



## Developing your Graduate Attributes with an MA in Management

The MA Management aims to offer a robust grounding in distinct aspects of management by enhancing students' knowledge and understanding of key theoretical debates in the management field, alongside practitioner concerns. The MA Management seeks to develop well-rounded, thoughtful, active, reflective and practical professionals with excellent skills. The programme is distinct in that it adopts a critical management studies perspective throughout the programme, contributing to (and pre-dating) the current debates regarding the future of capitalism and the often problematic relationship between management, organising and the wider social environment.

*The programme provides students with a broad perspective on the global economic environment and its impacts upon the everyday experiences of people in all walks of life.*

This document is designed to raise awareness of the graduate attributes that will develop as a result of engaging in the MA Management programme at Keele and how these are fostered by the learning activities undertaken during postgraduate study. This statement is designed to provide clear guidance about which skills and attributes will be developed and enhanced by the MA Management programme. This information can be used in conjunction with a personal development plan to manage progress (in both personal and career development terms), track learning and achievements and to enable individuals to make the best use of opportunities available at Keele and in the wider community.

As with so many experiences in life, it is often practice that helps us to learn. In what follows we offer some key examples of where graduate attributes are developed in

the Management programme. Naturally, the development of these attributes will often overlap in practice, with some learning contexts developing several graduate attributes at the same time.

## **Helping Management Students to Realise their Potential**

### **Attribute 1**

**An open and questioning approach to ideas, demonstrating curiosity, independence of thought and the ability to appreciate a range of perspectives on the historical, sociological, political and economic contexts of Management.**

All the modules offered on the programme aim to foster an open and questioning approach to ideas, so that individuals learn to develop their own informed and critical approach over the course of the degree. Emphasis is placed on reading widely throughout the year, and developing the ability to critically appraise various theories and concepts. Many different perspectives – entirely coherent and logical in themselves – are compared and contrasted to expose potential contradictions. Throughout the MA programme students develop familiarity with the main qualitative methods of social scientific research and the ability to formulate and communicate their own ideas about the development of Management as a discipline. These research skills will help students to question what are often taken-for-granted assumptions about the relationship between management, organising and the wider social environment. This approach helps students to challenge dominant ideas and conventional ‘wisdom’ and form their own opinions.

### **Attribute 2**

**An appreciation of the development and value of ideas within Management scholarship and practice: their contexts; the links between Management and other disciplines; and the provisional and dynamic nature of theoretical advances in this field of research.**

Our modules encourage students to develop the ability to draw from relevant disciplines (such as sociology, political science and anthropology, amongst others) in order to better understand the dynamic development of ideas around Management theory and practice. Throughout the MA, students explore the complex concepts and institutions which influence the Management environment through class discussions focussing on case studies and research conducted by Keele staff. Throughout the programme, students are frequently engaged in weekly discussions and carefully selected readings. This also provides a space for students to consider what management means in all different situations of practice, and this is learned by

interacting with others in the form of presentations and group discussions. The modules are designed to help students to understand how complex Management is; while the institutions of markets and governments are powerful agents, they also hold sway over more than simple economic concerns.

### **Attribute 3**

**The ability to gather, evaluate and synthesise large amounts of frequently conflicting information, ideas and data relevant to the study of Management.**

Information literacy is developed at through library inductions and the Learning to Learn programme. In all modules, students are encouraged to develop their ability to critique existing literature and doing so forms a core part of the assessment in various modules. The Dissertation undertaken between May-September gives students the opportunity to undertake independent study, which gives student the opportunity to do some organisation research in practice. While students are fully supported throughout this process, this is where students design their own project by undertaking fieldwork-based research, usually in an off-campus organisation. Similarly, the Company Internship offers students the opportunity to work on a real-world business problem that demands information literacy. With a wealth of businesses to choose from in the local area, students often find that they can also use this time to generate ideas for their own career development by finding out what work is 'really like'.

### **Attribute 4**

**The ability to solve current problems in Management by applying a range of different theories, creative approaches and techniques, and developing the judgement skills to choose between them.**

The ability to problem-solve creatively is developed throughout the Management programme and these skills will strengthen as you progress. Students learn to critically analyse economic problems and to assess possible outcomes to solve the problem. Students are presented with the chance to work in teams throughout the programme, with an emphasis on the development of business skills. Formal and informal presentations feature as formative assessments throughout the programme which broaden student's experience of problem solving in a group, whether their task is to address a particular case study, or where the exercise itself is an opportunity to engage in creative approaches to managing diverse groups. Through engaging in varied learning experiences like these, graduates will better understand

how the logic of contemporary and historical management thinking constructs both 'problems' and 'solutions' at different times.

