

GUIDE

Global Publication for MBA and EMBA Applicants

2026-2027 EDITION

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Graduate Education Is More Essential Than Ever

Christophe Coutat

Founder and CEO

Advent Group

Nowadays, with a single search, you can find an answer to almost anything. Several prompts are enough to analyse data or explain complex ideas in minutes. So it's a fair question to ask: why commit years, savings, and ambition to a degree, when so much knowledge is one prompt away?

Although technology may change what we need to learn, it cannot change why we learn it. Studying in primary school and college is mostly about building yourself as an adult while acquiring languages, culture, knowledge, and a way of reasoning.

A strong MBA or Master's programme goes to the next step. It introduces us to people and cultures who see the world

differently and prepares us to make decisions based on more than facts.

AI can process information, but it cannot take responsibility for a decision or inspire trust. Leadership requires emotional intelligence and empathy. No algorithm can recreate what further graduate degrees will bring you in terms of experience, relationships, learning from others, inspiration. Programmes are developing more and more modules to help you manage people, products, and projects in complex and digital environments.

We encourage you to study more than ever, to develop judgement, curiosity, and interpersonal skills to set you apart. Enjoy the read!



Lead the Change

How to adapt to upcoming business and leadership trends

The rulebook for business leadership is changing fast and the people who will shape the next decade are already asking themselves: what does it take to lead through it? Which capabilities will matter most and how is management education preparing executives for what comes next?

Challenges and trends in business leadership

Getting accustomed to change and thinking outside the box have always gone hand in hand with successful leadership. Understanding the main trends in the world of work today – and how they interact – is where it begins.

Artificial intelligence

For business leaders, artificial intelligence is no longer a topic of the future. It is reshaping how organisations function right now. If 2025 was the year of chatbots, 2026 is the year of agentic AI, according to experts. These are systems that do not just assist people with individual tasks, but run entire

workflows autonomously, end-to-end. Large corporations and smaller businesses alike are deploying such tools to compete at a scale that was previously out of reach.

At the same time, the dominant models are changing. Large language models – the broad, general-purpose systems that captured public imagination – are giving way to small language models (SLMs). These are leaner, faster, and built for specific business functions. The direction is toward AI that is more targeted rather than simply more powerful.

For leaders, this will mean having to carefully assess the needs of their business. *“Adding more technology doesn’t automatically improve how your business runs. What really matters is deciding which business technology trends are worth your time and energy,”* says Dimitar Dimitrov, Founder and Managing Partner at European IT services company Accedia, for Entrepreneur Magazine.

While businesses cannot afford to lag behind in adopting AI, the real risk is adopting it without a clear sense of where it belongs. MBA programmes are changing accordingly

to prepare leaders to evaluate the way these tools fit, manage their risks, and govern their use.

Geopolitical and societal shifts

If AI presents a challenge of technological choice, geopolitical turbulence presents one of context. More than 60% of the faculty at

the French business school INSEAD pointed to geopolitical crises as the leading threat to business for 2026. This indicates the extent to which the world around a company shapes what it can do. Trade fragmentation, sanctions, and shifting alliances are forcing businesses to rethink supply chains and market exposure.

The World Economic Forum furthermore places societal polarisation among the top three global threats over the next two years, warning that even stable democracies are at risk.

As London Business School (LBS) (UK) professors note, *“uncertain times produce turbulent politics”*. When people do not see stability or growth, they become more open to disruptive alternatives. Business leaders may find themselves in a difficult position: expected to stay out of politics, yet unable to pretend it has no bearing on how they operate.

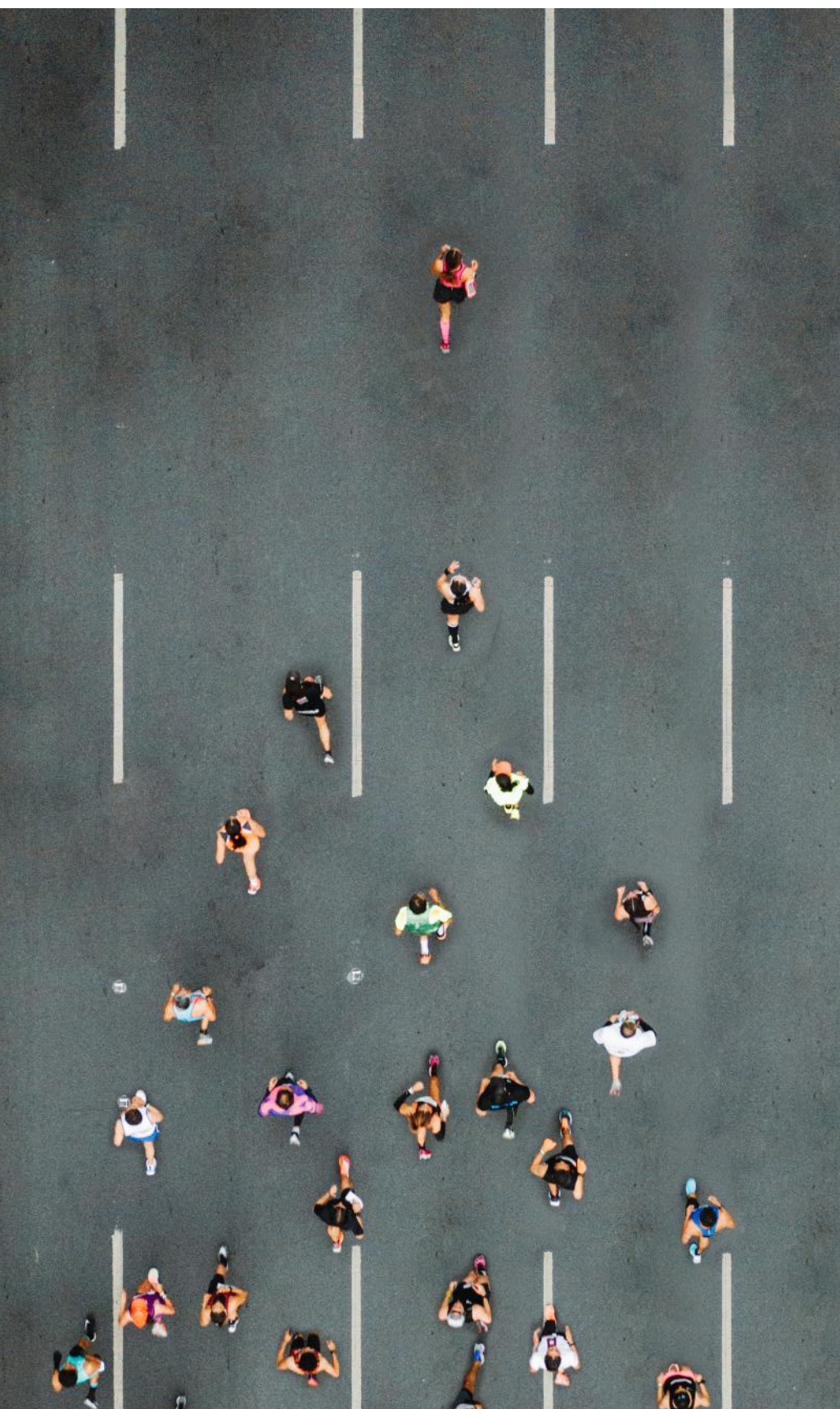
Even culture and sports are not immune from the current geopolitical context. Tensions were visible regarding the 2026 FIFA World Cup and its three co-hosts – the US, Canada, and Mexico. For business leaders, this means they can no longer just focus on financial results to maintain trust. They also need to show they can navigate a world where society and public opinion are often divided. This challenge connects directly to the third major trend shaping business leadership today: sustainability.

Sustainability and climate change

In 2026 and beyond, sustainability is no longer a parallel function sitting alongside the “real” business. According to Switzerland’s IMD Business School, it is becoming embedded in core business models, investment priorities, and innovation roadmaps. In the coming years, the topic of sustainability is expected to serve as a genuine engine of competitiveness.

Yet the picture is more complicated than a simple march toward green business. Although many companies remain committed to their sustainability goals, they may choose to be less vocal about them. This will be a deliberate strategy in a polarised environment, says IESE Business School, where public commitments can attract as much backlash as praise. The Spanish institution describes this as operating in a “PLUTO world”: moving forward and protecting the company’s purpose without making a show of it. The message is not to retreat, but to embed.

The labour market reflects where this is heading. The World Economic Forum projects that sustainability specialists will grow by 33% and environmental protection professionals by 34% in the coming years. These forecasts place both job roles among the fastest-growing globally. Perhaps more importantly, this growth is not confined to



traditionally “green” sectors. It signals which industries are modernising fastest and where future competitive advantage is built.

Skills for the future

The trends described above – AI disruption, geopolitical instability, and the growing demands of sustainability – share a common implication for leadership: the skills that got leaders to where they are today may not be sufficient for what comes next. How can they keep learning in a world that keeps changing?

Active learning and adaptability

Of all the skills future leaders will need, the capacity to learn may be the most fundamental. As Herminia Ibarra, Charles Handy Professor of Organisational Behaviour at London Business School (UK), puts it: *“Businesses grappling with adaptive problems today need to embrace a learning orientation that empowers people to become more adaptable – to experiment, iterate, and innovate and to share the learning around the organisation.”*

This is precisely what the trends explored earlier demand. Agentic AI will render some skills obsolete while creating new ones. Geopolitical shifts will redraw the rules of global business. Sustainability will require leaders to understand entirely new regulatory and scientific frameworks. All these trends are dynamic and cannot be mastered once and for all – they will need a lifelong commitment to learning.

Analytical and strategic thinking

The World Economic Forum identifies analytical and creative thinking as the

top skills for the future, alongside the rising importance of AI and technological literacy. But data alone does not make decisions – leaders do. As advisor and leadership coach Charlie Curson describes it for Forbes, strategic thinking means *“zooming out to see patterns others miss, making deliberate choices about where to focus energy, resources, and attention, and balancing short-term action with long-term positioning.”*

In such complex business environments, the ability to step back and think clearly is what separates reactive management from genuine leadership. It is also a skill that can be taught, practised, and refined, which is precisely what management education is designed to do.

Emotional intelligence and empathy

Technology can automate workflows, but it cannot build trust, read a room, or hold an organisation together through uncertainty. It is rather the human aspects of leadership – authenticity, transparency, the ability to connect with people – that have proven essential in recent years and they will remain so.

LBS’s Herminia Ibarra observes: *“Empathy may not come naturally to some and it may be something to work on – to reflect on and to proactively think about as a core leadership skill.”* This is an important point: emotional intelligence is not necessarily just a character trait. Like analytical thinking and adaptability, it can be developed. The best leadership education recognises this, because in a fast-moving world, human skills may matter most of all.

Of all the skills future leaders will need, the capacity to learn may be the most fundamental.



The Degree that Keeps Giving

What is the value of doing an MBA today?

Some investments pay back in numbers. Others pay back in ways that are harder to measure: in the confidence to lead, the wisdom to adapt, and the relationships that last a lifetime. An MBA has a rare way of delivering both. It certainly advances careers and increases earning potential. But it also broadens the mind, sharpens the skill set, and draws professionals into a community that opens doors long after the final exam is over. This is the degree that keeps giving.

Career growth opportunities

One of the main reasons professionals decide to pursue an MBA is because they are looking for fresh perspectives and the best way to advance their careers. This is also one of the degree's greatest strengths. An MBA opens doors to diverse career paths in various sectors that may not have been accessible to people otherwise.

Suited for different career paths

Those doors open in many directions. Whether your background lies in the corporate world, entrepreneurship, the non-profit sector, or public service, the MBA is designed to equip you with a comprehensive business skill set. The curriculum and available specialisations

further allow you to curate the learning experience that suits your specific needs and career aspirations.

In fact, switching functions or industries is a common goal for many MBAs after graduation and the experience helps them handle this transition smoothly. Consulting, finance, technology, healthcare – all areas of work can benefit from the business acumen gained and polished in an MBA. French INSEAD's 2025 employment statistics show that 65% of its MBA graduates changed industry, function, or country after completing the programme.

Creates possibilities for promotion

Of course, not everyone wants to change direction. For many professionals, graduate business education provides an opportunity to achieve substantial growth in their current role or industry. The business knowledge, confidence, and negotiation skills acquired throughout the programme make it far easier to climb the career ladder and step into roles at a higher level.

"Professionally it has [boosted] my career exponentially, [leading to] 3 or 4 promotions," highlights UCL School of Management (US) MBA alumna Patsy McNeil about her own experience. *"I am now second-in-command at the company. This is far above what I expected or even aimed for in acquiring the MBA."*

Employers themselves increasingly value not just the credentials, but the practical skills and mindset that MBA graduates bring to the organisation.

Paves the way for leadership roles

A rise to managerial positions can also be challenging to achieve, depending on the industry and company. An MBA programme prepares aspiring leaders to not only work towards and accomplish this

goal, but to conduct themselves effectively once they reach it. Graduates walk out with the resilience, emotional intelligence, and communication skills to lead diverse teams to success.

Leadership is inevitably moulded by constant shifts in the economy and business, by technological advances, and social movements. An MBA teaches aspiring leaders how to anticipate trends

and disruptions early on and be ready to lead their organisations through good and bad.

Increased earning potential

While not the most important benefit, the financial case for an MBA is difficult to ignore. Beyond the career growth and leadership development the degree provides, it also delivers a sizeable return on investment (ROI), often within a few years of graduation.

Research insights from the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC) point to the same conclusion. According to their Corporate Recruiters Survey, the median US MBA salary in 2025 was projected to be the highest of any degree, outpacing candidates coming directly from other organisations by USD 25,000. This gap speaks volumes about the practical expertise and problem-solving mindset developed during an MBA: qualities that employers are willing to pay a premium for.

The Financial Times 2026 Global MBA Rankings reinforce this picture at the international level. The publication reported weighted salaries ranging from just under USD 96,000 to nearly USD 260,000 depending on the programme. The salary percentage increase at some institutions like the Indian School of Business reached almost 250% compared to pre-MBA earnings.

While individual outcomes naturally vary by industry, geography, and programme, the data consistently proves that an MBA is among the most financially rewarding educational investments a professional can make.

Expanded network

Next to the professional advancement and increased earnings, most MBAs point out that it is the connections made throughout the programme that turned out most valuable. An MBA is an entry point into a professional community that stays with you long after graduation. The relationships nurtured with classmates, faculty, and visiting industry experts often prove highly beneficial for the students’ learning both during and after the programme.

Business schools actively build on this experience. *“The university has events which expose students to entrepreneurs*



and investors,” says Juan Jose Güemes, Chairman of the Entrepreneurship & Innovation Centre at IE Business School (Spain). “We have an immense community of alumni who are involved in private equity venture capital, and investors in search funds and corporate innovation.”

IE University currently has a network of 85,000 alumni from 77 nationalities spread across 104 alumni clubs worldwide. This means that with little effort MBA graduates can connect with fellow peers or faculty wherever they are.

The MBA community delivers both in size and in depth. While on an institutional level the number of alumni is vast and allows them to connect with anyone anywhere, the MBA class is usually a tight-knit entity. Participants overcome each challenge of their studies together, they form teams to work on projects, and find friends and partners for life.

Improved skill set

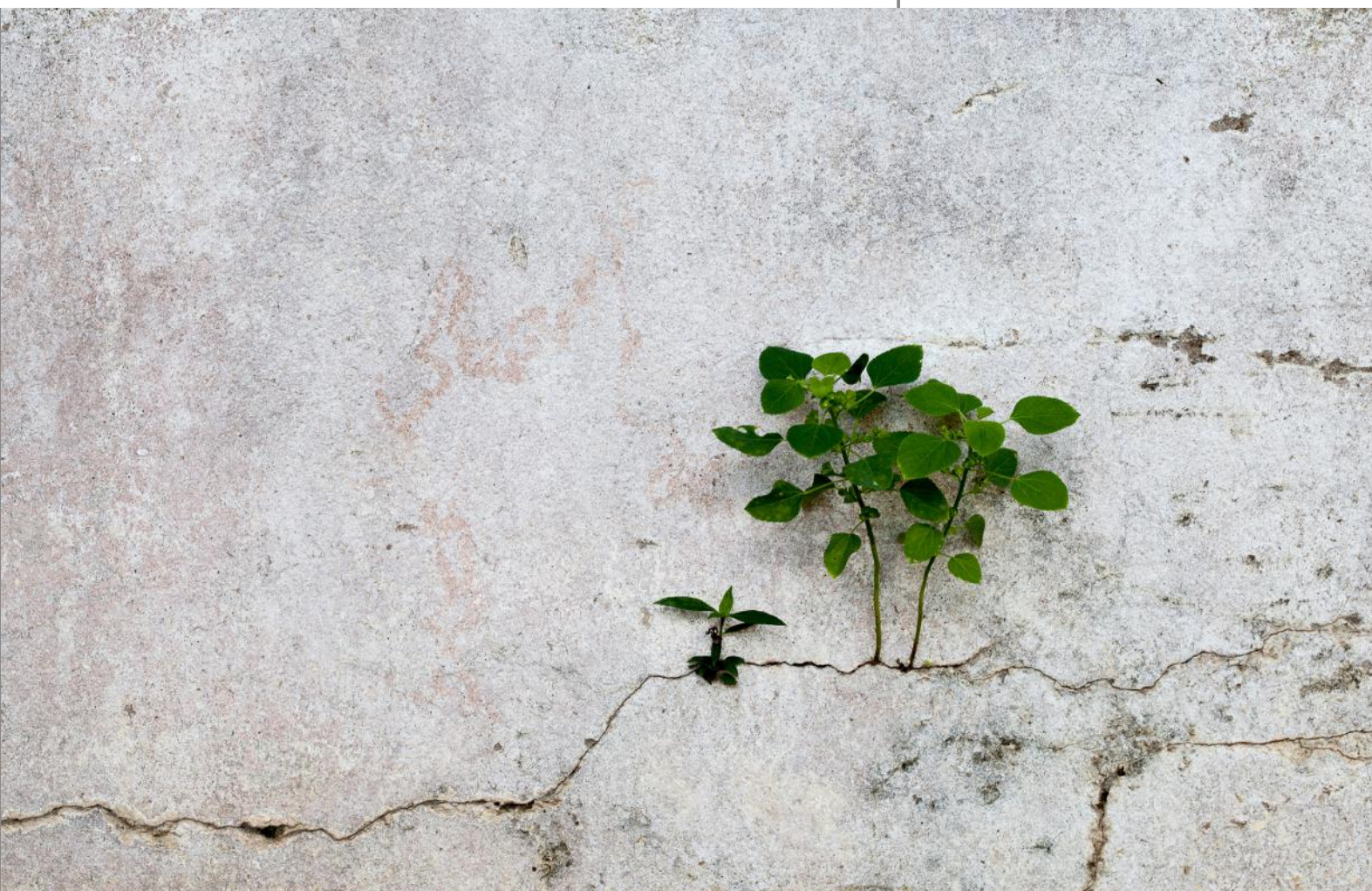
With each passing week of their learning experience, participants build on both the

technical business acumen and soft, human-centric skills crucial to business success. Even more importantly, the MBA teaches not only specific business theories or leadership know-how. As in the age-old proverb: “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.” Similarly, the MBA equips students with a tool kit to keep learning and growing throughout their life and career. It’s a one-time experience that can bear fruit for years or even decades.

In practice, this means graduates are better equipped to navigate ambiguity, ask the right questions, and make sound decisions even in unfamiliar territory. The communication strategies and cross-functional thinking honed during the programme become second nature, carried forward into every subsequent position.

In times of constant change, the ability to learn, unlearn, and adapt is perhaps the most valuable skill of all. And that is precisely what the MBA trains you to do.

Employers value not just the credentials, but the practical skills and mindset that MBA graduates bring to the organisation.



Business as a Force for Good

How responsible management education is redefining business leadership



Dr. David Steingard
Head of Principles for
Responsible Management
Education (PRME)

Dr. David Steingard is the Head of PRME, a UN Global Compact initiative. With more than 25 years at Saint Joseph's University (US), he served on the faculty of the Leadership, Ethics, and Organisational Sustainability programme and directed the SDG Dashboard at the Haub School of Business. His research on ethical leadership, sustainability, and AI-driven SDG impact assessment has been published in leading journals. He has profound expertise in responsible management education and advancing the 2030 Agenda.

What are the Principles of Responsible Management Education and how much impact do they exert?

PRME is the higher education initiative of the United Nations Global Compact, focused on preparing future generations of leaders to build a prosperous and sustainable world. At its core is a simple but urgent truth: business education must evolve at the same pace and scale as the challenges facing humanity and the very sustainability of life on Earth. The intention of the Seven Principles of PRME is to inspire and enable a better world through responsible management practices: Purpose, Values, Teach, Research, Partner, Practice, and Share.

MBA education is at an inflection point. It has to adapt to the realities of the 21st century or risk becoming irrelevant to it.

The impact is significant and accelerating. With over 800 schools globally, PRME is helping higher education institutions rethink their curricula, research, and partnerships in alignment with the most ethically grounded and aspirational goals we have as a global society as captured in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

But this moment demands more. In the face of geopolitical instability, climate risk, and widening inequality, PRME is doubling down on its role in supporting higher education to become a true force for good with urgency, scale, and measurable impact.



What lies in the intersection of AI and PRME?

AI is the defining force reshaping business and PRME is the framework that poses the question *to what end?*

AI represents both the greatest opportunity for human advancement and a profound existential risk if left unguided. That duality makes it one of the defining leadership challenges of our time.

PRME is uniquely positioned to help ensure AI advances the good while mitigating the harm. This is not just about technology, it is about power, ethics, and long-term societal direction.

We frame this as **AixSDGs**: using AI to scale education, enhance decision making, and drive measurable societal impact. But that promise only materialises if AI is guided by core human and environmental principles, which are the foundation of the United Nations.

The real risk is not that AI moves too fast, but that it moves without values. And that is precisely why PRME's grounding in United Nations values is so powerful in guiding AI toward a responsible and equitable future.

Do you see growing awareness and demand from prospective business school students for more SDG-relevant education?

Absolutely! Students are not just responding to change, they are driving it. Today's students want to *supercharge* their education with the capabilities needed to lead large-scale, system-level transformation. They understand that business is among the most powerful forces shaping the future of humanity and the planet and they want to influence that direction.

At PRME, we talk about Return on Principles (ROP): mobilising teaching, research, partnerships, and student engagement to deliver real progress on the world's grand challenges.

Students are no longer choosing between purpose and pay. They expect both. What once appeared as a trade-off is now a strategic advantage.

This shift challenges traditional MBA thinking. The old question was: *What is the financial return on my degree?* The new question is: *What is the impact return on my leadership and how do I get paid for delivering it?*

How can prospective students learn more about business schools with a strong focus on PRME?

Students today have unprecedented access to information. Through PRME, they can explore more than 800 business schools globally and see how institutions

are integrating sustainability, ethics, and leadership into their programmes. As part of their commitment to the Principles of PRME, our schools submit Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) reports. As a key integrity measure, the SIP's main objective is to serve as a public vehicle for information on responsible management education. This is a great resource to learn more about what the schools are doing on the ground.

But the key is to look beyond surface signals. Students should ask:

- Is sustainability embedded across the core curriculum or siloed?
- Are there real-world, hands-on experiences tied to the SDGs?
- Do faculty research and partnerships reflect these priorities?

The strongest programmes demonstrate alignment between what they say and what they do across curriculum, research, experiential learning, and career outcomes.

Students can also explore PRME Students, a global student-led network, which unlocks opportunities to connect globally, develop professionally, and take on leadership roles. Through this platform, students are empowered to amplify their voices in global conversations, build practical skills and entrepreneurial capacity for sustainability-driven innovation, and strengthen career

readiness through mentorship, real-world experience, and connections with responsible businesses.

How is PRME embedded into the curriculum?

The most forward-thinking schools don't treat PRME as a course, they treat it as a design principle.

Sustainability and ethics are embedded into finance, marketing, operations, and strategy: wherever decisions are made. Learning extends beyond the classroom through consulting projects, impact labs, and partnerships with business, government, and civil society.

For PRME Signatories, this often means rethinking both *what* is taught and how it is taught. For example, at the University of Victoria, Canada, educator Christian Van Buskirk transformed his teaching after engaging with PRME's Impactful Five, our innovative and playful pedagogy framework. Instead of only teaching business concepts, he began making sustainability tangible: students work with local non-profit organisations, engage in community-based projects, and even reflect on the reasons why they are learning.

What is notable is that this went beyond the classroom level. His approach helped shape a new required course in Business and Sustainability for all undergraduate business students, embedding the Principles of PRME directly into the core curriculum. As he put it, the goal shifted from adding sustainability "in the cracks" to creating a truly transformational learning experience.

We are also seeing rapid innovation in pedagogy, with the use of real-time data, SDG metrics, and AI-enabled tools to connect learning directly to real-world outcomes.

The shift is profound: from teaching about responsibility to recognising that responsibility is the core leadership capability of our time.

Is alignment with PRME and the UN SDGs reflected in MBA accreditation and rankings?

Yes, and this marks a fundamental shift in how excellence is defined.

Accreditation bodies such as AACSB and EFMD now recognise engagement with the SDGs as central to demonstrating impact on society. Leading rankings, including the Financial Times and QS, are increasingly incorporating SDG-related metrics.

What is especially significant is that top-tier institutions are leading this shift, not resisting it. The Wharton School of Business of the University of Pennsylvania, for example, continues to rank among the best in the world while also leading in SDG alignment, sending a clear signal that impact and excellence now go hand in hand.

