



Programme Title	Doctor of Business Administration
Awarding Bodies	London School of Business and Finance (Malta)
Level of Award ¹	MQF Level 8
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies Recognition	
Credit Structure ²	180 ECTS
Mode of Attendance	Full-time and Part-time
Standard Length of Programme ³	36 months full-time 54 months part-time
Intended Award	Doctor of Business Administration
Named Exit Awards	Qualification 1: Doctor of Business Administration (180 ECTS) Qualification 2: Master of Research (180 ECTS) Qualification 3: PG Certificate in Management Research Methods (45 ECTS) Qualification 4: Award in each Module (15 ECTS)



Entry Requirements ⁴	<p>Academic entry requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor's degree + Master's degree/Level 7 postgraduate qualification/MBA or professional qualification (ACCA, CIMA, CFA, CPA) + 3 years professional experience in a mid-level management position or higher; or; <p>Applicants who do not meet the stated entry requirements may apply via the Mature Route. Applicants will be asked to provide evidence of five year's managerial work experience(middle or senior level), plus certificates/ transcripts of their highest qualifications achieved to date. Applications via this route are assessed on a case-by- case basis.</p> <p>English language requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IELTS 6.0 or equivalent or • High school in English or • Bachelors completed in English or • Three years of work experience in an English-speaking environment (upon approval by admissions board) • Applicants who do not hold or have expired acceptable English test can have their proof of English assessed based on minimum of 3 years of professional work experience in an English speaking work environment, supported by a reference letter. These applicants' acceptance may be subject to successfully completing an English interview with LSBF's Academic team.
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Delivering Institution	London School of Business and Finance
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This definitive record sets out the essential features and characteristics of the Doctor of Business Administration Programme. The information provided is accurate for students entering level 8 in the 2025-2026 academic year.

Programme Summary

Our Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) programme offers a rigorous, research-led curriculum designed to cultivate strategic business leaders and accomplished scholar-practitioners. Candidates engage in advanced academic enquiry, developing the expertise required to bridge the gap between complex theoretical frameworks and modern professional practice.

The curriculum is structured into three distinct stages designed to fit within the 180-ECTS framework, representing a total of 4,500 learning hours. This structure ensures a focused progression from methodological mastery to the contribution of original knowledge.

**The three-stage programme consists of:**

1. **Core Modules**
2. **DBA Thesis Proposal Development (Research Design and Ethics Module)**
3. **The DBA Thesis**

The programme follows a linear progression model, ensuring that every student starts with the foundational research training in Stage 1 before moving towards research proposal components in Stage 2. This sequence ensures that all candidates possess the necessary methodological rigour to maintain high standards of academic integrity and professional excellence throughout their educational journey.

The structure will resemble the one below for part-time students:

Term	Module Title	Status
Term 1	Management Theory and Practice	Core
Term 2	Foundations of Management Research	Core
Term 3	Research Methods	Core
Term 4	Academic Writing and Dissemination of Research	Core
Term 5	The Reflective Practitioner	Core
Term 6	Research Design and Ethics	Core
Terms 7-18	DBA Thesis	Core

The structure will resemble the one below for full-time students:

Term	Module Title	Status
Term 1	Management Theory and Practice	Core
Term 1	Foundations of Management Research	Core
Term 2	Research Methods	Core
Term 2	Academic Writing and Dissemination of Research	Core
Term 3	The Reflective Practitioner	Core
Term 3	Research Design and Ethics	Core
Terms 4-12	DBA Thesis	Core

The *DBA Thesis* (Stage 3), which enables students to undertake and complete:

- (i) a sustained piece of research/applied research which leads to-
- (ii) the production completion, and successful oral defence of a significant Doctoral Thesis.



This module is the culmination of the DBA journey, focusing entirely on the independent research, execution, and scholarly presentation of the doctoral thesis. Building upon the foundational knowledge and research skills acquired in earlier modules, this module provides advanced guidance and support for students as they undertake their significant research project and translate their findings into a rigorous and impactful doctoral thesis.