## **Attribute 5**

**An appreciation of the social, environmental and global implications of your studies: the capability to act as a responsible manager: perform leadership roles in developing sustainable and socially responsible organisations.**

Students entering the Management programme come from a wide variety of social and cultural backgrounds. This provides an opportunity for students to experience working with people from another culture, an important factor for those wishing to pursue a management career or looking to broaden their life experience and skills. Group assignments, class discussions and case studies will give students multiple opportunities to develop knowledge and capabilities needed to act as tolerant, empathetic and responsible managers and to perform leadership roles in developing sustainable and socially responsible organisations. Central to the Management programme is the belief that management and organisations are key locations for the production and reproduction of inequality in global society. Students are encouraged to challenge those inequalities throughout the programme.

## **Attribute 6**

**The ability to communicate clearly and effectively about Management issues in written and verbal forms for different purposes and to a variety of audiences.**

The MA Management assessment strategy provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the subject in a number of diverse ways. All modules also involve group work whereby students develop their verbal communication skills through in-class discussions in small groups and larger class-wide debates, thereby building up their confidence and skills in terms of communicating to a wider group. This approach encourages students to hone important communication and presentation skills in a variety of formats which have a resonance for life beyond Keele. In their studies, individuals will be able to progressively develop written and verbal communication skills during the Management programme and get feedback on their progress. Individuals will be required to make several formal and informal presentations, either individually or as part of a group.

Every module involves some form of written work: as well as more traditional essays, this may involve literature reviews, case studies, reflective essays and consultancy

reports. There are opportunities for early feedback on written work: for example, in a number of modules individuals produce an essay based upon several weeks of seminar teaching to enable early formative and summative feedback to help them improve their writing skills for the next assessments.

## **Attribute 7**

**The knowledge, skills, self-confidence and self-awareness to actively pursue future goals, whether Management-related or not.**

At Keele, students will often discuss case studies that members of staff have written. These deal with real-life cases that focus on the introduction of change and innovation in different contexts. Through enabling individuals to work with both real-life business problems and those of an academic nature, the MA Management provides a variety of experiences and challenges to help individuals develop the knowledge, skills, self-confidence and self-awareness to pursue future goals.

*Studying, theorising and solving emerging and topical Management issues, helps individuals gain a unique understanding and experience of the latest developments in a variety of social and professional settings.*

## **Attributes 8 and 9**

**The ability and motivation to participate responsibly and collaboratively as an active citizen in the communities in which you live and work: appreciate and cherish diversity; comprehend the ties between local, national and global issues; appreciate the impact of your work on management, organisations and the world of work in general.**

**A professional and reflective approach: qualities of leadership, responsibility, personal integrity, empathy, care and respect for others, accountability and self-regulation.**

The ability and motivation to participate responsibly and collaboratively as an active citizen in the communities in which you live and work is developed both through the team work activities within the programme and also in the various co-curricular opportunities discussed above. This is emphasised at Keele, and particularly within the Management programme because our students travel from all over the world to study with us. We find that this is a great way to find out more about other cultures and other ways of seeing the world of business. Qualities of leadership, responsibility, personal integrity, empathy, care and respect for others, accountability and self-regulation are fostered

## Your ten steps to success:

1. Read widely and critically
2. Use online peer reviewed journal articles early in your studies
3. Use feedback on your work to improve your performance
4. Reflect on your personal and professional development and achievements and keep an up to date CV
5. Make the most of group discussions to explore different perspectives voiced by peers
6. Use formal presentations as a learning experience
7. Consider the ideas learned in other disciplines and to build a richer perspective
8. Be ambitious when presenting your ideas - be prepared to take risks
9. Enjoy the intellectual diversity of Management
10. Use the research and reading to help consider career options

through opportunities such as team exercises, not to mention the acquisition and reinforcement of basic professional disciplines such as punctuality and measured, reasoned argument.

The Management programme seeks to empower individuals to develop a professional and reflective approach to their studies and future career. Throughout the programme, the emphasis is firmly upon the practical use and application of research within a number of different professional contexts. We also seek to develop a professional approach through inviting guest speakers from industry into selected modules to share their experiences and knowledge and to provide networking opportunities.

## Attribute 10

**The flexibility to thrive in rapidly changing and uncertain external environments and to update skills and knowledge as circumstances require.**

Studying, theorising and solving emerging Management issues, help individuals gain a unique understanding and experience of the latest developments in a variety of social and professional settings. This will help develop the adaptable skills and attitudes necessary to thrive in a diverse range of careers after graduation. The Management programme very much focuses on developing an understanding of the implications of the ever-changing economic, global and social environments and how this affects business professionals and consumer behaviours. The research- and practitioner-led nature of teaching in the programme means that individuals will be introduced to the latest developments and thinking in the field and their implications for the workplace, through diverse readings, the empirical research and experience of tutors and individual research.