

Faculty: Business School

Title of Programme: MSc Strategic Business and Information Systems

Programme Code: BSDEC

# Programme Specification

Start Date: September 2011

Date of Approval: 28 June 2011

Associate Dean (Academic Quality): David Gayfer

Signature 

# Programme Specification

## MSc Strategic Business and Information Systems

This programme specification (PS) is designed for prospective students, enrolled students, academic staff and potential employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the teaching, learning and assessment methods, learning outcomes and content for each module can be found in Definitive Module Documents (DMDs) and Module Guides.

### Section 1

<b>Awarding Institution/Body</b>	University of Hertfordshire
<b>Teaching Institution</b>	University of Hertfordshire
<b>University/partner campuses</b>	de Havilland
<b>Programme accredited by</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Final Award</b>	MSc
<b>All Final Award titles</b>	Strategic Business and Information Systems
<b>FHEQ level of award</b>	7

#### A. Programme Rationale

The rationale for this programme is to fulfil a need within the market for masters level graduates who have a wide range of business knowledge and who have gained experience in the application of modern strategic management information systems techniques. To this end the programme is designed to recruit students who have followed a postgraduate diploma in the field of information systems and related disciplines.

#### B. Educational Aims of the Programme

The programme has been devised in accordance with the University's general educational aims of programmes of study as set out in UPR TL01.

##### Additionally this programme aims to:

- develop abilities and skills relevant to problem recognition and solving and process enhancement in business;
- develop critical evaluation skills in relation to methods used in problem solving and process enhancement;
- develop skills in working independently on a project;
- provide students with a contemporary, critical and applied programme of study at postgraduate level within the subject area of Strategic Business and Information Systems;
- develop the academic and practical skills appropriate to the study of Strategic Business and Information Systems;
- develop students' ability to critically evaluate tools and techniques as applied in Strategic Business and Information Systems.

The programme aims to develop abilities and skills in the design, selection, use and exploitation of information systems in achieving strategic advantage in modern business practices. It also aims to develop critical evaluation skills in relation to information systems and skills in carrying out independent project work relevant to Information Systems.

### C. Intended Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills and other attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes are referenced to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2008), and relate to the typical student. Additionally, the SEEC Credit Level Descriptors for Further and Higher Education 2003 have been used as a guiding framework for curriculum design.

Knowledge and Understanding of:	Teaching/learning methods & strategies	Assessment
A1 Have knowledge and understanding of the range of relevant approaches to research methodology and research methods	Acquisition of knowledge and understanding is through a combination of lectures, small group tutorials, throughout the programme. Throughout, the learner is encouraged to undertake independent study both to supplement and consolidate what is being taught/learned and to broaden their individual knowledge and understanding of the subject.	Testing of knowledge and understanding is through the dissertation
A2 Develop and apply frameworks in the analysis of information systems in the context of strategic decision making (in the context of their own experience where possible and appropriate) to reach useful and appropriate conclusions by drawing upon various aspects of their learning on the programme as appropriate to the pursuance of their topic.		
A3 Develop their abilities by engaging in sessions which will include the role of theory in informing enquiry and the skills of research, data collection, analysis and evaluation, writing and presentation.		
A4 how to investigate complex information systems issues in a rigorous manner		
A5 the posing of questions appropriate to the topic		
A6 the role of theory in informing strategic decision making and the contribution of information systems to it		
A7 an accepted means of researching such issues		
A8 an accepted means of writing up their investigations and		

results		
Intellectual skills - able to:	Teaching/learning methods & strategies	Assessment
<p>B1 Undertake an independent piece of research in their chosen field and produce a postgraduate dissertation</p> <p>B2 Choose and define an appropriate subject for research.</p> <p>B3 Develop apply and test hypotheses and/or research questions</p> <p>B4 Demonstrate some originality in their research work</p> <p>B5 consider the implications of their research within their chosen field and for their academic discipline</p> <p>B6 develop postgraduate skills of independent research, analysis, evaluation, writing and presentation</p> <p>B7 apply postgraduate level skills in the undertaking of a piece of independent research and the production of a postgraduate dissertation</p> <p>B8 conduct work in an ethical manner</p> <p>B9 plan and implement an integrated information systems research project involving primary and secondary research.</p> <p>B10 develop a well supported argument as a result of applying an acceptable research process</p> <p>B11 present the argument in a conventional format</p>	<p>Intellectual skills are developed throughout the programme by the methods and strategies outlined in section A.</p> <p>Throughout, the learner is encouraged to develop intellectual skills further by independent study</p>	<p>Intellectual skills are assessed through the dissertation.</p>
Practical skills - able to:	Teaching/learning methods & strategies	Assessment
<p>C1 gather, analyse and synthesise complex information from a range of primary and / or secondary sources</p> <p>C2 Use initiative and independence, which may mean working and</p>	<p>Practical skills are developed by analysis of practical business situations.</p>	<p>Practical skills are assessed through the dissertation.</p>

