

Programme Specification

BSc Agricultural Business Management

For students entering Part 1 in September 2025

UCAS Code: D4N2

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This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	3 years
Length of Programme with placement/year abroad	BSc Agricultural Business Management with Placement Year - 4 years (UCAS Code: DN42)
Accreditation	N/A
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Food, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences

Programme information and content

The BSc in Agricultural Business Management will provide students, through an appreciation of rural business management and agriculture, with the ability to pursue careers in commercial and practical management within agriculture and related industries. Moreover, the degree will build the skills needed to prepare students for a more autonomous and sustainable approach to farming that considers alternative forms of production and enterprises. It trains the students to discover new problems and use their entrepreneurial skills to reposition their current business, reveal potential niche opportunities and innovate. In addition, the programme provides several opportunities to discuss the importance of natural resource use efficiency, technology adoption and precision farming, and other farm management practices associated with the goal of sustainable agriculture and food security. The objectives of the degree are to:

- Develop the student's understanding of the evolving economic, technological and organisational principles that underlie the practice of business management and its risks, particularly in the agricultural and rural sectors
- Enable the students to learn how to apply such principles to the management of agricultural and rural and urban farming based businesses
- Train students to develop effective decision making and become active entrepreneurs in a constantly changing rural environment and economy
- Develop a critical appreciation of the techniques and concepts available to assist effective execution of the business management function; and
- Develop the range of personal and transferable skills that are expected from 'Reading Graduates' to become successful managers, leaders, rural entrepreneurs, advisers and communicators

Part 1:	Introduces you to core skills and knowledge required for examining the social, economic and environmental factors influencing agricultural
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	<p>businesses and the future sustainability of the sector. In addition, it builds the basis for learning about the rural economy and entrepreneurial environment that businesses function, and the issues surrounding food production and security. Furthermore, students will be given training in economics and the mathematical and statistical ideas used by applied economists and business managers working in the agricultural, food and rural sectors. Learning will be delivered via lectures, practical sessions, case studies and a programme of farm visits and consultancy exercises. Students will also go on a field study tour to see a range of farming types, businesses and systems, particularly those not common in the area of Berkshire, and to encourage team building amongst students.</p>
Part 2:	<p>Provides you with the more demanding aspects of business management and agricultural economics science building on the learning from Part 1. Students will be equipped with effective problem solving and numeracy skills via a series of practical examples and case studies. During a practical exercise in collaboration with a well-established agri-business consultancy company, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate entrepreneurial capacity and to develop opportunity awareness. Furthermore, students are introduced to research methods and data analysis; developing their ability to analyse and interpret data in the context of agricultural businesses and the rural economy. Learning will be delivered via interactive lecture sessions, practical examples within the classroom, case studies (real farm studies or derived from the literature) and a programme of farm visits and consultancy exercises.</p>
Placement/Study abroad year:	<p>Students can work for a year away from Reading between Part 2 and Part 3 as part of the 4-year programme.</p>
Part 3:	<p>Gives you the opportunity to develop your understanding of business planning and strategy and apply it via case studies developed in collaboration with partner agribusinesses. Engagement with the industry and challenges derived from the real farming and rural business world, provides a unique opportunity to further enhance your ability to design, evaluate and assess a business plan. This ensure that students have the professional skills and knowledge required for the workplace. Students choose and develop a final year research project of their choice culminating in the writing of a dissertation which develops their project management and research skills in an area of interest.</p>