This reinforces a broader transformation: "business as a force for good" is not a constraint on performance. It is beginning to drive it.

What should MBA students focus on to apply PRME and SDG values in practice?

First, master the fundamentals but apply them through a systems lens. The challenges we face are interconnected, and so must be the solutions.

Second, develop ethical judgment. Leadership today requires navigating complexity, trade-offs, and uncertainty.

Third, build the ability to translate sustainability into strategy, such as through data literacy, stakeholder engagement, and implementation.

Critically, students must also learn to make the business case for sustainability. The UN Global Compact represents over 20,000 companies committed to principles-based leadership, but turning ambition into action requires leaders who can align purpose with performance.

Finally, seek real-world experience. The goal is not just to understand impact but to deliver it.

Because business is one of the most powerful forces shaping our world.

PRME is about ensuring it shapes that world for the better at the scale and speed this moment demands.

*The new question is:
What is the impact
return on my leadership
and how do I get paid
for delivering it?*





The Fork in the Road

How to select the MBA that fits your life and your goals

The letters are the same. The experience is anything but. An MBA can open doors, change careers, and sharpen the way you think, but it's important to choose the right one for you. With different formats, hundreds of schools, and an abundance of online information, knowing where to start can feel overwhelming. So let's walk you through the key questions every prospective student should ask before taking the leap.

What are my options?

Not all MBAs are created equal, and that's a good thing. The format you choose should fit your life, not the other way around.

A *full-time MBA* is the classic immersive experience: you step away from work, go all in, and emerge transformed: ideal if you want to switch industries or accelerate quickly. A *part-time MBA* lets you keep your job while you study, spreading the experience over a longer period. The *Executive MBA (EMBA)* is designed for seasoned professionals, typically with 10 or more years of experience, who want to level up into senior leadership without pausing their careers. *Online MBAs* have grown significantly in the last few years, making them an attractive option for those balancing busy schedules.

Then there's the question of breadth versus depth. A General Management MBA gives you a broad foundation in finance, strategy, marketing, and operations. It's a strong all-rounder for those who want versatility. A specialised MBA (in areas such as technology, healthcare, or finance) goes deeper in one particular field and suits those who already know their direction.

School perspective

"The real differentiator is not the level of academic rigour, but suitability. In other words, which format best fits your current career stage, personal circumstances, and how much disruption you are willing or able to accept in order to reach your next career step," says Stephanie Pleiss-Dietrich, Programme Consultant for the Part-time MBA at HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management (Germany).

When is the right time?

Most full-time MBA programmes look for candidates with three to five years of professional experience. The classroom only comes alive when students bring real-world challenges to the table, so if you're at an earlier stage in your career, a specialised Master's might serve you better for now.

Your career stage matters. Do you want to pivot into a new industry, accelerate within your current one, or step into a leadership role? Each goal calls for a different kind of programme and a different kind of timing. On a personal level, consider the financial commitment alongside your

life circumstances: savings, family responsibilities, readiness for disruption. Sometimes waiting a year to be better prepared financially and mentally is a smarter choice.

Finally, consider how you will time your application. Round 1 deadlines typically fall in the autumn and can get more competitive, but offer more scholarship opportunities. Round 2 is more common, but the pool is larger. Knowing this early gives you a head start.

School perspective

“Ask yourself why you want an MBA, why now is the right time, and how it will advance your career,” says Yolanda Habets, Head of MBA Programmes at Vlerick Business School (Belgium).

What are the factors to consider?

Curriculum and specialisations

Does the programme teach what you need? Look at the courses in depth and dig into electives, projects, and industry partnerships. A good curriculum should position you for what comes next in your career.

Location and network

The location of a school determines where its alumni end up. A programme with strong ties to the financial sector in London will open different doors from one near a manufacturing hub in Germany. Think about where you want to work after graduation before you apply.

Culture and cohort size

Some programmes thrive on competition; others are built on collaboration. There’s no right or wrong option but one may suit your learning style better. Class size matters too. A smaller cohort means more of a community feel and more access to faculty; a larger one means a broader network from day one.

Return on investment

There is more to the financial side than just tuition fees. Look at average post-MBA salaries, career progression data, and employment rates at graduation. Most business schools publish this information every year.

Accreditation & rankings

Accreditations from AACSB, EQUIS, or AMBA are a mark of quality assurance. Some programmes hold all three (and are known as “triple accredited”). MBA rankings provide useful reference points, but use them as one tool among many. For a more personalised approach, platforms such as Unimy allow you to compare programmes on the basis of your own priorities.

School perspective

“Location is key because it encompasses much of your experience. The location is not just your zip code, although it will be your home for a few years; location contributes

to your access, experience, and quality of life,” says Shelly Heinrich, Sr. Assistant Dean, Graduate Admissions and Career Management Centre at SMU Cox School of Business (US).

How should I research my options?

An MBA brochure will only take you so far, so go beyond the glossy pages to make an informed decision for your future.

Campus visits

If your situation allows it, arrange an official school visit. Walk through the campus and get a feel for the place. Does it feel like somewhere you could spend one to two years of your life? See if there’s a possibility to attend a lecture or talk to programme representatives.

Events and MBA fairs

MBA events are one of the most efficient ways to meet numerous schools in one day, ask direct questions, and gauge how each admissions team communicates. To make the most of the opportunity, come prepared with specific questions for each school you are interested in.

Connecting with alumni

No one can tell you more accurate information about a programme than someone who has

been through it. Most schools can connect you with alumni themselves, but LinkedIn is also an option. Ask about their experience in the classroom and their career development after graduation.

Consultants

MBA admissions consultants can be genuinely valuable, especially if you’re targeting competitive programmes. They help sharpen your overall application and keep you on track with deadlines. Even a single consultation with an orientation expert at the start of your MBA search can help you figure out the next steps.

School perspective

“If two candidates are relatively equal in terms of credentials and one has made the effort to visit and attend events, that would definitely work in his/her favour,” says Patricia Keegan, former Associate Dean at Chicago Booth (US) and former admissions reviewer for Stanford GSB (US).

Whichever path you choose, you can be sure that the best MBA is the one that challenges you to grow and puts you where you want to be in your life and career.



Return on Yourself

The financial picture that shapes your MBA decision

Two candidates enrol at the same school, in the same cohort, paying the same tuition. One graduates into a six-figure salary jump. The other spends years paying off a degree that only led to a modest promotion. Same MBA, very different deal.

The difference is the fit, including the financial fit. Before you commit to an MBA, you need to understand not just what it costs, but what it costs you; and what return is realistic given where you're starting and where you want to go. Getting that calculation right could be one of the most important parts of your decision

The shared financial reality

Whoever you are and whatever you're hoping to get from your MBA, there are four costs that you will incur regardless.

Tuition is the number everyone looks at first, and for good reason: at top global programmes, it can run anywhere from EUR 30,000 (like Kedge Business School in France) to over USD 200,000 (at some two-year US programmes). Still, tuition is often not your biggest cost.

Foregone salary is what many candidates underestimate. If you're leaving a EUR

60,000 job to do a two-year full-time MBA, that's EUR 120,000 in income you won't earn during your studies. Think of foregone salary as your invisible tuition fee.

Study materials and trips are the costs people should budget for much earlier than they usually do. Case books, international study treks, industry conferences, networking events, where a significant part of the learning (and connecting) actually takes place.

Living expenses also vary greatly by city. A year in London or New York can look very different compared to a year in Rotterdam or Singapore. Where you choose to study is, among other things, a financial decision that's worth factoring in from the start.

Which type of MBA professional are you?

The Career Switcher

Are you aiming to start on a new professional path and leave your current field of work? The MBA is the credential that can grant you entry into a different industry or role, which makes this a brave financial decision, but also a fulfilling investment in your future.

As a career switcher, you are probably taking care of the full MBA cost yourself. It's essential to factor your foregone salary into your calculations, because as an MBA student you will be stepping away from a steady income. The return on investment



(ROI) is strong, but you will need to be patient throughout the payback period.

Smartest move: Take scholarship opportunities seriously and apply on time, because this profile is exactly what many merit-based awards are designed to support. Be rigorous about matching the school's competitiveness to your financial situation: a mid-tier MBA with a strong scholarship can outperform a top-tier MBA loaded with debt.

The Corporate Climber

You're already on a solid trajectory in your career, and the MBA isn't a pivot so much as an accelerator. It's a way to get to the faster promotion and the credibility that opens doors that are beyond your reach.

Your return may be gradual rather than transformational: a meaningful step up in seniority, a salary increase, a stronger and more international professional network. But even incremental gains compounded over the course of a career add up to a great deal.

You could also be the strongest candidate of the four profiles for employer sponsorship, because your company already knows you, values your contribution, and has a practical reason to invest in your further development.

Smartest move: Start the conversation on potential sponsorship before you submit

your applications. Even partial employer support can change the financial picture significantly. If you're self-funding, be disciplined about aligning the programme cost with the return you're realistically expecting.

The International Mover

You're crossing borders to study, work, or both, and the MBA is your ticket to a new professional market or a global network. Start by making sure you include the visa fees and relocation costs of moving abroad into your planning spreadsheet.

The ROI calculation also depends on which way you're moving. A US or European MBA can be a powerful asset in a high-growth market as the return can be substantial. But if you're borrowing in a strong currency and planning to earn in a weaker one, that gap between loan and income can follow you for a long time.

Smartest move: Search specifically for geography-targeted scholarships, since many schools and independent foundations have funding for students from particular regions. Before you sign any loan agreement, take the time to model your repayment schedule in the currency you'll actually be earning.

The Entrepreneur

You're not chasing a salary increase and you might not even be planning to take a traditional job when you graduate, because

you're here for something different: the network, the thinking space, the access to investors and advisors, and the classmates who might one day become your co-founders.

Standard ROI metrics barely apply here and a salary-based payback calculation misses the point, because your return isn't measured in a post-graduation pay rise. That makes the ROI difficult to quantify. For many aspiring founders, what matters most in an MBA is the entrepreneurial culture, the investor connections, and the cohort.

Smartest move: Prioritise grants, fellowships, and business plan competition prizes, since these forms of funding arrive without debt and often carry additional benefits like mentorship or investor introductions. And when evaluating programmes, weigh the strength of the entrepreneurship ecosystem (such as faculty, alumni network, venture resources) more seriously than the school's prestige alone.

The funding toolkit

Whatever your profile, the same menu of funding options is available to you. The difference is knowing which tools are right for your situation.

Savings are the cleanest source of funding, without any interest or obligations. But they're rarely enough on their own. Think

of your savings as a buffer and a signal: it shows lenders and scholarship committees that you are financially serious.

Working while studying is a realistic option mainly for part-time and Executive MBA formats. In full-time programmes, the strongest benefit is immersion: you're paying a lot to be in the room, so spreading your attention across studies and work is rarely possible.

Scholarships deserve your undivided attention. Most candidates apply to far fewer than they should, largely because applications take time. Scholarships reward early applicants and thorough ones. If you're a career switcher or an international mover, they should be near the top of your funding strategy.

Grants, fellowships, and sponsorships are among the most under-used types of MBA funding. Fellowships are often sector-specific: public service, social impact, global development. Corporate sponsorship, as noted, is the corporate climber's primary tool, but it's worth exploring across profiles.

Loans are common among MBAs, but they deserve scrutiny. Structure, currency, interest rate, and repayment terms vary enormously across providers and geographic areas. For international movers especially, the currency you borrow in can matter more than the rate. Treat loans as the last layer of your funding strategy.

Knowing your cost base, your likely return, and your funding options will sharpen your decision and protect you from expensive mistakes. So: which MBA are you paying for? Answer that and the rest of the calculation gets a lot clearer.

Search for geography-targeted scholarships, since many schools and independent foundations have funding for students from particular regions.





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From Insight to Impact

The indispensable skills taught by business schools for a data-driven world

Today's advances in technology are shaping every aspect of our lives, including the way we lead and manage teams.

What are the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for tech and other industry leaders? And what are the indispensable skills to lead successfully in a data-driven world?

In this article, we explore the impact of technology on leadership and delve into the steps each leader should initiate to be able to wield tech for their own good. For MBA candidates, understanding these shifts is central to what modern business education now delivers.

Embrace and understand

In recent years, leaders have had to prioritise artificial intelligence, data analytics, and automation. With any new development comes the need to make even more decisions as a leader. How can this piece of tech help steer my organisation in new directions? What are the potential pitfalls? Without the knowledge, risk assessment skills, and confidence to make such decisions, leaders will find it difficult to navigate the fast-accelerating world of tech. MBA programmes increasingly support this by introducing students to data analytics, digital strategy, and decision-making in uncertain environments.

According to Forbes Magazine, the first steps for decision makers should be to embrace technology and understand their

customers' needs. By staying on top of the latest innovations and recognising their customers' requirements, leaders will be able to build a solid base for further tech exploration.

International business schools have taken it upon themselves to address these questions in their management and leadership programmes. Tom Lawrance explained that, according to his own experience, *"around one third of the people looking to apply to business school are doing so because they want to transition into the tech industry"*. As a former MBA recruiter at Amazon and former Head of Global Industry Careers at the University of Oxford Saïd Business School (UK), he has seen first-hand the value of MBA-taught skills such as data analysis and leadership and communication in tech roles.

Analyse and anticipate

Data-driven insights and real-time analytics are essential for speeding up decision making. On top of that, leaders must be prepared to anticipate and manage the challenges that may arise with new technologies. Risks such as data breaches and system failures are a very real part of working with almost any type of technology and when you add personal data to the equation, it becomes even trickier. In MBA settings, students build these skills through case studies and projects that involve analysing data and responding to business risks.

"Every company is now a technology company in some capacity, and the



commercialisation of emerging technologies like AI, quantum computing, and virtual reality is happening faster than developers can anticipate unintended and potentially harmful consequences of misuse,” Beena Ammanath, Executive Director of the Global AI Institute at Deloitte, told Fast Company.

Organisations should also be prepared to manage their teams’ expectations and reactions to technological changes. A Deloitte study on transformational technology leadership outlined “change agents” among the top five leadership competencies:

“Tech leaders with this competency are experts at instigating, managing, and delivering large complex digital transformations across the enterprise. They deliver value by transforming business processes, employee and customer experiences, and/or business operations.”

Balance and nurture

As much as it requires technical know-how and business acumen, success in digital innovation depends on another key factor: human connection.

“Most people move up the ranks by being stellar individual contributors but may not have a broad view of organisations and the systems that make them run. This is especially true in tech, where the technical skills that make you successful become less critical as you take on more responsibility,” highlights Jo-Ellen Pozner, Faculty Director of the Executive MBA at Santa Clara’s Leavey School of Business (US).

MBA programmes reflect this by integrating leadership development, teamwork, and communication into the learning experience.

Leaders need to inspire, collaborate with, and build loyalty within diverse teams. Empathy and emotional intelligence are not just buzzwords when it comes to fostering a supportive workplace culture. Deloitte’s research confirms this: between 41% and 54% of tech executives believe non-technical skills such as leadership and relationship skills will be more important than tech expertise.

Seek ethical leadership

Ethical considerations around artificial intelligence or data collection require careful judgment from C-level executives. Establishing responsible and transparent digital leadership practices should be a priority just as much as any other business objective. Business schools incorporate these topics into MBA curricula, encouraging students to explore the ethical dimensions of technology in practice.

Maastricht School of Management (the Netherlands) addresses the topic as part of the Executive MBA programme’s Digital Management module. Ahlem Chanteloup Slama, Maastricht EMBA graduate, says the module made her “reflect on the responsibility and impact of the data analysis process”.

“My takeaway is that it’s important to work on Corporate Digital Responsibility (CDR) from the beginning of a project in order to tackle the risks and to create the opportunity to make a difference,” she adds.

Embracing the digital frontier requires a blend of technical acumen, adaptability, and a deep understanding of human dynamics. The leaders of today (and tomorrow) must navigate this complex landscape with a commitment to upholding the fundamental values that make for effective and ethical leadership in the digital age.

“Around one third of the people looking to apply to business school are doing so because they want to transition into the tech industry.”

Tom Lawrance, former MBA recruiter at Amazon

Charting the Course

How MBA programmes shape global leaders

An MBA is often associated with strategy frameworks, financial models, and case studies. And while these are essential, they are only part of the picture. The real value of an MBA lies in how it transforms the way you think, work, and lead across cultures, industries and, increasingly, technologies.

Today's leaders are expected to navigate complexity, manage diverse teams, and make decisions in environments shaped by rapid technological change, including AI. MBA programmes are designed with this reality in mind. They combine international exposure, personal transformation, and real-world immersion to prepare professionals not just for the jobs of today, but for the leadership challenges of tomorrow.

Building a global mindset

One of the defining features of an MBA is its international dimension. Classrooms bring together participants from different countries, industries, and professional backgrounds, creating a learning environment that mirrors the global business world.

This diversity is not incidental; it is central to leadership development. Exposure to multiple perspectives strengthens cross-

cultural communication and adaptability, both critical for global leadership roles.

Many programmes go further by embedding international experience into the curriculum: global modules, study trips, or consulting projects abroad. These allow students to test their thinking in unfamiliar contexts and understand how business operates across markets. In such settings, learning becomes immediate and tangible: students work on real challenges with real organisations, often in cultures very different from their own.

University of Hong Kong MBA graduate Kunio Kure spoke highly of the China Immersion Programme through which his MBA cohort visited major cities and toured the headquarters of leading organisations like Baidu, Shanghai Stock Exchange, and Asia Financial Centre: *"Seeing how companies operate in this high-growth environment was invaluable for understanding the future of global business."*

The result is not just knowledge, but a global mindset. Graduates learn to navigate ambiguity, collaborate across borders, and identify opportunities in diverse environments.

Leadership starts with self-awareness

While global exposure expands perspectives outward, MBA programmes



also work inward. They are creating space for reflection, self-discovery, and personal growth.

Leadership today requires emotional intelligence, adaptability, and a clear sense of purpose. MBA programmes address this through leadership labs, coaching, and reflective exercises that challenge students to understand their own values, strengths, and blind spots.

“One of the perspectives that I take is that we’re in the business of developing transformative leaders,” highlights Matt Gorlick, Executive Director of Student Development for UCLA Anderson’s MBA programmes. *“[...] and in order to transform teams, organisations, industries or the world, you’ve got to be able to transform yourself. And to do that, you need to understand yourself.”*

As highlighted in leadership-focused MBA curricula, students develop capabilities such as managing high-performing teams, building personal presence, and solving complex problems in uncertain environments.

Students often enter with a functional or technical mindset and leave with a broader

understanding of leadership that includes empathy, communication, and the ability to inspire others.

In this sense, an MBA is as much about learning who you are as it is about learning what to do. It helps participants articulate their leadership identity and align it with their career direction.

Learning by doing: the real-world dimension

Another defining element of MBA programmes is their strong practical focus. Business schools have moved far beyond traditional lectures, integrating experiential learning into the core of the curriculum.

Case studies remain a cornerstone, but they are increasingly complemented by live projects, simulations, and partnerships with companies. Students may consult for startups, solve strategic challenges for multinational firms, or develop their own ventures. At the International University of Monaco, MBA participants take part in a simulation where they pitch ventures to investors and industry professionals, replicating real investment decision-making

environments and receiving feedback from practitioners.

This hands-on approach bridges the gap between theory and practice. It allows students to apply concepts in real time, test ideas, and learn from outcomes, often in high-pressure, team-based environments.

Research and programme insights consistently highlight the fact that experiential learning is key to leadership development, combining knowledge with action and reflection.

Just as importantly, this experience builds confidence. By the time they graduate, MBA students have not only studied business problems, but they have also worked through them.

Preparing for a changing world of work

The context in which leaders operate is evolving rapidly. Globalisation, digital transformation, and AI are reshaping organisations and redefining what leadership looks like.

Modern MBA programmes respond to this shift by integrating technology, data, and innovation into their teaching. Students learn how to work alongside intelligent systems, interpret data-driven insights, and make decisions in complex environments.

Leadership in this context becomes a balancing act combining human judgement with technological capability. As business becomes more interconnected and dynamic, leaders must be able to adapt quickly and manage both human and digital resources.

MBA programmes develop exactly these capabilities: blending analytical thinking with creativity, and strategic vision with operational execution. They prepare graduates to lead in environments where change is constant and uncertainty is the norm.

A combination that creates global leaders

What makes an MBA powerful is not any single element, but the combined experience it offers.

- International exposure builds global perspectives
- Personal development fosters self-aware leadership
- Practical learning connects ideas to real-world impact

Together, these dimensions create leaders who are adaptable and able to operate across cultures, industries, and technologies.

As business schools continue to evolve, so too does the MBA. It is more than a qualification. It is a transformation that equips professionals to lead in a world where boundaries are blurred, challenges are complex, and the future is still being defined.

More than One Way to Learn

From classroom to screen:
what each MBA format really offers

There was a time when an MBA meant one thing: showing up on campus, case in hand, ready to debate in a classroom full of equally ambitious peers. That model still exists, and still works, but it's no longer the only way.

Today, MBA candidates can choose between on-campus, remote, and hybrid formats, each offering a different rhythm of learning. The real question is no longer which format is better, but which format works best for you and how schools make each one valuable.

As GMAC notes in its research on graduate business education, flexibility has become one of the defining expectations of modern MBA candidates. Business schools have responded by rethinking how learning takes place in each format.

On-campus: Learning through proximity

On-campus MBA programmes remain the gold standard for immersive learning. The value here is not just academic: it is environmental.

You learn in proximity to others. Conversations don't end when the lecture does; they continue in hallways, over coffee, during group projects. That constant interaction creates what many

graduates describe as the "invisible curriculum": the network, the exposure to different perspectives, and the confidence built through real-time exchange.

Business schools amplify this by designing environments that force interaction: cohort-based learning, case discussions, leadership labs, and group assignments that mirror real business challenges. Networking is embedded in the structure.

For candidates seeking a career change or access to global networks, this format still offers unmatched intensity.

Remote: Learning without borders

Remote MBA programmes have evolved far beyond recorded lectures and discussion boards. Today's best online formats are deliberately designed to replicate, and in some ways enhance, the learning experience.

Live virtual classes, breakout discussions, collaborative tools, and global cohorts allow participants to engage in real time, often from multiple time zones. A single discussion might include professionals from finance in London, tech in Singapore, and consulting in São Paulo.

According to The Harvard Gazette, the official news website for Harvard University, the goal is not to digitise the classroom, but to redesign it: *"Growing evidence has shown*



that techniques that get students to participate in the learning process [...] produce better educational outcomes at virtually all levels.”

Business schools make remote learning valuable by being intentional about engagement. This includes:

- Structured peer interaction (small group discussions, project teams)
- Faculty facilitation in live sessions rather than passive delivery
- Digital platforms that track participation and encourage contribution

Networking, often seen as the weak point of online learning, is also being reimagined. Virtual coffee chats, global networking events, and alumni platforms create connections that extend beyond geography.

For working professionals, this flexibility is a major advantage. You don't step away from your career; you integrate learning into it.

Hybrid: The best of both worlds

Hybrid MBAs combine online learning with periodic on-campus residencies. Think of it as a rhythm: flexible study during the year, followed by intensive in-person sessions.

These residencies are where relationships accelerate. After weeks of virtual collaboration, meeting in person deepens trust and connection. Workshops, simulations, and networking events are packed into short, high-impact periods.

In many ways, hybrid formats reflect how contemporary work takes place: a mix of digital collaboration and in-person moments

that matter.

The new design of learning

While the delivery mode may be different, what matters across all formats is how well it is designed.

Top business schools invest heavily in teaching methods that work across environments:

- Case-based learning that encourages decision-making
- Experiential projects with companies
- Leadership development embedded in the curriculum
- Continuous feedback and peer learning

The format shapes the experience, but the pedagogy determines its value.

Stand-alone business schools vs. university-based schools

Another dimension that shapes the MBA experience is where the business school is situated.

Business schools that are part of a larger university offer breadth. MBA students can access courses, faculty, and perspectives from across disciplines such as economics, technology, humanities, and even public policy. This creates a more interdisciplinary learning environment and a broader network.

In contrast, stand-alone business schools tend to offer a more focused and intimate experience. With smaller cohorts and a strong emphasis on applied learning, they often create tighter communities and more direct interaction with faculty members.

Take Germany's ESMT Berlin, for example. Known for its hands-on approach and close ties to industry, it emphasises practical leadership development and real-world application. In such environments, learning is often more personalised, with greater access to professors and peers.

Neither model is inherently better. They simply offer different advantages. One expands your perspective across disciplines; the other deepens your engagement in a focused business context.

Choosing what fits

For MBA candidates today, the choice is not just about what to study, but how you want to experience learning.

Do you want full immersion and constant interaction?

Do you need flexibility without stepping away from your career?

Do you prefer a diverse academic ecosystem or a close-knit, highly focused environment?

The modern MBA offers all these options.

And perhaps that's the real shift: learning is no longer determined by a single path. It's designed to meet you where you are and take you where you want to go.

The Art of Good Judgement

Why sound decision making is the skill that outlasts every disruption



Dr Mahdi Tavalaei
MBA Director
Surrey Business School (UK)

Dr Mahdi Tavalaei is a Senior Lecturer in Strategy and Digital Transformation and an MBA Director at Surrey Business School. He is also a Senior Fellow at The Higher Education Academy (UK). He holds a PhD in Business Studies (Strategy) from IE Business School. His research is mainly on competitive strategy in digital markets. He teaches AI and decision intelligence and AI and analytics tools for business in the Surrey MBA programme.

