BA (Honours) Business Studies
Distance learning degree qualification

GLOBAL
STUDY
GLOBAL
RECOGNITION
Qualification details

How do businesses develop strategies, handle risk and take decisions? What’s involved in essential business functions such as marketing, accounting and finance? This degree provides an innovative and accessible introduction to the world of business, and helps you relate your studies directly to your own workplace.

You’ll investigate how organisations think and work, how they’re managed, and the external world in which they operate. You’ll also gain a general understanding of business organisations and their key elements; wider considerations such as environments, markets and processes; and how all these work together.

Flexible options enable you to specialise within business studies if you wish – for example, the BA (Hons) Business Studies (Accounting). Or you can combine business studies with another subject and study for a BA (Hons) Business Studies with or Economics.

Career relevance and employability

The skills and knowledge you’ll develop by studying this degree will equip you to follow a number of career paths, and are recognised by employers as having great value for work in management and business. They can also lead to opportunities in specialist areas concerned with offering guidance to managers – such as management consultancy or business journalism. The degree also contributes to your career development by:

- developing your cognitive skills – critical thinking,
- analysis, paraphrasing and evaluation
- improving ICT, numeracy, and presentation skills
- developing your understanding of the function and contribution of specialisms like marketing, HR, operations and finance.

Entry requirements

There are no formal entry requirements to study this degree, although you will need to have a proficiency in English as all course material, exams and tutor support is in English.

Credit for previous study elsewhere

If you have already completed some successful study at higher-education level at another institution you may be able to transfer credit for this study and count it towards an Open University qualification. If you wish to apply to transfer credit you must do so as soon as possible, and before you register for your chosen qualification. If you are awarded credit for study completed elsewhere, you may find that you need to study fewer OU modules to complete your qualification with us.

Course duration

Typically it takes six years part-time study to complete this qualification, but you can take anything from three (full-time study equivalent) to 16 years.

Modules and pathways

As part of your registration you can choose a pathway. Pathways are different sets of module options, allowing you to specialise in certain subjects to complete your degree.

There is currently only one pathway for this qualification available to international students:

- Standard pathway

To complete your degree you need to achieve 360 credits; 120 credits at Stage 1, 120 at Stage 2, and 120 at Stage 3; with each module being 30-60 credits. Modules can be compulsory, in which case you must study them, or optional, in which case you can select the ones you prefer to study. To see full details of how you can choose from the modules listed overleaf please visit our website, www.openuniversity.edu

For full details of the modules available, please refer to our website, www.openuniversity.edu.

Assessment key

EMA = End-of-module assessment
iCMA = Interactive computer marked assessment
TMA = Tutor-marked assignment

Stage 1

An introduction to business studies (B120)

Credits: 30 at Level 1
Assessment: 4 TMAs, EMA

This Level 1 course is the first in our degree in business studies and is the recommended introductory course in business studies. It explores the question ‘What is a business?’ and investigates the business functions of human resource management, accounting and finance, and marketing. Different internal and external elements of a business are introduced, and the context in which a business operates explained. You’ll explore the common aims and characteristics of business – investigating what makes them different. Business structures, cultures and functions are identified and the political, social, economic, technological and ethical considerations affecting business are introduced.

Professional communication skills for business studies (LB160)

Credits: 30 at Level 1
Assessment: 4 TMAs, EMA

Personal and corporate success in business relies on effective communication. Professional communication skills for business studies will help you acquire skills to distinguish you from your peers. This practical introductory Level 1 course will empower you to undertake more insightful case-study analysis, write successful essays, and produce influential documents. From proposals to emails, you’ll work with a wide range of texts from business studies courses and the wider business world, deepening your subject knowledge while developing your written communication skills – helping you to succeed in the field of business studies and business in general.

