



MBA (Top Up) Programme Handbook



September 2025
Version 6

Welcome from the Provost

Hello, I am Professor Dilshad Sheikh, Provost at Arden University. With over 24 years teaching experience, I would like to welcome you to this exciting programme. I oversee a highly experienced management and teaching team with lots of vocational business experience. I am sure that they look forward to both teaching you on the course and to sharing their experiences from the business world. I wish you every success on the course and look forward to witnessing your progress and development as an Arden University student.

Welcome from the Head of the School of Management and Executive Education



I am Dr Hassaan Khan, the Head of the School of Management and Executive Education at Arden University. I studied Accounting and Finance at the University of Kent, followed by an MSc and PhD in Finance from Durham University.

Before joining Arden, I served as the Associate Dean at the Global Banking School, where I oversaw the Finance and Business Management degree courses. I was also the Director of Programmes at BPP University, responsible for managing degree programmes in Finance and Applied Management, as well as professional accountancy courses and degree apprenticeships. My previous roles include Director of the Centre for Financial Research at Anglia Ruskin University, Entrepreneur Scholar at Judge Business School, and Teaching Assistant at Durham University. I have considerable experience in knowledge transfer partnerships, most notably with Allia Limited, Cambridge, where I worked as a Social Investment expert in collaboration with the Icube Cambridge Business Incubator.

In addition to my role at Arden University, I continue to work as a Consultant Financial Economist at the Bank of England. I am also a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and a member of various professional organisations, including the Fintech Professionals Association, the Royal Economic Society, ICAEW, the Chartered Management Institute, and the British Accounting and Finance Association.

Welcome from the Head of Department of MBA and Executive Education



Hello, I am Dr Syed Ali Tarek, Head of the Department. I am an Oxford graduate and over 16 years of experience in higher education. My academic achievements include degrees in Computer Engineering, Business Administration and Management, Teaching and Learning and finally, Educational Assessment. As a Senior Fellow of AdvanceHE, and a Fellow of RSA, RAS, IOEE, and SET, I am passionate about creating an inspiring and dynamic learning environment where you can thrive. I serve His Majesty's Government as a Member and Deputy Chair of the Quality and Standards Assessment Committee at the Office for Students, Department for Education. Also, I am an Advisory Committee Member at the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Our dedicated teaching team, with deep industry knowledge and real-world insights, is here to guide and support you at every step. They are excited to share their expertise, challenge your perspectives, and help you unlock your full potential. I believe this programme will be a transformative experience, opening doors to new opportunities and lifelong learning. Embrace this journey with curiosity and determination. I wish you every success, and I look forward to celebrating your achievements as a student in our department.

Introduction to the Programme

Welcome to the MBA (Top Up) programme. This handbook provides you with information about the structure of your programme.

The MBA (Top Up) programme consists of a business transformation project. An outline of the content of the modules and the assessment methods used can be found in the Module Descriptor section of iLearn.

MBA Top-Up Module

Module Code	Module	Module Type (Core/Option)	Credits	Level
RES7005	Business Transformation Project	Core	60	7

Please note that modules may not be delivered in this order; please refer to your course timetable.

Pace of Study

Student Loans Company Funded Students

If you have been granted a postgraduate loan from the Student Loans Company, you must progress at an appropriate pace to complete it within two years. Arden University is required to make annual reports to the Student Loans Company regarding your progress. If you fall behind, or if you decide you would prefer to study at a slower pace, you may transfer to the Flexible Distance Learning route (see below). However, if you transfer to the more flexible route, you will not be eligible for any continued loan payments from the Student Loans Company.

Flexible Distance Learning Students

If you have chosen the flexible distance learning route and have not received a postgraduate loan from the Student Loans Company, you have the flexibility to plan your own pace of study. Postgraduate degrees usually take around two to three years to complete depending on how many modules you study each year. In order to achieve this, it is recommended that you aim to complete at least 60 credits each year, equivalent to three 20-credit modules. You will have a maximum of five years to complete the programme (from the date you first started).