The module emphasises the student's role as an independent researcher, fostering self-direction, critical thinking, and scholarly rigour throughout the research process. Although formal supervision arrangements will be in place, the module encourages proactive engagement with supervisors to refine research design, navigate methodological challenges, interpret findings, and develop a coherent and compelling scholarly argument.

Key aspects of this module include:

- Advanced Research Execution
- Thesis Structure and Writing
- Navigating Challenges and Problem-Solving
- Preparing for Assessment
- Contribution to Knowledge and Practice

The target students for the DBA programme are experienced professionals in business and management, including senior executives, industry practitioners, consultants, entrepreneurs, public and non-profit sector leaders, and academics seeking industry-facing careers. It enables participants to conduct rigorous, practice-based research that strengthens strategic leadership, innovation, and organisational impact. The target age groups include 19- 65+ years of age.

The language of instruction is English.

Graduates of the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) programme can pursue a range of senior roles in business and management across industry and academia, including but not limited to the following:

- C-suite Executive (e.g. CEO, COO, CFO, CSO, CIO)
- Senior Manager / Director
- Business Development Director / Manager
- Entrepreneur / Founder
- Management Consultant / Business Analyst
- Research Fellow / Research Analyst
- University Professor / Academic
- Public Sector or Non-profit Leader



The DBA programme orientation is fundamentally applied or practice-oriented, seeking to use advanced knowledge to solve a complex, significant gap in professional practice. The DBA transforms the candidate into a scholarly practitioner, a leader capable of applying advanced academic methods to solve real-world, complex business problems. The doctoral title, underpinned by a rigorous, applied thesis, confers significant professional authority and trust.

Programme Aims

The programme provides an advanced, research-informed understanding of business processes, principles, and governance, enabling students to critically evaluate strategic and operational contexts within contemporary organisations.

The principal aim of the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) is to develop scholarly practitioners who apply rigorous academic research methods to generate original, evidence-based solutions to complex, real-world problems in business and management.

The general programme aims and objectives are to enable students to:

- Acquire a critical understanding of the nature of advanced study and research methods to enable them to display mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge and advanced skills to conduct research.
- Create and interpret new knowledge at the forefront of an area of professional practice.
- Apply and develop suitable techniques and methodologies applicable to research and advanced scholarship.
- Work independently to deal with complex and unpredictable situations in professional environments.
- Enable candidates to initiate, implement, and evaluate a programme of practice-based research projects which lead to organisational change.

**DBA Programme Learning Outcomes****(i) Knowledge and Understanding: Students**

completing the programme will be able to:

- a) Critically evaluate and justify the selection of advanced theoretical frameworks to address complex, multi-faceted professional challenges.
- b) Synthesise diverse, multi-disciplinary research to formulate novel conceptual models that address dynamic organisational and jurisdictional complexities.
- c) Critically assess and contextualise advanced research methodologies to ensure valid and reliable evidence generation for applied solutions
- d) Create and structure scholarly knowledge and complex analytical findings into clear, defensible, and actionable strategic narratives suitable for immediate executive and policy-maker comprehension and implementation.
- e) Systematically analyse the intersection of internal and external factors contributing to executive failures, dissecting limitations in current professional practice
- f) Critically evaluate and navigate the complex ethical, governance, and legal frameworks that govern applied research within diverse professional and international jurisdictions

(ii) Applying Knowledge and Understanding:

Students completing the programme will be able to:

- a) Demonstrate mastery in skills such as the selection and analysis of research, writing, design, development and sustainability of the argument manifested in innovative scholarly research and defended in a viva voce examination.
- b) Respond to technological, social and cultural issues and address the needs of a knowledge-based society through an original research project.
- c) Communicate expertise to a wide audience including peers and the general public, through disseminating the findings of their research project using different methods such as national and international publications and participating in specialist fora.
- d) Demonstrate expertise in critical evaluation and analysis with incomplete or limited information to solve design original solutions to problems in new or unfamiliar professional environments.
- e) Conduct a significant research project on an organisation, industry or country depending on the nature and scope of the chosen research topic.
- f) Demonstrate understanding of how to translate theory or research into practice with the purpose of articulating and defending actionable recommendations.
- g) Design and implement innovative solutions to complex organisational challenges, demonstrating originality and practical impact
- h) Articulate complex, evidence-based research and strategic recommendations with executive proficiency across diverse professional and scholarly contexts, utilising written, oral, and visual communication strategies to effectively influence and facilitate organisational change at the highest levels.
- i) Design and lead organisational and market transformation strategies by critically evaluating and leveraging advanced digital competencies to generate new, evidence-based knowledge.



Programme Design

The design of this programme has been guided by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

- The UK frameworks for higher education qualifications provide definitive points of reference for UK higher education providers when designing courses. They also provide a context in which qualifications can be reviewed and developed.
- Qualifications are determined by level and academic credit. Level descriptors and academic credit values allow providers to accurately describe and market their qualifications in a consistent manner. Not only are they tools for securing threshold academic standards nationally, they allow valid comparisons to be made with qualifications in other nations which enables student mobility.
- Feedback from key stakeholders/sources and multidisciplinary research allow developers to craft relevant and innovative courses of study. Sources of feedback for course design may include internal and external specialists, prospective, current and past students, employers and PSRBs. The incorporation of a systematic, relevant and stimulating assessment strategy, which enables course and module learning outcomes to be met, is also a key consideration for course design and development.

Programme Structure

The Doctor of Business Administration comprises modules at level 8.

Module Specifications for each of these modules is included within the student handbook, available to students on-line at the beginning of each academic year.

Level	Module	Credits	Module Type
Stage I			
8	Management Theory and Practice	15	Compulsory
8	Foundations of Management Research	15	Compulsory
8	Research Methods	15	Compulsory
8	Academic Writing and Dissemination of Research	15	Compulsory
8	The Reflective Practitioner	15	Compulsory
Stage II			
8	Research Design and Ethics	15	Compulsory
Stage III			
7	DBA Thesis	90	Compulsory



Awards

Qualification 1: The main qualification is the Doctor of Business Administration (180 ECTS)

Qualification 2: Master of Research (90 ECTS)

Master of Research (MRes)	
Module	ECTS
Module 1: Management Theory and Practice	15
Module 2: Foundations of Management Research	15
Module 3: Research Methods	15
Module 4: Academic Writing and Dissemination of Research	15
Module 5: The Reflective Practitioner	15
Module 6: Research Design and Ethics	15
Total ECTS	90

Qualification 3: Postgraduate Certificate in Management Research Methods (45 ECTS)

Postgraduate Certificate in Management Research Methods	
Module	ECTS
Module 1: Management Theory and Practice	15
Module 2: Foundations of Management Research	15
Module 3: Research Methods	15
Total ECTS	45

Qualification 4: Module 1 to 6 can be taken as stand alone modules and an Award will be given. (15 ECTS).

Award	ECTS	MQF
Award in Management Theory and Practice	15	8
Award in Foundations of Management	15	8
Award in Research Methods	15	8
Award in Academic Writing and Dissemination of Research	15	8
Award in The Reflective Practitioner	15	8
Award in Research Design and Ethics	15	8



Programme Delivery

The programme is delivered online from the London School of Business and Finance, and the language of instruction is English. Students studying full-time on the Doctor of Business Administration are likely to have approximately 6 contact hours per week. The contact hours will be online lectures and discussions. Students will normally be expected to undertake at least 18 hours of independent study in an average week, but should be prepared for this to vary based on assignment deadlines and class exercises.

