Programme Specification for Pre-Masters in Business

This document applies to Academic Year 2025/26 onwards

Table 1 programme specification for Pre-Masters in Business

1.	**Awarding institution/body**	University of Worcester
2.	**Teaching institution**	University of Worcester
3.	**Programme accredited by**	NA
4.	**Final award or awards**	Pre-Masters in Business
5.	**Programme title**	Pre-Masters in Business (Level 6)
6.	**Pathways available**	NA
7.	**Mode and/or site of delivery**	Standard Taught Programme
8.	**Mode of attendance and duration**	Full time (1 year)
9.	**UCAS Code**	NA
10.	**Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement**	QAA Characteristics Statement - International Pathway Courses October 2022
11.	**Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision**	Approved July 2024

12.   Educational aims of the programme

This programme is tailored for international students at Level 6 who do not meet the direct entry requirements for the University's postgraduate courses, as well as students seeking to redirect their academic trajectory post-completion of undergraduate studies by integrating core business knowledge to facilitate their transition.

Its academic objectives encompass facilitating adaptation to the UK's Higher Education system, cultivating core English language proficiency, refining academic and general business subject knowledge, and acknowledging students' cultural and educational backgrounds, as well as individual learning needs, within a supportive learning environment with a guaranteed progression route to WBS post-graduate courses. The programme aims to achieve the following:

1. Prepare graduates for master's level studies in business/management or related fields, despite not meeting direct entry requirements.
2. Develop students' English language, critical thinking, and analytical skills to support successful completion of postgraduate degrees.
3. Equip students with study skills and strategies necessary for independent research and critical engagement with challenging academic topics.
4. Enhance fundamental business and management knowledge, demonstrating applicable skills and techniques for various contexts.
5. Provide an educational pathway conducive to professional employment and development in the national and international commercial sectors.
6. Foster an appreciation for lifelong learning through the development of competent intellectual and practical skills, facilitating informed decision-making in both academic studies and careers.
7. Support successful adjustment to the academic and social environment of the University of Worcester.

13.   Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

This course aim is to prepare international graduate students for the University's postgraduate programs by aiding their transition into the UK's Higher Education system. This is achieved through learning objectives designed to enhance their English language proficiency, and their academic and general business subject knowledge:

Table 2 knowledge and understanding outcomes for module code/s

Knowledge and Understanding		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	**Module Code/s**
1.	Employ and demonstrate proficiency and integrity in the written and spoken English language at a level appropriate to the chosen programme of study.	LANG3501 BMGT3502
2.	Apply a range of academic reading, writing and oral communication skills to demonstrate effective personal development and project management	BMGT3505 BMGT3508
3.	Appraise different methods of data collection and analytical approaches	BMGT3506 BMGT3503
4.	Identify and be able to explain contemporary business issues.	BMGT3504 BMGT3507

Table 3 cognitive and intellectual skills outcomes for module code/s

Cognitive and Intellectual skills		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	**Module Code/s**
5.	Employ academic language (reading, writing, speaking and listening) at a level of proficiency equivalent to IELTS 6.5 (minimum 5.5) required for entry to WBS post graduate courses; to produce assessments recognising UOW academic integrity policies.	LANG3501 BMGT3502
6.	Formulate an original concept for an independent research project, systematically search and evaluate sources, and apply methodologies pertinent to the proposed project.	BMGT3503 BMGT3506
7.	Demonstrate critical thinking skills in the process of information analysis and project development.	BMGT3504 BMGT3507
8.	Design and justify a business project showcasing personal development, and professional management skills	BMGT3505 BMGT3508