Full-Time Distance Learning Students

If you are a full-time distance learning student, you will study at a prescribed pace to ensure that you complete it on time. You will study two modules per quarter and will be working on your dissertation at the same time, with the final quarter to complete the dissertation, allowing you to complete the whole degree in 12 months.

Arden University Assessment Regulations

Students will be assessed in accordance with the standard Arden University assessment regulations which can be found on the Arden University website <http://arden.ac.uk/>

PSRB: CMI

This course is accredited by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI). The Institute aims to boost career development across the management sector and connect you with like-minded professionals across diverse sectors.

As the CMI possesses a Royal Charter, they are the only organisation in the UK that can award Chartered Manager status to their members – the gold standard in management. They are also active in business policy making across the globe and ensure that their more than 140,000 members are represented in policy decision making.

As an Arden student, you'll have free CMI Membership throughout your studies, giving you access to a range of additional resources including a mentoring service and invitations to networking events both online and offline.

Upon completion of your course, you will be eligible to gain a CMI qualification, which is offered at 3 different levels: an Award, Certificate or a Diploma. The final award you receive upon completion of your degree will depend on your level and length of study, whether you entered your course with Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL) or if you accept any compensation on your modules.



PSRB: ILM

What is ILM?

ILM is the UK's leading provider of leadership, coaching and management qualifications and training. We've been part of City & Guilds since November 2001, providing qualifications for learners in the UK and internationally. ILM qualifications are delivered globally by: over 2,500 training providers. employers in-house. Every year ILM qualifies 70,000 leaders and managers, helping them develop the critical skills to succeed, and in doing so, make a real difference to the present and future of workplaces in the UK and globally.



What does the student need to do?

As an Arden student, you'll receive free membership to the ILM for a year after your graduation, giving you access to over a thousand comprehensive learning resources, including webinars, videos, leadership assessment tools, a dedicated e-learning tool, careers advice, and networking opportunities.

Providers of ILM leadership and management qualifications and their learners receive complimentary access to studying membership from The Institute of Leadership & Management. All ILM qualifications are awarded by The City and Guilds of London Institute which was founded in 1878 and is incorporated by Royal Charter. A printed certificate will be issued to each successful learner for units and the full qualification. E-Certificates are a complimentary service for all City & Guilds/ILM qualifications enabling students to view and download PDF versions of certificates. A digital credential is a visual representation of knowledge and skills, and is issued online for the full qualification only, making it easy for individuals to demonstrate their competencies to employers, clients, and peers. Each digital credential has a unique URL that can be shared electronically via social media, in an email signature, and on a CV.

QUALITY ASSURANCE DOCUMENT QA3 – PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Programme Code	N/A					
2. Programme Title	Master of Business Administration (Top Up)					
3. Target Award Title	MBA (Top Up)					
4. Exit Award Title(s)	MBA (Top Up)					
5. Subject area	Business Management					
6. School	S Management and Executive Education					
7. Programme Team Leader(s)	Andrew Howard					
8. Programme Type	Generalist					
9. Delivery Model	DL F/T	X	BL F/T	X	Apprenticeship	X
	DL P/T	X	BL P/T	X	Other	X
Where delivery model identified as 'Other' please provide details	Students can study individual modules for a university certificate.					
10. Location of delivery	BL & DL					
11. Proposed Start date	1 October 2022					
12. Reference points	This programme is in line with the QAA Master's Subject Benchmark Statement: Business and Management released in March (2023) (Category 3 degrees), FHEQ L7, the QAA Quality Code (2023) and the standards set by the PSRBs.					
13. Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Bodies (PSRB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chartered Management Institute mapping to Level 7 Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership Practice QN:603/4833/1 603/4843/3 603/4837/9 Institute of Leadership and Management mapping to Level 7 Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership QAN: 601/3241/3 					

14. Programme aims

The Arden University MBA (Top Up) programme aims to provide a unique, inter-disciplinary and integrative educational programme for individuals seeking to develop and consolidate their managerial achievements. The programme is designed to expose programme participants to current thinking and practice across a wide range of management disciplines, delivered using a cross-cutting approach. A higher level of criticality is expected across the master's programmes, and this will allow students to consider more deeply the various functions of Management.

