance to disseminate the results within the larger module group.

Lecture	A lecture is usually an oral presentation intended to present information or teach students about a particular subject. Lectures are used to convey critical information, history, background, theories and equations.
Practical	Learning opportunities relating to putting theory and research into practice.
Seminar	A seminar is a form of academic instruction which has the function of bringing together small groups for recurring meetings, focusing each time on some particular subject, in which everyone present is requested to participate. This is often accomplished through an ongoing Socratic dialogue with a seminar leader or instructor, or through a more formal presentation of research. It is essentially a place where assigned readings are discussed, questions can be raised and debates can be conducted.
Supervision	Students undertaking the final 60-credit research module will be allocated a supervisor, who will oversee the progress of the student through a mutually agreed schedule of independent research and writing.
Supported Independent-Study	Activities where a trainee conducts research or another identified learning activity either on their own and/or with tutor support (face-to-face or otherwise).
Tutorial	A tutorial is a small class of one, or only a few students, in which the tutor, a lecturer, or other academic staff member, gives additional individual attention to the students. More interactive and specific than a lecture, a tutorial seeks to teach by example and supply the information to complete a certain task.
Webinar	A web-based learning or training activity, usually interactive, for example, a workshop or seminar. Webinars take place synchronously online using video conferencing software, with participants taking part remotely. Webinars may be recorded and made available as a video for asynchronous viewing.
Workshop	A training workshop is a type of interactive training where participants carry out a number of training activities rather than passively listen to a lecture or presentation. Broadly, two types of workshops exist: a general workshop is put on for a mixed audience, and a closed workshop is tailored towards meeting the training needs of a specific group.

6.1 Learning Enhancement

In accordance with QAA Subject Benchmark Statement, the teaching would aim to engender a culture of independent learning that presents a challenging learning experience. The design of the programme facilitates real world learning and favours authentic assessment that draws on,

and informs, their professional experience. Theory and practice are integrated throughout the curriculum.

6.2 e-Learning

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, higher education has considered how it can shift towards a more consistent digital pedagogical approach. As such, digital materials and resources are used extensively during the programme via the Distance Learning Platform, including the provision of reading lists, module workbooks, shared tutor and student presentations, slides, quizzes, videos, and other digital resources. Students are encouraged to engage in peer support through other professional online platforms such as LinkedIn and Twitter.

7. Modes of Assessment

In accordance with the Learning and Teaching Strategy 2020-2025, and following University regulations and policies, assessment will be inclusive and authentic. Students submit work for marking, moderation, and external examination, using a range of assessment methods (see table below). Written assignments are marked anonymously in accordance with institutional requirements (with the exception of the final project) and comprehensive written and verbal formative/summative feedback is provided to students throughout the programme.

Method	Description
Annotated Bibliography	Students compile a list of citations to books, articles, and documents applicable to the topic of interest. Each citation is followed by a brief (usually about 150 words) descriptive and evaluative paragraph, the 'annotation', the purpose of which is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited.
Case study	Analysis and/or evaluation of a business, organisation or business practice, or aspect of business strategy (real or imagined).
Essay	A written response to a question based on synthesis and analysis, demonstrating appropriate knowledge and understanding of key current debates in the subject. Essays are used to judge the mastery and comprehension of the material, with students asked to explain, comment on, or assess a topic of study in the form. The academic essay tests the student's ability to present their thoughts in an organised way and is designed to test their intellectual capabilities.
Presentation	Clearly structured individual or group verbal delivery within timed conditions, delivered using appropriate methods and which demonstrates detailed knowledge and analysis of the subject

Project Proposal	A written proposal for the Strategic Management Project. It will include the design and plan for the project, project strategy, and a risk register addressing practicalities and ethical issues.
Report	A report is an analytical piece of work using research to critically review the subject area. A report can also use the support of diagrams, pictures and captions to analyse research.
Strategic Management Project (Dissertation)	Students will conduct and write up a substantive, independent, research-focused dissertation that makes an identifiable and innovative contribution to knowledge that can be applied in practice. A dissertation is a document submitted in support of candidature for an academic degree or professional qualification presenting the author's research and findings.

8. Exemptions to University Regulations

The ability to APCL 120 credits from previous study.

9. Work-Based Learning/Placement Learning

The MBA programme is designed to encourage and support students' practice, leadership, and management within a professional context. Tasks and assessment activities may utilise personal work contexts where possible or a theoretical setting if more appropriate. Students develop confidence in their knowledge and skills in leadership and management.