Managing in the workplace (B121)

Credits: 30 at Level 1
Assessment: 1 TMA, EMA

This introductory Level 1 course introduces management ideas and uses activities to build on your existing

Stage 2

Business functions in context (B203)

Credits: 60 at Level 2
Assessment: 6 TMAs, 1 Examination

This course focuses on the essential organisational functions of human resources; marketing; operations management; information management; and accounting and finance. You will examine their key practices, processes and thinking, and their contributions to organisations and their operations – with an emphasis on practice-based learning. You will explore activities undertaken by functional specialists,

An introduction to retail management and marketing (B122)

Credits: 30 at Level 1
Assessment: 3 TMAs, EMA

The retail industry is highly dynamic and innovative. This course looks at how retailing has developed within a business context, and how retail outlets work and apply retail marketing. It offers a balance between theory and practice that is innovative and engaging. During your studies you will consider contemporary factors that affect retailing: globalisation; the impact of ever-changing technology; and social and ethical issues. This course is designed for retail industry employees wishing to develop a career in management, and anyone interested in working in the retail sector, or simply wanting to know more about the world of retailing. If you are planning to study more than one course, it is recommended that you study B120 first, but you can start your studies with B122 if you wish.

Discovering mathematics (MU123)

Credits: 30 at Level 1
Assessment: 5 TMAs, 5 iCMAs

This key introductory Level 1 course provides a gentle start to the study of mathematics. It will help you to integrate mathematical ideas into your everyday thinking and build your confidence in using and learning mathematics. You’ll cover statistical, graphical, algebraic, trigonometric and numerical concepts and techniques, and be introduced to mathematical modelling. Formal calculus is not included and you are not expected to have any previous knowledge of algebra. The skills introduced will be ideal if you plan to study more mathematics courses, such as Using mathematics (MST121).

For more information and to register go to www.openuniversity.edu, or call +44 845 241 6555

For more information and to register go to www.openuniversity.edu, or call +44 845 241 6555

Credits: 30 at Level 1
Assessment: 5 TMAs, 5 iCMAs

This introductory Level 1 course provides a gentle start to the study of mathematics. It will help you to integrate mathematical ideas into your everyday thinking and build your confidence in using and learning mathematics. You’ll cover statistical, graphical, algebraic, trigonometric and numerical concepts and techniques, and be introduced to mathematical modelling. Formal calculus is not included and you are not expected to have any previous knowledge of algebra. The skills introduced will be ideal if you plan to study more mathematics courses, such as Using mathematics (MST121).
and develop skills in critical thinking, problem solving, numeracy, information literacy, and written and oral communication.

Business organisations and their environments (B201)

Credits: 60 at Level 2
Assessment: 5 TMAs, 1 Examination

Business organisations come in all shapes and sizes, and form a central feature of our everyday lives. Our experiences of business organisations vary depending on where we are globally, but we interact with them daily in very personal ways. This course is inspired by the ways in which these organisations are conceived, function, survive and prosper in these turbulent times of the twenty-first century. It is a practical course, grounded in your own experience of business organisations as an employee, customer or stakeholder, and is designed to develop your personal and professional practice in diverse business environments.

Making it happen! Leadership, influence and change (B204)

Credits: 60 at Level 2
Assessment: 6 TMAs, 1 EMA

This course focuses on leadership and change practice, and has considerable potential to support employability. Its strong work-based and reflective enquiry component will help you explore how to initiate and carry through improvements and projects in your current work from an early stage. You will also develop skills to enable you to manage your learning in new work contexts. ‘Work’ isn’t just limited to paid jobs. However – for successful completion of this course – it’s very important to be involved in some ongoing project where you can influence others and initiate change.

Running the economy (DD209)

Credits: 60 at Level 2
Assessment: 5 TMAs, 4 ICAMs, 1 Examination

This course responds to the need to understand the problems of running national and global economies in the wake of a major economic crisis. It starts with macroeconomics, looking at how economies work from global and integrated perspectives. It then moves to microeconomics, drilling down into the behaviour of people, firms and governments. This combined analysis allows you to explore how policy affects, and is affected by, the economy and its constituent members. Using a simulator, you will apply what you have learned, taking on the role of an economic analyst to make or advise on policy choices.

Stage 3

Making sense of strategy (B301)

Credits: 60 at Level 3
Assessment: 6 TMAs, 1 Examination

The fascinating world of strategy – from its origins and development as a subject to the controversies that dominate contemporary strategic debate – is introduced in this course. It’s relevant to anyone interested in how organisations and individuals make sense of the world and strive for success. You’ll develop skills in clear thinking, independent enquiry and collaborative working as you analyse and apply the ideas and approaches that have done most to influence how strategy is conceived and carried out in today’s organisations, whether commercial or not-for-profit, locally, nationally and internationally.