Online teaching materials are derived from established academic research to develop critical powers of analysis, reflection, and further development of interpersonal skills in preparation for key positions in industry, commerce and the public sector.

Programme participants will build on their existing understanding management and organisations within a framework that enables them to relate their experience to contemporary ideas and practice within a global context. This is achieved through critical thinking, creativity, and personal development.

The MBA (Top Up) programme consists of a business transformation project.

In particular, the purpose of the programme is to provide participants with:

- A critical and detailed understanding of the role of **ethical and innovative** management within organisations.
- A critical understanding of the management of management within a global context.
- The opportunity to create and **take ownership** of a detailed piece of project relating to a management issue.
- A critical understanding of issues pertaining to **sustainability and business ethics**.
- An ability to critically analyse and apply knowledge of management theory and models to complex issues (including data analytics), both systematically and **creatively**, to improve **ethical business and management practices**.

A stimulating online academic environment, which is based upon the values of academic openness and critical appraisal.

15. Programme Entry Requirements

Arden University is keen to ensure that the programme is available to all those who can benefit from it.

Top Up entry requirements:

1. Qualification: 120 credits at Level 7 in a broadly-based business/management award, for example a Postgraduate Diploma in Business or an equivalent alternative confirmed via UKNARIC.

2. Work experience: No work experience is required.

3. English requirement: We will accept Level 7 certificate as the evidence for English proficiency.

For overseas qualification, a letter confirming Medium of Instruction was English. Where previous Medium of Instruction was not English, evidence confirming English language proficiency equivalent to IELTS 6.5 (no less than 6.0 in any element).

It is not intended to offer exemptions based on experiential learning.

16. Graduate Attributes

The concept of the Arden University Graduate, based upon the definition of 'graduate attribute' by Bowden et al (2000).

GA1. Digitally literate to show confident and critical use of information and digital technologies across a range of professional, personal, and academic contexts. (This may include but is not limited to computer literacy, digital information, digital media, digital communication, and collaboration competencies).

GA2. Contextually innovative through applying skills of critical, creative, and evidenced based analysis and/or personal reflection to current real-world situations and future challenges.

GA3. Socially intelligent and proactively inclusive, able to effectively navigate complex (working) relationships with others from any background or culture using teamwork, communication, and leadership skills.

GA4. Professionally knowledgeable in their subject area, with in-depth comprehension, awareness, independent research skills, and other skills associated with their subject area and discipline(s).

Arden Values Mapping and PRME Principles Mapping: the table below identifies how programme modules provide full coverage of Arden University Values.

Values	Descriptor
Stand Out (S)	Our creative thinking and willingness to do things differently shines brightly on the inside and is truly visible on the outside.
Progressive (P)	We inspire our students and one another, igniting bright futures through developing our knowledge and innovative use of technology.
Accessible (A)	We make education truly inclusive, creating an inspiring and welcoming environment for everyone to flourish.
Resourceful (R)	We strive for the best for our students and each other, finding ways to catalyse careers and accelerate development.
Kindness (K)	We embrace a culture of togetherness and support that radiates through our teams.

Modules	S	P	A	R	K
RES7005 Business Transformation Project	x	x		x	

In July 2021, Arden University became a signatory of the UNPRME. This means along with a network of other HE institutions around the globe Arden University is committed to aligning all leadership and management programmes with the six PRME principles set forth by a United Nations-supported initiative.