Surrey positions itself at the intersection of business and sustainability. How does that shape the way MBA content is taught and how students engage with it?

I describe our MBA as an MBA for change and an MBA for good. Responsibility runs through the Surrey MBA as one of its defining pillars, from Sustainable Operations and Supply Chain to Responsible AI for Business. Students also put these ideas into practice through our Global Impact Residency, where they work on international consultancy projects for organisations with a social or environmental mission. As a signatory to the UN Principles for Responsible Management Education, we treat environmental and social factors as embedded in business decisions, not as constraints on the profit function. Our aim is to develop leaders who create value while considering the wider consequences of their decisions.

What mechanisms do MBA programmes use to close the gap between academic theory and business reality, and how do you know when they are working?

The critical mechanism is a feedback loop with practice. Our faculty members combine research with consultancy, advisory work, and industry partnerships,

bringing both rigour and relevance into the classroom. We reinforce this through guest speakers, live projects, and resident executives. In the final Integrative Applied Project, students apply what they have learned to a specific problem, either by building a business plan or by solving a company's challenge as a consultant. We know these approaches work when graduates move into leadership roles, drive change within their organisations, or launch ventures that began as ideas during the programme, of which our alumni offer many examples.

How central are real company challenges to the way learning takes place at Surrey, and what do business partners get out of that relationship?

Real organisational challenges sit at the heart of the Surrey MBA. We benefit from a unique ecosystem that includes: the University of Surrey Research Park, a thriving cluster of start-ups and SMEs; SETSquared, a world-leading business incubator; and Surrey Hatchery, our student-focused incubator. Companies bring real challenges into the classroom and, in return, receive fresh thinking, rigorous analysis, access to future talent, and solutions backed up by research. Students gain real experience applying theory in complex settings, and the relationship keeps the learning relevant for both sides.

How does the mix of professional backgrounds and cultural perspectives change the quality and depth of learning for everyone in the room?

An MBA is essentially a peer-learning experience, which is why we keep cohorts diverse in terms of nationality, industry, and professional background. Our students range from science and engineering to business and finance, and work across sectors including IT, banking, healthcare, hospitality, and government. A strategy that succeeds in one market may have failed in another, and those contrasting experiences enrich every discussion. When a founder, an operations manager, and a consultant analyse the same problem from different perspectives, the learning becomes deeper and more practical. In many ways, the cohort becomes a co-lecturer. Our block teaching format strengthens this dynamic by giving students extended, focused periods to work closely together and learn from one another.

Data fluency, AI literacy, geopolitical volatility - how do you decide what to prioritise within a fixed programme length?

Of course, AI, as a defining element of the new economy, has an important place in the Surrey MBA, which has recently been revamped as a future-focused programme. That is why every student takes the AI and Decision Intelligence core module, while those seeking deeper expertise can follow an AI elective pathway covering generative and agentic tools and their responsible use. Geopolitical challenges are explored specifically in the Global Strategy in Disruptive Markets module. However, we ultimately aim to focus on capabilities rather than headlines. AI, data literacy, and geopolitical awareness matter because they all contribute to effective decision making in a rapidly changing world. The key question we ask is: what will still matter ten years from now? AI and data skills are becoming basic literacy, but what matters most is making sound decisions in a world of constant disruption, drawing on an abundance of evolving tools and technologies.

Can the MBA classroom meaningfully prepare someone for failure, or is it something only experience can teach?

A classroom cannot reproduce the real cost of failure, and I would not pretend otherwise. What it can do is rehearse the response to it, equipping students with adaptability, resilience, and resourcefulness. For instance, we run business simulations in class where teams run a company over several rounds, learning from each outcome before adjusting in the next. I have always loved Samuel Beckett's line: "Ever tried. Ever

failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better." Students in our class learn how to respond to setbacks, adapt quickly and, in Beckett's words, "fail better" on the path to success.

If you had to name the one thing you most want MBA graduates to carry with them for the rest of their careers, what would it be and why?

If I had to choose one, it would be the judgment to act responsibly when the information is incomplete. Technology can provide more data and better tools, but leaders still need the confidence to act, the wisdom to weigh competing priorities, and the ability to bring others with them. Frameworks will evolve and technologies will change, but sound judgement endures. Ultimately, that is what we aim to develop at the Surrey MBA: graduates who combine technical capability with responsibility, human insight and the confidence to lead through uncertainty.

An MBA is a peer-learning experience, which is why we keep cohorts diverse in terms of nationality, industry, and professional background.



She Owns the Room

Inside Bentley's bold blueprint for women who mean business



Yaro Fong-Olivares, PsyD.
Executive Director
Gloria Cordes Larson Center
for Women and Business
Bentley University

Yaro Fong-Olivares, PsyD. is an organisational development leader and executive adviser helping organisations address the real dynamics that shape leadership, culture, and performance. She serves as Executive Director of the Gloria Cordes Larson Center for Women and Business at Bentley University, an applied research and leadership development organisation that partners with leaders to advance gender equity. Dr. Yaro holds a doctorate in Organisational Leadership Psychology from William James College, with a concentration in the neuroscience of leadership. Her work challenges the false choice between people and profit, showing how investment in people fuels innovation and business results.

How is Gloria Cordes Larson Center for Women and Business serving Bentley University students and the local community?

At Bentley University's Center for Women and Business, we serve students and alumni by advancing women's leadership. We offer programmes for undergraduate and graduate students on executive development topics such as confidence, promotion, and salary negotiation, as well as universal development areas such as cross-cultural competency, conflict management and navigating difficult workplace conversations across cultural differences. Our professional development portfolio prepares women to advocate for themselves as they effectively navigate their careers from college to board level. At Bentley, we equip women with the technical and relational skills necessary to take charge of their careers as they navigate male-dominated industries.

Working with our award-winning career placement centre, we serve as a lifelong career concierge and sponsor to our students by offering skills-based professional development programmes and access to key professional relationships. We do this by hosting events and conferences that support career growth and the development of career-enhancing networks. For example, we partner with 50/50 Women on Boards, which advocates for women's inclusion on private and public boards, as well as the largest women's conference in Massachusetts, and with the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, which is a state-wide governor-sponsored advocacy group.

Our third area of impact is applied research. Our centre translates faculty peer-reviewed research into ready-to-use insights that support advancement for women. Our latest industry-focused white papers include Multigenerational Impacts on the Workplace, The Business of Beauty, and Women Business Owners and the Pandemic: Digitalization as Crisis Response. Our Bentley faculty and student researchers work with data partners and corporate allies to leverage the most up-to-date information to help organisations design workplaces in innovative and research-backed ways. Our research focuses on solutions and

interventions that expand access to opportunity for women of all ages and at all stages of their careers.

What are the latest trends in leadership development, especially of female professionals? Are you noticing any generational differences?

There is a disconnect between stated needs for a sustained leadership pipeline (in particular women leaders) and how these same organisations think about leadership and career advancement. What I see in

today's college-age cohort is a tendency towards work-life integration and a choice to pursue their interests, including entrepreneurial ventures alongside full-time work. Early career professionals express a desire to balance traditional nine-to-five career work with alternative passion projects that also provide diverse sources of income. At the same time, this cohort expresses a wish to achieve a more flexible lifestyle that includes, but does not focus exclusively on career ambition. This can create a gap for employers seeking "company evangelists" who will grow within the organisation and eventually step into the C-suite.

At the same time, even as generational workplace culture preferences shift (including differing views on AI, flexible or hybrid work), many structural and regionally specific challenges remain. Women still face intangible and unspoken barriers that can be unclear and therefore difficult to overcome in any organisation. For instance, corporate company cultures may implicitly reward more masculine styles of leadership that value assertiveness over collaboration. Other structural challenges that affect women in their care-giving years include high child care costs and the reduction of elder care support. Widespread challenges such as pay inequity and an unequal division of labour at home also affect women differently at distinct stages of their careers. These ongoing and nuanced women-specific challenges hinder overall progress into top revenue-generating roles that often lead to the C-suite.

Psychologically, what steps are the most effective for women to achieve career advancement?

Culture, family values, personality, and other factors shape women's psychology at work and hence what has the greatest impact can vary. Recently, I have heard more women (and even men) speak up about feelings of impostorism. Coined by Dr. Valerie Young, the term "impostor syndrome" refers to feeling unqualified for a professional role and feeling like an impostor, despite meeting all qualifications and performing well on the job. Paradoxically, this is the opposite of what data on confidence and gender often show: women tend to apply to roles only when they feel 100% qualified, while men tend to apply when they feel about 60% qualified. In practice, the data on how impostor syndrome erodes confidence and prevents proactiveness can be at odds with women's tendency towards perfectionism or over-preparedness. I am not defending perfectionism either, as it does create an additional psychological burden, like the unhealthy fear of failure or chronic procrastination. However, MBAs must include both technical skills and the psychological training needed to own one's competence and credentials with confidence.

Is entrepreneurship a shortcut to leadership positions? How





does the mindset and skill set differ from climbing the corporate ladder?

I come from a family of entrepreneurs, and I have always gravitated towards startup environments. Earlier in my career I was a fitness entrepreneur working to open my own fitness studio. I have learned from my experience and coaching other women that entrepreneurship is not episodic; if you have an entrepreneurial bent, you will look back in your lifetime and are likely to notice that you always found ways to exercise this tendency in your life and inside a company. While I would not call it a shortcut, because it may require more sweat equity, courage, and conviction than a corporate job, entrepreneurship creates different leadership opportunities, and it is absolutely a growing option for women in business.

Understanding whether entrepreneurship or corporate leadership is for you is complex because in the United States for example, women launch about half of all new businesses. However, only 2–3% of venture funding goes to women founders.

The disparities in funding are not preventing women from starting businesses, but for women to truly achieve entrepreneurial equity, funders must support their participation in high-earning entrepreneurial ventures.

Which is the healthiest approach to achieve work–life balance? Is work–life balance a state or a process?

As an ambitious professional and neuroscience researcher, I see work–life balance as a personal formula that changes on the basis of individual needs and the stage in a person's life. Brain science suggests that a balanced 24-hour day includes adequate sleep, physical movement, play, reflection, and periods of mindfulness and stillness. The goal is not to give each of these exactly the same amount of time, but to find the right mix for sustainable energy and well-being. In practice, this often requires negotiation both at work and at home. Additionally, every day may be different for a woman juggling work, volunteer board engagement, and family commitments. I recommend a daily practice

of taking stock of the hours of the day, coupled with continuous experimentation with the balance. Every day can be an opportunity to tweak something that gives you back more energy.

How do MBA programmes empower women for leadership roles?

Bentley's MBA classes are small and highly interactive, and the gender mix typically includes 40–50% women. This balance gives women meaningful opportunities to contribute to peer learning and to practice leadership in real time. Through case discussions, group work, and active class participation, students learn to craft and deliver their message. By taking leadership roles in case and project teams, women can build confidence, strengthen their leadership skills, and find their authentic voice. The learning environment inside and outside the classroom provides the ideal conditions to help students refine their leadership voice and style.



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Career Multiplier

A guide to where MBAs go, what they earn, and what is possible

Few decisions carry as much professional weight as the choice to pursue an MBA. The degree has the power to accelerate careers, unlock new industries and, in some cases, change everything.

Where MBAs go

Completing an MBA opens doors to different industries, roles, and career paths as long as you have a clear vision for your future and rely on what you learned, rather than just the credential.

Consulting, finance, and tech remain fields that are closely associated with an MBA. As an example, 55% of INSEAD's (France) MBA Class of 2025 are now working in consulting, according to the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC).

At the same time, fields such as healthcare, consumer goods, and social impact are becoming increasingly popular, offering growth opportunities for business school graduates. *"In 2018, just 7% of prospective business students were interested in a career in healthcare. By 2023, that figure had grown to 15%,"* GMAC Contributor Nick Harland reports.

What the numbers make clear is that there is no single MBA career path. Still,

wherever your ambitions point, the MBA equips you to get there faster and with greater credibility.

Numbers don't lie

While personal and professional growth and fulfilment are prime reasons for pursuing an MBA, salary figures are not to be ignored. In fact, ROI and career outcomes remain the most-researched topics among prospective students, GMAC found. Salary data gives a strong indication of the market and the available opportunities for executives, although numbers can vary significantly depending on region, industry, and organisation.

Jobs in consulting, finance, and tech continue to dominate the list of the highest-paying options for MBA graduates, according to GMAC: *"Even at firms outside the Big Three, you can still expect to earn an average salary of over USD 100,000 as a consultant in the United States."*

When it comes to specific roles, management consultant, investment banking associate, and C-suite titles such as chief technology officer are currently among the highest-paid opportunities for graduates.

The employment reports of big B-school brands show that the average salary three years after graduating is more

than USD 256,000 for Harvard MBA graduates and USD 242,000 for Stanford graduates. INSEAD MBAs earn average salaries of USD 210,000 three years after graduation.

“The overall ROI of my MBA has been outstanding. I recouped my investment within just six months at Arthur D. Little Middle East, thanks to a tripled salary and rapid career advancement. The experience has positioned me for continued success and leadership in consulting, making the MBA a highly strategic decision,” highlights Giovanni Sobrero, a graduate of the Imperial Business School (UK) Full-Time MBA Class of 2024.

The three major paths

Although there are as many career directions to take as there are MBA candidates, there are three main roads available after graduation.

First is the corporate climb, i.e. entering or re-entering large organisations at a senior level, typically in strategy, operations or general management. The MBA credential signals readiness for leadership, opening doors to roles that would otherwise require years of incremental progression. For career returners and those pivoting from technical or specialist trajectories, it offers a structured bridge to the executive layer.

Then there is the option to switch the industry, function, or location of a career. Some MBAs opt for all three at once, which is challenging, but definitely not impossible. An MBA provides the cross-functional knowledge and professional network to make such moves credible to new employers. GMAC data consistently show that a significant share of graduates successfully enter industries

and functions in which they had no prior experience.

Finally, an MBA can be an ideal launchpad for an entrepreneurial career. The programme grants valuable access to networks and funding ecosystems, while business schools increasingly support founders through incubators and competitions. For those with a business idea already forming, the programme also provides a rare low-risk environment to test and refine it with expert faculty and like-minded peers.

Some graduates do not wait long to put that foundation to work. Two weeks after graduating from the University of Queensland Business School (Australia), Jan Bodnaruk started his own civil construction company. *“Without [the MBA], I wouldn’t have had the skills nor the confidence to build my own company,”* he said in 2024. *“But it’s now two years since I started the company, and it’s still going strong. By applying the learnings from my MBA and offering something a little bit different, we’ve had nothing but success.”*

The switcher’s advantage

An MBA has long been the tool of choice for professionals wishing to change their industry, function, or geography, and sometimes all three at once. Interestingly, though, the motivation is shifting. According to GMAC, the proportion of candidates pursuing business school specifically to change industry or function has dropped from 58% in 2022 to 42% in 2025. Today’s candidates are less focused on the destination and more focused on what they need to get there, i.e. skills.

This re-framing may actually make the MBA a more effective switching mechanism than ever. *“To transition*

from engineering to a product role and excel in it, I realised I had to develop a solid grasp of finance, marketing, strategy, and entrepreneurship – areas that weren’t really part of my daily routine as a software engineer,” says Harshita Pal, MBA Class of 2023 at the University of California (US). *“In the end, it was a combination of enhancing my skills, positioning myself well, and seeking relevant experiences that helped me make this transition.”*

What the trends are telling us

The MBA career landscape is not static. Purpose-driven roles in sustainability, ESG, and social impact are attracting a growing share of graduates who want their careers to generate more than personal return. At the same time, tech companies are increasingly recruiting MBAs not just for business functions but for leadership roles at the intersection of strategy and emerging technology, mainly product, AI, and digital transformation.

Global mobility is also gaining value. As organisations operate across borders and time zones, candidates with cross-cultural fluency and international experience are commanding greater attention from recruiters.

For Executive MBA candidates, the picture looks different again. Many are not seeking a career change so much as career acceleration, using the degree to consolidate seniority, expand their strategic perspective, and build a leadership network while remaining in their job.

What unites all of these trends is a single underlying shift: the MBA is no longer just a passport to a better job. Increasingly, it is a tool for building a more intentional one.



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Not If, But When

Why the right career move is a matter of timing

At what point in someone's career does an MBA have the most impact?

An MBA can be a pivotal moment in a professional career when they have already gained some experience in their industry and their role, they have progressed to a certain point in their organisation, and they feel like they've reached a ceiling. An MBA can help them with boosting their confidence, consolidating their experience with current research and knowledge, and provide them with strategic and holistic insights into how to run successful businesses and teams in uncertain times.

Personal desire to learn, grow, and have an impact are the trademarks of the students on the Manchester Met MBA and our students and graduates have reported back to us that the time they have spent with us has transformed the way they think and approach leadership challenges and the way they see themselves.

For some, this means stepping into leadership roles and developing greater strategic confidence. For others, it is about progressing within their current organisation, moving into a new sector, or growing their own business. Our cohorts bring together professionals from organisations such as Google and Siemens, the public sector, healthcare, and elite sport, creating a diverse learning environment where different perspectives and experiences

shape richer discussions, stronger networks, and better informed decision making.

The greatest impact often comes when individuals are ready to reflect on their career direction and actively shape what comes next.



Dr Anastasia Kynighou
MBA Director and Reader
(Associate Professor) in HRM
Manchester Metropolitan
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Dr Anastasia Kynighou is MBA Director and a Reader (Associate Professor) in Human Resource Management at Manchester Metropolitan University Business School. She is a Chartered Member of the CIPD, a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and an EFMD Accredited Online Facilitator.



Career development means different things to different MBA students. How does Manchester Met's programme accommodate that range?

For some students, the motivation to study for an MBA might be about accelerating within their current organisation; for others, it is about moving into new industries or functions, or even starting their own ventures. That is why the Manchester Met MBA's Career Programming scheme supports our students with finding their own authentic self during this journey and empowers them to take the next step.

Our students are invited from the first day they join us on campus for their induction, to start considering their own story; who they are, what they want to achieve, how they will get there and what legacy they will leave. Working with career coaches specialising in executive leadership, we prepare our students to write a CV that stands out in an era dominated by AI-generated CVs, to make a lasting impression in job interviews, and successfully land their dream job, be it internal to their organisation or external.

We also help students consciously think about networking opportunities and they work with their coaches and use the

Cappfinity Leader's Profile to explore their career path. These aspects are also woven into the curriculum, and students are invited to reflect on their own leadership in various points across the programme during their assessments.

Just as importantly, students learn from one another's experience across sectors such as finance, technology, healthcare, consultancy, and the public sector. This peer-to-peer learning often helps broaden career thinking in unexpected and valuable ways.

What makes mentoring relationships with alumni successful?

Our MBA Alumni Mentoring programme is designed to create meaningful connections between MBA students and experienced graduates who can support their development. Where possible, students are matched with mentors working in a similar industry or with similar backgrounds. Importantly, mentors have already completed an MBA and progressed in their own careers, so they can offer guidance based on their experience. This gives students the chance to gain honest advice, broaden their professional network, and build confidence as they explore their next steps.

This provides a truly unique opportunity to explore the future with someone who has lived the past! Mentors support students in considering their next professional steps, but also act as sounding boards for students to share the lessons from the MBA and the challenges facing them.

What does your programme do specifically for the student who wants to move into a completely different industry or function?

For students wishing to move into a completely different industry or function, the Manchester Met MBA provides opportunities to develop and apply transferable skills in new contexts. One of the unique elements of the Manchester Met MBA is our use of authentic, applied assessments rather than traditional examinations. Through live business cases, consultancy projects, simulations, and strategic challenges, students are continually applying learning to real-world situations, helping them build the confidence to transfer their skills into new environments.

This is strengthened by the diversity of the cohort, which brings together professionals from a wide range of sectors including engineering, finance, consultancy, healthcare, the public sector, and more.

Learning alongside peers with different experience and perspectives helps students broaden their thinking, develop new approaches to problem solving and build networks beyond their own industry.

Alongside this, the MBA builds the broader leadership and strategic skills needed to operate at a senior level, while the global recognition of the qualification also supports credibility when they move into new sectors.

What do MBA graduates often underestimate about the career transition ahead of them?

Many MBA graduates are surprised by how much they continue to draw on their MBA learning long after the programme has finished. Much of the learning is applied immediately in practice, but its value often deepens over time as graduates take on increasingly complex leadership challenges.

We often see alumni reflecting on how the Manchester Met MBA supported them through significant moments of change in their careers and in their personal lives. For example, our alumna Emily described how the programme underpinned her approach during a period of major transformation in her organisation, including leading through the pandemic and overseeing a significant merger that reshaped the scale and direction of the business.

She reflected that the academic framework of the MBA gave her confidence in her decision making in practice, and highlighted how lessons about strategy, financial awareness, change management, and organisational culture continue to shape her leadership approach today.

Ultimately, graduates often underestimate that an MBA is not just preparation for the next role, but a toolkit they return to throughout their careers when navigating uncertainty, complexity, and change.

If someone is choosing between two strong MBA programmes and career outcomes are their deciding factor, what should they be looking at beyond the ranking and the salary statistics?

Prospective students should also look closely at the quality of career support, the strength and accessibility of alumni networks, and the extent to which the programme is connected to real industry practice.

At Manchester Met, we place a strong emphasis on applied learning, employer engagement, and responsible leadership. Students not only develop technical and strategic skills, but also learn how to lead ethically and effectively in complex, changing environments. Just as importantly, they become part of a close-knit MBA community where they are known as individuals and supported throughout their learning. This personalised approach, combined with dedicated career programming, helps students build the confidence, networks and direction needed to achieve their career ambitions. Studying in Manchester also adds a further dimension to this experience.

Ultimately, the most important factor is fit, meaning how well the programme aligns with your goals, values, and preferred way of learning. This alignment is what drives meaningful and sustained career impact.

The most important factor is fit – how well the programme aligns with your goals, values, and preferred way of learning.





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Beyond the Glass Ceiling

How women around the world are using business education to transform their careers

When Sodontuya Nerguidavaa left Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia to begin her MBA at UC Davis, the journey felt improbable. She was a first-generation student from a developing financial market, arriving in the United States during the height of a pandemic. Two years later, Sodontuya was a Vice President at BNY on Wall Street. Her journey, from a nomadic countryside upbringing to one of the world's most prominent financial institutions, is one of the more striking examples of what an MBA, combined with extraordinary determination, can make possible.

Nerguidavaa's story is one of many. Across industries and continents, women are using MBAs to break through career ceilings, cross borders, and arrive somewhere they could not have reached alone. The path is rarely smooth and the honest voices of those who have walked it acknowledge that clearly. But the destination, for a growing number of women globally, is genuinely transformative.

The numbers are moving

For the first time in 2024, more than 6,000 women enrolled in full-time MBA programmes at the world's top business schools, according to the Forté Foundation, a non-profit organisation dedicated to increasing opportunities for women in leadership. A record eight schools achieved gender parity

that year, up from just one school in 2020. Women now account for 42% of full-time MBA students at Forté's 61 member schools, compared to just 28% when the organisation was founded in 2002.

Schools that have reached parity include some of the most prestigious names in business education: Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, Duke University's Fuqua School of Business, and Johns Hopkins' Carey Business School, where 59% of the 2024 incoming class were women.

"Women are still applying to and enrolling in business schools, which reflects their resilience and commitment to leadership."
— Elissa Sangster, CEO, Forté Foundation

The pay gap remains real: Forté's 2024 MBA Outcomes research found a 6% gender pay gap in women's first post-MBA role. But the MBA, Sangster argues, remains one of the most reliable routes into the senior roles where that gap begins to close.

From plateau to pivot: real stories

For Mireille Francis, originally from Lebanon, the catalyst was a feeling of stagnation. She had been working in communications for the French government: a respectable career, but one that had reached its natural ceiling. *"The problem in the public sector is that sometimes you arrive at a plateau in your career, and that's what I felt like,"* she told MBA GradSchools. *"I felt I wouldn't be able to move forward with it. I felt like it was the*

right move to utilise the experience I already had, but to find a different path where I can really grow and excel."

Her answer was the ESSEC Global MBA in Paris. The programme gave her far more than business theory. *"The MBA was a great tool for me to make the switch to the private sector. Aside from the academic parts, they work a lot on your personality, your soft skills. We had a lot of courses on negotiation, how to present ourselves."* Today, Mireille works as a Managing Consultant in Strategy and Digital Transformation at Capgemini Invent.

Irina Kozlova's trajectory tells a similarly global story. The Russian-born marketer pursued her MBA at EU Business School with an ambition to build an international career. And the degree delivered on that ambition with striking speed. *"My MBA from EU gave me a great start. I almost doubled my salary,"* she says. *"I had greater responsibilities and started managing a team."*

She went on to join Estée Lauder, leading marketing for La Mer and Jo Malone London across Russia, before moving to Paris to manage 14 markets across EMEA in her current role as Senior Product Marketing Manager. A business degree did not just expand her income. It expanded her world.

Challenges, honestly acknowledged

None of these women would describe the journey as straightforward and it would be dishonest to frame it that way. The financial

barriers are real: leading MBA programmes carry tuition fees that can stretch into six figures, and the opportunity cost, years away from a salary and an established career identity, is not trivial.

The gender pay gap that persists after graduation is well-documented. Forté Foundation's research, polling more than 1,000 MBA alumni at over 60 elite programmes, found that the 6% gap in women's first post-MBA salary grows to 17% in their current role and has not budged since 2021. More subtly, women report arriving at MBA programmes and wondering, quietly, whether their ideas will carry the same weight in class, whether the networks built over decades will open the same doors.