Table 4 skills and capabilities related to employment outcomes for module code/s

Skills and capabilities related to employability		
LO no.	**On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:**	**Module Code/s**
9.	Self-management: Demonstrate effective time planning and management skills, coupled with a willingness to take responsibility and enhance personal performance through feedback and reflective learning.	BMGT3503 BMGT3505
10.	Team Working: collaborate with others on shared tasks, assume appropriate team roles, lead discussions, contribute meaningfully, and negotiate effectively, recognizing the importance of interdependence.	LANG3501 BMGT3504
11.	Problem Solving: Develop critical reasoning, analytical, and synthesis capabilities, along with the skill to apply knowledge in practical contexts.	BMGT3502 BMGT3507
12.	Data Analysis: Demonstrate proficiency in retrieving, analysing, and evaluating information from diverse sources.	BMGT3506 BMGT3503
13.	Communication: Communicate information clearly and appropriately, both orally and in writing, and adapt messages to specific audiences and purposes.	LANG3501 BMGT3508
14.	Application of Information technology: Identify and utilize the appropriate IT tools for given tasks, demonstrating familiarity with word processing, spreadsheets, file management, and effective use of AI, the internet, and email.	BMGT3503 BMGT3506

Table 5 transferable/key skills outcomes for module code/s

Transferable/key skills		
LO no.	**On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:**	**Module Code/s**
15.	Organise self effectively, agreeing and setting realistic targets, seeking and accessing support where appropriate and managing time to achieve targets.	All Modules
16.	Demonstrate an understanding of cultural diversity while cultivating self-confidence and belief in own ideas, as well as in the contributions of others, within collaborative settings.	All Modules

Learning, teaching and assessment

This programme has been specifically designed to facilitate students' intellectual and cultural transition as they embark on postgraduate studies at a UK Higher Education Institution (HEI). Aligned with the University Learning and Teaching strategy and the Worcester Business School's pedagogical approach, the modules are structured to impart

the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies crucial for supporting students in transitioning to postgraduate education in the UK. Recognizing the diverse starting points of students, the course adopts a collaborative approach, engaging students as partners to tailor an educational experience that optimizes their prospects of advancing to a postgraduate programme.

The course's learning objectives are developed to assist students to develop English language, academic, personal and professional skills while exploring contemporary business themes within a diverse, multicultural academic setting. Students will be exposed to real-world business challenges, fostering a learning environment that is both vocational and relevant.

The programme's learning, teaching, and assessment methodology incorporate a variety of approaches, including tutor-led direct contact, university-based teaching sessions featuring structured lectures, interactive seminars, flipped classroom sessions, group discussions, cooperative learning activities, individual tutorials, real-world case studies, oral presentations, hands-on practice and self-directed research. Emphasising collaborative learning, students will use the university's Virtual Learning Environment to participate in online collaborative activities, ensuring shared learning experiences.

Teaching

Students are taught through a combination of interactive workshops, lectures, seminars, practical activities, etc. Interactive workshops take a variety of formats and are intended to enable the application of learning through discussion and small group activities. Seminars enable the discussion and development of understanding of topics covered in lectures, and laboratory practical sessions are focused on developing subject specific skills and applied individual and group project work.

In addition, meetings (both individual and group) with personal academic tutors are scheduled throughout the academic year.

The University emphasizes enabling students to develop independent learning capabilities that will equip them for lifelong ongoing learning, future employment, and academic achievement. A mixture of independent study, teaching, and academic support from Student Services and Library Services, as well as the personal academic tutoring system enables students to reflect on progress and build up a profile of skills, achievements, and experiences that will help them to flourish and be successful graduates.

Contact time

Students will have a total of 32 hours of contact time per week arranged between classes and independent study.

Typically, class contact time will be structured around eight hours per week for 12 weeks per semester including:
- Information giving, facilitated discussions, small group work, presentations.
- Practical skills – the opportunity to practice group facilitation, presentation, communication and listening skills.
- Visiting speakers and opportunities to visit other settings are regular features of the course.

Independent self-study

In addition to the contact time, full-time students are expected to undertake around 24 hours of personal self-study per week, including preparation for assessments and

examinations. Typically, this will involve meeting with individual tutors to discuss progress and feedback, completing online activities, reading journal articles and books, working on individual and group projects, undertaking research in the library and online. In addition to this, students will spend time sharing ideas with fellow students, taking part in extra-curricular learning activities and engaging with external employers.