Given that context, in addition to the Arden Values, the Programme also embeds the six Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME). Through these principles, we wish to strengthen our student's understanding of sustainability, and enable them to address societal impacts and sustainability goals when making business decisions. The PRME principles are as follow:

PRME Principle	Descriptor
#1 Purpose	We advance responsible management education to foster inclusive prosperity in a world of thriving ecosystems.
#2 Values	We place organizational responsibility and accountability to society and the planet at the core of what we do.
#3 Teach	We transform our learning environments by integrating responsible management concepts and practices into our curriculum and pedagogy.
#4 Research	We study people, organizations, institutions, and the state of the world to inspire responsible management and education practice.
#5 Partner	We engage people from business, government, civil society, and academia to advance responsible and accountable management education and practice.
#6 Practice	We adopt responsible and accountable management principles in our own governance and operations.
#7 Share	We share our successes and failures with each other to enable our collective learning and best live our common values and purpose.

Source: Principle for Responsible Management Education, <https://www.unprme.org/what-we-do>.

Sustainability is an integral concept for future business leaders who have to meet environmental, social and

governance goals in addition to pure economic returns and profits. Each module in the Programme is designed and developed with specific guiding PRME in mind, to ensure students can generate sustainable value, undertake corporate social responsibilities, and partner with civil societies and other stakeholders when performing their roles of industry captains.

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7
RES7005 Business Transformation Project	x		x	x			x

Across the whole of the programme, it is intended that student will develop a range of behaviours to complement their skills and subject knowledge. They will understand how to act with integrity having considered issues from a range of different perspectives and studied relevant topics such as ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility. Through an emphasis on creativity and problem solving they will be able to address issues in innovative ways. Finally, they will be able to take personal responsibility for their own learning and development as fully autonomous learners.

17. Learning, teaching and assessment methods and strategies

At Arden, our mission is to provide opportunities for individuals to access higher education in a way that suits their personal circumstances and ambitions and equips them for employment in the 21st Century. The single most important aim of our Learning, Teaching and Assessment Plan is improving student outcomes, with an institutional target of 80-85% progression over the next 2-3 years. LTA 2020 Plan identified interconnected objectives to achieve that aim, how improvements will be achieved, responsibilities, timelines and measures for success:

The three key objectives:

- Achieve excellent academic standards to support improved student outcomes
- Undertake effective monitoring and review (of programmes, modules, student satisfaction and feedback)
- Develop, Support and Strengthen Academic Teams

(Learning, Teaching and Assessment Plan, October 2020)

Distance Learning

Acquisition of programme outcomes is via engagement with the online module learning material and the online tutoring and programme participant support mechanisms, both of which are delivered via Arden University's ilearn platform (a Moodle-based system). The learning material comprises purpose-written self-contained lessons with frequent activities and feedback to generate learning and reinforce the knowledge acquisition through frequent application of learning to specific examples.

Embedded within the text are links to further reading and appropriate websites. Feedback within the learning material is provided to allow programme participants to check their understanding with that of the tutor. Additionally, group learning activities direct programme participants to the tutor-facilitated discussion forums where they engage in discussion with their peers and receive formative feedback from the module tutor.

Each of the 20 credit modules provide programme participants with an understanding of key theoretical and practical management issues, debates and academic informed literatures.

Teaching/learning methods adopted are transferrable across modules and are similar across modules and include online class discussions, exercises/case studies and group discussions.

For each subject being taught a programme of structured online learning activities using both formative and summative assessment is applied. The emphasis is on action learning through the mediation of the module leader for each module.

Learning and Teaching activities are:

Asynchronous

- Independent and directed student study, supported throughout by comprehensive online multi-media teaching materials and resources accessed through our Virtual Learning Environment (iLearn)
- Guided group / project-based work
- Research tasks
- Discussion forums where students discuss and critically engage with themes emerging from the online materials they engage with, following the posing of questions or propositions, case studies or similar by either tutor or students themselves
- Podcasts and narrated PowerPoints

Synchronous

- Online seminars facilitated by Zoom.
- Live chats
- Based upon the profile of our typical student body, our strategy enables students to engage with a variety of learning tools that best meet their learning styles, overall objectives and personal circumstances. Independent study is the cornerstone of the learner experience, supported by subject specialist engagement with the tutor and peer engagement.
- Guest speaker sessions.

