

The Actuarial Profession
making financial sense of the future

Life conference and exhibition 2010
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Who should do an MBA?

What you will and won't get from the course

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What is an MBA?

“Masters in Business Administration”

- General business degree...
- ...with a strong focus on management and communication
- MBA designed for “individuals looking to make a vertical shift in their current career path, or change industry or job function, and for those looking for an entrepreneurial toolkit that will enable them to put their own business plan into practice.”
- Executive MBA designed to “transform ambitious mid-career managers into senior business people, without the need for students to interrupt their career.”
- Today's session focuses more on EMBA than MBA

As an Actuary, what could you expect to learn from an MBA?

Two broad categories

- Management skills
 - working in teams
 - non-financial people, not selected by you and not reporting to you
 - communication skills
 - project Management
- Content
 - new subject matter
 - try your new skills in a safe environment
 - refresh old subject matter, and understand what the other half knows!

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2

“Core” subjects include the following (1 of 2)

- Corporate Finance
- CSR and Business Ethics
- Data Analytics for Managers
- Decision and Risk Analysis
- **Developing Effective Managers and Organisations**
- **Developing Entrepreneurial Opportunities**
- Financial Accounting
- Introduction to Management Accounting
- **Leadership Skills**

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3

“Core” subjects include the following (2 of 2)

- Managerial Economics
- Managerial Statistics
- **Marketing**
- **Operations Management**
- **Strategic Management**
- **Understanding General Management**
- Understanding the International Macroeconomy
- Core subjects are covered in the first “year” of the course and are intended to provide “a thorough grounding in the essential skills and knowledge required for your future business success.”

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4

Students choose 8 “Elective” subjects from the list of ~70

- “Your choice of electives presents an opportunity to explore areas of particular interest, to specialise in certain subjects and to gain breadth across a range of business and management disciplines.”
- Electives are available in the following broad areas:
 - Accounting
 - Economics
 - Finance
 - **Marketing**
 - **Organisational Behaviour**
 - **Strategic and International Management**
 - **Management Science and Operations**
 - **Entrepreneurship**

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5

Example of an elective – Brand Management

- Light on theory, heavy on practice
- Example of something that might sound “soft and fluffy” to the average FIA but turned out to be quite the contrary
- Explored all dimensions of brand management, from defining brands, building, architecture and extension issues, etc.
- The course focus ranges from small start-up brands, consumer brands, service brands and B2B brands
- The course included a number of guest speakers

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6

Example of an elective – Negotiation and Bargaining

- This 30 hour course alone is probably worth the price of admission!
- Covers the theory behind the central concepts in negotiation
- Learn and develop strategies for analysing and preparing for negotiations
- Students **have the opportunity to practice negotiation skills**, receive feedback on individual negotiation problems and improve their ability to analyse the behaviour and motives of individuals, groups, and organisations in competitive situations.

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7

What to expect from the rest of the class

- “Executive MBA students are high-calibre managers, executives and entrepreneurs who have the potential and motivation to become truly global, multi-skilled business leaders. Students typically have between five and 22 years of managerial experience...” – LBS Website
- Lots of diversity in terms of background, career, age groups, languages, etc.
- Expect breadth not depth from the majority of classmates, especially in financial subjects
- For most Actuaries the course won't be tough to pass but hopefully that's not the point

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8

Teamwork is critical

- Study groups of 5-6 people for all of year 1
- ~50% of grades awarded to group and not individual
- Potentially very interesting:
 - diversity in culture
 - different objectives and priorities
 - alpha males / females
 - limited power to motivate

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9

Practical considerations (prioritised)

1. Which school?
 - not just brand recognition but also affects the quality of professors, fellow students, etc.
2. Which course?
 - Full time or part time
3. Funding and the business case
4. Can you fit it into your personal and family life?

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10

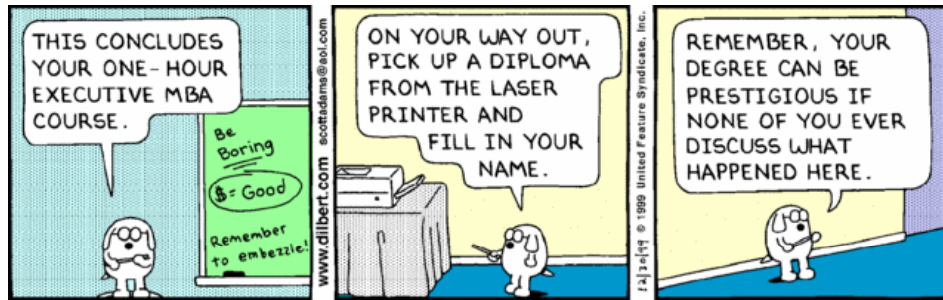
You've done your MBA – now what?

- You now have:
 - good broad business knowledge
 - high calibre diverse network of very social individuals
 - increased confidence
 - wider career options (though salary may be a challenge)
 - increased career prospects within your industry
- You may not have
 - greater clarity over what you want to do
 - any friends outside the course...until you apologise for your 20 month leave of absence!

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11

Questions or comments?



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12