10. Programme Structure

Full Time
Level 7

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Assessment	Sequence	Compulsory/ Optional	Condonable/ Non-Condonable
BUAM01	Strategic Leadership	30	100% Coursework	1	Compulsory	Condonable
BUAM02	Finance and Strategy	30	100% Coursework	2	Compulsory	Condonable
BUAM03	Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation	30	100% Coursework	3	Compulsory	Condonable
BUAM04	Strategic Management of Data and	30	100% Coursework	4	Compulsory	Condonable

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Assessment	Sequence	Compulsory/ Optional	Condonable/ Non-Condonable
BUAM05	Information Management Project Methods	20	100% Coursework	5	Compulsory	Non-Condonable
BUAM06	Strategic Management Project	40	100% Coursework	6	Compulsory	Non-Condonable

Part Time
Level 7-Year 1

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Assessment	Sequence	Compulsory/ Optional	Condonable/ Non-Condonable
BUAM01	Strategic Leadership	30	100% Coursework	1	Compulsory	Condonable
BUAM02	Finance and Strategy	30	100% Coursework	2	Compulsory	Condonable
BUAM03	Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation	30	100% Coursework	3	Compulsory	Condonable

Level 7-Year 2

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Assessment	Sequence	Compulsory/ Optional	Condonable/ Non-Condonable
BUAM04	Strategic Management of Data and Information	30	100% Coursework	4	Compulsory	Condonable
BUAM05	Management Project Methods	20	100% Coursework	5	Compulsory	Non-Condonable
BUAM06	Strategic Management Project	40	100% Coursework	6	Compulsory	Non-Condonable

Delivery Pattern
Full-time (12 months) - two potential entry points a year (September and January)

Duration	Taught Input	Module
September - January	September, October, November, December	BUAM01 BUAM02

January - May	January, February, March, April	BUAM03
		BUAM04
June - September	June, July, August	BUAM05
		BUAM06

Duration	Taught Input	Module
January - May	January, February, March, April	BUAM01
		BUAM02
June - September	June, July, August, September	BUAM03
		BUAM04
September - January	September, October, November	BUAM05
		BUAM06

Part-time (24 months)

Year 1 (September intake)

Duration	Taught Input	Module
September - December	September, October, November	BUAM01
January - April	January, February, March	BUAM02
May - July	May, June, July	BUAM03

Year 2

Duration	Taught Input	Module
September - December	September, October, November	BUAM04
January - February	January, February	BUAM05
March - July	(supervision only)	BUAM06

Year 1 (January intake)

Duration	Taught Input	Module
January - April	January, February, March	BUAM01
May - July	May, June, July	BUAM02
September - December	September, October, November	BUAM03

Year 2

Duration	Taught Input	Module
January - April	January, February, March	BUAM04
May - June	May, June	BUAM05
July - December	(supervision only)	BUAM06

Year 1 (May intake)

Duration	Taught Input	Module
May - July	May, June, July	BUAM01
September - December	September, October, November	BUAM02
January - April	January, February, March	BUAM03

Year 2

Duration	Taught Input	Module
May - July	April, May, June	BUAM04
September - November	September, October	BUAM05
December - April	(supervision only)	BUAM06

The table below shows the various 'threads' through the programme. These 'threads' provide cohesion and coherence to the programme, so that learning can be developed and built upon in a robust way that makes sense to the students. Links will be forged during learning sessions with content from previous modules, as well as indication of learning on up-coming modules. The 'threads' act as a mechanism for students to see how the learning links together in meaningful way and will be made explicit to students throughout the programme.

Level 7

Module Code	Module Title	Thread	Employability skills (Section 14)
BUAM01	Strategic Leadership	A, C, D, F, G	Leadership and social influence Digital skills Emotional intelligence
BUAM02	Finance and Strategy	A, B, D, F, G	Complex problem-solving Systems analysis and evaluation Critical thinking and analysis Digital skills
BUAM03	Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation	B, E, F, G	Creativity, originality and initiative Reasoning and ideation Digital skills
BUAM04	Strategic Management of Data and Information	A, B, C, D, F, G	Complex problem-solving Critical thinking and analysis Digital skills
BUAM05	Management Project Methods	B, E, F, G	Creativity, originality and initiative Reasoning and ideation Digital skills
BUAM06	Strategic Management Project	A, B, C, D E, F, G	Leadership and social influence Creativity, originality and initiative Critical thinking and analysis Digital skills

A. Critical thinking and analysis

B. Practical business skills

C. Leadership

D. Strategic thinking

E. Creativity and innovation

F. Personal development and reflection

G. Research skills

- Leadership and social influence: students are able to motivate others to act towards achieving a common goal
- Emotional intelligence: students are able to recognise and manage their emotions, and the emotions of others, both individually and in groups.
- Complex problem-solving: students are able to identify complex problems and review related information in order to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions in real-world settings.
- Systems analysis and evaluation: students are able to study a process or situation in order to identify its goals and purposes and create systems and procedures that will achieve them in an efficient way
- Critical thinking and analysis: students have the ability to actively conceptualise, analyse and synthesise information objectively and make a reasoned judgment to reach an answer or conclusion
- Creativity, originality and initiative: students are able to perceive the world in new ways, to find hidden patterns and to generate new solutions. Students develop the ability to assess situations and initiate solutions independently.
- Reasoning, problem-solving and ideation: students are able to consider issues and situations in a sensible way using logic and imagination and have the capacity to form intelligent solutions
- Digital Skills: ICT Proficiency and Productivity; Digital Collaboration; Digital Learning and Teaching; Finding digital information and data management; Digital problem-solving.