Investigating entrepreneurial opportunities (B322)

Credits: 30 at Level 3
Assessment: 3 TMAs, 1 EMA

This course addresses the crucial first steps related to developing new business ideas, implementing innovations and launching new ventures. It will develop business-planning capabilities, skills and understanding, including market and competitor research and the use of important financial concepts such as break-even and cash flow. It will lead you through a systematic process of testing your ideas and experience to arrive at a business proposition with ambitious yet attainable objectives. The course will help you to focus on your own capabilities and skills in project planning; business project appraisal; report writing; and environmental and personal analysis.

Marketing and society (B324)

Credits: 30 at Level 3
Assessment: 3 TMAs, 1 Examination

Are you interested in exploring the application of marketing concepts beyond commercial marketing and considering the issues of ethics and responsible practice in marketing? In this course you’ll explore the role and responsibility of marketing in relation to society. Your study will be based around three key themes: social marketing – how marketing can have a positive influence on health and social behaviour; ethics and marketing – how decision making and marketing activities can be affected by taking an ethical perspective; and responsible business marketing – how organisations might adopt responsible marketing behaviour in the context of corporate social responsibility.

Managing across organisational and cultural boundaries (B325)

Credits: 30 at Level 3
Assessment: 3 TMAs, 1 Examination

This course is about collaboration – working, managing and organising across organisational and cultural boundaries. Whether within or across organisations, via partnerships, joint ventures and alliances, collaboration can be both stimulating and rewarding. It entails the combination of resources and expertise which enables partners to achieve something jointly that they cannot achieve working alone. However, collaboration is also fraught with difficulties and dilemmas. In this course you’ll explore the many issues and challenges associated with working collaboratively across different contexts. You will also learn about concepts and theories that can help you to better manage collaborative situations in the future.

Managing 1: organisations and people - online version (BZX628)

Credits: 30 at Level 3
Assessment: 2 TMAs, 1 EMA

This course investigates organisational behaviour and human resource management. Designed for working managers, those who depurise for managers, management trainees, supervisors and team leaders, it takes a very practice-based approach to studying management concepts, focusing on your own role. It is suitable for aspiring managers provided you have experience of either paid or unpaid (voluntary) work involving leading a group or team; a project or task involving one or more others; or running/helping to run a voluntary organisation. It is not suitable if you have no previous work experience (paid or unpaid) on which to draw.

Managing 2: marketing and finance - online version (BZX628)

Credits: 30 at Level 3
Assessment: 2 TMAs, 1 EMA

This practical course covers topics in marketing and accounting and finance through activities and problem-solving. It takes a very practice-based approach to studying management concepts focusing on your own role. You can study this course on its own or start your OU management studies with it. However, you may find this course easier to engage with if you have studied B628 first.

For more information and to register go to www.openuniversity.edu, or call +44 845 241 6555
Can I study in any country?
This course is not available in all countries. Please use the Course Finder menu at www.openuniversity.edu to see what courses are available in your country.

Is an OU qualification recognised in my country?
An OU degree is equal in academic standard to a degree from any other British university. The University is subject to the same quality assurance procedures, through the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), as all other British universities, and uses external assessors and examiners to ensure comparability of standard and level in its courses.

A leaflet is available on how you can apply for formal recognition in your country. To download the leaflet, please go to www.openuniversity.edu/brochures/recognition.pdf.

What tutor support will I receive?
The OU excels in its unrivalled support for students. You'll have email and online support from a tutor and you will be able to discuss your study in online tutor group discussions, using our customised learning environment. Our community websites Platform and OpenLearn offer a different perspective on your subject, and a huge range of OU resources on YouTube and iTunes U can expand your understanding. In addition, you can tap into a range of enthusiastic and welcoming OU social network groups on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Are there any entry requirements?
For most undergraduate qualifications you don’t need any formal qualifications, or to pass an entry test to study with us. Our undergraduate qualifications are open to all because we believe anyone who is keen to succeed should have the opportunity to study.

As part of the registration process, however, you will be asked to confirm your proficiency in English. (If you are unsure, you can take a short online test, which you will find when completing the online registration form.)