Beyond recruitment, MBA programmes must address the full student experience. In the classroom, women should be well represented in case studies. Programmes also need to invest in their faculty, with representation at all levels. The degree alone is not a cure but it is increasingly a powerful instrument in the hands of women who know how to use it.

What the degree really changes

For Sodontuya Nerguidavaa, the MBA did something the credential alone cannot capture: it gave her a community. Arriving alone in a foreign country, she credits the UC Davis GSM network – fellow students, faculty, alumni – with making the impossible possible. She wrote an autobiography in Mongolian to inspire young girls from developing countries

to pursue their dreams. The MBA, for her, was never just about the job. It was about proving to herself and to others what was achievable.

Aditi Javeri Gokhale, Senior Advisor Executive in Residence at Boston Consulting Group and MIT Sloan MBA alumna, puts it simply: *"Women often talk themselves out of opportunities when they should be doing the opposite."* The MBA, she and many others suggest, is one of the most effective interventions for reversing that tendency by giving you the language, the network, and the credentials to act on who you already are.

Take the leap

The evidence, taken together, points clearly in one direction. Women who pursue MBAs tend to arrive somewhere they did not fully anticipate. Not just more senior, or better networked, but more capable of building the career they want rather than the one that just happens to them.

Business schools are investing in mentorship networks, family-friendly policies, and women's leadership programmes with a seriousness that would have been unrecognisable a decade ago. The women who have been through it – from Ulaanbaatar to Wall Street, from Beirut to Paris, from Moscow to EMEA marketing leadership – are increasingly visible, increasingly vocal, and increasingly willing to share what they found on the other side.

The challenges are real. The gap is real. The work is hard. But so is the reward for those who go.





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MBA



Start Here, Go Anywhere

From Vancouver to the world: An interview with UBC Sauder's Dean Darren Dahl on career advantages with an MBA

How is UBC Sauder preparing MBA students for a market that is more competitive and more complex than it was a few years ago?

A curriculum that balances business fundamentals with real-world application is key. From consulting projects with businesses in different regions of the world, internships, and global experience at prestigious international business schools, students build skills that are critical to making a meaningful difference in their careers.

Then there's AI, which augments a lot of our work and is only going to accelerate. At UBC Sauder, we are structuring AI education around three capacities: engagement with AI tools, understanding their capabilities and limits, and judgment about when human responsibility must remain central. Understanding how to use AI responsibly, combined with soft skills – the ability to lead, to navigate uncertainty, to communicate, to think across disciplines – and experiential learning, positions our graduates to add value above and beyond what AI can do. With technology continuing to advance, those are the skills that endure.

What does meaningful career activation look like at UBC Sauder?

It starts before students arrive and continues well after graduation. But at the heart of it is the Hari B. Varshney Business Career Centre, which gives students direct access to employers and the business community. It is not just help with CVs, though we do that too, with tailored interview preparation and mentorship access for specific

industries like management consulting and finance. It is about connections. Our career strategists personally connect students with employers and alumni for coffee chats and informational interviews, not just pointing students to a job board, but making introductions that open doors.



Darren Dahl
Dean
UBC Sauder School of
Business (Canada)

Darren Dahl is the Dean of the UBC Sauder School of Business and RBC Financial Group Professor of Entrepreneurship. He is globally recognised for his work in strategic marketing, entrepreneurship, creativity, and social influence. Dahl is an award-winning academic who is a past recipient of the Killam Research Prize and the 3M Teaching Fellowship. In 2015, he was ranked as the #1 professor worldwide for marketing research by the American Marketing Association.

Last year, we posted over 7,000 internship and full-time job opportunities and we hosted 240 employer recruitment sessions during the hiring cycle, including dedicated alumni hiring events where graduates network with people who have walked the same halls. The same network that gets students hired also fosters ongoing mentorship long after graduation.

How does Vancouver, Canada shape the career trajectories available to graduates and does it give them an edge that MBAs from other cities may not have?

I think of Vancouver as a gateway for global business success. It sits at the intersection of Asia-Pacific business and is a thriving hub for climate innovation, clean technology, and sustainability-focused work. Graduates interested in combining career growth with meaningful impact can find opportunities to work on solutions that address environmental and social challenges.

Vancouver's entrepreneurial ecosystem also creates distinctive opportunities for graduates to make an impact early in their careers. Alongside large, international organisations, there is an ever-growing network of startups where many UBC Sauder graduates have taken on higher-impact roles early in their careers.

As the only Canadian school in the Global Network for Advanced Management, our students can supplement their studies with a semester at a prestigious international school, from Copenhagen to Shanghai. Combined with the diversity of our students and faculty and a highly engaged global alumni network, it is an exceptional environment for developing the cross-



cultural leadership skills that matter in international organisations.

Ranked best business school in Western Canada by multiple prestigious rankings, the combination of innovation, entrepreneurship, and global perspective at UBC Sauder is difficult to replicate, giving MBA graduates in Vancouver a distinct advantage and access to unique career pathways.

How are MBA curricula keeping pace with the skills wanted by employers?

To connect the curriculum directly to what employers actually need, in the first semester students identify their strengths, weaknesses, and the specific tracks they want to explore. Our most recent tracks – Climate and Technology and Analytics Leadership – are a direct reflection of employer needs.

AI is integrated into the curriculum, not just a standalone subject. The goal is to develop the critical thinking and judgement to know when to rely on AI tools, when to question them and how to lead responsibly in an AI-enabled environment.

Beyond that, we involve students in real-world experience throughout the

programme: case studies, working with businesses, solving real problems together. Students walk away reflecting on their experience that genuinely changed how they think and prepared for their next career move.

For someone considering an MBA right now, what is your honest answer to why this is still the right moment to invest?

I think the honest question people are asking themselves is: with everything going on – AI, uncertainty, a competitive market – what are the outcomes actually going to be? Am I going to fill my toolbox and prepare myself for the future of work? Am I going to get access to an amazing network of students, faculty, the business community, alumni? Am I going to walk away proud of the credential I've earned, what I've learned and what I bring to the table? The answer to all of those, if you choose the right programme and commit to it, is yes.

The data tell us that employer expectations for AI and technology skills continue to rise, but increasingly in service of better strategic thinking, decision making, and problem solving. The durable skills an MBA builds are not going away. If anything, they are becoming more valuable as AI takes

on more of the implementation work. The MBA prepares you for what is left, and what is left is the hard stuff.

What is the relationship between business education and the kind of society we are building?

A good business education should ensure that when students walk out of every class, they are thinking to themselves: “that changed the way I see X, Y, and Z.” This kind of experience makes better leaders and better business people, and it encourages people to care about others and the world around them. It comes back to the student experience and the broader impact on society, both locally and globally.

Business has a bigger role to play when we talk about climate change and other global issues. Business schools have to prepare future leaders who are equipped to navigate them. The broader impact we have through our research, our alumni, our connections to the international business community, and being good global citizens is how we keep our status as a world-class institution. And that is how business becomes a force for good.



Every Voice Counts

MBA peer learning requires a diverse classroom

Diversity: still alive even after *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*

Despite the landmark decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in this 2023 case, which prohibited explicit quotas or affirmative action programmes assigning value to specific backgrounds, MBA programmes still support diversity and seek to recruit a balanced class across industries, functions,

genders, ethnicities, sexual orientations, socioeconomic backgrounds, and other dimensions. While this ruling applies specifically to US institutions, its influence has shaped the global conversation around admissions diversity.

Why do MBA programmes care about diversity?

MBA programmes not only admire students who have overcome discrimination and hardships, they also know that business leaders in any significant organisation will have employees, customers and business partners from many different backgrounds. Any education that omits those points of view is incomplete. MBA admissions teams usually group applicants according to their background and then admit the best from each group, comparing military applicants against other military applicants, finance applicants against other finance applicants, and so on, rather than ranking the entire applicant pool on a single scale.

A short anecdote from one of our clients demonstrates how a lack of diversity can lead to bad business decisions. The applicant worked at a private equity firm whose partnership consisted exclusively of American men in their 50s. The firm was evaluating the opportunity to acquire a business producing day planners for women, with sections designed to help them track both professional and family appointments.

Because there were no women in the partnership, the managing partner conducted “market research” by asking his wife’s opinion. She had paid staff to cook, clean, and care for her children, and for this

reason she saw no value in a day planner to track household duties.

Based on this short chat, the firm declined the opportunity – only to see the company’s revenues triple. Had the partnership included women who balanced both work and family duties, they could have made a very profitable investment.

How can you use your unique background to win admissions offers and scholarships?

MBA programmes give you several ways to explain the unique contributions you could make as a student:

1. Background statements

As Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard was litigated in lower courts, US-based MBA programmes were already adapting their admissions process to support diversity (even in a post-affirmative-action legal environment).

The text of the final US Supreme Court decision included this important phrase:

“...nothing in this opinion should be construed as prohibiting universities from considering an applicant’s discussion of how race affected his or her life, be it through discrimination, inspiration, or otherwise...”

In anticipation of this ruling, MBA programmes introduced short essay questions giving applicants space to explain exactly how their backgrounds inspired them or forced them to overcome discrimination. For applicants outside the US, this legal context may not apply directly,



David White
Founding Partner
Menlo Coaching

David White co-founded Menlo Coaching in 2012 to help ambitious professionals gain admission to leading MBA programmes. Previously, he spent 15 years in technology leadership roles at startups and established companies across the US and Europe, hiring and developing more than 100 early-career professionals. He now specialises in helping MBA applicants define credible career goals and practical plans for long-term advancement.

but background and identity essays have long been a feature of leading MBA applications worldwide.

For example, Stanford GSB's application includes the following prompt:

"We know that each person is more than a list of facts or predefined categories. With this space, we provide you with an optional opportunity to elaborate on how your background or life experience have helped shape your recent actions or choices."

If your background inspired you, gave you a different viewpoint, or meant that you faced discrimination, I strongly advise you to explain that in these short "background" essays.

MBA programmes can assign value to your background only if you explain it in a manner that aligns with the Supreme Court decision; they cannot assign value to the factual statements in the personal data section of the application about your ethnic background, sexual orientation, etc.

2. Personal and behavioural essays

MBA application essays often ask about who you are as a person or what you have done as a leader who faced challenges. These essays are another opportunity to show how your background enables you to make a unique contribution, or how you would be an ally and support diversity by helping others.

Essay topics from our students admitted to Harvard, Stanford and Wharton have touched on diversity in ways that go far beyond traditional categories, such as:

- Recovery from drug and alcohol addiction
- Reforming a bank's training programmes to include education about proper pronoun usage when speaking to customers
- Volunteering on a private high school alumni board and modernising dress codes to be inclusive of non-binary students
- Acting as a male ally at a Middle Eastern consulting firm by designing staffing policies that protected female consultants from discrimination during client visits
- Leaving an investment banking job to escape persistent sexual harassment, then working with the CFO of her next company to institute no-tolerance policies for harassment committed by the company's investors
- Taking part-time jobs starting at age

12 to help his family make ends meet

Use your essays to explain how your background can enrich classroom discussions and how you will be an ally of other students.

3. Pipeline-building organisations

If you identify as part of an under-represented community, or as an ally, you can participate in pre-MBA programming hosted by organisations such as:

- Forté Foundation, which supports women in business
- Sponsors for Educational Opportunity, whose alternative investments programme helps under-represented finance professionals secure buy-side roles
- ROMBA, which supports the LGBTQ+ business community
- Synergist, which supports women in

investing

- Riordan MBA Fellows, which supports under-represented MBA applicants through programmes including their Diversity MBA Admissions Conference
- MLT (Management Leadership for Tomorrow), which supports under-represented professionals in pursuing graduate management education and career success

These organisations offer you connections to professional mentors, events where you can meet MBA admissions officers, and peer-to-peer networking.

Menlo Coaching offers discounted GMAT and GRE prep courses to members of Forté, ROMBA, MLT, US military veterans, and members of similar diversity-focused organisations. Contact Menlo directly for details.



Questions about the MBA? MLT has the Answers.



Want to apply for B-School?

TRY OUR MBA PREP PROGRAM!

MBA Prep provides aspiring professionals with personalized guidance and effective tools to successfully:

- » Navigate the business school application process
- » Optimize your MBA experience

Want to improve your B-School experience?

TRY MBA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT!

MLT's **MBA Professional Development (PD)** program provides aspiring MBA candidates with the tools and network to:

- » Maximize your business school experience
- » Take your career to the next level

What MLT Offers:

MBA PREP

MBA PD

Personalized Coaching

Work with a coach to develop a winning game plan for school admission

Work with an executive coach who is knowledgeable in your industry of choice

Personal Clarity

Cultivate personal clarity and identify which schools are your best fit

Assess passions, strengths, constraints, and experiences to maximize happiness and impact

Access to critical resources

Access top MBA program admissions officers at events hosted by B-school and corporate partners

Access top companies seeking to hire Fellows for internships and full-time jobs

A robust Network

Meet with driven, high-performing peers in the MLT community

Connect with high-achieving leaders across private and public sectors and industries

A Career Roadmap

Connect your long-term career goals to your near-term action plan

96%

of MBA PD Fellows receive **at least one MBA internship offer.**

LEARN MORE:
mlt.org/mba-prep

93%

of MBA Prep Fellows are accepted into a **Top 10 Business School.**

LEARN MORE:
mlt.org/mba-pd

MBA Prep Key Dates

Application Opens Summer 2026

MBA PD Key Dates

Application opens in Fall '26 for those beginning an MBA in Fall '27

A.J. Tella, MBA Prep '21

"After my MBA Prep journey, I'm on a trajectory that I previously had only dreamt about. I'm starting an Ivy League MBA program at my #1 choice, and I owe it all to MLT."



What MBA Scholarship Committees Actually Look For

An inside look at what really influences MBA scholarship decisions beyond numbers alone



Loubna Bouamane
Founder,
The Admission
Concierge

Loubna Bouamane PhD is the founder of The Admission Concierge and an expert in the MBA/MSc admissions field. She has over 15 years' experience in higher education. Her professional path has led her to work in several business schools including Babson College and Harvard Business School and five years as the Director of Admissions at the University of Miami. She has been a featured speaker both domestically and internationally at various MBA fairs and has led webinars with GMAC.

When people think about MBA scholarships, they usually imagine the same formula:

760 GMAT, perfect GPA, MBB consultant, private equity background, done. And yes, those candidates absolutely exist. But honestly, some of the biggest scholarship offers I've seen over the years did not necessarily go to the most perfect-seeming applicant on paper. A lot of applicants misunderstand what scholarship committees are trying to reward. In this article, I wanted to answer a few of the questions I get most often from clients about MBA scholarships and what schools are really evaluating behind the scenes.

Are MBA scholarships mostly about statistics?

Not as much as applicants think. Strong numbers help, obviously. A high GMAT or GPA reassures the school that you can handle the academics and contributes to rankings data. But once you get into the pool of competitive applicants, schools start looking at something else entirely: Who feels valuable to the class?

I worked with a client last year who had objectively strong statistics. Great GMAT, finance

background, well-known employer. On paper, he looked exactly like the type of applicant people assume gets scholarship money automatically. But the application initially felt incredibly generic. His goals seemed as though they were copied from LinkedIn. His essays were polished but forgettable. There was nothing wrong with the profile, but there was also nothing particularly memorable about it.

At the same time, another client had a lower test score but a much more distinctive story. She had spent years managing operations for her family's manufacturing business while helping expand the company internationally. The leadership examples felt real. The goals made sense. The application had personality.

Guess which applicant ended up receiving stronger scholarship offers?

Schools are not just rewarding intelligence. They are investing in people they believe will contribute something meaningful to the community and eventually reflect well on the brand.

What actually makes someone stand out for scholarship money?

Usually clarity. Not perfection. Not buzzwords. Not trying to sound like the future CEO of Goldman Sachs at age 27. The strongest scholarship applications tend to feel very coherent. The person knows who they are, where they are going, and why the MBA makes sense in that process.

One of my clients received a major scholarship at a top MBA programme after coming from a very non-traditional background in healthcare operations. She did not have the most elite resume in the pool, but every piece of her application connected

logically: why she started in healthcare, why she became interested in operational inefficiencies, why she wanted to move into healthcare strategy, and why that specific MBA programme fitted her goals.

Nothing felt forced. That matters more than applicants realise. Because admissions committees read thousands of applications where everyone claims to be "passionate about leadership and impact." After a while, those applications completely blur together. The candidates who stand out are usually the ones who feel specific.

What's the biggest mistake applicants make when trying to position themselves for scholarships?

Trying too hard to sound impressive. This is probably the most common issue I see.

Applicants think scholarship committees want the biggest possible story, so suddenly every project "transformed an organisation" and every career goal becomes "revolutionising global access through innovation." Meanwhile, the application loses all sense of realism.

One client came to me with essays full of massive consulting jargon and extremely inflated career goals. The funny part was that when we actually spoke live, he was thoughtful, smart, and genuinely likeable. But none of that personality existed in the application. Once we stripped away all the corporate-sounding language and made the essays more direct and grounded, the entire application became significantly stronger.

MBA applications are weirdly personal in that way. Sometimes sounding more human is what actually makes someone more competitive.

Can applicants with average test scores still get scholarships?

Yes. Especially if the rest of the profile feels differentiated. People online love reducing admissions to numbers because it feels predictable. But scholarship decisions are often much more subjective than applicants want to believe.

I had a client with a very average GRE score who still received scholarship money at multiple schools because her leadership experience was unusually strong. She had built and scaled a non-profit initiative during college and continued mentoring students for years afterwards while working full-time. During interviews, that depth of commitment came across immediately.

And that is the other thing applicants forget: schools are also evaluating who they actually want sitting in classrooms, leading clubs, representing the programme, and contributing to discussions for two years. That cannot always be measured through test scores.

So what is the real takeaway here?

The strongest scholarship candidates usually feel believable. Their stories make sense. Their goals feel earned. Their leadership examples sound real. Their applications feel like an actual person wrote them instead of a corporate press release. And honestly, that is why some applicants with perfect-seeming profiles end up disappointed every year while other candidates quietly walk away with significant scholarship offers. Because beyond a certain point, MBA scholarships are not just about who looks the smartest on paper. They are about who feels the most compelling to invest in.





DREAM IT. PREPARE IT. ACHIEVE IT.

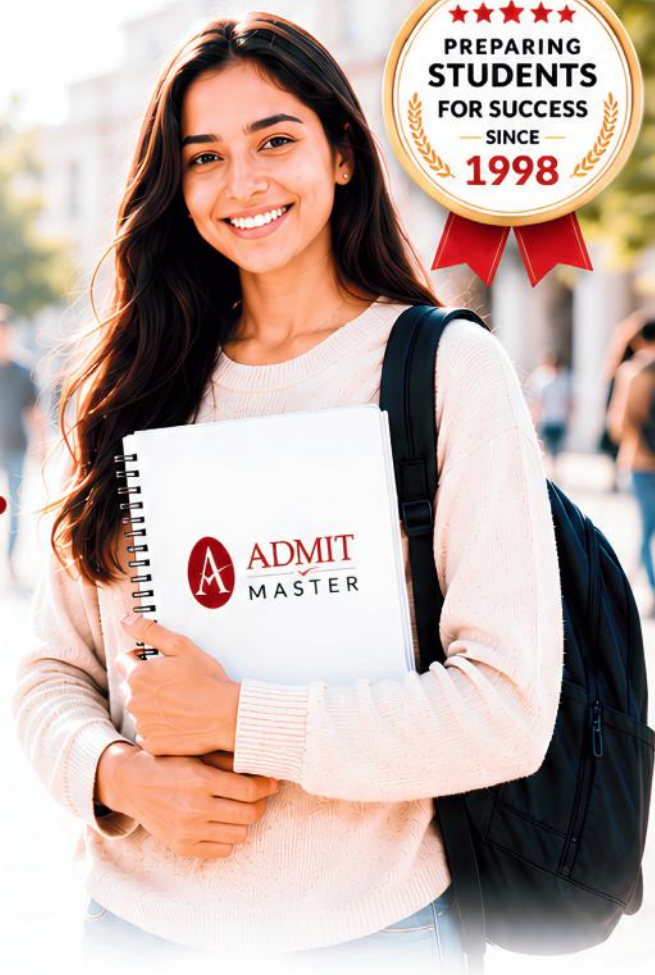


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MBA

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Become a Responsible Global Business Leader



Success at ESSEC means achieving professional excellence, personal fulfilment, and a positive societal impact. Our Full-Time MBA provides a solid business foundation within a global and multicultural context, emphasising hard and soft skills. Focus areas include **Innovation & Entrepreneurship, Digital Leadership, and Strategic Sustainability**, complemented by industry-specific workshops and global networking in **Consulting, Tech & Product Management, Finance or Luxury**. This approach ensures graduates are prepared to lead confidently and effectively in a dynamic global market.

5 REASONS TO CHOOSE THE ESSEC GLOBAL MBA:

1. Personalise your journey by selecting electives within **3 key**

topics, and enhance your experience with **4 Industry Learning Labs** offering industry-specific workshops, networking opportunities, and global expeditions.

2. Receive personalised guidance aligned with your career goals from our **dedicated talent centre**.

3. Study at the heart of Europe's premier business district in **Paris - La Défense**.

4. Take your career to the next level and experience high post-MBA employability.

5. Join a diverse cohort where **100%** of the students are **international**.

PARIS, FRANCE

STUDENT BODY

Male vs. Female ratio: 45:55

Age range: 25-40 years

Average age: 30 years

Degree background: Business – 35%; Engineering – 21%; IT – 16%; Media & Communications – 11%; Political Sciences – 3%; Other – 14%

International students: 95%

International student diversity:

Europe: 10%

North America: 10%

Central/South America: 7%

Middle East: 5%

Asia and Oceania: 58%

Africa: 10%

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

University degree: Bachelor's degree or higher

Aptitude tests: A competitive GMAT, Executive Assessment, GRE, or TAGE MAGE score

Language tests:

Advanced English level

References: 2 professional references

Minimum work experience: 3 years

COSTS

Application fee: EUR 130

Tuition fees: EUR 57,500

Scholarships: There are various merit-based scholarships available, including women in leadership, digital transformers, and sustainable leaders and entrepreneurs, among others.

CONTACTS

Name: Global MBA Team

Email: global-mba@essec.edu

Telephone: + 33 (0) 1 46 92 41 68

Website: www.essec.edu/en/program/global-mba/



PROGRAMME INFO

Programme name	GMBA
Language of instruction	English
Application deadlines	There are multiple rounds of admissions from September to June. Please visit our website for more information.
Starting dates	September 6, 2027
Accreditations	AACSB, EQUIS, AMBA
Ranking	#11 Executive Education, FT, 2026

A Personalised MBA for a Complex World

Inside Luiss Business School's boutique approach to leadership, career development and international learning

Today, what attracts aspiring managers to business school and your MBA programme? Is there any shift in the past two years?

Today, MBA participants are looking beyond traditional academic learning. They seek opportunities to advance their careers, strengthen their international mindset, and



Maria Isabella Leone
Associate Professor of
Management of Innovation and
Head of the MBA Programmes,
Luiss Business School

Maria Isabella Leone is Associate Professor of Management of Innovation and Head of the MBA Programmes at Luiss Business School. She teaches Innovation Management, Open Innovation & IP Management, and Economics of Strategy. Her research focuses on Intellectual Property rights, and Open Innovation. She is involved in national and international research projects and has published in leading journals, including Strategic Management Journal and Organization Science.

acquire the capabilities required to navigate the growing complexity of the global business environment.

In addition, we have seen growing attention to personalisation, flexibility, international exposure, and experiential learning, that combine theory with practice. At Luiss Business School, our boutique approach delivers exactly that: a tailored journey that blends academic excellence, meaningful engagement with business leaders and companies, and continuous personal development.

How does your programme prepare executives for business leadership in a constantly disrupted world?

In an era of continuous disruption, effective leadership depends on the capacity to navigate complexity, act under uncertainty, and embrace change. Our MBA programmes blend rigorous management education with a focus on innovation, technology, sustainability, and entrepreneurship. By combining experiential learning with exposure to business leaders and organisations, we prepare participants to address real-world challenges and lead with adaptability, responsibility, and a broad perspective.

How does the programme support students pursuing entrepreneurial, nonprofit, or non-traditional post-MBA paths?

Every MBA participant has distinct experiences, ambitions, and career objectives. Our boutique approach supports individual growth through a tailored learning journey that combines an entrepreneurial mindset, personalised coaching, mentorship from senior executives, specialised development opportunities, and engagement with an extensive corporate

network. Our goal is not to define one way to success for participants, but to equip them with the tools, relationships, and opportunities to create their own professional future.

How can MBA participants customise their individual study experience?

At Luiss Business School, personalisation starts with flexibility. Participants can choose the MBA format that best suits their professional and personal circumstances: a fully immersive Full-time MBA, a weekend-based Part-time MBA for working professionals, or a Flex MBA that combines online learning with selected on-campus experiences. The learning journey extends well beyond the classroom, offering access to electives, personalised coaching, executive mentoring, cross-MBA initiatives, corporate events, and company visits. Exposure to our international, multi-hub ecosystem further broadens participants' perspectives by connecting them with different markets, industries, and business cultures.

What builds the MBA ROI? Are there any new factors that affect it?

The value of an MBA today cannot be measured solely by salary progression. Equally important are career advancement, access to influential networks, international exposure, leadership capabilities, and opportunities for professional growth. In a world increasingly shaped by technology and artificial intelligence, the ability to adapt and continuously learn is more important than ever. An MBA is therefore a long-term investment in the skills, connections, and perspective required to navigate an evolving career and a rapidly changing business environment.