Structure and Points of Progression

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Delivery Sequence	Assessment Point	Progression Point
BUAM01	Strategic Leadership	30	1	MAB – Feb PAB – Feb	
BUAM02	Finance and Strategy	30	2	MAB – Feb PAB – Feb	Exit award (PGCert) available after completion of M01 and M02
BUAM03	Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation	30	3	MAB – June PAB – July	

BUAM04	Strategic Management of Data and Information	30	4	MAB – June PAB – July	Exit award (PGDip) available on completion of four modules
BUAM05	Management Project Methods	20	5	MAB - September PAB - September	
BUAM06	Strategic Management Project	40	6	MAB – Feb PAB - Feb	Exit award available (MBA)

11. Accrediting Professional Body /Professional Regulatory and Statutory Body (PSRB)

N/A

12. Professional Advisory Group

N/A

13. Academic Progression Opportunities

Successful participants could be eligible to apply for an MPhil/PhD programme in a topic of business and management at Plymouth Marjon University, or other institutions.

14. Employability and Career Progression Opportunities

Employability skills are integral to this programme and are developed through peer learning, independent tasks, formative and summative assessments. In addition to those skills shown as Threads in Section 10, the following skills are developed: Analytical thinking and innovation (BUAM02, BUAM03, BUAM06); Active learning and reflective practice (BUAM01, BUAM03); Leadership and social influence and Emotional Intelligence (BUAM01); Reasoning, problem-solving and ideation (BUAM02, BUAM03, BUAM04), and Complex problem-solving (BUAM06). Digital Skills are developed throughout the module, in particular: ICT Proficiency and Productivity (all modules) and Finding Digital Information and Data Management (BUAM02, BUAM04, BUAM06).

Typically, graduates from the programme are expected to be candidates for rapid progression within their organisation. Through a combined focus on developing knowledge, skill acquisition, and personal development planning, students are in an excellent position to become innovators or leaders of change in their work and business sector contexts.

15. Support for Students and for Student Learning

All registered students of Plymouth Marjon University are entitled to draw upon a range of the University's student support and guidance services. The following are accessible remotely:

- Academic tutorial staff, including programme leaders, module leaders, and external University tutors.
- Extensive library and other learning resources, including the electronic library catalogue, e-journals, and Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).
- Library and study skills guidance, access to Studiosity and Turnitin.
- Student Support Services: support with learning, counselling services.
- Detailed programme and module handbooks.

16. Student Feedback Mechanisms

The programme team seek to develop positive relationships with participants through ongoing and continuous dialogue and regular communication. Feedback at programme level will be achieved through programme and module evaluations, mid module evaluations, end of semester evaluations and the staff student liaison committee. In addition, students will be invited to participate in the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES).

17. Other Stakeholder Feedback

The design of this MBA has considered the market locally, nationally and internationally and sought guidance from other HEIs running similar programmes. Feedback from the Chartered Management Institute on the programme outline and structure has also been positive.

18. Quality and Enhancement Mechanisms

The quality of the student experience and the standards of the awards are managed and quality assured through the University's regulations policies and procedures. Student achievement and progression is managed through the Module Assessment Boards (MABs) and the Progression and Award Boards (PABs). Programmes are reviewed annually through University annual monitoring processes, including external examiner contributions, and incorporate student feedback mechanisms at both modular and the programme level reported formally through the University's annual monitoring and reporting cycle.

Learning Outcomes Mapping Matrix

Module Code	Knowledge and Understanding				Intellectual Skills				Practical Skills				Transferable/Key Skills				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
BUAM01	X	X		X		X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
BUAM02	X	X	X	X		X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
BUAM03	X	X		X		X	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	
BUAM04	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
BUAM05			X	X		X	X			X	X		X	X	X	X	
BUAM06	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

APPENDIX 1. INFORMATION RELATING TO STUDENTS ENTERING THE PROGRAMME AT DIFFERENT POINTS

Students have the opportunity to enter the MBA programme at several points, depending on their level of pre-existing qualifications:

1. **Direct entry under the University's normal Admissions Criteria, and completion of all modules (180 credits at Level 7)**

2. **Entry with up to 60 academic credits** awarded on the basis of Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning.

   Prospective students will be advised following an individual and comprehensive assessment of their qualifications and experience. Their study pathway may include any two of the 'taught' modules which best facilitate them meeting the overall programme learning outcomes. In certain cases, students will be encouraged to study a third taught module to ensure that they are able to meet all the programme learning outcomes.

3. **Entry with 120 academic credits** awarded on the basis of Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning.

   Prospective students will again be advised following an individual and comprehensive assessment of their qualifications and experience. Their study pathway may include a taught module where it would facilitate them meeting the overall programme learning outcomes.

Success on the Strategic Management Project element will be assured through the implementation of an intensive 20-credit Management Project Methods (with Project Proposal). This will help students who have not been in a Higher Education environment for some time to focus on the requirements and timescales for a successful project. Full tutor support will be provided through this phase, through the facilitation of either located sessions, connected sessions or a combination of both. Bridging work may be recommended if necessary for student success.