LSBF implements a continuous review of the curriculum for each programme so that any new developments within the discipline are incorporated to ensure that the curriculum meets external requirements and the latest academic standards. Innovation in teaching and learning is strongly encouraged and it is considered essential that the organisation demonstrates that it meets standards expected at national level.

The approach to learning activities is one of flexibility and adaptability to be able to respond to the diverse student needs and not only deliver the underpinning theories but also demonstrate applicability and relevance in the external environment. In order to achieve this, a range of learning methods are used including video presentations, case studies, active student participation, teamwork, and other forms of independent and guided learning to enable reflection and self-discovery. Programme Leaders play a key role in the curriculum review process and are regularly invited to ensure that the link between theory and practice is demonstrated.

It is considered that the reflective and testing element of the learning process is a valuable dimension in the knowledge acquisition process and facilitates the integration of such knowledge.

Programme Delivery Content

1. Dynamic Videos

LSBF's delivery provides engaging visual content by utilising HD-quality studio production and animated infographics to highlight the key theories for each individual Bit (short video tutorial of up to 3-4 minutes in length). This combination presents a highly effective medium of communication to students, especially visual learners.

The building blocks of LSBF's videos are as follows:

a) Script – All original Bits video content is written by industry experts who condense a wealth of information into a concise learning segment. The scripts are structured in a



manner that facilitates effective learning by adhering to three basic principles:

- i. Tell the learner what they will learn in the Bit
- ii. Familiarise the learner with what the Bit is and provide an example
- iii. Provide a summary of the Bit for the learner

b) Recording – recording is conducted in LSBF's state-of-the-art studios using a roster of professional presenters with past experience at leading broadcasting networks such as the BBC.

c) Infographics – LSBF's video content combines the presenter's delivery with visually engaging infographics designed by the content creators to help visually explain the core theoretical framework of each topic.

2. Flash cards

Flash cards are electronic pdf files, which complement the videos by highlighting key points and providing a transcript of the video recording for the student to read. The flash cards are a very effective tool for revision, and a key medium of retention for learners who absorb information more effectively through reading.

3. Scenarios, Case Studies and Online Discussion Forums

Scenarios are an integral part of the supplementary material for each Bit. Based on case-study style learning methods, Scenarios allow students to apply theory within a simulated real-world context, which particularly benefits kinaesthetic learners. The goal here is to enhance the learner's understanding of the theory in relation to a specific context or situation.

Online discussion forums facilitated by the professors will be offered in each unit to engage students and apply theory to practice in relation to the scenarios and case studies to build upon theoretical concepts.

4. Synchronous Live Lectures, Seminars, Workshops and Tutorials

Regular synchronous/ live sessions in the form of online lectures, seminars, workshops and tutorials are conducted regularly which allow students to interact with their tutors and each other in real time and understand the concepts in greater depth.

Programme Assessment

The DBA programme is grounded in a scaffolding approach to assessment, which means that all assessments in taught modules contribute directly to the DBA thesis. Scaffolding ensures that assessment mirrors the research journey and acts as a quality control mechanism, allowing the candidate to successfully integrate the theoretical knowledge from the Taught Stage into the Research Stage (described in the General Pedagogical Methods), a core requirement of the DBA's applied orientation. The structure encourages the reuse and refinement of successful assessment outputs. This systematic reuse ensures consistency and efficient application of learning.



Assessment Profile

Assessment Profile (Modules)

1. 20% -online discussion and/or online quiz
2. 80% - Individual assignment
3. (Or) 100%: Individual assignment

It is up to the lecturer's professional discretion to choose between the two assessment methods. This allows lecturers flexibility between the choice of both assessments to create a more conducive assessment depending on the group needs. The length of the assignment should be between 3,500 – 4,000 words.

The assignments can differ in format in order to align to with the particular needs of the unit being assessed. Hence, the Individual Assignments will be tailored to the specific requirements of each module (including and not limited to extended critical essays or papers, critiques of methodology, research plans etc) and also be designed through the scaffolding approach discussed above to directly contribute to the DBA thesis. Assignment Briefs are internally and externally verified before release to students to ensure alignment with programme and module learning outcomes.