**Luiss
Business
School**

A world ahead

Looking for more than just a business degree? At Luiss Business School, the MBA is a transformative journey – intimate, global, and boundless.

Refine your skills, challenge conventions, and join a vibrant community where innovation meets purpose. Choose the path that fits your life and ambitions:

◆ Full-time MBA

Study in Rome, Italy, and dive into a global network and international opportunities

◆ Part-time MBA

Advance your career and balance study and work with weekend classes in Rome or Milan, Italy

◆ Flex MBA

Learn from anywhere through immersive, real-world projects



www.luissbusinessschool.it - mba@luissbusinessschool.it
Campuses & Hubs: Rome, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai



Challenge yourself,
then challenge the world

Leeds University Business School

At Leeds University Business School, we believe business can be a powerful force for positive change. Through research-led teaching, globally relevant learning, and strong industry partnerships, we equip students with the knowledge and skills to tackle local and global challenges, from climate change to social inequality. Our approach is solution-focused, bringing together diverse perspectives to inspire innovation and real-world impact, while our community-centred culture fosters belonging, collaboration, and respect for difference. Guided by the values of inclusivity, internationalism, responsible autonomy, and collective excellence, we create an environment where students can thrive, develop as responsible leaders, and contribute to a more sustainable and equitable future.

PROGRAMME PRESENTATION

The Leeds MBA is a dynamic, practice driven programme designed for ambitious professionals ready to lead with impact. Under the guidance of our Programme

Director, named one of Poets & Quants Best 40 Under 40 MBA Professors in 2025, the MBA is continuously evolving to reflect the demands of modern business. Our cohort is entrepreneurial at heart: 1 in 4 students have previously launched a business, and many engage with Spark, our enterprise support hub, which offers guidance during the MBA and for seven years beyond. Innovation thrives here. Each student takes part in a global study tour, collaboratively selecting the destination and engaging with local businesses on a real-world project. Back on campus, our MBA Masterclass Series brings C-suite leaders into the classroom every fortnight, offering invaluable insights. We champion practice-based learning through three live challenges focused on enterprise planning, consulting, and innovation, each set by industry. Students also explore cutting-edge topics like design thinking and generative and agentic AI. Our careers support is exceptional, with access to expert consultants throughout the programme and for three years after graduation.

PROGRAMME INFO	
Programme name	The Leeds MBA
Programme format	Full-time
Language of instruction	English
Starting dates	Fall 2027
Accreditations	EQUIS, AACSB, AMBA, Small Business Charter
Rankings	QS #72 in the world, QS #30th in Europe, QS #9th in UK, 1st in the UK and top 5 globally, Shanghai Rankings, Global Rankings
OTHER STUDY LOCATIONS	
Campuses	Leeds, United Kingdom
Study abroad	Chosen by our students

LEEDS, UK

STUDENT BODY

Male vs. Female ratio: 50:50
Degree background: Business – 34%; Engineering – 27%; Social – 20%; Social Sciences – 13%; Arts and Humanities – 6%
International students: 97%
International student diversity:
Europe: 3%
North America: 2%
Central/South America: 2%
Middle East: 2%
Asia and Oceania: 89%
Africa: 2%

CAREERS

Salary increase after graduation: 67%
Companies that are recruiting from our MBA programme: NHS, Amazon, EY, Citigroup, Jaguar Land Rover

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

University degree: 2:1 or international equivalent
Aptitude tests: Not required if academic Bachelor's qualification score is met
GMAT (if required) - minimum required score: 555 from Focus Edition
Language tests:
IELTS (minimum required score): IELTS Academic: 6.5 overall with no less than 6.0 in each component
TOEFL (minimum required score): At least 88 overall with a minimum of 19 in Listening, 20 in Reading, 22 in Speaking and 21 in Writing
PTE (minimum required score): 64 on PTE Academic, with at least 60 in each of the skills
References: Contact details of 2 professional references
Minimum work experience: A minimum of 3 years' postgraduate work experience with appropriate management responsibility (internships not included)

Three Paths. One Commitment: *Making You the One Who Leads.*

Porto Business School, the management school of the University of Porto, built its MBA portfolio to answer three different career realities, but all three start from the same conviction: leading today takes real business fluency, comfort with AI, and the ability to decide under pressure.

Compare the 3 Programs:

International MBA

Reimagine yourself.
Explore the future.

Full-time, for those looking to accelerate or pivot their career in a truly international environment (68% international students). Ranked 12th for Value for Money and 14th for ESG and Net Zero Teaching (FT Rankings). Includes a Global Immersion Week, a Double Degree option, and 30+ electives across 5 concentrations.

Format: On Campus

Language: English

Duration: 11 to 15 months

Price: €30,000

Double Degree & Accelerated Path

The International MBA can be personalized two ways: the Double Degree, for students in their final (2nd) year of a master's who want to combine it with the MBA for a double credential; and the Accelerated Path, for those who already hold a master's degree and can complete the MBA in just 6 months. Two options, one goal fitting the MBA to each candidate's academic background.

Global Online MBA

Lead the AI era —
from anywhere.

#1 in Value for Money and Overall Satisfaction, and #2 in Online Satisfaction (FT Online MBA Ranking), #6 FT Online MBA Ranking. A fully digital format with the same faculty and academic rigor as the Porto campus, AI-first learning, and Sustainability or Entrepreneurship tracks.

Format: Online

Language: English

Duration: 15 months

Price: €28,500

Executive MBA

Lead with impact.
Redefine leadership.

For senior professionals looking to sharpen strategic decision-making and broaden their global outlook. Specialization tracks in Sustainability or Entrepreneurship, international exchanges and double degree options, and an AI Business Impact Challenge applying AI to real business problems.

Format: On campus

Language: Portuguese and English

Duration: 15 months

Price: €30,000

Scholarships:

10+ types available, including Women in Business, Diaspora, Sustainability and Alumni Heritage.

Which Path is Yours?

Want to switch industry or geography fast? International MBA. Need full flexibility without leaving your current role? Global Online MBA. Already leading teams and ready to scale your impact? Executive MBA.

Career Outcomes

Main target industries: Consulting, Technology, Industry, Banking & Financial Services, Energy, Retail & FMCG, Health, Telecom.

Accreditations:



Rankings:



Contacts:

Admissions Director:
Angélique Garcia
agarcia@pbs.up.pt

pbs.up.pt



Leadership, Sustainability & International



We are part of the University of Sheffield, a UK Russell Group University ranked in the world top-100 (QS World University Rankings 2027). Holding Triple Crown accreditation (AACSB, AMBA & EQUIS), we stand among the global elite of business schools.

Sheffield is located in the heart of the UK, with easy connections to other cities and airports. London is just two hours away and Manchester only 50 minutes by train. As one of the UK's most affordable major cities, the UK's greenest city and a top-5 student city, Sheffield is a great place to live and study. The city's ecosystem is driven by digital innovation and a vibrant startup community.

PROGRAMME PRESENTATION

The Sheffield MBA places responsible leadership and sustainable development in business at its core. You'll develop the knowledge, skills and mindset needed to lead with purpose and create a positive

impact on people, organisations and society.

At Sheffield, your personal, professional and career development is our priority. Whether you're aiming to progress into senior leadership, explore new career directions, pursue international opportunities or launch your own venture, we'll support you in making it happen. Through the Future Leaders module, one-to-one career and leadership coaching, alumni mentoring and real client projects, we'll help you build the confidence, capabilities and network to achieve your ambitions.

You will study alongside a diverse international cohort while connecting directly with our alumni and industry networks. As part of the programme, study trips to major cities in Europe including Frankfurt, Mannheim and London will enable you to explore new business environments and career opportunities.



SHEFFIELD, UK

STUDENT BODY

Male vs. Female ratio: 54:46
Age range: 22-46 years
Average work experience: 6.75 years
International student diversity:
UK: 4%
North America: 4%
West Africa: 7%
South Asia: 64%
East, Southeast Asia & Pacific: 14%
West Asia: 7%

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

University degree: 2:2 undergraduate honours degree or equivalent
Language tests:
IELTS (min. required score) - 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each component or equivalent
Minimum work experience: 3 years' full time postgraduate work experience. This should include appropriate management experience and show good career progression.

COSTS

Application fee: No fee
Tuition fees: GBP 37,630
Scholarships: A number of scholarships worth 50% of the tuition fee are offered throughout the year on a competitive basis. No separate application is required as all MBA candidates will automatically be considered for these scholarships.

CONTACTS

Email: mba@sheffield.ac.uk
Website: sheffield.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/courses/mba

PROGRAMME INFO

Programme name	The Sheffield MBA
Programme format	12-month, full-time
Language of instruction	English
Application deadlines	Rolling admissions through the year
Starting dates	September 2027
Accreditations	AACSB, AMBA, EQUIS, CMI, CIMA
Rankings	Tier One- Global MBA Rankings, CEO Magazine



Turbulence into Opportunity

How the Sheffield MBA builds adaptive, high-impact leaders

What are some of the unique experiences and expertise of your MBA students?

Students take the Sheffield MBA to pivot their careers or accelerate their career progression. Some notable examples include students with an Indian Army background, all of whom achieved successful transitions: one is a Project Manager for a global construction design company in London, one returned to India to co-found a capital advisory company, and two students have secured senior management roles at Amazon. The Sheffield MBA offers our students a tailored approach, supporting their personal, professional, and career development based on their unique backgrounds and goals.

How have the MBA curriculum, teaching, and delivery formats evolved recently?

We recently redesigned the Sheffield MBA programme to reflect today's volatile

business landscape, digital transformation and sustainability demand. We consolidated the curriculum into fewer but larger modules to alleviate assessment pressure and create space for integrated learning. This structure better mirrors the complex, real-world challenges leaders face daily.

We have introduced a flagship module named *Future Leaders - Skills for Effective and Responsible Leadership*, which runs through the entire year. To adapt to dynamic industry changes driven by AI innovation, climate change, and geopolitical shifts, we have also added core modules such as *Transformative Marketing*, *Leading People and Transforming Organisations*, *Strategic Management in a Complex World*, and *Uncertainty, Risk and Crisis in a Dynamic World*.

Students can tailor their course through specialised electives in *Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, *AI, Analytics and Digital Technologies*, or *Impact Investing and Portfolio Management*. Our new curriculum is designed to transform every student into a confident, agile, and responsible future leader.

What is your programme approach to leadership development?

Leadership development lies at the heart of the Sheffield MBA. Alongside the *Leading People and Transforming Organisations* module, our year-long *Future Leaders - Skills for Effective and Responsible Leadership* module is built around three pillars: *Leading Yourself*, *Leading Individuals*, and *Leading Collectives*. It blends leadership theory with 360-degree feedback, self-reflection, coaching, evidence-based skill development. Purposeful leadership is brought to life through guest speakers, live company challenges, international study trip to Germany as well as the London Career Safari. Paired with Sheffield University Alumni Mentors in senior positions worldwide, students gain direct insight into high-impact careers. This empowers them to become responsible, confident leaders with strategic influence.

From your point of view, are MBA career paths becoming more diverse?

Yes, MBA career paths have diversified significantly over the past five years in response to a fast-evolving workplace. While many MBAs still pursue more traditional paths in consulting and finance, more are

seeking to pivot into tech, brand strategy and social impact roles. A growing percentage have launched their own startups or stepped into Venture Capital. Whatever the path, success requires resilience, cross-cultural collaboration, emotional intelligence to lead across global boundaries, and strategic AI literacy.

Why should students choose a full MBA programme over a short term online certification?

A full-time MBA offers an unforgettable experience, fostering deep cohort connections, networking opportunities, and events that are difficult to replicate online. From day one, the Sheffield MBA puts student learning first. It kicks off with a transformative Welcome Week designed to give them a flying start, before entering live challenges with real clients for hands-on UK business exposure.

The course extends beyond the classroom through an immersive three-day London Career Safari, an international study trip to Germany, and dedicated on-site career coaching. Students live and study in the heart of Sheffield, a vibrant hub driven by digital innovation and a thriving start-up scene, with easy connections to other UK cities.

In what ways have topics such as sustainability and climate change impacted the programme or the business school itself?

Sheffield University Management School is the management school of the future. As a Triple Crown-accredited institution, sustainability is a core pillar of our identity, preparing leaders, organisations, and communities not just to adapt to climate change and population growth, but to shape them responsibly and sustainably.

As a proud signatory of the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), we embed responsible leadership throughout the Sheffield MBA curriculum, from our flagship *Future Leaders* module to core courses addressing global risk and crisis management. By connecting candidates with real-world sustainable business challenges, we empower graduates to drive transformational change globally.



Dr Melanie Hassett
MBA Director
Sheffield University Management School

Dr Melanie Hassett is MBA Director, Senior Lecturer in International Business, and interim Associate Dean for Education at the University of Sheffield's Management School, a Triple Crown-accredited, global top-100 institution. Her research spans internationalisation, cross-border mergers and acquisitions, and post-acquisition integration. Passionate about transformative education, Melanie ensures the MBA addresses modern demands in sustainability, leadership, and digital transformation, enabling every student to evolve into a confident, agile, and responsible future leader.

Leading Beyond Technology: Building AI-Ready Business Leaders

TU Wien Academy combines research excellence with executive education that translates into practice

What are some of the unique experiences and expertise of your MBA students and faculty?

What makes us special is the close connection to TU Wien's research excellence. We pick up current developments in AI, robotics, and quantum technologies and prepare them for professionals who need to translate technology into sound decisions. Knowledge shouldn't stay abstract, it should become immediately applicable. We combine strategic perspective, concrete application, and personal reflection, so understanding turns into real implementation.

What does your programme prioritise when training people for a world defined by AI and technology?

The world has fundamentally changed. Companies that ignore this won't be the same in a few years. AI is reshaping business models faster than classical planning cycles can react. What's needed are people who understand not only what technology can do, but where its limits lie, and what that means strategically. Technological know-how alone isn't enough, though. Classic leadership and collaboration skills matter more than ever. Many companies have strong technology but can't use it strategically; others have strong managers who lack technological understanding. We build the bridge between the two, always starting from the company's reality, not from theory.

Are MBA career paths becoming more diverse?

Clearly. Our participants sometimes want to leave their field, but mostly they want more reach within it. A technical expert becomes someone who shapes strategy without losing their engineering voice; a manager in a tech-driven company finally understands the technology deeply enough to lead it. Some move into board roles, others start companies, others transform their organisation from within. The common thread is range: the ability to move between

the technical and the commercial world opens paths that were closed before.

What role does the participant network play for them and for their companies?

An enormous one. In the room sit professionals from a wide range of industries and functions, all with concrete challenges. The peer learning that emerges is often just as valuable as the formal curriculum. Participants don't just come back with knowledge, they come back with a network that opens doors. Collaborations arise, partnerships begin. They become part of a growing community of decision makers, whatever their role or level.

What sets your school apart?

TU Wien Academy brings technology and management together at the heart of Europe, in the centre of Vienna. We consistently translate TU Wien's technological excellence into applicable, practice-relevant education. On learning journeys to fast-moving hubs like Singapore and Seoul, as well as through our collaboration with Caltech, participants gain first-hand insights into different approaches to speed, risk tolerance, and innovation culture and bring these perspectives back into their organisations.

What builds the MBA ROI, and are there new factors affecting it?

We see clear effects. Decision quality improves, because participants can assess technological developments themselves. Collaboration with technical teams improves, since a shared language emerges. Participants gain speed in implementation, recognising connections faster and deciding more confidently. And perhaps most important, their perspective changes. They start seeing opportunities, business models, and markets they couldn't access before. The real return isn't only the investment you make today; it's the range of decisions you'll be able to make in a market that keeps changing.



Prof. Wolfgang Güttel
Dean
TU Wien Academy

Prof. Wolfgang H. Güttel is Full Professor of Leadership & Strategy at TU Wien (Technische Universität Wien) and Dean of the TU Wien Academy. His research focuses on leadership, strategic change, organizational learning, and innovation in complex environments. Combining academic research with extensive consulting and executive education experience, he helps organizations navigate transformation and develop sustainable leadership practices.

Your Schedule, Your Pace, Your MBA.



Athabasca University's Faculty of Business delivers innovative, accessible business education designed for working professionals across Canada and around the world. As a pioneer in online learning, AU has built a strong reputation for academic quality, flexibility, and student support.

Grounded in research excellence and industry relevance, we emphasise ethical leadership, strategic thinking, and real-world impact. Courses are designed to foster collaboration, critical analysis, and applied problem-solving. With experienced faculty, a diverse student community, and a commitment to accessibility, AU's Faculty of Business empowers professionals at every stage of their careers to advance with confidence without putting life on hold.

PROGRAMME PRESENTATION:

Athabasca University's online MBA for executives is designed for experienced

professionals ready to elevate their leadership impact and careers. Launched in 1994 as Canada's first fully online MBA, the programme combines decades of expertise in distance education with the highest academic standards, including AACSB accreditation.

Delivered in a fully asynchronous format, the MBA offers maximum flexibility. The curriculum strengthens strategic decision making, organisational leadership, and innovation capabilities, with a strong focus on real-world application.

With no GRE or GMAT requirement, the programme recognises professional achievement and managerial experience. AU's MBA empowers executives to sharpen their strategic edge, expand their networks, and drive meaningful change, on their own terms.

PROGRAMME INFO

Programme name	MBA for Executives
Programme format	Online, asynchronous
Specialisations	Streams: IT & Digital Strategy, or Strategy, Organisational Behaviour & Leadership, or Technology, Innovation & Operations, or Finance, Economics & Banking Stream, or Customisable Stream.
Language of instruction	English
Application deadlines	15 October, 15 March, 15 June
Starting dates	January, May, August
Accreditations	AACSB



*for additional information, please scan the QR code

CANADA

STUDENT BODY

Admission rate: 3:2
Male vs. Female ratio: 55:45
Age range: 23-50 years
Average age: 35 years
Degree background: Business – 10%; Non-business – 25%; Professional designations – 25%; Managerial experience – 40%
International students: 1%
International student diversity:
 North America: 1%

CAREERS

Salary increase after graduation: 40%
Industry placement post-graduation:
 Automotive/Engineering – 20%; Banking/Finance – 25%; Health/Pharma/Biotech – 15%; Other – 40%

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

There are 4 routes of entry into AU's MBA for executives*:

1. Standard entry
2. Accelerated entry
3. Professional designation holders
4. 8+ years of substantial managerial experience

Standard entry: Undergraduate Degree + 3 years of managerial experience.

Accelerated entry: Undergraduate Degree in business completed within the past 10 years + 3 years of managerial experience, and a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher for the last 60 credits taken.

Language tests: Applicable to international applicants applying to a graduate programme who have obtained a degree in a language other than English.

References: 3 professional references, or 2 professional references and 1 academic reference

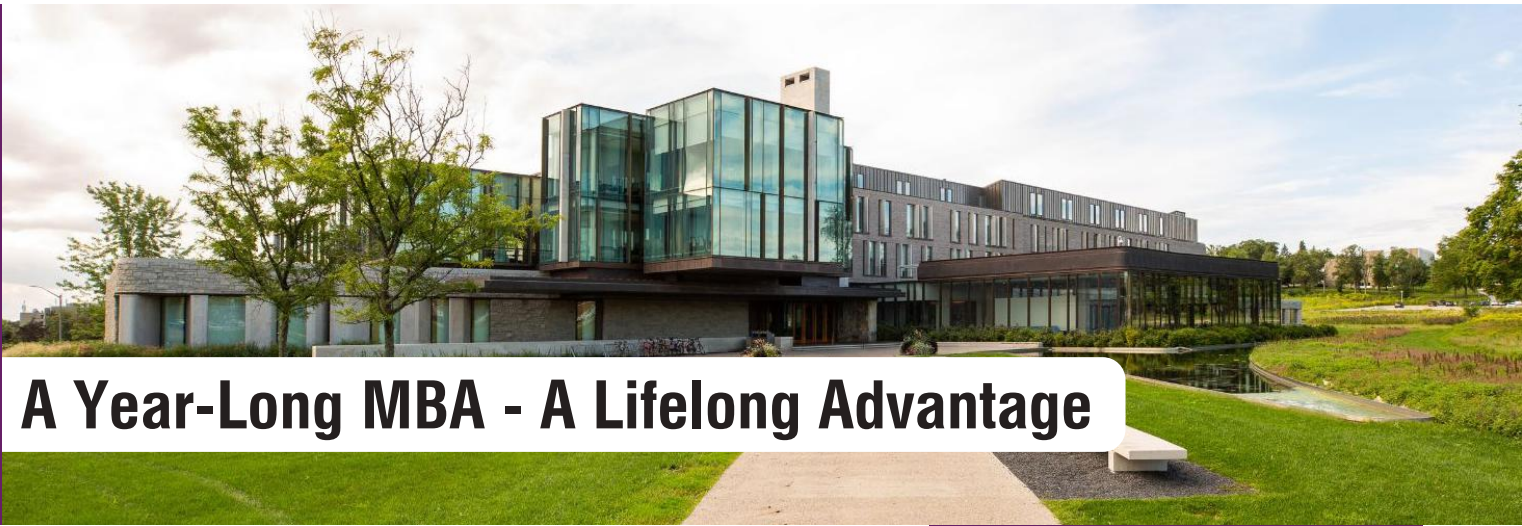
COSTS

Tuition fees: CAD 56,804* for standard entry
 CAD 36,303* for accelerated entry

* The estimated total will change depending on your elective choices and is subject to change.

CONTACTS

Name: Athabasca University,
 Faculty of Business
Email: fb-business@athabascau.ca
Telephone: (North America) 1-800-788-9041
 ext. 6189; (International) +01-780-675-6100
Website: www.athabascau.ca



A Year-Long MBA - A Lifelong Advantage



Ivey Business School at Western University develops leaders who think globally, act strategically, and address critical issues facing society through high-impact research and transformative learning experience.

PROGRAMME PRESENTATION

Our full-time MBA programme is an action-oriented learning experience designed to accelerate your success in the real world. You will be the decision maker asked to analyse the data and develop alternatives.

THE IVEY DIFFERENCE

At Ivey, we recognise that completing your MBA means time away from the workforce. That’s why our programme is designed in one year instead of two, maintaining a world-class intense curricular package that will help you to achieve your career goals and return to the workforce quickly.

CASE STUDY METHOD

We are the only case-based programme in Canada. We go beyond lecturing, employing over 300 cases per year and bringing real-world examples to the forefront of the class.

OUR COHORT

At Ivey, we attract exceptionally strong candidates from diverse backgrounds. We hold our faculty to the same high standards. Ivey’s full-time faculty members have a global scope, with over half holding international citizenship and representing 27 countries.

GLOBAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Beyond their diverse classroom experience, Ivey MBA students also have the opportunity to extend their learning with an international study trip and an international exchange programme.

PROGRAMME INFO

Programme name	MBA
Programme format	Full-time
Specialisations	Finance, Entrepreneurship, Marketing, Corporate Strategy & Leadership, International Management
Language of instruction	English
Application deadlines	4 September 2026, 2 November 2026
Starting dates	January 2027
Accreditations	EQUIS
Rankings	#1 MBA Program in Canada (Financial Times Global MBA Ranking 2026) #1 MBA Program in Canada for 9 years (Bloomberg Businessweek, 2014-19, 2022-25) #1 globally for Sector Diversity rank (Financial Times Global MBA Ranking 2026) #1 in Canada for Networking (Bloomberg Businessweek, 2024-25) #1 in Canada for Learning (Bloomberg Businessweek, 2024-25) #1 in Canada for: Alumni Network Rank, ESG and Net Zero Teaching, and Faculty with Doctorates (Financial Times Global MBA Ranking 2026)

OTHER STUDY LOCATIONS

Campuses	London, Ontario, Canada (FT MBA)
Study abroad	Costa Rica, Portugal, Silicon Valley, Dubai, Paris and Santiago

LONDON, CANADA

STUDENT BODY

Admission rate: Maximum enrolment 156
Male vs. Female ratio: 56:43
Age range: 23-36 years
Average age: 29 years
Degree background: Business – 42%; Engineering – 23%; Arts – 16%; Sciences – 19%
International student: 40%
International student diversity:
Canada: 38%
Central/ South America: 2%
India: 10%
China: 10%
Africa: 14%
Southeast Asia: 5%
Other: 6%

CAREERS

Companies that are recruiting from our MBA programme: CIBC, Deloitte, Scotiabank, Kearney, Bain & Company
Industry placement post-graduation:
Banking/Finance: 35%; Consulting: 24%; Technology management: 9%; Other: 32%

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

University degree: At least a Bachelor’s (three-year) degree
Aptitude tests:
GMAT /GRE- Required if applicant does not qualify for exemptions (www.ivey.ca/MBA)
Average GMAT score: 670 (original)
Language tests:
IELTS (min. required score): 7
TOEFL iBT (min. required score): 100
References: 2
Minimum work experience: 2 years

COSTS

Application fee: No fee
Tuition fees: CAD 84,915 Domestic
CAD 136,310 International
+ Ancillary Fees (~CAD 6200)
Scholarships: Merit-based scholarships. 80% receive an admission scholarship. CAD 10,000 – CAD 70,000
Specific fellowships include Forte Foundation and ROMBA.

CONTACTS

Name: Lindsay Lippmann
Email: llippmann@ivey.ca
Website: www.ivey.ca/mba

Practice Makes Leaders

How Ivey Business School's case-based approach turns every class into a management experience

What attracts aspiring managers today to business school and your MBA programme? Has there been any shift in the past two years?

