



Developing your Graduate Attributes: MA in Marketing

The MA in Marketing involves studying theory and practice. The programme is distinctive in that it adopts a critical marketing and 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 marketers, consumers, global organisations and the wider social environment. Students will be given the opportunity to develop a robust grounding in distinct aspects of marketing by enhancing their knowledge and understanding of key theoretical debates in the field, alongside practitioner concerns, resulting in well-rounded, thoughtful, active, reflective and practical professionals with excellent skills.

The programme is distinctive in that it provides students with a broad yet critical marketing perspective on the interactions between marketers, customers, consumers, business and society.

This document is designed to raise awareness of the graduate attributes that will develop as a result of engaging in the MA Marketing at Keele and how these are fostered by the learning activities undertaken during postgraduate study. This information can be used in conjunction with a personal development plan to manage progress (in both personal and career development terms), to track learning and achievements, and to enable individuals to make the best use of opportunities available at Keele and in the wider community. In what follows we offer some key examples of where graduate attributes are developed in the International Business 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 Marketing 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 Marketing.

All 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. Emphasis is placed on reading widely throughout the year, and developing the ability to critically appraise various theories and concepts. Many different perspectives 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 Marketing as a discipline. These research skills will help students to question what are often taken-for-granted assumptions about “doing marketing”. This approach helps students to challenge dominant

ideas and conventional ‘wisdom’ and form their own opinions.

Our modules encourage students to develop the ability to draw from relevant disciplines (such as sociology, political science and anthropology) in order to better understand the dynamic development of ideas around Marketing theory and practice. Throughout the MA, students explore complex concepts through class discussions focusing on case studies, real-life projects, and marketing literature, all supported by insights from current research in the field, including Keele staff. This provides a space for students to consider what marketing means in different settings and to different participants in marketing and consumption practice.

Attribute 2

An appreciation of the development and value of Marketing theory and practice: awareness of their contexts; the links between Marketing and other disciplines; and awareness of the provisional and dynamic nature of knowledge and advances in this field of research.

Attribute 3

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

Initially, information literacy is developed through library inductions and the Learning to Learn programme. In all modules, students are encouraged to develop their ability to critique existing literature and ideas, and this is a core part of assessment. In the Marketing Research Theory and Practice module, students engage with a real-life situation and follow the project through from data gathering to data analysis. Between May-September, students choose to study via a company Internship or a Dissertation, giving the opportunity to undertake independent study, and to explore marketing theory alongside practice. Students are fully supported throughout this process, by means of a mentor or supervisor. Students design their own project, and this involves handling complex information and information literacy.

The ability to problem-solve creatively is developed throughout the Marketing programme and these skills will strengthen as you progress. Students learn to critically analyse marketing and consumption 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, broadening the experience of problem solving in a group, whether the task is to address a particular case study, or an opportunity to engage in creative approaches to managing diverse international groups. Through engaging in varied learning experiences like these, graduates will better understand how the logic of contemporary and historical marketing thinking problematises consumption in different ways at different times.

Attribute 4

The ability creatively to solve problems using and applying a range of different theories, creative approaches and techniques, and to develop the judgement skills to choose between them.

Attribute 5

An appreciation of the social, environmental and global implications of your studies and other activities, including recognition of any ethical implications.

Students entering the Marketing programme come from a wide variety of social and cultural backgrounds, providing an opportunity for students to experience working with people from another culture, an important factor for those wishing to pursue an international career or looking to broaden their life experience and skills. Group assignments, class discussions and case studies give students multiple opportunities to develop the knowledge and capabilities needed to act as tolerant, empathetic, ethical and responsible managers and to perform leadership roles in developing sustainable and socially responsible organisations. Central to the Marketing programme is the belief that the practice of marketing within a capitalist society can be problematic and students are encouraged to go beyond the simplistic acceptance of the current way of “doing marketing”, and to consider alternatives.

The assessment strategy provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the subject in a number of diverse ways. Students develop their verbal communication skills through in-class discussions and presentations in small groups and larger class-wide debates, thereby building up their confidence and skills in communicating to a wider group. This approach encourages students to hone important communication and presentation skills in a variety of formats which will prepare them for life beyond Keele. Every module involves some form of written work: traditional essays, literature reviews, case studies, reflective essays and reports. Early on, you will submit a short essay, for formative feedback, which will help you to improve specific aspects of your writing style ready for the next assessments.

Attribute 6

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

Attribute 7

The knowledge, skills, self-confidence and self-awareness actively to pursue future goals.

At Keele, students will often discuss case studies and through enabling individuals to work with both real-life business problems and those of an academic nature, the MA Marketing provides a variety of experiences and challenges to help individuals develop the knowledge, skills, self-confidence and self-awareness to pursue future goals. The dissertation and internships opportunity in the third semester is a massive challenge in terms of self-organisation with a resultant boost to self-confidence and greater self-awareness of one's own strengths and relative weaknesses.

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 Marketing programme because many of our students travel from all over the world to study with us. For all students, this is an opportunity to find out more about other cultures and other ways of seeing the world of business and marketing. Qualities of leadership, responsibility, personal integrity, empathy, care and respect for others, accountability, punctuality, reasoned argument and self-regulation are fostered throughout, both in and out of the classroom. We also seek to develop a professional approach through inviting guest speakers from industry into selected modules to share their experiences, knowledge and perspectives, and to provide networking opportunities.

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

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 Marketing 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 Marketing 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.

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 Marketing**
- 10. Use the research and reading to help consider career options**