Independent learning is supported by a range of excellent learning facilities, including the Hive and library resources, the virtual learning environment, and extensive electronic learning resources as well as our network of employers and entrepreneurs.

Teaching staff

Students will be taught by a teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the course. The team includes senior academics, professional practitioners with industry experience and business leaders and employers.

Teaching is informed by research and consultancy, and many lecturers are Fellows of the Higher Education Academy. Teaching is informed by the research and consultancy work carried out by staff and staff profiles can be view at the WBS Staff Profile Page.

Assessment

The course provides opportunities to test understanding and learning informally through the completion of practice or 'formative' assignments. Each module has one or more formal or 'summative' assessment which is graded and counts towards the overall module grade.

Assessment methods include writing individual reports, individual essays, group presentations, case studies, closed-book exams, open-book exams and mini vivas.

The precise assessment requirements for an individual student in an academic year will vary according to the module taken, but a typical formal summative assessment pattern for each semester of the course is:

Semester 1:

- 1 Diagnostic test
- 3 Group presentations
- 1 Exam
- 1 in class quiz
- 2 Individual projects
- 1 Portfolio/journal

Semester 2:

- 2 Individual essays/report
- 1 Exam
- 2 Portfolio/journal
- 2 Group presentations
- 1 Individual project

Inclusivity

The learning and teaching strategies for individual modules have been undertaken in accordance with the University's Curriculum Design Policy. There is constructive alignment of the learning outcomes with teaching and learning approaches and assessment, research-informed teaching and Business School Employability Standards have been embedded within modules to meet the learning needs of a diverse range of learners.

14. Assessment strategy

The program's assessment strategy aims to familiarise students with the assessment methodologies, feedback mechanisms, and grading systems typical of UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). It also aims to prepare them for the challenges they will encounter at the master's level.

Assessment includes up to two summative coursework per module such as presentations, case studies, examinations, and assignments. Additionally, there is an early diagnostic test for Academic English and Post-Graduate Study Skills at the beginning of the semester to support students with English language competence.

Various assessment methods are employed throughout the modules to effectively measure the achievement of learning outcomes. These assessments strike a balance between formative and summative elements and provide detailed and timely feedback from tutors, which is crucial for student learning.

Each assessment is meticulously designed to align with the University's Assessment Policy and Undergraduate Grade Descriptors.

15. Programme structures and requirements

This course aim is to prepare international graduate students for the University's postgraduate programs by aiding their transition into the UK's Higher Education system. This is achieved through enhancing English language proficiency, academic and general business subject knowledge trough the following modules:

Award map for :   Certificate in Pre-Masters at Level 6

Table 6 award map

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional (O))
LANG3501	Academic English and Post-graduate Study Skills	15	M
BMGT3502	Critical Thinking and Academic Integrity	15	M

Module Code	Module Title	Credits (Number)	Status (Mandatory (M) or Optional (O))
BMGT3503	Research Techniques in Business	15	M
BMGT3504	Contemporary Topics in Sustainable Business and Management	15	M
BMGT3505	Personal and Professional Development	15	M
BMGT3506	Data Analysis for Business	15	M
BMGT3707	Advanced Topics in Sustainable Business and Management	15	M
BMGT3508	Project Management	15	M

Student must take all of the above modules to complete the award.

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

This award is located at Level 6 of the OfS sector recognised standards.

This Level 6 award offers international students an opportunity to acclimate to UK academic norms, develop core skills, subject knowledge, and confidence within a nurturing environment mirroring higher education institutions. Its design adheres to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, QAA International Pathway Courses Characteristic Statement, OfS regulatory framework for HE in England guiding principles.

Firstly, the course academic skills provision aligns with the Quality Code for Higher Education, ensuring academic standards are met and maintained while enhancing student engagement and upholding award integrity through external referencing.