Aspiring managers come because at Ivey they practice managing and leading every single day. Every class is a case, a live experience, an applied project, or some other management practice. Students learn concepts and apply them at the same time. They develop the ability to read complex situations and apply judgement in action. By doing all that together in teams and with classmates, they learn about collaboration and leadership at the same time.



Martha Maznevski
Associate Dean, Programmes
Ivey Business School

Martha Maznevski is the Associate Dean, Programmes and Professor of Organisational Behaviour at the Ivey Business School. She is an expert in global teams, global leadership, culture and identity, and empowering individual differences. Martha completed her PhD in Cross-Cultural Management at Ivey, then served as faculty at University of Virginia and IMD (Institute for Management Development) in Switzerland before returning to Ivey in 2016.

In the past two years, our main shift is taking advantage of technology to double down on the experience. We've added more action learning projects, leadership coaching, and live cases. Technology facilitates how students learn the concepts, and gives us access to even more data and information for putting into management practice.

How does your programme prepare executives for business leadership in a constantly disrupted world?

The workplace of the future is both more technology-enabled and also more human and social. It is important that graduates are prepared for both those things. Technology will drive and support intelligent analysis, clear strategic direction, and high-impact value creation. Our students learn how businesses use technology, including AI, and they learn to use the technology tools themselves for these management activities. At the same time wisdom, judgment, and human connection for collaboration will all become ever more important. Deep leadership development is central to our curriculum. The year kicks off with executive coaches working with learning teams and career coaches supporting personal development. Throughout the year students engage in workshops about resilience, character, and lifelong learning. They build community among themselves and with our alumni and partner organisations. Students experience how technology and humans come together to build powerful businesses and societies.

How does the programme support students pursuing entrepreneurial, non-profit, or non-traditional post-MBA paths?

MBA career paths are certainly becoming more diverse. Today's society is so complex, and institutions across sectors realise the important role MBA graduates can play in building and leading strong organisations with clear direction. Entrepreneurship is a required course and everyone has the option

to develop their own business idea through our Entrepreneurship Institute. Many of our action learning project partners are non-profit and non-traditional business organisations. We have a strong and active alumni network in entrepreneurship and in non-traditional career paths, and they actively support and mentor those currently in the programme.

How can MBA prospects choose between different types and formats of MBA programmes?

A full-time MBA is for students who really want to step up their career in a condensed time period. It is intense and deeply immersive, and allows students to truly transform themselves. Because our programme is all about learning and practising simultaneously, our culture is highly collaborative and community-oriented. We build the cohort carefully and support student activity from everyday class dialogue to long-term career journeys. Student government and clubs are extensive and partner with the school to enrich the community. Our strong programme culture is a key reason for the incredible strength of our alumni network.

In what ways have topics such as sustainability and climate change impacted the programme or the business school itself?

Our school's purpose is to inspire leaders for a sustainable and prosperous world, and our Building Sustainable Value centre is a clear global leader in sustainability research, practice, and education. We take a system-based approach, so climate change and environmental sustainability are connected with business, economic and social sustainability. Our approach helps leaders develop innovative solutions to complex problems and implement them, taking a long-term view. MBA students learn our system-based approach and are ready to lead the changes the world needs.

Your Next Step Is Here



At Smith School of Business, MBA students develop the leadership skills, confidence and global perspective needed to advance their careers. Beyond the classroom, Smith fosters a community where ideas are tested and perspectives are challenged, preparing professionals to make an immediate impact.

Career success is built into the Smith MBA experience through personalised coaching, employer connections, experiential learning, and lifelong support tailored to each student's goals. Students can also choose to complete an optional, paid, for-credit internship, extending the programme from 12

to 16 months while gaining valuable industry experience and expanding their professional network.

Ranking first in Canada for career services in the Financial Times Global MBA rankings for the sixth consecutive year reflects Smith's commitment to delivering an outstanding student experience and exceptional career outcomes. Smith alumni work across leading organisations in consulting, finance, technology, healthcare, and entrepreneurship worldwide. Supported by a collaborative learning environment and a global network, graduates are well-positioned for long-term career growth.

PROGRAMME INFO

Programme name	Smith Full-time MBA, Queen's University
Programme format	Full-time
Specialisations	Consulting, Digital Business, Entrepreneurship & Innovation, Finance, Management Analytics, Marketing & Sales
Language of instruction	English
Application deadlines	International application deadline: 30 September 2026
Starting dates	January 2027
Accreditations	AACSB, EQUIS
Rankings	#92 in the Financial Times Global MBA rankings. #1 in Canada for career services, career advancement, return on investment, and salary increase (2026)

OTHER STUDY LOCATIONS

Campuses	Kingston (Canada), Toronto (Canada)
Study abroad	As a student at Smith, you will have access to thousands of electives through international exchange. Smith offers more international exchange partnerships than any other business school in Canada: over 130 respected business schools in more than 45 regions.

KINGSTON, CANADA

STUDENT BODY

Male vs. Female ratio: 45:55 (Class of 2027)

Age range: 22-40 years

Average age: 28 years

Degree background: Business, Engineering, Economics, Technology, Science, Arts, Healthcare, Other

International students: 16% international students, 16% permanent residents, 68% domestic students (Class of 2027)

International student diversity: Bangladesh, Cameroon, China, India, Italy, Korea, Nigeria, Pakistan, Taiwan, UK (Class of 2027)

CAREERS

Salary increase after graduation: 96%

Companies that are recruiting from our MBA programme: Amazon, BCG, Deloitte, RBC,

Google, Bain & Company

Industry placement post-graduation:

Banking/Finance- 35%; Consulting- 15%; Health/Pharma/Biotech- 8%; Power/Utilities/Energy- 8%; Technology Management- 25%

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

University degree: Required

Aptitude tests:

GMAT- Required, waivers available

GRE- Required, waivers available

Executive Assessment- Required, waivers available

Language tests:

IELTS (min. required score)-7.0 (Academic)

TOEFL iBT (min. required score)-100 overall, minimum of 24 on speaking and writing

References: 2 professional references

Minimum work experience: 2 years

COSTS

Tuition fees: Domestic (Canadian): \$85,201 CAD; International: \$110,000 CAD

Scholarships: General entrance scholarships, Federau Kreele MBA Scholarship, Len Morrow MBA Scholarship, Liana Tesan Memorial Scholarship, Forté Scholarship, Roozen Family MBA Scholarship, Dean's MBA Admission Scholarships, Stephen J.R. Smith Scholarships, Ian and Maureen Dawson Scholarship, Jim Leech Scholarship, MBA 1980 Class Scholarship, MBA 1981 Entrance Scholarships, MBA 1988 and 1972 Scholarship, Scholarships for Black Students, Scholarships for Indigenous Students, Reaching Out MBA Scholarship.

CONTACTS

Name: Declan McCann

Email: Declan.McCann@queensu.ca

Website: smithqueens.com/mba



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- Product Management

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Course topics include:

- Machine Learning
- Fintech
- Investment Banking & Private Equity
- Financial Data Analytics
- Corporate Finance

[Click here](#) to book an application pre-assessment.

WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION | APPLIED LEARNING EXPERIENCES | LIMITLESS OPPORTUNITIES

Business Leaders. Built Here.

SMU Cox School of Business

The SMU Cox School of Business, located in Dallas, Texas, prepares ambitious professionals to lead in a rapidly changing global economy through rigorous academics, personalised support, and experiential learning. As part of Southern Methodist University, Cox combines the resources of a nationally recognised research university with the close-knit culture of a collaborative business school. Students benefit from direct access to one of the United States' fastest-growing business centres, engaging with corporate partners, executives, and a global alumni network while developing the analytical, leadership, and communication skills needed to drive organisational success.

PROGRAMME PRESENTATION

The STEM-designated Full-Time Two-Year MBA is a 21-month programme that blends a strong business foundation with extensive elective flexibility, allowing students to tailor their studies across disciplines including finance, consulting, business analytics, marketing, strategy, and entrepreneurship. Hands-on consulting projects, global learning opportunities, leadership development, and a summer internship prepare graduates to accelerate their careers, pursue new opportunities, and create lasting impact in business.

PROGRAMME INFO

Programme name	Full-Time Two-Year MBA
Programme format	Full-time
Specialisations	Accounting, Business Analytics, General Business, Finance, Finance: Corporate Finance, Finance: Energy Finance, Finance: Finance Honors Track, Finance: Investments, Information and Operations, Management, Marketing, Marketing: Brand Marketing, Marketing: Customer Analytics, Marketing: Customer Experience, Management Consulting, Management Consulting: Healthcare, Management Consulting: Human Capital, Management Consulting: Strategy, Management Consulting: Technology, Real Estate, Supply Chain and Operations Management, Strategy and Entrepreneurship
Language of instruction	English
Application deadlines	Tuesday, 6 October 2026 Tuesday, 5 January 2027 Tuesday, 2 March 2027 Tuesday, 20 April 2027
Starting dates	Fall 2026 - 23 August 2027
Accreditations	AACSB, SACSCOC
Rankings	#25 Best Business School and MBA Programmes in the US (Fortune, 2026); #26 Best Business School in the US (Bloomberg Businessweek, 2024); #30 Best MBA in the US (Fortune Education, 2025); #36 Best Full-Time MBA in the US (U.S. News and World Report, 2026)

OTHER STUDY LOCATIONS

Campuses	Dallas, United States
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DALLAS, USA

STUDENT BODY

Admission rate: 34% of all applicants were admitted

Male vs. Female ratio: 64:34

Age range: 23-41 years

Average age: 30 years

Degree background: Business – 42%; Arts & sciences – 40%; Engineering – 8%; Art – 4%; Communications – 1%; Education – 1%

International students: 20%

International student diversity:

Europe- 12%

North America- 4%

Central/South America: 20%

Asia and Oceania: 40%

Africa- 24%

CAREERS

Companies that are recruiting from our MBA programme: AT&T, Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan Chase, PepsiCo, McKesson

Industry placement post-graduation:

Banking/Finance- 29%; Consulting- 12%;

Technology Management- 26%; Other- 33%

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

University degree: Required

Aptitude tests: Not required

Language tests: Not required

References: 2 professional references

Minimum work experience: 2 years

COSTS

Application fee: No fee

Tuition fees: USD 126,134

Scholarships: FT MBA merit scholarships between 10% and 100%

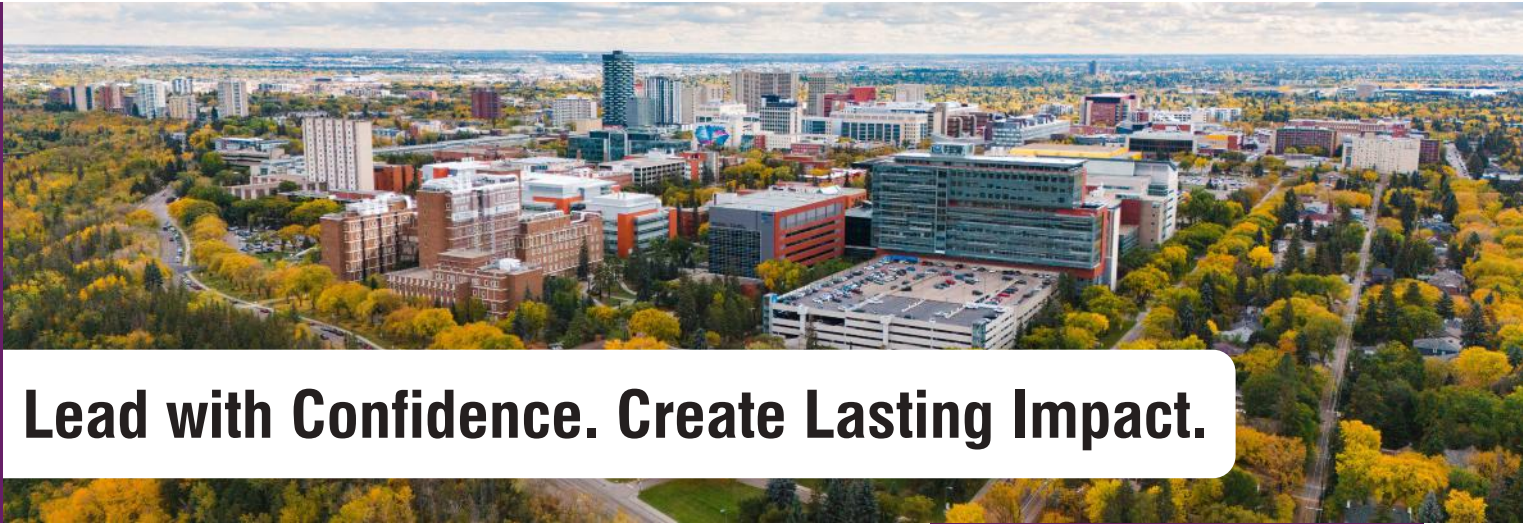
CONTACTS

Name: Jessica Lunce

Email: gradadmissions@smu.edu

Telephone: 214-768-6024

Website: www.smu.edu/cox/business-degrees/



Lead with Confidence. Create Lasting Impact.



Established in 1916, the Alberta School of Business has been developing leaders who make an impact across industries and communities for more than a century. As Canada’s longest continuously AACSB-accredited business school, an achievement earned by fewer than six percent of business schools worldwide, we deliver a world-class education grounded in academic excellence, innovative research and strong industry connections. As part of the University of Alberta, consistently ranked among Canada’s top four universities, students learn from internationally recognized faculty and join a global alumni network of more than 300,000 graduates.

PROGRAMME PRESENTATION

The UAlberta MBA prepares ambitious professionals to lead in an increasingly complex world. At the center of our program is an experiential learning curriculum where theory meets real-

world action. Students solve complex business challenges through client-facing consulting capstones, venture mentoring with the Creative Destruction Lab, and international study initiatives. Paired with this applied experience is 1-on-1 personalized career coaching tailored to your specific leadership trajectory and professional goals.

Located in Edmonton, Alberta’s capital and one of Canada’s fastest-growing cities, students benefit from a thriving entrepreneurial and technology ecosystem, direct access to industry partners and strong career outcomes. Combined with one of the lowest costs of living among major Canadian cities, Edmonton provides an excellent return on your educational investment. We offer flexible pathways tailored to your goals, including a 12-month Full-Time MBA, a Part-Time MBA, an accelerated FastTrack MBA for business graduates, and an Executive MBA (EMBA) program designed for senior leaders.

PROGRAMME INFO	
Programme name	MBA
Programme format	Full-Time, Part-Time, FastTrack, EMBA
Language of instruction	English
Application deadlines	International students: 1 September 2026 – 1 March 2027 Domestic students: 1 September 2026 – 1 May 2027
Starting dates	Fall 2027
Accreditations	AACSB
Rankings	#4 IN CANADA 2026 QS World University Rankings #6 IN CANADA 2026 Times Higher Education
OTHER STUDY LOCATIONS	
Study abroad	We have an impressive network of over 40 institutions spanning 25 countries across the world. www.ualberta.ca/en/business/international/index.html

EDMONTON, CANADA

STUDENT BODY

Male vs. Female ratio: 51:49
Age range: 26-35 years
Average age: 30 years
Degree background: Science – 32%; Business – 32%; Engineering – 11%; Arts – 7%; Other – 18%
International student: 50%
International student diversity:
Europe: 3%
Central/South America: 6%
Asia and Oceania: 53%
Africa: 38%

CAREERS

Industry placement post-graduation:
Banking/Finance: 14%; Government/Public sector/NGO : 25%; Strategy consulting: 19%; Other: 42%

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

University degree: Undergraduate degree from a recognised institution with a minimum grade point average of 3.0/4.0
Aptitude tests:
Not required
Language tests:
IELTS (min. required score): Overall band score of 7.0, with at least 6.0 on each test band
TOEFL iBT (min. required score): Overall score of at least 5.0, with no individual band score below 4.5
TOEFL iBT: Tests taken before January 21, 2026 (minimum required score): overall score of at least 100
Other language tests: Duolingo English Test: Overall score of 140, with no integrated sub-score below 120
References: 2 professional references
Minimum work experience: 2 years of full-time, post-graduate work experience

COSTS

Application fee: CAD 135
Tuition fees: 2026 Tuition Numbers:
Domestic Students: CAD 42,000
International Students: CAD 82,400
Scholarships: FT MBA Entrance Awards: CAD 5,000 – 15,000
FT and PT MBA In-Programme Scholarships: CAD 1,000 – 12,000

CONTACTS

Name: MBA Recruitment and Admissions
Email: busgrad@ualberta.ca
Telephone: Phone: 780.492.3946
Toll free: 1.866.492.7676
Website: uab.ca/mba



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Alberta School of Business
Master of Business Administration



AACSB
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Elevate Your Career with an MBA and Invest in Your Future



The Peter J. Tobin College of Business provides an education that is entrepreneurial, experiential, and global. As a St. John's University student, you can have it all: an education that broadens your mind, the chance to serve members of our community, the fun and excitement of New York City, and the inspiration and support you need for future success. Whether you want to advance in your current career or lay the foundation to start a new one, St. John's advanced degree programmes will challenge you to become the very best you can possibly be.

PROGRAMME PRESENTATION

Our 36-57 credit MBA programmes enable students to enrol in onsite or online courses. Explore our Tobin MBA, Online MBA, STEM MBA, and Accounting MBA. Our programmes can be taken in-person at our Queens or Manhattan campuses, or online. By pursuing an MBA at St. John's University, you gain the knowledge, skills, and connections needed to excel in a wide range of industries.

PROGRAMME INFO

Programme name	Tobin MBA, STEM MBA, and Accounting MBA
Programme format	Full-time and Part-Time, Online, in person (on our Queens or Manhattan campuses)
Specialisations	Tobin MBA offers 18 concentrations in: 1) Artificial Intelligence, 2) Business Analytics, 3) Educational Management, 4) Enterprise Risk Management, 5) Entrepreneurship, 6) Finance, 7) FinTech, 8) Healthcare Systems, 9) Information Systems, 10) Interdisciplinary Business, 11) International Business, 12) Marketing Analytics, 13) Marketing Management, 14) Risk and Financial Advisory, 15) Risk Management, 16) Strategic Management, 17) Sustainability, and 18) Taxation STEM MBA – students select 2 of 8 concentrations: 1) Artificial Intelligence, 2) Business Analytics, 3) Enterprise Risk Management, 4) Finance, 5) FinTech, 6) Information Systems, 7) Risk Management, and 8) Sustainability
Language of instruction	English
Application deadlines	Rolling admission Recommended deadline – 1 April for Fall Admission and 1 November for Spring admission
Starting dates	Fall 2026- September 2, 2027 Spring 2027- January 20, 2027 Fall 2027- TBD
Accreditations	Middle States Accreditation and AACSB

OTHER STUDY LOCATIONS

Campuses	Queens, New York City, USA Manhattan, New York City, USA
Study abroad	We do not have study abroad on the graduate instance, but we do have global destination coursework which allows students to study in various global locations for 1-2 weeks in a semester. Past locations include London, England, Rome, Italy, Paris, France, Dubai, UAE

NEW YORK CITY, USA

STUDENT BODY

Admission rate: 4:1 (applicants vs. admitted students)
Male vs. Female ratio: 42:58
Average age: 29 years

CAREERS

Companies that are recruiting from our MBA programme: PWC, Deloitte, EY, Protiviti, and AON

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

University degree: Bachelor's equivalent
Aptitude tests:
GMAT- Optional, minimum required score- 550
GRE- Optional, minimum required score- 550
GMAT equivalent
Language tests:
IELTS (min. required score)-6.5
TOEFL iBT (min. required score)-4
TOEFL (min. required score)-80
PTE (min. required score)-54
Other language tests-Duolingo-115
Cambridge-176
References: One reference letter from a professor or a professional
Minimum work experience: Not required, but 2 years of full-time experience is preferred

COSTS

Application fee: USD 70
*Application fee can be waived for candidates who attend an Access MBA event.
Tuition fees: Tuition varies per program from USD 1,000 to 1,720 per credit
Scholarships: Work Experience, Alumni Scholarship, Endowed Scholarships, External Scholarships, Graduate Assistantships and Fellowships, GSRM, and Zurich Fellowship for select programs

CONTACTS

Name: Office of Graduate Admission
Email: Tobingradnyc@stjohns.edu
Telephone: +1-718-990-1345
Website: www.stjohns.edu



A School Is More Than Just a Name

Match and connect with the right MBA



Launched by Advent Group in 2018, Unimy's mission is to help MBA candidates worldwide find and connect to the best-matching business and management programmes online.

Innovative by design, Unimy makes the most of Advent Group's 20+ years of human expertise in matching MBA candidates and business schools globally in person and online.

Coupled with AI, advanced technology, and research, Unimy provides highly personalised MBA selection and guidance services with insights beyond just the name of a school.

Because school culture matters

Your MBA experience is holistic and being in the right environment will help you thrive. Each business school has a unique organisational culture and spirit. The Unimy Culture Fit guides you to the schools that fit best with your values and preferred style.

After completing a five-minute survey, you will have your unique cultural profile. You

can then see how well the school of your choice aligns with your culture profile and we will also give you an additional list of three Top 100 Financial Times business schools that match the best.

Because rankings can be personal

Unimy has been revolutionising business education rankings with the launch of its 360° MBA Ranking in December 2023.

This is the first ranking that puts the MBA candidates' priorities at the heart, allowing them to rank schools by the criteria most important to them and setting priorities - career outcomes, diversity, faculty, acceptance rate, and school culture. This personalised approach makes the 360° MBA Ranking a truly unique resource - all the world's top 100 MBA programmes, ranked by you.

Because your dreams have a match

The choice of study destinations, delivery formats, and the variety of MBA programmes is abundant. This means you can dream big and fine-tune your MBA preferences.

Unimy's MBA Matching AI tool helps you identify 10 MBA programmes that closely match what you are looking for. Our consultants will guide you further to refine your list and arrange to meet directly with school representatives.

Because alumni stories inspire

Once in your shoes, MBA students and alumni provide insights into the business school experience and post-MBA growth.

MBA stories inspire, but most importantly they help you consider details in school selection you can't anticipate on your own. Peer learning is at the heart of the MBA experience. Student and alumni stories and connections bring peer insights before you start your MBA studies.

Because it's all about you

The MBA is a once-in-a-lifetime experience empowering your personal and professional growth and impact.

Match and connect with the right MBA at unimy.com

Greater Than Its Parts

What makes the MBA student experience?

Months of challenges, collaboration, and self-development, but a lifetime of transformation and memories: this is the MBA experience. Although it is worth exploring all of its individual components, whether it's the courses, networking, or diversity, its greatest strength lies elsewhere.

The value is wholistic – all aspects work together to offer a full, immersive, varied MBA journey. The MBA experience also enriches students through each school's unique organisational culture that builds on those of the city, region, and country.

Being essential, student experience is an important criterion for school selection. It can be sensed through contacts with university representatives, students and alumni; it can be felt during a campus visit and open days. Luckily, school culture can also be measured and compared with the research-based Unimy Cultural Fit. And yet, what makes the MBA student experience so important in the programme?

A window to innovation

From the very first study discussion, the MBA experience begins rewiring how students think, but not in isolation or behind textbooks. Instead, transformation happens through the demanding studies and diverse points of view shared in real time. When a former software engineer sits beside a healthcare administrator and a marketing director, all dissecting the same problem, the learning goes beyond any individual course or assignment. The MBA becomes a catalyst for something far more profound than just learning about business frameworks. It becomes a window into entirely different ways of solving problems, making decisions, and understanding markets.

Amid the intensity of the MBA, students may find themselves naturally gravitating toward classmates whose backgrounds complement their knowledge gaps. A former consultant might explain market entry strategies while learning about supply chain optimisation from an operations veteran. This creates a collaborative learning environment that no other classroom could replicate.

The curriculum's demanding pace works in a way that strengthens these connections rather than hindering them. Networks are built on genuine respect, collaboration, and support, far deeper than typical professional connections. As a result, there is the chance to develop unique intercultural exchanges and lasting relationships.

Cultural mix

Choosing an MBA programme or study destination is as much about the international diversity and networking as it is about the courses and projects. A late-night group work session can also mean a bonding experience over pizza, sharing stories from around the world.

The multicultural aspect turned out to be among the most valuable perks of IESE Business School for Prahlad Narasimhan Chari: *"The programme has around 450 students, split into six sections, each with around 75 students. The classroom is diverse, intense, and collaborative,"* highlights the Asian-born student doing his MBA in Spain. *"My team includes people from Brazil, Argentina, South*

Korea, England, Chile, and the US, and I've learned as much from them as I have from the curriculum."

Within the format of the MBA, whether on campus or elsewhere, different cultures always seep through, in all aspects of that word. On the one hand, there are the students' individual backgrounds, their professional experiences, communication styles, ideas, and dreams. At the same time, each institution has its own ways too. Some cultural layers mix to form entirely new and unique combinations, while other traditions stand firm. To this day, at Oxford University, where 60% of all graduate students are from outside the UK, there is a specific set of guidelines for wearing academic student gowns on special occasions and during exams.

Beyond the classroom

Both on campus and outside it, networking shapes much of the MBA student experience for participants. Extracurricular activities, clubs, and alumni events are just some of the unmissable opportunities for making connections, as well as learning from others. *"The most amazing resource at LBS is its alumni, so I drew on this as much as*

possible, meeting everyone whose job seemed interesting to me," says London Business School MBA alumna Dominique Carrie. *"I heard about my second internship, at Social Finance, through meeting with alumni too."*

Extracurricular activities don't simply complement the curriculum – they add to it in unexpected ways. Professional development workshops organised by student societies sometimes provide more context and examples for the theory covered in class.

