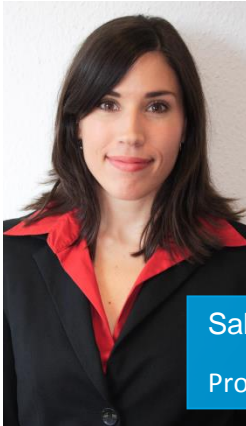




## Factory FIBAA Consult



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## The new MBA-Guidelines<sup>1</sup>

### *Amendments and their impact on accreditation according to FIBAA Quality Standards*

The independent and innovative network European QUALity Link (EQUAL), which was established in June 1996 as an association to promote effective management development and as a think tank for the accreditation system EQUIS of the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD), adopted last October the amended MBA Guidelines.

What are the most important amendments and which impact do they have on accreditation of MBA programmes according to the quality requirements of FIBAA?

### Amendments in detail:

- *Pathways, 'labels' or sector-specific programmes*

In the new MBA Guidelines pathways, 'labels' or sector-specific programmes are explicitly acceptable as long as the MBA retains its essential generalist core. Therefore, the later part of the programme may make provisions for electives and may include the possibilities for participants to choose a major area of study or specialization.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.efmd.org/images/stories/efmd/downloadables/EQUAL/EQUAL-Guidelines.pdf>

- *Personal interview as part of the admission procedure*

The new amended MBA Guidelines require that the admission procedure should include a personal interview. That should better ensure that only qualified participants are given access to the programme.

- *Longer post-graduate experience for Executive MBAs*

In the new Guidelines, the required post-graduate experience for Executive MBAs is now explicitly mentioned. The participants should have more seven years of senior management experience, with some at leadership level.

- *Structured contact*

Neither a minimum duration of study nor a minimum of proportion of structured contact are required in the new MBA Guidelines. It is only expected that the MBA would include a substantial proportion of structured contact between faculty and the learning group and within the learning group itself. Furthermore, it is expected that an MBA would provide for ample interaction between both participants and faculty, which is particularly important for the development of transferable 'soft' skills.

- *New MBA delivery modes considered*

Additionally to classic MBAs in form of full or part time programme, other delivery modes, such as distance learning or blended/online learning, are now explicitly considered in the new guidelines. Each MBA delivery mode must offer an equivalent intensity and must include appropriate features, in order to ensure the achievement of curricular requirements and the interaction defined above. Programme design should ensure that participants have sufficient opportunities for synchronous, interactive learning.

- *International learning experience of the participants*

The new MBA Guidelines require now explicitly that MBA programme should offer and encourage the international learning experience of their participants (for example through: the curriculum, student exchanges, cross cultural environments, international work placements, learning a foreign language and study visits).

- *Balanced regime of examinations*

The new MBA Guidelines point now explicitly the importance of a balanced regime of examinations, which should include an appropriate mix of formative and summative assessment methods.

With regard to content, the new MBA Guidelines provided four main areas: „**Strategy and Leadership**“, „**Organisations**“, „**External Environment**“ and „**Management**“. Within the framework of these four main areas, it is expected that graduates will be able to demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge and understanding in the following areas:

- **Markets** (*development and operation of markets for resources, goods and services*)
- **Customers** (*customer expectations, service and orientation*)
- **Finance** (*sources, uses and management of finance; use of accounting and other information systems for managerial applications*)
- **People** (*management and development of people within organisations, theories and practice of leadership and the development of multicultural and diversity understanding*)
- **Operations** (*management of operational processes and resources*)
- **Information Systems** (*development, management and exploitation of information systems and their impact upon organisations*)
- **Communication and Information Technology** (*comprehension and use of relevant and current communication and information technologies for application in business and management*)
- **Business Policy and Strategy** (*development of appropriate policies and strategies within a changing environment, to meet stakeholder interests in for example: internationalisation and globalisation, business innovation, creativity, enterprise development, and knowledge management*)
- **Responsible Management** (*ethics, sustainability, corporate social responsibility and risk management*)

Within the framework of personality development, MBA programmes should demonstrated following cognitive and intellectual skills:

- *cognitive skills of critical thinking, analysis and synthesis. This includes the capability to identify assumptions, evaluate statements in terms of evidence, to detect false logic or reasoning, to identify implicit values, to define terms adequately and to generalize appropriately*
- *effective problem solving and decision making using appropriate quantitative and qualitative skills including identifying, formulating and solving business problems*

- *the ability to create, evaluate and assess a range of options together with the capacity to apply ideas and knowledge to a range of situations in conditions of limited knowledge or uncertainty*
- *effective communication, oral and in writing, using a range of media which are widely used in business including the preparation and presentation of business reports*
- *interpersonal skills of effective listening, negotiating, persuasion and presentation.*
- *numeracy, mathematical and quantitative skills including statistical data analysis, interpretation and extrapolation; management science skills as support to the decision-making processes in an organisation the use of models of business problems and phenomena*
- *effective use of communication and information technology for business applications*
- *effective self-management in terms of time, planning and behaviour, motivation, self-starting, individual initiative and enterprise*
- *effective performance, within a team environment, including leadership, team building, influencing*
- *project management skills*
- *ability to conduct research into business and management issues, either individually or as part of a team for projects/dissertations/presentations. This requires familiarity with and an evaluative approach to a range of business data, sources of information and appropriate methodologies, and for such to inform the overall learning process.*

### Impact on Accreditation

Within the framework of its programme accreditation procedure, FIBAA assesses MBA programmes according to the MBA Guidelines. For this reason, it adapted its Assessment Guide, which serves the MBA providers as the basis for compiling their self-evaluation report, to the new Guidelines, as follow:

#### 2.4 Professional experience (if relevant; Asterisk Criterion for master programmes that require professional experience)

Please describe and state reasons for the professional experience required for this study programme.

Meets quality requirements

The required professional experience must correspond to the defined qualification profile of entrants and the study programme's objectives. Certified proof of this experience must be shown at the time of the admission.

For an MBA programme, this translates into at least 2 years of professional experience after the first higher education qualification.

For an Executive MBA programme, it means at least 7 years of professional experience after the first higher education qualification, with some at a leadership level.

Exceeds quality requirements

The quality and/or duration of the professional experience required is systematically derived from the study programme's objectives. They go beyond the level normally required.

### 3.1 Contents

#### 3.1.1 Logic and conceptual coherence (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe how the qualification objectives of the study programme are implemented in the curriculum.

Meets quality requirements

The curriculum adequately reflects the qualification objectives of the study programme. The contents of the modules are well-balanced, logically connected and oriented towards the intended learning outcomes. The areas of specialisation (compulsory electives) or optional electives enable students to acquire additional competences and skills.

For master programme that require professional experience, the following applies additionally: the contents of the master programme take into account the students' prior professional experience and refer to it.

For an MBA programme, the following applies additionally: the contents of the programme are in line with the [EQUAL MBA Guidelines](#).

Exceeds quality requirements

The modules consistently reflect the strategic orientation of the study programme. They clearly meet the requirements of the job market. Additional electives enhance the graduates' employability.

#### 3.2.1 Modular structure of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)

Please provide an [overview of the curriculum](#), which shows the modular structure of the programme based on the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Please provide the following information as well:

Projected study time	
Number of Credit Points (CP)	
Workload per CP	

Number of modules	
Time required for processing the final thesis and awarded CP	
Number of contact hours (For MBA programmes: Please describe in which way the substantial proportion of structured contact according to the EQUAL MBA Guidelines is ensured.)	

Meets quality requirements
<p>The programme structure supports the smooth implementation of the curriculum and helps students to reach the defined learning outcomes. The programme consists of modules and assigns Credit-Points (CP) per module on the basis of the necessary student workload. Practical components, if existent, are designed and integrated in such a way that CP can be acquired. The <a href="#">module descriptions</a> provide detailed descriptions of intended learning outcomes and the information defined in the <a href="#">ECTS Users' Guide</a>.</p>
For MBA programmes: Depending on the didactic approach, the programme includes a substantial proportion of structured contact.
Exceeds quality requirements
n/a