Programme Learning Outcomes - BSc Agricultural Business Management

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

Learning outcomes	
1	Compare a range of farming systems in relation to their physical, social and economic attributes
2	Critically evaluate the impact of different crop management and animal husbandry practices into the production performance of the farming systems
3	Develop formative, well argued views on topical issues affecting agriculture, rural communities, and the countryside
4	Understand the breadth and diversity of farming systems and how they fit into the rural economy and business environment
5	Apply key economic concepts to real world problems at the individual, business, and country level
6	Appreciate the relevance of basic business concepts (planning, organising, leadership and control)
7	Recognise the value of leadership and human resource management, and understand differences in organisational structures and behaviour
8	Understand the role of financial control and accounting as well as the importance of marketing to the attainment of organisational goals and the strategic management.
9	Outline the main features of contemporary environmental challenges and summarise contrasting viewpoints on causes of sustainability problems and responses.
10	Demonstrate the ability to apply management tools to decision making and business development e.g. identification of opportunities, threats etc. in the wider environment, labour and machinery management, financial planning including enterprise and partial budgets, sensitivity analysis
11	Demonstrate the ability to develop alternative strategies for a business. This will include understanding how to develop appropriate plans for the introduction of new enterprises / major changes to a rural business and presenting a coherent proposal for investment to a potential lender (i.e. a bank)
12	By the end of the Placement Year programme, students will have contextualised their academic learning in a placement role relevant to their programme of studies and developed their professional experience, skills and knowledge, contributing significantly towards their continuous learning and career prospects as graduates

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

In addition to the learning outcomes stated above if you are on a placement or study abroad programme you will have the opportunity to develop the following learning outcome:

Additional Learning outcomes

Study Abroad

By the end of the Study Abroad Programme, students will have adapted to international study contexts in order to achieve the required academic outcomes determined by the host institution.

Placement

Subject-specific. By the end of the Placement Year programme, students will have contextualised their academic learning in a placement role relevant to their programme of studies and developed their professional experience, skills and knowledge, contributing significantly towards their continuous learning and career prospects as graduates.

Module information

Each part comprises 120 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Part 1 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AD1AGP	Agriculture in Practice 1	20	4
AD1APS	Agricultural Production Systems	20	4
AD1EEN	The Economic Environment	20	4
AD1FMM	The Fundamentals of Management and Marketing	20	4
AD1GLS	Global Sustainability: Challenges and Prospects	20	4
AD1RBM	Research and Professional Skills for Business and Marketing	20	4

Part 1 comprises 120 credits and offers no optional modules. The aim is to engage students with a core set of skills and knowledge to prepare them effectively for Part 2 and Part 3 of the degree.

Part 2 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AD2AGP	Agriculture in Practice 2	20	5
AD2FBM	Farm Business Management	20	5
AD2RDA	Research Methods and Data Analysis	20	5

Your remaining credits will be made up of optional modules from selected modules from the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development and from an approved list, subject to timetabling constraints. The optional modules provide a choice of subjects or a guided selection of topics such that the student can tailor the programme to match their interests and career aspirations. Students also have the option to select a language module.

Modules during a placement year or study year (if applicable):

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AD2PPY	Professional Placement Year	120	5

As part of the Placement Year, students have the option to take a full year (minimum of 40 weeks) in full time employment.

If you take a year-long placement or study abroad, Part 3 as described below may be subject to variation.

Part 3 Modules:

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AD3BME	Business Management and Entrepreneurship	20	6
AD3BPC	Business Planning and Control	20	6
AD3RES	Independent Research Project	40	6

Your remaining credits will be made up of optional modules from selected modules mainly from the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development and from an approved list, subject to timetabling constraints.

The optional modules provide a choice of subjects or a guided selection of topics such that the student can tailor the programme to match their interests and career aspirations

Placement opportunities

You have the opportunity to undertake a credit-bearing placement as part of your Programme. This will form all or part of an optional module. You will be required to find and secure a placement opportunity, with the support of the University.

Optional modules:

The optional modules available can vary from year to year. An indicative list of the range of optional modules for your programme can be found online in the Course Catalogue. Details of optional modules for each part, including any additional costs associated with the optional modules, will be made available to you prior to the beginning of the Part in which they are to be taken and you will be given an opportunity to express interest in the optional modules that you would like to take. Entry to optional modules will be at the discretion of the University and subject to availability and may be subject to pre-requisites, such as completion of another module. Although the University tries to ensure you are able to take the optional modules in which you have expressed interest this cannot be guaranteed.