Secondly, the course follows the QAA Characteristics Statement for International Pathway Courses, providing context for educational systems distinct from students' backgrounds, facilitating their transition into UK higher education without replacing their original academic approach.

Thirdly, it provides academic content provision relevant to the student's intended Business degree course linked closely to the QAA Subject Benchmark Statemented for Business and Management and the OfS HE regulatory framework. to assist students in developing disciplinary-specific vocabulary and a basic understanding of core subject matter before they progress to the next level of study.

Module learning outcomes, content, and teaching strategies are crafted according to these standards, ensuring alignment with FHEQ qualification levels. Ultimately, the Certificate in Pre-Master's Studies signifies the general achievement expected at Level 6 and reflects students' proficiency and completion of the course.

17. Support for students

The Pre-Masters is designed to equip students for every facet of student life in the UK and its Higher Education system. At Worcester Business School, students benefit from extensive support aimed at maximizing their achievement of course objectives. The following delineates the diverse range of support services accessible to students, some are specifically tailored for international students taking this course:

- Course induction: This includes a concise overview of the course, introduction to delivery patterns and assessment methods for both the overall programme and specific modules, as well as an introduction to the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and available learning resources. The induction aims to facilitate students' transition and adaptation to the new teaching and learning environment.
- Student life and cultural adaptation: This important aspect of the programme is fostered through active engagement with informal curriculum and co-curricular activities. This includes participation in events, university societies, and various opportunities for social interaction and personal development, all contributing to a well-rounded student experience. This aims to help students understand and navigate local services and opportunities available.
- Course Leader: Students have access to a course Leader who serves as a point of contact for addressing overarching programme-related questions and concerns. Special focus is placed on ensuring that Pre-Masters' students have access to support services for their wellbeing, neurodiversity, and any additional learning needs they may have. It's recognized that students from certain cultural backgrounds may not feel comfortable seeking out such support independently.
- Personal Academic Support Tutor: Each student is allocated a Personal Academic Support Tutor who assists in their integration into the University, understanding program requirements, maximizing the use of available learning resources, and serves as a key point of contact for support.

   https://www2.worc.ac.uk/firstpoint/
   https://www.worcester.ac.uk/life/help-and-support/services-for-students/home.aspx
   https://www2.worc.ac.uk/disabilityanddyslexia/

18. Admissions

Admissions policy
This course seeks to recruit international students with an undergraduate degree in any subject, and with diverse prior learning experiences. . The University of Worcester is an accessible place for higher education. It is committed to widening participation and encouraging diversity in the student population. Worcester Business School works closely with central student support services including the Admissions Office, the Disability and Dyslexia Service and the International Centre to support students from a variety of different backgrounds. UW actively encourage and welcome people from the widest range of economic and cultural backgrounds and value the contribution of mature learners.

Entry requirements

- International Students with an undergraduate degree in any subject.
- English Language Requirements:
   IELTS   6.0 (minimum 5.5)
   PTE   59 (minimum 59)
   TOEFL iBT   78 (R: 18, L:17, W: 17, S: 20) f
   or more information please follow the link below:
   https://www.worcester.ac.uk/study/International/international-applicants/english-l anguage-requirements.aspx
- See Admissions Policy for other acceptable qualifications.
- International students can check their qualification with the International Recruitment Team at: international@worc.ac.uk

Admissions procedures

Entry to the course requires all applicants to complete an application form which gives a variety of information about the student's work experience, qualifications and motivation. These will be checked by the Admissions Tutor. Where information on the form is insufficient for a decision to be made the applicant will be contacted directly by the Admission Tutor for an interview.

Please refer to the Admissions office or
https://www.worc.ac.uk/study/find-a-course/how-to-apply/home.aspx

Admissions/selection criteria

Candidates must be able to demonstrate that they meet the minimum requirements for admission. Offers will be conditional against successful meeting of entry requirements. Evidence from personal statements and/or references included with the application form will be considered in order to ascertain a candidate's ability to demonstrate enthusiasm for undertaking the course, commitment to study and the academic capability to succeed on the course.