Cultural festivals and celebrations can also become unlikely venues for new insights, partnerships, or networking. A Diwali (Hindu festival) celebration organised by a South Asian student association might feature discussions about emerging market opportunities. A networking dinner with Latin American students might offer perspectives on regional business practices. These social gatherings deepen friendships and expand global business awareness, creating connections that prove invaluable long after graduation.

The ripple effect

Because everything in an MBA programme is connected, these interwoven experiences

create lasting impact for students. Graduates often credit their career breakthrough not just to technical skills learned in class, but to a connection made during a guest lecture or extracurricular project, like Geraldine Alias, who completed her MBA from Harvard Business School (US), and was part of Harvard's Alumnae Circles – small groups of women who meet monthly to learn from and inspire each other. *"Advice from members of my Circle group has fundamentally helped me become a better person – a better friend, parent, work colleague, boss, wife, sister, and family member. They have impacted all facets of my life."*

This is precisely why the MBA experience proves bigger than the sum of its parts. The intense but rewarding curriculum provides the foundation, the diverse community offers perspectives, and the culture creates the environment where transformation happens. When these elements combine, they generate something no single component could achieve alone – a personal and professional journey of growth that extends far beyond any degree or qualification.



The Missing Metric

Top ranking criteria and how culture makes a difference

From a purely academic tool to a mass media opinion-making machine, MBA rankings have changed dramatically since 1977 when they were first invented. In the beginning it was the Carter Report, whose criteria were limited to the publications of faculties in academic journals. The Ladd & Lipset Survey, which started in the same year, examined how faculties ranked schools, but it wasn't until 1988 when BusinessWeek published its first ranking that the whole game of assessing, criticising, and wooing between business schools and big media really began.

Rankings are a helpful tool if used properly, as they contain a lot of valuable information for applicants, but as always, there is a drawback: they tend to overshadow more important factors, such as, for example, whether a school is really suitable for a candidate, whether it fits their career goals, and whether it is recognised by the applicant's preferred industry.

To this day, cultural fit between student and institution is rarely part of the methodology of mainstream rankings. While they excel at measuring quantifiable outcomes, they don't capture the intangible elements that determine whether a student will actually thrive in a particular environment – factors like teaching philosophy, peer collaboration, and institutional values.

To be able to navigate the world of rankings more objectively, start by learning how different publications get their results. What are the main criteria used and are they relevant to you at all?

Employment rate and career progression

Rankings typically measure employment rates three months after graduation, along with career progression metrics like promotions and job function changes. These numbers can be useful to MBA candidates as they reflect how well schools prepare students for the job market. After all, career advancement is one of their primary goals and measuring the extent to which programmes achieve it can be informative.

However, successful post-MBA employment can mean different things across regions and industries. Silicon Valley start-ups may value different metrics than traditional consulting firms. Keep in mind what your goals are in terms of global versus local employment when considering ranking data.

Salary increases and weighted salary

Comparing pre-MBA and post-MBA income and weighted salaries naturally appeals to prospective students as they associate these numbers with programme value and return on investment (ROI). In the Financial Times MBA Ranking, average post-MBA salaries and salary

increases three years after graduation (including value for money and career progress ranks) make up about 40% of the total score.

At the same time, cultural factors can influence salary expectations and career motivations. Nordic countries emphasise the work-life balance over pure income, while emerging markets may prioritise different career trajectories.

That's why more and more rankings now adjust their data according to purchasing power to create fairer comparisons, e.g., a USD 100,000 salary in New York differs vastly from the same amount in Mumbai.

Class and faculty diversity

Owing to the great value of having varied perspectives in class, diversity metrics have long been another important factor in MBA rankings. International representation, gender balance, and faculty diversity can all reflect what the classrooms of different schools look like. Watch out for the number of nationalities represented, the male-to-female ratio in class, and faculty credentials.

Still, cultural contexts can vary and the meaningful integration of different nationalities or genders might matter more to you than statistical achievements. The best programmes balance diverse representation with genuine inclusion and ensure that both lead to a better learning experience.

ROI and value for money

An extremely important factor to consider, return on investment data compares career benefits against total MBA costs, including tuition, living expenses, and opportunity costs of time out of the workforce. Rankings have different methodologies for this, from simple calculations to complex models that account for long-term career progress.

This metric addresses prospective students' fundamental question: is a particular programme worth it? However, ROI calculations rarely speak for cultural factors such as different career progression patterns, salary expectations, and each person's definition of success. If you prioritise job security over high salaries or if you value entrepreneurial opportunities over corporate work, you

may want to look at ROI in rankings more critically.

Culture fit

Organisational culture has been studied for years when it comes to corporate and work environments, but universities and business schools have their own unique values, common practices, and norms of behaviour too. Despite the importance of culture and the way it can impact the learning experience of students, it has not been measured by most of the mainstream MBA rankings.

Some MBA applicants never understand the importance of finding a business programme with the right cultural fit until they set foot on campus. How could a prospective student make the most of their studies or networking if they felt disconnected from the school environment? For example, they may

prefer building a friendly and relaxed relationship with professors, but the accepted norm at the school might call for more formal relations.

Now, as part of Unimy's 360° MBA Ranking, candidates have the opportunity to gain a deeper and more personal insight into the business schools that best fit them culturally. The 360° MBA Ranking lets you choose the criteria that matter most to you – including cultural fit – when selecting an MBA programme.

In the future, the schools that recognise and communicate their cultural strengths – alongside other achievements – will attract students who are not just statistically successful, but genuinely fulfilled by their educational experience. After all, the best MBA programme isn't necessarily the highest-ranked one; it's the one where you can thrive both academically and personally.



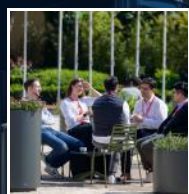


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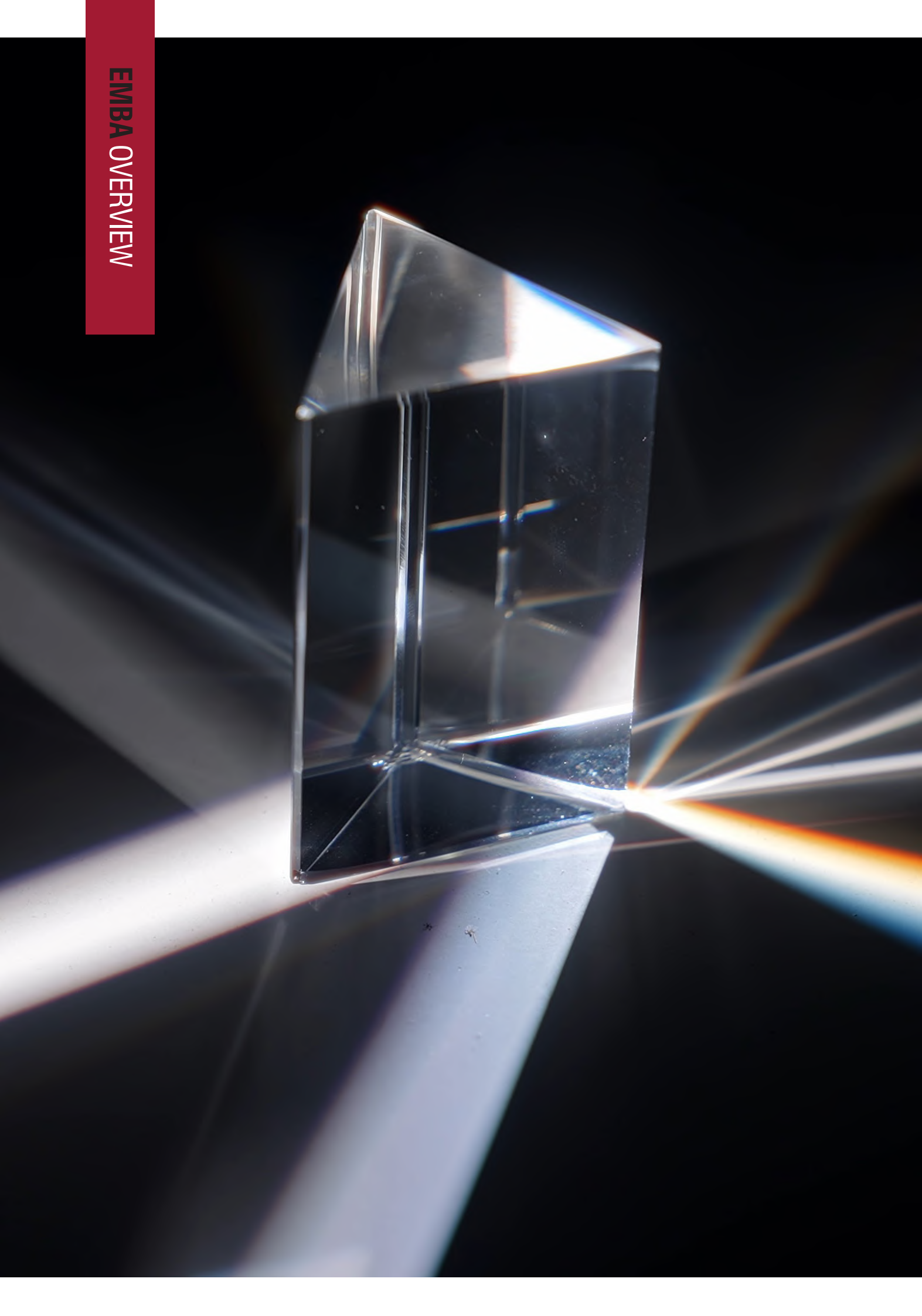
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Different Point of View

Why even the most experienced executives are turning to EMBA programmes

You have the experience. What are you missing?

You have spent years (or perhaps decades) making decisions under pressure, building teams, steering strategy through uncertainty. Your instincts are sharp; your track record is solid. So why, exactly, would you need to go back to school?

The honest answer might surprise you: it's not because you lack knowledge, but because of what you don't know you're missing. Amid geopolitical volatility, AI disruption, shifting consumer values, cross-border supply chain fragility, the most dangerous thing a leader can have is a single perspective, however excellent it is.

This is the insight that draws an increasing number of senior professionals to the Executive MBA: to deliberately and strategically expand how they see beyond the borders of their own expertise.

The power of the room

Ask alumni or current students about what makes an EMBA distinctive and their answer will almost certainly be about

the cohort. A typical programme brings together professionals with 10 to 20 years of experience spanning industries from healthcare to energy, from tech to financial services, from the public sector to family businesses. These are people who have real stakes in the discussions they are having.

Consider what happens when a supply chain director from a manufacturing firm sits next to a hospital administrator arguing about crisis management, while a fintech founder weighs in with a data-driven counterpoint. None of these people is wrong. Each is drawing on deep, legitimate expertise. And together, they arrive somewhere none of them could have reached alone.

"Recognise that an EMBA is both a commitment and an opportunity for profound transformation. Stay curious, embrace diverse perspectives, and apply your insights in real time," highlights Maher Said, Associate Professor of Economics and Academic Director of Executive MBA Programmes, NYU Stern School of Business (US).

This peer-to-peer dynamic is not incidental to the EMBA experience. It is central to it. Research consistently supports the link

between diverse inputs and better outcomes. According to McKinsey's landmark Diversity Matters Even More report, companies in the top quartile for gender and ethnic diversity are 39% more likely to outperform their peers financially. But diversity of perspective goes beyond demographics; it includes the diversity of professional experience, industry background, and functional expertise that an EMBA cohort provides.

From classroom to conference room by Monday

Here is what sets the EMBA apart from almost every other form of executive development: it takes place in parallel with your career. You do not put your work on pause to acquire new thinking. You bring your work into the learning, and you take the learning straight back to work.

This is the defining rhythm of the EMBA experience. A Friday session on behavioural economics in negotiation becomes the framework you test in a Tuesday supplier meeting. A Saturday workshop on cross-functional leadership changes how you structure your next team off-site. The classroom and the boardroom become part of the same feedback loop.

Drexel University LeBow College of Business's EMBA programme (US) puts it plainly: the structure is designed so that students can

take what they learn in the classroom on a Saturday and apply it in their organisation's Monday morning meeting.

The perspective you cannot buy elsewhere

One of the most frequently cited revelations among EMBA graduates is the discovery that the problem they thought was unique to their industry has already been solved in a completely different sector. A logistics executive realises that the patient flow models used in hospitals could revolutionise warehouse throughput. A media strategist discovers that pricing tactics from the airline industry map neatly onto subscription models for content.

This is what diverse cohorts enable. When your classmates work across functions – marketing, operations, finance, technology, legal affairs – and across sectors, the sum of what the group knows vastly exceeds what any one person, or even any one organisation, could contain. And because everyone in an EMBA cohort is actively working, these are not hypothetical exchanges. They are live case studies, drawn from real organisations, tested in real time.

“EMBA programmes aim to equip experienced management professionals striving to deepen their impact on an organisation. They usually place greater emphasis on strategic

leadership, decision-making, innovation, change agency, and management,” Arman Davtyan, Assistant Dean of Enrolment Management at the Pepperdine Graziadio Business School at Pepperdine University in California, says.

A leader who stops learning stops leading

There is a particular trap that success can set for experienced leaders: the belief that what brought you here can also take you somewhere new. In stable, predictable environments, deep expertise is an asset. But in the kind of volatile, interconnected world that today's executives navigate, the leaders who thrive are those who can absorb and act on perspectives that challenge, complicate, and enrich their own.

The EMBA is not about becoming a generalist. It is about becoming a more complete expert – one who understands how the decisions made in finance reverberate through operations, how cultural dynamics shape strategy implementation, and how a breakthrough from another industry might hold the key to your most persistent challenge.

You have spent years building expertise. But a leader who keeps learning keeps leading. The EMBA is how you make sure that is still you.



Connected at the Top

How the people around you change everything

You enrol in an Executive MBA course for the education. You stay for the relationships, and it is the relationships that last. Long after the case studies have faded and the frameworks have blurred into one another, what lingers is the web of connections built across boardrooms, group projects, and late-night study sessions, a network that continues to pay dividends for decades.

Networking is consistently cited as one of the most valued benefits of an Executive MBA. Unlike a conventional full-time programme, where students leave their careers to study, an EMBA brings together professionals who are actively working, leading teams, managing budgets, and navigating real-world challenges. The result is a cohort with something unusually valuable to offer one another: genuine experience, hard-won perspective, and immediate relevance.

A network built on substance

There is a big difference between collecting business cards at an industry event and building relationships inside an EMBA cohort. In the latter, the bonds are forged over months of shared pressure: collaborative presentations, heated debates over strategic frameworks, and the camaraderie that comes from tackling hard problems together.

Denise Carter, an alumna from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania

(US) EMBA, experienced this first-hand within weeks of starting the programme. When she had a pressing business question, the response from the broader Wharton community was almost immediate. As she put it: *“It was remarkable how quickly I was then put in contact with several alumni who had experience building the same types of companies as well as experience on the VC side.”*

This speed of access is not accidental. EMBA programmes are deliberately constructed to place high-calibre professionals from a wide range of industries and functions in close proximity. The diversity is a feature, not a coincidence and it creates a network of striking breadth and depth.

Opening doors

Beyond the enrichment of shared learning, an EMBA network has a very practical dimension: it opens doors. Career transitions, business partnerships, advisory roles, investment introductions, board positions – all these opportunities rarely arrive through job boards. They tend to emerge from conversations with people who know you and trust you.

This is not merely anecdotal. According to the Executive MBA Council’s 2024 survey, 53% of EMBA graduates moved into roles with greater responsibilities, and 41% received promotions either during or shortly after completing their programme. More than 70% of Cornell EMBA Metro NY graduates

experienced a promotion or a new career opportunity before they had even crossed the graduation stage.

Growth through others

The second dimension of EMBA networking is subtler, but arguably just as transformative: the intellectual and human enrichment that comes from sustained exposure to people who see the world differently.

Senior professionals often operate within well-defined industries and functional

domains. The EMBA classroom disrupts this. A classmate from the non-profit sector challenges your assumptions about motivation; a colleague from a family-run business in Latin America reframes your thinking on stakeholder management; a fellow student from manufacturing asks a question about strategy that no one in your usual circle would ever think to raise.

Angelina Jiang, an alumna of the LBS-Columbia EMBA-Global programme, captured this dimension clearly: *“I’m filling gaps in my professional knowledge by learning about disciplines and industries*

that I haven’t previously had exposure to and it’s such a privilege to learn from classmates across other sectors and industries.”

Professor Kevin Werbach of Wharton frames it succinctly: *“An EMBA programme is about everything beyond the content: the dynamic interactions with the faculty and other students, and the ways the classroom is only the starting point.”*

Making the most of your EMBA network

Networking does not take place automatically, even in the best-designed programmes. Here are a few principles that EMBA alumni consistently point to:

1. Start early and stay curious. The instinct of experienced professionals is to protect their time. Resist it. The first weeks of an EMBA are a rare window to connect with colleagues without the pressure of deliverables. Ask questions. Listen more than you speak. People remember those who are genuinely interested in them.

2. Give before you take. The most effective networkers are those who think first about what they can contribute. Share an introduction, a relevant article, a useful contact. The return is almost always proportionate to the generosity.

3. Maintain the relationship after graduation. An EMBA network is at its most powerful not in the weeks after graduation, but in the years that follow. A brief message to mark a former classmate’s promotion, a recommendation on LinkedIn, or an introduction made on someone’s behalf – these small acts add up into something significant over time.

4. Engage with the alumni community. Most leading EMBA programmes maintain robust alumni platforms, career services, and chapter events. These are not afterthoughts, but extensions of the programme itself. Use them.

In the end, an EMBA is both a credential and a community. The degree opens doors. The network keeps them open and continues to create new ones, long after the final exam has been written and the graduation photographs taken. For executives considering the commitment, this is perhaps the most compelling argument of all: the investment you make in an EMBA is also an investment in the people you will know for the rest of your career.





All Roads Lead to Rome

Choosing the Executive MBA format that fits your career and lifestyle

The Executive MBA was built for people who cannot press pause on their careers. But with so many programme formats now available – weekend, modular, blended, and global – the question is no longer simply whether to pursue one, but which structure suits your life. The right format can make the difference between thriving and merely surviving, so it pays to understand how each one is designed before you commit.

Weekend EMBA

The Weekend EMBA is one of the most popular formats for senior professionals who cannot step away from their careers during the week. Classes are held on Fridays, Saturdays, or across the full weekend, typically on a fortnightly basis. This rhythm allows participants to remain fully engaged in their roles from Monday to Thursday while dedicating their weekends to intensive study.

Cohorts tend to be highly international, with participants often travelling from across the country or even from abroad for each session. The format demands strong organisational skills and the support of both employers and families, but for those who can commit, the rewards are substantial.

“I am based in Zurich and commute to London for our EMBA class at the weekend – every

two weeks,” Sherif Khalifa, London Business School (UK) EMBA Class of 2024, said at the time of his studies. *“We’re just wrapping up our first term and I couldn’t help but reflect on how demanding the last four months have been and how much we have accomplished. If you’re truly passionate about pursuing an EMBA programme despite your already busy schedule, the balance can be achieved.”*

His experience shows that the weekend format works best when participants approach it with clear expectations about the pace of the programme and a genuine willingness to sacrifice personal time in exchange for professional and intellectual growth.

Modular EMBA

EMBA participants enrolled in modular programmes spend up to a week on campus at a time over a period of 15 to 22 months. Rather than attending classes every weekend, they gather for concentrated bursts of learning every four to six weeks. This structure enables participants to properly prepare for each module in advance and to apply new knowledge in their workplaces between sessions. The longer on-campus blocks also lend themselves to experiential learning, group projects, and the kind of immersive peer discussion that is harder to achieve in shorter sessions.

“The modular format really helps to balance

work, life, and study. That one long weekend every 4-6 weeks is surprisingly manageable and easy to plan around,” shares Rishi Kumar, Modular Executive MBA Class of 2027 at Bayes Business School (UK). *“You can really dive deep into the modules over that extended weekend. It also gives you a chance to spend quality time with the cohort, especially those who have travelled from all over the world to be here.”*

The modular EMBA at Bayes takes place over a long weekend (Friday-Monday), once a month, over the course of 24 months. This predictable flow makes it straightforward for participants and their employers to plan well in advance, reducing the scheduling conflicts that can otherwise arise with more frequent class commitments.

Blended EMBA

Blended EMBA programmes incorporate online elements into the classroom, giving executives even more freedom to fit the coursework into their schedules. They attract candidates who appreciate the flexibility of online learning but do not want to forgo networking and face-to-face meetings.

In a typical blended structure, participants complete a significant portion of their coursework remotely through recorded lectures, virtual seminars, and online case discussions. They come together on campus a handful of times per year for intensive residential modules. These residencies are

carefully designed to maximise the value of in-person time, focusing on team-based learning, presentations, and relationship-building activities that work best face to face. The blend of synchronous and asynchronous learning means participants can often study from anywhere in the world without taking extended leave from work.

Ledia Telhai, Global EMBA alumna from SKEMA Business School (France), is certain that despite the heavy load of the format, it is not only possible, but extremely valuable to dedicate time out of your life for it: *“I completed this programme during the busiest period of my career. If I could manage it, anyone with the determination to succeed can, no matter how demanding their schedule might be,”* she says.

The blended format, while demanding, is built around the real constraints of working professionals rather than asking them to reshape their lives entirely around the programme.

Global EMBA

Participants in global EMBA programmes typically get to spend time on campuses in different countries. Residencies might take place across hubs such as New York, London, Dubai, Shanghai, and São Paulo, exposing students to distinct markets and business cultures. Each location is chosen deliberately to illustrate specific aspects of the global economy. Local company visits,

guest speakers, and field projects are usually embedded into the curriculum to bring those lessons to life.

The format is also an opportunity for executives to test their time management abilities and to set strategic priorities. Because participants are in transit across time zones and away from their home offices for consecutive periods, they need strong support systems both at work and at home. Schools that offer global programmes typically build in structured academic advising, peer coaching, and wellness resources to help participants navigate these pressures.

“Between school, work, and personal obligations, staying focused and positive in an Executive MBA programme is a challenge, but it’s not impossible if you have the right mindset. When I initially began the Global Executive MBA programme, I had to immediately adjust the priorities in my life,” says Sara Lavi, Global Executive MBA Class of 2024 at Duke’s Fuqua School of Business (US).

Intercultural exposure is, for many alumni, one of the defining features of their EMBA course, and one that proves directly applicable to careers in multinational organisations.

Whichever road you take, the destination is the same: a sharper strategic mind, a stronger professional network, and the confidence that comes from proving to yourself and to others that you can lead at work and grow as a leader at the same time.



Worth Your While

How to build and measure the real return on your EMBA investment

Many senior professionals approach an EMBA with a sense that it will be worth it. The tuition is paid and the qualification is earned, and then comes the question: worth it by how much and by when? The conversation about return on investment (ROI) is an important one for every candidate to have with their organisations, with schools, and perhaps most crucially with themselves.

The true cost of an EMBA

An Executive MBA is a significant financial commitment. Tuition is the largest and most visible item on the list, and depending on the programme and institution, it can range from USD 40,000 to over USD 100,000. Add the registration fees and the cost of international travel, and the figure climbs further still.

Some of the costs are harder to quantify. Weekends and evenings claimed by coursework. The mental bandwidth demanded by simultaneous study and senior-level work. Employer relationships, too, require careful management: how you

communicate your commitment to the programme matters a lot.

There is also the question of opportunity cost. Time spent in class or on assignments is time not spent on other professional development or personal projects. The format you choose – weekend, modular, blended, or global – will shape the nature of these trade-offs considerably. A domestic weekend programme carries very different hidden costs to a global format with multiple international residencies.

Defining your return

Most candidates spend considerable time calculating what an EMBA will cost them. But you need to spend just as much on considering what you want in return to maximise your investment.

Returns tend to fall into three broad categories.

The first is career advancement. A promotion, a new role, a move into a different sector. For many candidates, this is the primary driver: a measurable step up within one to three years of graduation, accompanied by a meaningful

salary increase. The network that comes with an EMBA – peers, faculty, alumni – often proves as valuable in achieving that step as the qualification itself.

The second is business impact. For entrepreneurs and senior leaders driving change within organisations, the return may be less about title and more about capability: the skills to scale, restructure, or lead with greater credibility.

The third is personal development. Sharper thinking. Greater confidence. A clearer sense of direction, particularly for those at a mid-career crossroads.

“I didn’t embark on the EMBA to get a leadership position. I already had one,” says Viviane Joalland about the reasoning behind her Audencia Business School (France) course. “It was more about a challenge in the position I already had, and thinking about how to develop and adapt it, modernise my approaches, and set myself up for the next 15 years of my career.”

The intangible dividend

It is about more than the salary or career growth: there are advantages to the Executive MBA that most participants realise only after stepping into the programme. This is no reason to ignore financial scrutiny, but it is important to also account for non-financial value.

The most cited of these intangibles is the peer network. *“I’ve been all over the world and I always run into people [from Ivey] in Asia or Africa or South America,”* Ivey Business School (Canada) EMBA alumna Vasie Papadopoulos says. *“Having that camaraderie and commonality is really great because I feel like I’m part of a very successful large team.”*

An EMBA cohort is unlike most professional environments: a concentrated group of senior, high-achieving individuals from different industries, functions, and geographical areas, all operating at full intensity for 18 to 24 months. Relationships formed in that context have a particular strength. Business partnerships, board introductions, career pivots – many alumni point to a connection made during their programme as being the catalyst for an opportunity that came later.