learning in unfamiliar as well as familiar contexts		
<b>Transferable skills - able to:</b>	<b>Teaching/learning methods &amp; strategies</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
D1 manage a complex research strategy systematically and creatively	Transferable skills are developed through the dissertation. Throughout, the learner is encouraged to develop transferable skills by maintaining a record of evidence and completing a personal development plan.	Transferable skills are assessed through the dissertation.
D2 communicate effectively in writing, reference written work, and use other methods of communicating (such as numerical and /or IT based methods) in the dissertation document		
D3 critically reflect on their progress through the research process and their own learning from that process.		

## D. Programme Structures, Features, Levels, Modules, and Credits

The programme is offered in part- time distance learning mode leading to the award of an MSc Strategic Business and Information Systems. Entry is normally at Masters (7) level with postgraduate diploma in a related subject. . Intake is normally in semesters A (September).and B (February) and C (May).

### Programme Structure

The programme structure and progression information below (Table 1a and 1b) is provided for the award. Any interim awards are identified in Table 1b. The Programme Learning Outcomes detailed above are developed and assessed through the constituent modules. Table 2 (in section 2) identifies where each learning outcome is assessed.

**Table 1a Outline Programme Structure**

**Mode of study** Part-time (distance learning)

**Entry point** Semester A

<b>Compulsory Modules</b> Module Title	Module Code	Credit Points	% examination	% coursework	Semester
Research Methods: Strategic Business and Information Systems (On-line)	7BSP0460	0	0	100	ABC
Dissertation: Strategic Business Information Systems (On-line)	7BSP0459	60	0	100	ABC

**Mode of study** Part-time (distance learning)

**Entry point** Semester B

<b>Compulsory Modules</b> Module Title	Module Code	Credit Points	% examination	% coursework	Semester
Research Methods: Strategic Business and Information Systems (On-line)	7BSP0460	0	0	100	BCA
Dissertation: Strategic Business Information Systems (On-line)	7BSP0459	60	0	100	BCA

**Mode of study** Part-time (distance learning)

**Entry point** Semester C

<b>Compulsory Modules</b> Module Title	Module Code	Credit Points	% examination	% coursework	Semester
Research Methods: Strategic Business and Information Systems (On-line)	7BSP0460	0	0	100	CAB
Dissertation: Strategic Business Information Systems (On-line)	7BSP0459	60	0	100	CAB

The award of an MSc Strategic Business and Information Systems requires 180 credit points passed at level 7, including the dissertation.

**Table 1b Final and interim awards available**

The programme provides the following final and interim awards:

Award	Minimum requirements	Available at end of (normally):
Masters Strategic Business and Information Systems	180 credit points at level 7, including the dissertation.	3 Semesters

Masters and Diploma awards cannot be made "with Distinction" or "with Commendation" on this programme, because it is not possible to meet the criteria as described in UPR AS14 for this programme.

## E. Support for students and their learning

Students are supported by:

- A Programme Tutor
- Student Support and Guidance Centre (SSG)
- Academic Skills Unit (ASU)
- Student representative on programme committees
- A designated programme administrator
- An Induction week at the beginning of the academic session
- StudyNet, a versatile on-line inter-active intranet and learning environment
- Access to extensive digital and print collections of information resources
- A substantial Student centre that provides advice on issues such as finance, University regulations, legal matters, accommodation, international student support etc.
- Office of Dean of Students, incorporating Chaplaincy, Counselling and nursery
- Medical centre
- English support classes
- A Mathematics Drop-in Centre
- A faculty based Disabled Student Co-ordinator
- An Equal Opportunities Officer
- The Students' Union
- Guided student centred learning through the use of StudyNet
- A Careers Service for all current students and graduates

## F. Entry requirements

The normal entry requirements for the programme are:

- NCC Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Business IT or;
- a Postgraduate Diploma in Information Systems, or;

- a postgraduate qualification in Information Systems from a UK University equivalent to 120 credit points, or;
- the equivalent of the above from a recognised University overseas or;
- at least one year of work experience in an information systems role, supported by an HE qualification or equivalent professional qualification.