Can I count previous study towards an OU qualification?
Any higher-education level studies you’ve successfully completed elsewhere may count towards your OU degree or other qualification. We enable you to do this by awarding you a certain amount of ‘transferred credit’. By transferring credit gained from previous study, you can reduce the amount you need from OU study to achieve your qualification. For more information please go to www.openuniversity.edu.

How do you work towards a qualification?
We measure the size of our qualifications in credits – an honours degree is 360 credits, made up of three 120-credit stages. Each stage is made up of a number of modules which cover different parts of the subject. Modules are also measured in credits and are set at different ‘levels’. Levels give an indication of a module’s relative complexity and/ or depth of learning. Most modules are worth either 30 or 60 credits and are set at Levels 1, 2 and 3, which roughly equates to studying in the first, second and third year at a campus-based university.

So for a typical three-stage honours degree you would study:
- 120 credits at Stage 1, taking modules worth 30 or 60 credits at Level 1
- 120 credits at Stage 2, taking modules worth 30 or 60 credits at Level 2
- 120 credits at Stage 3, taking modules worth 30 or 60 credits at Level 3.

In the example given above, each stage could consist of two 60-credit modules or one 60-credit module and two 30-credit modules, or four 30-credit modules.

How long does it take?
Our qualifications are designed to be flexible. So if you want to vary the amount of time you spend studying, you can. The table below is a guide on the time required, but call today to discuss how you can vary the study intensity, and therefore the time taken to complete your course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate qualifications</th>
<th>Credits required</th>
<th>Time required to complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certificate of management</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1 year part-time study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma of higher education</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>2 years full-time study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA degree with honours</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>3–4 years full-time study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How much will it cost?
If you are studying with us for the first time our standard fee for 2012/2013 is £5,000 – based on 120 credits of study – which is equivalent to a year’s full-time study at a campus-based university. Of course you don’t have to study 120 credits a year and the price you pay will be proportionate to the standard fee. So, for example, if you only study 60 credits a year, you will pay 50 per cent of the standard fee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit studied each year¹</th>
<th>Percentage of standard fee</th>
<th>Cost per year</th>
<th>Time taken to complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>120 credits a year</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>£5,000</td>
<td>3 years full-time study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 credits a year</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>£2,500</td>
<td>6 years part-time study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹For illustrative purposes only – in most cases you can vary the number of credits taken per year and therefore the time taken to complete the course. Please note: prices are approximate and subject to change. Visit our website or call us for latest details.

When can I start?
To give you more opportunities to start, most qualifications have two intakes a year – April and October for this qualification. To start in October 2013, for example, you need to register no later than 10th September 2013.

What payment options are there?
Your payment options include spreading the cost over monthly instalments with our own affordable student budget account, OUSBA (for certain EU countries). For more information please go to www.open.ac.uk/ousba.

Can I meet and network with other students?
Definitely – when you start with the OU you automatically become a member of the Open University Student Association (OUSA). OUSA also runs a popular student forum site. For more information, go to www.ousa.org.uk.

Once you have gained your qualification, you can join the OU Alumni Association, our vibrant and active alumni community with 280,000 members worldwide. You will enjoy many membership benefits, including regular newsletters, good networking opportunities and access to the alumni website.

How is my privacy protected?
We record your personal information when you contact us and use this to manage registration, study, examination and other services. When you register, we’ll tell you more about how we process and use your personal information.

When should I apply?
Apply as early as you can – particularly if you wish to claim for credit for previous study. Registration open dates are shown in the Courses section at www.openuniversity.edu.
What do I need to do next?

It takes just 2 simple steps.
Begin the process to secure your place. Here’s how easy it is.

1. Register now

Go to www.openuniversity.edu, select the Courses section and the degree you require. You will then be asked to select a pathway to register. (Pathways are different selections of course modules to complete your degree.)

Alternatively call us on +44 845 241 6555.

Don’t worry, you don’t need to pay anything at this stage.

As soon as you have registered you’ll get an email confirmation which contains your login details.

2. Choose your first module, make payment to enrol

Before you start studying you will need to choose and register on your first modules and arrange payment; instructions for this will be emailed to you.

Once complete you will officially be an Open University student – welcome!

For more information and to register go to www.openuniversity.edu, or call +44 845 241 6555