19.   Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Requirements to pass modules
- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- A student is required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items
- A student who submits course work late but within 7 days (one week) of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- A student who submits work later than 7 days (one week) will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

Retrieval of failure
- A student is entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student will be notified of the reassessment opportunities in the results notification issued via the secure student portal (SOLE). It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and comply with any reassessments.

Requirements for Awards

Table 7 requirements for awards

Award	Requirement
Pre-Masters in Business	Passed 120 credits at Level 6, as specified on the award map.

For further information, see the [Taught Courses Regulatory Framework](#).

20. **Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers**

Graduate destinations after completion of a Masters degree
Worcester Business School offers a wide range of post-graduate degrees including MSc Human Resource Management, MSc in Project Management, MSc in Logistics & Supply Chain Management, MSc Marketing, and MBA. The job market for our graduates is strongly affected by the state of the global economy and includes a wide range of employers with areas such as the UK Public Sector & NHS, software companies and publishing houses amongst some of the more recent employers for MSc in Human Resource Management. Construction, IT, automobile, pharmaceuticals, diversified industrial groups and even the public and voluntary sectors are increasingly recruiting graduates with Project Management knowledge and skills.

For Logistics and Supply Chain Management graduates areas such as retail, freight, automobile, pharmaceuticals, diversified industrial groups. This is an area that is in high demand due to the clear move to online business and the increase in globalisation and competition. Specialist marketing, advertising and PR agencies are not the only major employers of marketing graduates.

Marketing is a core element of all organisations and, therefore, opportunities exist across all industry sectors - private, public and voluntary. These can range from the financial, consumer and information technology industries to not-for-profit organisations, such as charities, local government, and higher education institutions. And for MBAs FMCG, pharmaceuticals, diversified industrial groups and even the public and voluntary sectors are currently recruiting more actively than finance and consultancy which have traditionally been the largest recruiters.

Student employability
The Pre-Masters course design centres on preparing students to progress to a Masters degree course enhancing their employability. The curriculum is strategically crafted to equip graduates with the necessary skills and competencies to thrive in today's competitive job market. Students are trained in a comprehensive variety of contemporary topics, aiming to the development of critical thinking, open-mindedness, inclusivity, and proficiency.

The international composition of both students and faculty, coupled with a diverse range of expertise and backgrounds, plays a pivotal role in shaping the learning journey. This diversity not only enriches the educational experience but also significantly contributes to the employability of students upon completion of the programme.

Links with employers
The Business School works closely with a number of professional organisations including the Chartered Institute of Management, Institute of Commercial Management, Chartered Institute of Marketing, Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, Chartered Institute of Public Relations, Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, Institute of Financial Accountants, Chartered Institute of Payroll Professionals, and British Computer Society.

The School has worked with a number of business clients in developing and delivering its programmes. These include – The NHS (a range of Primary Care and Acute Trusts); Local Government (a range of County, District and Unitary Authorities); West Mercia, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire and Staffordshire Constabularies; Ministry of Defence and The Royal Air Force; Her Majesty's Prison Service; Royal Mail; Financial Services Organisations (e.g. Lloyds TSB, HBOS Plc, Clerical Medical, NFU Mutual and Virgin Money); Housing Associations, Southco, Malvern Instruments, Allpay Limited, G4S Secure Solutions, Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and Hitachi Capital.

The School has well-developed working relations with the local business community many of whom contribute to postgraduate programmes through the internship option to give students a real-world insight into the future world of work and/or to provide live client briefs to students. Senior managers from this business community have been involved in the design of this programme. They were consulted on the skills and attributes they expect to see in our graduates as we well as the knowledge and academic competencies they want our graduated to exhibit.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in associated course documentation e.g. course handbooks, module outlines and module specifications.