Blended Learning

- A strategy which incorporates elements from the above criteria plus the support of face to face input will be utilised.
- A-synchronous learning will be supported by in class face to face lectures, seminars and workshops. Students will have full access to the iLearn platform and all programme resources within it. Formative opportunities will be available in class and also via seminars hosted using Zoom.
- Students will also have access to learning resources at each partner institution.
- Student learning will be supported and nurtured at our partner institutions by our tutor team and dedicated centre administrator and online via our student support team.
- Summative submissions will all be made via the 'Turnitin' platform.

18. Intended programme learning outcomes and the means by which they are achieved and demonstrated		
Learning outcomes	The means by which these outcomes are achieved	The means by which these outcomes are assessed
<p>At the end of this course you, the student, will be able to:</p> <p><i>(No more than 10 programme learning outcomes are permitted per programme.)</i></p>		
<p>1. Critically evaluate leadership and management frameworks/models and reflect upon professional experience in relation to business practices in a globalised and digitised business environment.</p> <p>2. Review and identify the management challenges confronted by an organisation across its functional areas with regard to evolving ethical standards and technological environments.</p> <p>3. Critically analyse the contexts, including the legal, ethical, and regulatory environment, in which an organisation operates, competes, and innovates</p> <p>4. Demonstrate a critical understanding of current thinking and research associated with leadership and management, with the reference to sustainability, business ethics, innovations, and technology disruptions</p> <p>5. Synthesise management models and theories to meet the needs of diverse business issues of differing complexity.</p> <p>6. Take ownership of / undertake in-depth study on a topic relevant to a general management issue and report the research making sustainability and competitively sound recommendations</p> <p>7. Apply analytical techniques and metrics to evaluate a management issue and make evidence-based decisions</p>	<p><u>Asynchronous:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent and directed student study, supported throughout by comprehensive online multi-media teaching materials and resources accesses through our Virtual Learning Environment (iLearn) Research tasks Discussion forums where students discuss and critically engage with themes emerging from the online materials they engage with, following the posing of questions or propositions, case studies or similar by either tutor or students themselves Feedback on chapters Independent writing <p>(L1-10)</p> <p><u>Synchronous:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online seminars facilitated by Zoom. Live chats Based upon the profile of our typical student body, our strategy enables students to engage with a variety of learning tools that best meet their 	<p>Formative activities:</p> <p>Chapter review and 1-2-1 supervision session, Supervision sessions.</p> <p>Summative assessments:</p> <p>Supervisor agreed research proposal and final project of 12,000 words (L1-L10).</p>

8. Critically evaluate data sources and conduct analyses using primary and/or secondary data.	<p>learning styles, overall objectives and personal circumstances. Independent study is the cornerstone of the learner experience, supported by subject specialist engagement with the tutor and peer engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest speaker sessions. <p>(L1-10)</p>	
9. Develop personal, leadership, and team working skills that enhance effectiveness of management practices		
10. Identify practical solution to theoretical and practical management related problems, thereby facilitating the organisation to attain competitive advantages and/or operational improvements.		

18. Summary of modules and mapped programme learning outcomes

List modules in order of delivery

Level	Module title	Module type <i>Compulsory (C)</i> or Pathway	Pinned/ Paired/ Running order of Modules	LO 1	LO 2	LO 3	LO 4	LO 5	LO 6	LO 7	LO 8	LO 9	LO 10	GA1	GA2	GA3	GA4	GA5	GA6
7	Business Transformation Project	C	1	x					x	x	x			x		x			x

Master's Top-Up

Master's top-up programmes must include 60 credits from the final project/dissertation.

To achieve MBA (Top Up) following module need to be completed:

- Business Transformation Project