Teaching and learning delivery:

You will be taught through lectures, seminars/tutorials, PC laboratory and field practical exercises/trials/visits and supervised project work.

Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology.

The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for your programme will depend upon your module combination. In addition, you will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which give some flexibility for you to choose when to complete them. You will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details

N/A

Assessment

The programme will be assessed through a combination of written examinations, coursework (including class tests) and oral examinations. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Progression

Part 1

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 1, a student will normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1;
- (ii) Obtain a mark of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to not less than 80 credits taken in Part 1; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in modules amounting to 120 credits.

In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 1 qualifies a student for a Certificate of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Transferring from a Joint Honours to a Single Honours programme

Students are able to transfer from a Joint Honours to a Single Honours programme in one of their joint subject areas at the end of Part 1, subject to fulfilling the Part 1 University Threshold Standard, achieving marks of at least 40% in at least 40 credits of modules in the subject to which they wish to transfer, and fulfilling any programme-specific progression rules for the Part 1 Single Honours Programme to which they wish to transfer.

Students who transfer from a Joint Honours to a Single Honours programme may not have taken all of the Part 1 modules listed in the Single Honours Programme Specification. The modules which they have taken will be shown on their Diploma Supplement.

Part 2

To achieve a threshold performance at Part 2, a student shall normally be required to:

- (i) Obtain a weighted average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (ii) Obtain marks of at least 40% in individual modules amounting to at least 80 credits taken in Part 2; and
- (iii) Obtain marks of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to at least 120 credits, except that a mark below 30% may be condoned in no more than 20 credits of modules owned by the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student must achieve a threshold performance.

The achievement of a threshold performance at Part 2 qualifies a student for a Diploma of Higher Education if they leave the University before completing the subsequent Part.

Professional/placement year

Students are required to pass the professional placement year/study abroad year in order to progress on the programme which incorporates the professional placement year/study abroad year. Students who fail the professional placement year/study abroad year transfer to the non-placement year version of the programme.

Classification

Bachelors' degrees

The University's honours classification scheme is based on the following:

Mark Interpretation

70% - 100% First class

60% - 69% Upper Second class

50% - 59% Lower Second class

40% - 49% Third class

35% - 39% Below Honours Standard

0% - 34% Fail

The weighting of the Parts/Years in the calculation of the degree classification is:

Three year programmes:

Part 2: one-third

Part 3: two-thirds

Four year programmes, including study abroad

Part 2: one-third

Study abroad: Year abroad not included in the classification

Part 3: two-thirds

The classification method is given in detail in: [Section 17: Awards: Bachelor's \(including Annex 1: Programmes for which exceptional arrangements have been approved by Senate\)](https://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/17-awards-Annex%201%20Programmes%20for%20which%20exceptional%20arrangements%20have%20been%20approved%20by%20Senate.pdf)
<https://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/17-awards->

[bachelors-degrees-withannex.pdf?la=en&hash=74C8E08A244D0F279DBF58EFE0CBBBEE](https://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/17-awards-bachelors-degrees-withannex.pdf?la=en&hash=74C8E08A244D0F279DBF58EFE0CBBBEE)

For 2022/23 (and onwards) entrants only -Section 17: Awards: Bachelor's (including Annex 1: Programme for which exceptional arrangement have been approved by Senate).
<https://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/-/media/project/functions/cqsd/documents/qap/17-awards-bachelors-degrees-withannex-22-23-entrants-onwards.pdf?la=en&hash=2F9B8E53B57FF100297F9DD810C64BFE>

Additional costs of the programme

Additional costs of the programme You should ensure that you bring with you to University a pair of wellington boots (£10) and/or sturdy footwear e.g. walking boots (£50 – 100) for farm visits.

Students should also have a waterproof jacket (£15-35) and trousers (£10-15) (should you need to purchase these, approximate costs are in brackets). Costs are indicative, but will vary according to module choice and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2024.

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

BSc Agricultural Business Management for students entering Part 1 in session 2025/26
22 May 2024

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