In addition all students must produce evidence of their English Language proficiency. The standard required is:

- a score of 6.5 or better on the British Council's IELTS test, or an equivalent score on a test recognised by the University of Hertfordshire.

This requirement will be waived if the student has successfully completed an undergraduate degree at a university in the United Kingdom, or another country acceptable to the University of Hertfordshire, where study was in English and the student was based in that university's home country during study.

The programme is subject to the University's Principles, Policies, Regulations and Procedures for the Admission of Students to Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes and will take account of University policy and guidelines for assessing accredited prior certificated learning (APCL) and accredited prior experiential learning (APEL).

## Section 2

### Programme management

<b>JACS code(s)</b>	G500
<b>Modes of study</b>	DL - P/T
<b>Intakes</b>	A, B & C
<b>Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group</b>	Masters awards in Business and Management
<b>Date of validation/last periodic review</b>	November 2006
<b>Date of production/ last revision of PS</b>	June 2011
<b>Relevant intake</b>	level 7 entering September 2011
<b>Faculty</b>	Business School
<b>Administrative Departments</b>	School of Management, Leadership and Organisation

#### Course (i.e. pathway) details

##### Course (ie. Pathway Point) Titles

##### Course (ie. Pathway Point) Codes

MSc Strategic Business and Information Systems  
Semester A entry (DL—P/T)  
MSc Strategic Business and Information Systems  
Semester B entry (DL—P/T)  
MSc Strategic Business and Information Systems  
Semester C entry (DL—P/T)

SBISSF1  
SBISSF2  
SBISSF3

The programme is managed by;

- The Dean and Deputy Dean
- The Head of Department
- A Programme Tutor who is responsible for the day- to-day management of the programme
- An Admissions Tutor, with specific responsibility for open days and selection
- An International Admissions Tutor, with specific responsibility for selection of overseas students
- A designated Administrator to deal with day-to-day administration associated with the programme
- Module Leaders who are responsible for individual modules
- A programme committee, the membership of which includes student representatives from each level of study and key members of the Business School staff.

### Programme-specific assessment regulations

The programme is compliant with the University's generic assessment regulations (Structure and Assessment Regulations for Academic Programmes, UPR AS14) with the exception of those listed below, which have been specifically approved by the University:

- None.

Further points of clarification and interpretation relevant to this specific programme are given below:

- Students who repeat a module and do not gain a pass grade may, after consultation with the programme tutor, be permitted to study another appropriate module from the Business School portfolio. Permission will only be given if the student's total programme of study covers all the learning outcomes of this programme.
- There are two situations where, as a consequence of a perceived lack of engagement with the associated teaching and learning processes, UHBS Module Board of Examiners will normally not permit referral in an individual module (FRef):
  - (a) where the aggregate mark in any Module is less than 20%, and/or
  - (b) where, at Levels 4 and 5 only, a student has been absent from more than 3 tutorial feedback sessions in a Semester.In these situations students will be required to repeat the diet of study (FRen) prior to re-assessment.



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## Other sources of information

- Definitive Module Documents
- Module Guides
- Student Handbook
- Programme Specification website: <http://www.herts.ac.uk/courses/> or (StudyNet → Staff → Department Lists → Academic Quality Office → Programme Management → Programme Specifications)
- University of Hertfordshire Course website: <http://www.herts.ac.uk/courses/>
- QAA Benchmark Statement website: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/benchmark/default.asp>
- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, 2008: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/EWNI08/default.asp>
- SEEC Credit Level Descriptors for Further and Higher Education 2003: <http://www.seec-office.org.uk/creditleveldescriptors2003.pdf>
- External Quality Review report website: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/reports/instReports.asp?ukprn=10007147>
- UNISTATS website: <http://www.unistats.com/>
- University of Hertfordshire Academic Quality Office website: (StudyNet → Staff → Department Lists → Academic Quality Office)
- Structure & Assessment Regulations - Undergraduate & Taught Postgraduate Programmes, UPR AS14: <http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/AS14.htm>
- Learning and Teaching Policy and General Educational Aims, UPR TL01: <http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/TL01.htm>
- Admissions - Undergraduate & Taught Postgraduate Students, UPR SA03: <http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/SA03.htm>
- Academic Quality, UPR AS17: <http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/AS17.htm>  
Index of UPRs for students: [http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr\\_azlist\\_info.htm](http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr_azlist_info.htm)

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## Other information relevant to the programme

The Business School was awarded 'confidence' in the Institutional Audit conducted in 2009.