Assessment Profile for DBA Thesis

The DBA Thesis has two components: The Proposal and The Final DBA Thesis.

- a. The DBA Proposal - A proposal for a DBA thesis is the initial, yet crucial, blueprint for a doctoral-level research endeavour in business and management. This document serves as the foundational agreement, articulating the 'what' and the 'why' of the proposed research, setting the stage for an in-depth exploration of a significant business challenge or opportunity. It communicates an initial, yet, robust understanding of the foundations of management research, research design and methodology and the DBA student's developing ability to contribute meaningfully to the field through rigorous investigation.
- b. The DBA Thesis - builds upon the research proposal and is a comprehensive and rigorously researched scholarly work that addresses the questions and objectives laid out in the proposal. The thesis details the entire research process, from the initial conceptualisation and literature review through the methodology employed, the data collected and analyzed, and finally, the findings, conclusions, and implications derived. The DBA thesis stands as tangible evidence of the candidate's ability to conduct independent, applied research that contributes meaningfully to business knowledge and practice.



The DBA Thesis is assessed by two independent examiners (one internal and one external). The candidate is invited to defend the DBA Thesis through a *viva voce* examination.

Progression Reviews

This is a formative means of monitoring the student's research progress. These regular reviews will involve submitting progress reports, presentations, and meetings with supervisors and a review panel. They are primarily for guidance and to ensure the research is on track. However, consistently poor progress might lead to academic probation or even termination from the programme. Successful progression is necessary to reach the thesis submission stage.

Final mark will be the average of all modules weighted by ECTS.

Marking Criteria

The guidelines below reflect the standards of work expected at postgraduate level. All assessed work is marked by a faculty member, and a sample is then moderated by another member of staff. Any piece of work may be made available to the external examiner(s).

Generic DBA Marking Criteria (Applicable Across Taught and Research Modules)

Distinction (70–100%)

Demonstrates exceptional achievement characterised by originality, independence of thought, critical synthesis of literature, methodological sophistication (where applicable), and a clear contribution to professional practice and/or knowledge. Work is analytically rigorous, well structured, and written to a scholarly standard appropriate for publication.

Merit (60–69%)

Demonstrates strong critical thinking and systematic understanding of the subject area. Literature is critically engaged, arguments are coherent and well supported, and appropriate methodological or analytical approaches are competently applied. The work shows clear relevance to professional practice and is well presented.

Pass (50–59%)

Demonstrates adequate understanding of key concepts and literature, with some



critical analysis and synthesis. Arguments are generally coherent and methodologies or analytical approaches are appropriate but may lack depth. The work meets minimum doctoral standards.

Fail (Below 50%)

Limited ability to demonstrate understanding or critical engagement. Work shows limited synthesis, insufficient or inappropriate methodology or analysis, insufficient engagement with literature, and/or poor academic structure and presentation.

Important Note:

These generic marking descriptors are applied through module-specific assessment criteria aligned to the intended learning outcomes of each DBA module

Programme Team

LSBF engages several layers of faculty. Programme Leader, Principal Lecturers, Senior Lecturers and Lecturers are contracted to teach for the organisation and have a wide range of responsibilities including content creation, course teaching, dissertation supervision, assessment creation, grading, committee membership and leadership, partnership liaison, etc. Team members generally work remotely. Communication and allocation of responsibility can be a challenge for management at times, but actions are coordinated by the Head of Academics and Programme Leader in coordination with heads of various departments. Almost 75% of the faculty have a PhD or doctoral degree and the rest have a relevant master's degree and extensive professional experience, which is the minimum requirement for the faculty to be able to teach on the programme.

Tuition and Fees

Payment of tuition fees is due at the time of enrolment and is managed in accordance with the Tuition Fee Policy.