

Ranked in the Financial Times and the Economist and accredited by the Association of MBAs and the European Quality Improvement System, the Birmingham Business School MBA is internationally acclaimed. The MBA offers a high-quality suite of programmes in a variety of flexible formats, designed to meet the needs of those wishing to study full or part-time.

With a history of business education dating back to 1902 and state-of-the-art facilities, Birmingham Business School offers a complementary combination of the traditional and the cutting-edge.

### History lesson

Over a hundred years ago it was a founding condition of the University of Birmingham that business studies should be taught. This tradition of management education has been given a contemporary edge with the school's recent move into University House, a purpose-designed new home. University House is situated in its own extensive landscaped grounds on the edge of the University of Birmingham campus. A multi-million pound teaching and learning centre with state-of-the-art facilities has been added to the original historic building of 1908.

It offers the best of both worlds: an elegant and atmospheric building in keeping with the school's long history and tradition, coupled with extensive teaching and learning facilities appropriate for the 21st century.

Students from all around the world choose to study at the school and each year it expects to represent over 50 different nationalities on the MBA. The Birmingham MBA appeals to international students because of its relevance and global perspectives and because of the support the university and school offer students from overseas.

# The masterstroke

Taking an MBA is one of the most important decisions you will ever make; along with where to study it. **Birmingham Business School** has been a major player in business education for more than a century and provides a wide variety of highly regarded programmes across a range of business disciplines.



With over 70 lecturing and research staff, many internationally recognised authorities in their field, all major business subject areas are represented. A number of research centres have been developed to build on areas of specialised excellence reflecting a dynamic global environment, including international finance, strategy and procurement management, industrial strategy and EU-South East Asia trade.

Members of the school maintain close links with industry, the financial community and major business professions. Consultancies have been undertaken for many companies and organisations such as the World Bank, the Bank of England and the Asian Development Bank. There are links with a number of governments and members of staff have been seconded to play major roles in the regulation of industry and in advising national institutions.

### Fieldwork

The University of Birmingham is situated in 234 acres of parkland and includes large lawns and even a lake. Its architecture is varied; from the grand traditional Victorian redbrick buildings of the Great Hall to the

recently built extension to the business school. The campus contains a variety of retail outlets including restaurants, banks, bookshops and supermarkets. The Barber Institute houses a concert hall and holds an international collection of paintings within its gallery. The library is one of the



**The school features a multi-million pound teaching and learning centre.**

most extensive university libraries in the UK, housing well over one and a half million volumes.

As England's second city, Birmingham is an exciting, bustling, vibrant hub and ideally placed for studying. It is the largest centre for the financial services industry outside of London and is known for its historical manufacturing and commercial industries with national and international links.

Over £9 billion of investment in the city over the last two decades has created new business growth in addition to retail and leisure developments that include canal-side bars and restaurants and the famous Bullring Shopping Mall. The city has an enviable location and convenient road and rail links across the UK. It is also served by Birmingham International Airport. ■

### Further information

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## The student

### Victoria Rayner - Exec MBA Profile

I studied on the Birmingham Business School Exec MBA programme between 2004 and 2009 and graduated with a distinction. Since enrolling as a student at Birmingham University my life and career has changed significantly. I started the MBA in June 2004, carried out the first two modules of the course and then took six months off after the birth of my son. I returned to the university, carried out another three modules and then took a year out after the birth of my twin daughters. I then completed the remaining three modules of the MBA in April 2007. I returned to work in between maternity provisions and because of my MBA experience was able to negotiate a secondment from my original post and take on an additional senior management role.

After my twin girls were born I returned to work for a second time and within six months had competed in an external recruitment and been promoted to the position of CEO. I feel certain that the experience and confidence secured

from being part of the MBA programme was instrumental in supporting my application. I regularly draw on the examples and case studies used during the course, and the essential learning derived from my peers.

It was the format of the MBA course that initially attracted me. I already had an MA from another institution, which I had studied on a part time basis. However, I found that evening classes did not work for me, and I was keen to find another approach. I really enjoyed the model of teaching modules in a week block, and found that the learning experience enabled me to quickly develop good connections with peers and enjoy a stimulating academic environment. It was also an escape from hectic family life to come away and do something completely different.

Some of my favourite moments were sitting in the leather sofas in the senior common room, engrossed in debate about a case study or presentation. Taking the opportunity to learn from other students was encouraged and

provoked some of the most significant challenges. The groups were full of strong personalities and it was a real opportunity to test out the strength of my conviction. I also enjoyed the continual change of pace within modules; module leaders demonstrated a real understanding of the need to break up sessions, change the mode of learning, bring in experts from industry and engage all of the students.

I think that almost all elements of the MBA will have a direct bearing on business life, often in terms of learning how not to do things. There were some particularly helpful sections focusing on finance and understanding of the international business environment, which proved academically and practically challenging. There were also opportunities for hands-on application of skills including media training and assessed presentations, where role play and peer pressure created an atmosphere of reality to cement the learning. I had a very positive experience at the business school.