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## University policies relevant to the Programme

The University undertakes to use all reasonable endeavours to deliver, assess and administer this programme in accordance with this Programme Specification. At the same time it is recognised that it is in the nature of academic developments that changes, for example to the structure, curriculum, and assessment of a programme may be necessary in order to ensure that the programme remains up to date, in response to issues raised as a result of on-going monitoring and evaluation, and/or in order to conform to new regulatory requirements imposed by this institution, by professional or statutory bodies, or by national or governmental bodies.

The programme operates within the guidelines and policies relating to equal opportunities and environmental issues which may be agreed from time to time by the Board of Governors and/or the Academic Board of the University.

Where the programme is offered in collaboration with another institution these policies and guidelines will normally be those of the partner institution.

The programme operates in accordance with the University's Regulations Governing Studies Involving the Use of Human Subjects (UPR RE01) agreed from time to time by the Academic Board of the University. However, where the programme is offered in collaboration with another institution (for example through a franchise arrangement for all or part of the programme) then specific approval must be obtained from the University for the operation of the programme within ethical guidelines prepared by the partner institution. The partner institution will be responsible for all insurance liability in connection with the observance of ethical guidelines.

Signed ..... *David Stephen Gayfer* .....  
Chair of Faculty Academic Quality Enhancement Committee

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Date...28/6/11.....

If you would like this information in an alternative format please contact:  
Hajre Hyseni, Programme Tutor

## MSc Strategic Business and Information Systems

**Table 2: Development of Programme Learning Outcomes in the Constituent Modules**

This map identifies where the programme learning outcomes are assessed in the constituent modules. It provides (i) an aid to academic staff in understanding how individual modules contribute to the programme aims (ii) a checklist for quality control purposes and (iii) a means to help students monitor their own learning, personal and professional development as the programme progresses.

		Programme Learning Outcomes (as identified in section 1 and the following page)																														
		Knowledge & Understanding								Intellectual Skills											Practical Skills				Transferable Skills							
Module Title	Module Code	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	C1	C2					D1	D2	D3			
Research Methods: Strategic Business and Information Systems (On-line)	7BSP0460	x								x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x					x	x	x			
Dissertation: Strategic Business Information Systems (On-line)	7BSP0459		x	x	x	x	x	x	x											x	x											

**Key:** Learning Outcome which is assessed as part of the module ☒

## Key to Programme Learning Outcomes

### Knowledge and Understanding

- A1 Have knowledge and understanding of the range of relevant approaches to research methodology and research methods
- A2 Develop and apply frameworks in the analysis of information systems in the context of strategic decision making (in the context of their own experience where possible and appropriate) to reach useful and appropriate conclusions by drawing upon various aspects of their learning on the programme as appropriate to the pursuance of their topic.
- A3 Develop their abilities by engaging in sessions which will include the role of theory in informing enquiry and the skills of research, data collection, analysis and evaluation, writing and presentation.
- A4 how to investigate complex information systems issues in a rigorous manner
- A5 the posing of questions appropriate to the topic
- A6 the role of theory in informing strategic decision making and the contribution of information systems to it
- A7 an accepted means of researching such issues
- A8 an accepted means of writing up their investigations and results

### Intellectual Skills

- B1 Undertake an independent piece of research in their chosen field and produce a postgraduate dissertation
- B2 Choose and define an appropriate subject for research.
- B3 Develop apply and test hypotheses and/or research questions
- B4 Demonstrate some originality in their research work
- B5 consider the implications of their research within their chosen field and for their academic discipline
- B6 develop postgraduate skills of independent research, analysis, evaluation, writing and presentation
- B7 apply postgraduate level skills in the undertaking of a piece of independent research and the production of a postgraduate dissertation
- B8 conduct work in an ethical manner
- B9 plan and implement an integrated information systems research project involving primary and secondary research.
- B10 develop a well supported argument as a result of applying an acceptable research process
- B11 present the argument in a conventional format

### Practical Skills

- C1 gather, analyse and synthesise complex information from a range of primary and / or secondary sources
- C2 Use initiative and independence, which may mean working and learning in unfamiliar as well as familiar contexts

### Transferable Skills

- D1 manage a complex research strategy systematically and creatively
- D2 communicate effectively in writing, reference written work, and use other methods of communicating (such as numerical and /or IT based methods) in the dissertation document
- D3 critically reflect on their progress through the research process and their own learning from that process.