There is also the signal the credential carries. An EMBA from an accredited institution travels across sectors and geographical regions. And then there is something harder still to name: the confidence that comes from proving to yourself that you could turn the challenge into an opportunity.

Calculating your break-even

To get a good sense of the returns that should follow, start with your total

investment: tuition, registration fees, travel, and residency costs. Don’t forget to make a realistic estimate of the indirect costs and opportunities you are setting aside for the duration of the programme.

Next, estimate the financial return you expect in the first year after graduation, whether due to a salary increase in a new role, additional revenue in your business, or a promotion. It is better to lean on the conservative side here, as optimistic projections rarely survive contact with reality.

Then divide the first number by the second. The result is your break-even point in years.

With a total investment of USD 80,000 set against an annual uplift of USD 20,000, it will take four years to break even. Employer sponsorship, even partial, compresses that figure significantly, which is why funding the investment is a decision worth taking.

Funding the investment

Employer sponsorship remains one of the most powerful options available. Full sponsorship is less common, but partial funding, e.g. tuition covered in exchange for a commitment to remain with the organisation, is negotiable at more companies than candidates assume. The 2025 EMBAC Student Exit Survey revealed that 30% of EMBA students received partial





sponsorship, representing a slight increase compared to previous years. Making that case internally is itself a leadership exercise, and one worth preparing for carefully.

Schools, meanwhile, also offer financial support. Scholarships, bursaries, and merit awards exist at most reputable institutions. It is always worth inquiring directly.

For those funding the investment personally, the options include loans, savings, and deferred income arrangements, sometimes structured across the duration of the programme. Hybrid models are also common: an employer covers tuition whilst the individual absorbs the cost of travel, accommodation, and residencies.

However you structure it, the funding model affects your ROI calculation directly. Factor it in before you make a commitment.

Setting realistic timelines

For most alumni, the first year after completing an EMBA is a period of consolidation and positioning rather than immediate financial reward. This is entirely normal.

The sector matters. In financial services and consulting, measurable returns tend

to appear relatively quickly. In the public sector, healthcare, or NGOs, the financial uplift may be slower or more modest, whilst the leadership impact is often immediate and substantial. Career switchers may face a short-term step sideways before the longer-term step up. Think of it as temporary recalibration.

“Although EMBA programmes can spark a career change, candidates should recognise that the process may take longer than anticipated,” according to MBA admissions consulting firm Stacy Blackman Consulting. *“The ROI on an EMBA typically takes longer compared with a full-time MBA. Candidates should anticipate incremental progress such as moving into broader responsibilities within their current firm before securing a complete industry or function change.”*

When it comes to ROI, try setting a three-year milestone and a five-year one. When the effects of the network, the credential, and the confidence built during the programme add up, results will also start accelerating over time.

The EMBA is not a sprint to a salary increase. It is a long-term investment in a longer career.



Executive Networking Events

- In-person meetings
- Alumni panel discussions
- Networking opportunities



How an EMBA Changes You

Learning through pressure, perspective, and exposure

Most people imagine business education in roughly the same way: lectures, presentations, classrooms, perhaps the occasional group project. An Executive MBA contains all those things, but the reality of the experience tends to surprise people once they are inside it.

This is partly because EMBA participants themselves are different.

These are not professionals at the beginning of their careers trying to imagine what leadership might look like one day. They are already responsible for teams, budgets, negotiations, and decisions that affect real organisations and real people. Many arrive with more than a decade of experience behind them. What they are looking for is rarely just knowledge. More often, they are looking for perspective – a sharper way of thinking, broader exposure, and the opportunity to step outside the habits of their own industry or company. That changes the nature of learning entirely.

The most valuable moments in an Executive MBA often happen when experienced professionals are pushed into unfamiliar territory: solving a problem outside their expertise, defending an idea in front of

equally experienced peers, or realising that someone from a completely different sector approaches leadership in a radically different way.

In that sense, an EMBA is less about returning to school and more about entering an environment designed to challenge how you already think.

Learning by doing

One of the first things many participants notice is how practical the learning feels. Business schools have increasingly moved away from management education as something purely theoretical. Instead, learning is often built around real business situations, live organisational challenges, consultancy projects, and decision making under pressure.

At London Business School (UK), Executive MBA participants work on projects connected to innovation, growth, and transformation. At IESE Business School (Spain), case-based discussions place participants in situations where they must analyse complex business problems, defend decisions, and challenge one another's assumptions.

What makes these environments powerful is not simply the content itself, but the tension inside the room. A strategy that sounds convincing from one perspective

may quickly unravel under questioning from someone with experience in another market or sector. Conversations become less about finding “the answer” and more about understanding trade-offs, ambiguity, and competing priorities.

For many participants, this is where the real learning begins. Leadership in practice rarely offers perfect information or clean solutions, and Executive MBA programmes increasingly reflect that reality.

Learning from other people

What EMBA alumni remember most is not so much the specific modules, but the people sitting next to them.

An Executive MBA classroom can bring together entrepreneurs, engineers, consultants, healthcare leaders, finance

executives, technology specialists, and managers from multinational companies, often all in the same cohort. The range of perspectives changes the atmosphere completely.

Herminia Ibarra, a Leadership expert and Charles Handy Professor of Organisational Behaviour at London Business School, describes this process as learning through “outsight”, i.e. the idea that people evolve by stepping into unfamiliar environments and encountering perspectives that disrupt their usual ways of thinking.

This idea is particularly relevant in an EMBA setting. The programme becomes a place where assumptions are quietly tested. A way of working that once felt universal suddenly reveals itself as industry-specific, cultural, or shaped by organisational habits rather than objective truth.

For many graduates, those relationships become one of the most enduring parts of the experience. In a reflection published by HEC Paris (France), EMBA alumnus Konstantin Artykhov described the experience this way: *“There are significant, deeply transformational changes I can see in myself as a professional and as a human being. Before the EMBA I tended to be chaotic and lacking a diversity of perspectives in my decision-making. Now, I feel much more confident, strategically minded, methodological, and open to diverse perspectives.”*

That shift appears consistently in alumni reflections across programmes. The degree changes not only what participants know, but often how they approach complexity, disagreement, and decision-making itself.

Learning through exposure

Many Executive MBA programmes also include international modules, global residencies, or study trips designed to expose participants to different markets and business cultures. At INSEAD (France), for example, global exposure is deeply embedded into Executive MBA courses through learning across multiple campuses and international environments.

A negotiation style that works comfortably in one culture may feel ineffective in another. Leadership expectations, communication norms, and approaches to decision-making can shift dramatically between regions. Exposure to those differences often forces participants to recognise how much of their own professional behaviour has been shaped by context.

Connell O’Leary, a Kellogg-Schulich EMBA graduate quoted by the Financial Times, described one of the unexpected outcomes of his programme as *“It really changed my perspective on the world.”* That broader perspective is increasingly central to Executive MBA learning, particularly as organisations operate across multiple markets, cultures, and economic realities.

Learning in real time

One of the defining characteristics of an Executive MBA is that participants usually continue working throughout the programme. Unlike full-time MBA students who step away from professional life, EMBA participants move constantly between classroom and workplace.

At HEC Paris, Executive MBA participants complete strategic projects built around real organisational challenges, combining analytical work with leadership and stakeholder management. Many schools



now design programmes specifically to encourage this immediate application of learning.

For participants, the experience can feel less like studying for the future and more like operating inside a continuous feedback loop between theory and practice. The pressure is real, particularly when balancing demanding careers with study, travel, and personal responsibilities. But that pressure is also part of what makes the learning stick.

Learning beyond business

Perhaps the biggest misconception about Executive MBA programmes is that they are mainly about technical business knowledge. Certainly, participants develop expertise in areas such as finance, strategy, and leadership. But many graduates describe the deeper impact differently.

They talk about becoming more comfortable with uncertainty. Better at listening. More aware of how they communicate under pressure. More capable of seeing situations from perspectives other than their own.

Some of the most important lessons emerge outside formal teaching entirely: during tense group projects, difficult discussions, moments of disagreement, or conversations after class where participants compare experiences openly and honestly. Over time, many become less focused on appearing certain and more interested in understanding complexity properly before acting.

An Executive MBA is demanding. The workload is intense, the balancing act can be exhausting, and the experience often pushes participants far outside their comfort zones. But that is also what gives the degree much of its value.

Because ultimately, the most meaningful learning in an Executive MBA comes from exposure: to different industries, different cultures, different ways of thinking, and sometimes even different versions of yourself.

“There are significant changes I can see in myself as a professional and as a human being. Before the EMBA I tended to be chaotic and lacking a diversity of perspectives. Now, I feel much more confident, strategically minded, methodological, and open.”

Konstantin Artykhov,
EMBA alumnus



The New Specialisations

What EMBA programmes are teaching now and why

The Executive MBA has always promised transformation. But transformation into what, exactly? For much of the qualification's history, the answer was somewhat broad: a more expansive perspective, a stronger network, a more strategic mind. Today, executives need more than that.

Organisations are not simply looking for leaders who can see the big picture. They want leaders who can read an ESG report or navigate a geopolitical risk. On top of that, they need to do so without outsourcing the thinking to a specialist below them. EMBA programmes are responding and specialisations are moving to the centre.

Why specialisations are gaining ground

The shift towards specialisations reflects who is now sitting in EMBA classrooms. Today's candidates typically arrive with a decade or more of work and even managerial experience. If you find yourself intrigued by the premise of an Executive MBA, you are likely to be a senior professional with well-developed instincts who is aware of what you need to grow.

Schools have responded by diversifying purely generalist programmes and introducing even more elective options and specialist tracks. In many cases, they are also redesigning their core curriculum around a particular area of focus that is forecast to grow in the future. The pressure to do so is coming from different directions: from candidates who make their EMBA picks by specialisation and from employers who want to see a clear return on their investment.

"I learned a lot about new sectors and how sustainability actually applies in different ways in energy, in finance, in investing, or in pharmaceuticals," Owen Bethell, IEMBA at the University of St. Gallen (Switzerland) summarised at the end of the course, *"and I learned to think about sustainability in a holistic sense."*

Where the demand is

Which specialisations are actually gaining ground?

Sustainability and ESG Leadership

What was once a single module in sustainability (often optional) has become a fully structured track at the better schools, covering climate

risk modelling and circular economy frameworks. Executives are now expected to make presentations on sustainability to boards, respond to investor queries, and align operations with regulatory frameworks that did not exist five years ago.

AI, Data, and Digital Transformation

This specialisation generates the most enquiries and business schools are racing to build it credibly. The goal is to understand what AI can and cannot do, how to evaluate outputs, and how to lead organisations through technological change while keeping

the human touch. Candidates from financial services, healthcare, and manufacturing are particularly active in this space, though the appetite cuts across sectors.

“With technology reshaping the way we do business, organisations are looking for leaders who can develop innovative business models and effectively implement enterprise-wide digital strategies,” says Saikat Chaudhuri, Faculty Director for the UC Berkeley Executive Programme in AI and Digital Strategy in the US.

Examples of programmes with similar specialisations include the Executive MBA

in Digital Transformation & Data Science at WU Executive Academy (Austria) and the Online Global Executive MBA with Artificial Intelligence at the University of Hertfordshire (UK).

Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Large Organisations

Intrapreneurship is also growing. More and more senior leaders are tasked with driving organic growth inside complex institutions. The methodologies that business schools have long taught when it comes to building ventures are ideal for this context. These types of specialist tracks often attract professionals who are already involved in innovation initiatives and are looking for the language and structure to match the project at hand.

Schools such as Imperial College Business School (UK) offer core modules in Corporate Innovation & Intrapreneurship, while others like TUM School of Management (Germany) have a dedicated EMBA in Innovation & Business Creation.

Healthcare Management and Life Sciences

Accelerated sharply by the pandemic, this track draws professionals from pharmaceuticals, medtech, hospital networks, and health policy – a sector that is short of experienced leaders precisely when it needs them most. The cohorts tend to be drawn almost entirely from healthcare, which creates excellent conditions for peer learning, which participants cite as the specialisation’s defining feature.

“The EMBA is a constant source of enrichment thanks to exchanges with other participants,” Paris-based Delphine Cozzone agrees. The EDHEC Business School (France) Executive MBA alumna has over 15 years of experience in the pharmaceutical sector. *“I learned so much from my teammates: their ways of working, handling complex situations, managing priorities, and leading teams.”*

Geopolitics, Risk, and Global Strategy

A generation ago, geopolitical literacy was the concern of foreign ministries and a handful of multinationals. Today, supply chain disruption, sanctions exposure, and the fracturing of trade relationships have made it a board-level preoccupation. A growing number of business schools are responding with tracks and subjects that equip senior leaders with leadership tools in a less predictable world.



They draw on political scientists and risk practitioners alongside the usual business faculty to tap into this expertise.

The TRIUM Global EMBA (NYU Stern/HEC Paris / London School of Economics and Political Science) is among the programmes most consistently associated with this specialisation. At LSE, students study international relations, conflict, and cooperation from political science and economics perspectives.

Choosing well

Knowing which specialisations exist is important, but knowing how to evaluate them honestly is crucial here.

The first question to ask is who actually teaches it. A sustainability track built around a dedicated research centre with active industry partnerships is a fundamentally different proposition from a sustainability module assembled from existing faculty and relabelled. Schools will rarely flag this distinction themselves, so it is worth asking directly. Who leads this track? What have they published or consulted on in the last three years? How much of the content is drawn from live cases?

The second question concerns format. A specialisation delivered entirely through lectures and case studies offers something different from one that embeds participants in a real organisational challenge or pairs

them with a practitioner mentor. Neither is necessarily better, but they suit different candidates. Executives who already have strong foundations may benefit more from more practical approaches, while those entering a new domain may need the theory first.

The third question is whether the specialisation connects to the school's broader research strengths. The best tracks feel integrated. A geopolitics seminar should make sense in the context of corporate strategy, while the data literacy built in an AI module should be applied in finance electives.

"I explored different programmes, some more healthcare-oriented and others more general. I had always heard about HEC (Paris)'s global reputation, its strong healthcare-related alumni network, and the diversity of its cohort. The programme structure and the specialisations were also key factors that convinced me to choose HEC," physician-turned-strategist Salima Hibat-Allah says about her choice of EMBA.

None of this is to suggest that candidates should approach the decision at the expense of instinct. The right programme is also, in the end, the one whose people and culture feel like the right fit. But instinct and rigour are not mutually exclusive and a little healthy scepticism about what is genuinely on offer is well placed.



Future-Fluent

Teaching executives to speak AI and think past it

What is the profile of a Global EMBA student and how does that change what happens in the classroom?

A Global EMBA participant is typically a senior professional, aged 36 to 45, with significant managerial responsibility and a strong

international outlook. Increasingly, we see profiles beyond the traditional consultant or engineer background: more technological, entrepreneurial, and diverse in geography, sector, function, and mindset.

This changes the classroom profoundly. GEMBA's are not students waiting to be taught in a conventional way. They arrive with real responsibilities, accustomed to facing complex decisions, and with a great deal to contribute. The classroom becomes a high-level forum where faculty, cases, and peers challenge one another. Participants test ideas against their own experience while gaining perspectives from industries, cultures, and corporate realities they may not know first-hand.

What do executives consistently underestimate about the Global EMBA experience before they start?

When people join the IESE GEMBA, they expect outstanding faculty and a strong global network. They get both. What they often underestimate is the depth of what we call "togetherness".

This is not simply about becoming close classmates or staying connected. It is about travelling together, sharing meals, evenings, and social moments. Discovering new cities and living through each module almost as a family. Participants learn with faculty,

classmates, guest speakers, and alumni and through interaction with the local business communities to which the programme exposes them. For many, this human dimension becomes one of the most powerful and lasting takeaways from the Global EMBA.

The Global Executive MBA spans locations and cultures. How does that shape the learning and how do you turn that into an asset rather than a logistical challenge?

The global format is not an accessory to the programme; it is central to the learning experience. In every destination, our goal is to facilitate genuine immersion into the local ecosystem: through company visits, conversations with entrepreneurs and executives, social and cultural activities, exposure to local business realities, and experience that could not be replicated elsewhere. All of this is curated first-hand by our team and enriched through the generous help of our alumni community.

Each module is deliberately different. Participants discover what it means to do business in distinct geographical regions, with different institutional contexts, cultures, opportunities, and constraints. This turns travel into pedagogy: the location is not a backdrop, but part of the curriculum. The logistics are complex, but the value lies in transforming complexity into learning.



Roser Marimon-Clos
Global Executive MBA Director
IESE Business School (Spain)

Roser leads the Global Executive MBA at IESE Business School, together with the programme's Academic Director. They work with faculty, participants, and the programme team to design a transformative learning journey for senior executives, connecting rigorous classroom learning with international immersion, practical relevance, and the realities of leading organisations worldwide.

How do you make sure the programme is genuinely relevant to what students are dealing with at work week to week?

This is essential for a senior executive MBA cohort, and we address it from several angles.

Firstly, through the balance between rigorous classroom work and direct exposure to real companies and executives. The case method is highly practical: participants diagnose situations, make decisions, and defend their reasoning. The programme also connects them with organisations around the world that face current challenges.

Secondly, the four defining pillars, i.e. Leadership, Digital & AI, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainability, give participants a practical framework for what they experience in their professional reality. Whether they are leading transformation, exploring new business models, integrating technology, or rethinking long-term impact, the programme gives them language, tools, and peer challenges they can

immediately take back to their organisations. The modular format reinforces this. Participants step away from work, then return to apply frameworks, test ideas, and bring new questions back. Learning becomes a cycle: reflect, apply, challenge, and refine.

Finally, many assignments connect with their own companies and professional realities, and the In-Company Project is the culmination: a real consulting or entrepreneurial project.

What does AI integration in the GEMBA experience mean in practice and how do you ensure it becomes something students use and think critically about?

AI is integrated into the Global EMBA at three levels. First, it is part of the content. Courses include cases and sessions on the impact of AI across sectors, functions, and business models.

Second, many speakers and companies share experiments, challenges, and success stories in applying AI to real business problems.

And third, AI is part of the learning methodology itself. We use AI-based simulations, AI-supported discussion forums, faculty digital twins, and cases or exercises where participants work with AI tools before deeper debate, as they increasingly do in real life. This shifts the conversation from whether AI matters to how it should be used, governed and questioned.

For us, AI is not a stand-alone topic. It is part of the executive toolkit and the learning environment. Participants experience AI as a co-pilot, a sparring partner, and a mirror that reveals the quality of their judgement.

There is a difference between teaching AI as a tool and developing executives who can lead organisations through AI-driven change. Which are you trying to do and how?

Our objective is the second. We want executives to understand AI tools, but the real challenge lies in preparing them to lead organisations through AI-driven transformation. This requires strategic judgement, ethical awareness, change capability, and the ability to ask better questions.

Executives need to understand what AI can and cannot do, where the risks lie and how its adoption affects people, processes, and decision-making. In the Global EMBA, AI is discussed as a leadership issue, not merely a technological one. The key question is not “Can we use AI?” but “How do we create value responsibly with AI?” Participants learn to evaluate opportunities, challenge assumptions, engage teams, and make decisions where technology evolves faster than organisations can adapt.

What do you expect of a GEMBA graduate today that you would not have expected five years ago?

Today’s Global EMBA graduate is expected to be much more active in shaping the learning journey and becoming a partner in the wider IESE experience. Participants no longer expect a predefined programme before returning to their “previous life”. They help co-create the experiential part of the programme, open doors to new ecosystems, bring opportunities from their networks, and engage with other IESE initiatives. This makes the programme more personalised, dynamic, and valuable. It reflects the type of leadership we want to develop: proactive, collaborative, globally minded, and able to create value beyond formal structures.





Summit or Sunrise

Choose which peak to climb or whether to forge an entirely new path

Executive success nowadays has as many different faces as there are individuals pursuing it, yet for many EMBA candidates, the corner office remains the coveted goal. While the narrative around career growth has shifted to celebrate different paths, the data tells a more traditional story: 40% of EMBA students receive a promotion during their programme and 55% report expanded responsibilities (2025 EMBAC Student Exit Survey).

The preferred path for senior professionals remains the one upward. But today's fast-paced, dynamic growth looks a lot different from the decades-long climb of previous generations. When business transformation happens so quickly, the EMBA has helped to unlock senior leadership roles that once required another decade of experience. For the modern executive seeking the C-suite, the question is rather how to make that ascent.

Upward momentum

Despite the proliferation of alternative career paths, roughly half of EMBA candidates enrol specifically to accelerate their careers within their current organisations, according to Stacy Blackman Consulting. This vertical advancement remains the most direct path to greater influence, compensation, and impact.

The financial returns clearly show why this path's appeal has not diminished. EMBA

graduates reported an average 17.5% increase in total compensation between the start and finish of the programme, according to EMBAC. The average salary and bonus rose from USD 192,644 to USD 226,428 over the course of the programme. At top-tier institutions, the gains can be even more significant.

Yet compensation alone does not explain the accelerator's enduring popularity. While organisations demand C-suite candidates with diverse skills, traditional career paths reward deep functional expertise. The EMBA resolves this tension by providing compressed, intensive exposure to disciplines executives rarely encounter in their day-to-day roles.

This often leads directly to opportunities for promotion. Participants who aim to reach executive ranks view the degree as a means to broaden their leadership skills while signalling their commitment to growth. The number of people reporting as C-suite executives jumped to 27%, up from 17% before the programme, according to INSEAD's (France) 2024 Employment Report. This growth occurred within eighteen months of graduation. An EMBA fundamentally shortens the timeline between middle management and an executive suite, often shaving years off traditional progression.

The credential itself also communicates credibility. It acts as evidence that an executive has invested in developing the multidimensional perspective required at senior levels.

Crossing industry lines

Advancement doesn't have to be vertical. Roughly 30% of EMBA candidates view the programme as a bridge to transition into adjacent industries or functions, according to Stacy Blackman Consulting. It involves roles that demand reinvention rather than progression.

"I was always sure I wanted to be a consultant," said Deepak Choudhary, who used the HEC Paris (France) Executive MBA to pivot from a nine-year career in oil and gas into a digital transformation consulting role at Boston Consulting Group. He explained that the programme gave him both the strategic language and confidence to reposition himself in a completely different sector. Choudhary credited the EMBA with *"facilitating the dramatic change in profession and sharpening the arc"* of his career.

These pivots succeed largely because they are intentional. The skills and confidence, and even the credential itself earned with an EMBA help to establish legitimacy in unfamiliar territory. Coursework provides fluency in new business models. Networks unlock access to sectors where the executive has no existing foothold.

What distinguishes successful pivots from career missteps is preparation. The executive who pivots effectively has identified which competencies transfer and which require a fresh perspective. The EMBA provides both a structured environment to acquire missing



capabilities and the credibility to convince stakeholders that the transition makes sense.

Multiple hats

A growing segment of EMBA graduates reject the premise that career identity requires a single focus. Instead, they combine executive positions with entrepreneurial ventures or move between operating responsibilities and thought leadership. Portfolio executives may command higher total compensation than single-role counterparts while maintaining autonomy. They diversify income streams and intellectual stimulation.

An Executive MBA programme can be beneficial for exactly what this model demands. It provides the confidence to navigate the unknown and networks substantial enough to generate new opportunities. Rochester-Bern Executive MBA alumni Philip Weis and Michael Mühlemann used connections formed during the programme to launch their own wealth management company together after graduation. Reflecting on entrepreneurship during the EMBA, they advised future students: *“You are presently in the best preparatory environment you can be in during your studies for such a step.”*

Of course, portfolio careers have their own challenges that traditional paths avoid. Managing several roles simultaneously means making difficult choices about

where to invest time. There’s also the risk of accepting roles that fragment attention without creating meaningful impact.

The EMBA prepares candidates for this complexity. Cohorts include executives, entrepreneurs, corporate leaders, and public sector officials, all with their own approaches to meaningful work. The education is highly experiential, with team consultancy projects, global study trips, and company collaboration. Students witness peers successfully managing multiplicity, making the portfolio career a thriving path.

Building something new

If you have that entrepreneurial impulse in you, you know it doesn’t disappear by itself or with seniority. It often intensifies with time. A significant portion of EMBA graduates channel their expertise into building ventures rather than climbing the career ladder. Some launch independent businesses, while others lead transformational initiatives within established organisations, as intrapreneurs.

Seasoned executives bring certain advantages: industry relationships, operational experience, access to capital. They have witnessed enough failures to avoid predictable mistakes and enough successes to recognise genuine opportunities. The EMBA accelerates this transition by providing formal frameworks for evaluating markets, structuring

deals, and managing growth. The cohort itself becomes a network of resources. Classmates may offer capital, expertise, or access that new ventures require. And the faculty is there to provide experienced perspectives on emerging business models, helping entrepreneurs refine their thinking before launching.

Choosing direction

Regardless of the chosen path, one capability distinguishes executives who thrive from those who plateau: adaptability: willingness to learn, unlearn, and relearn as circumstances shift. EMBA programmes cultivate this flexibility through diverse cohorts, real-time case application, and exposure to different operating models.

There is no universal right path, only the right path for each executive at a particular moment. An EMBA creates space to evaluate options and equips candidates with capabilities to pursue whichever direction they choose.

Degree of Transformation

How EMBA motivation is shifting and why adaptability is the ultimate executive skill

Why do senior business leaders join Executive MBA programmes and are there any recent shifts in motivation?

Senior business leaders typically pursue an Executive MBA to advance their career, expand and deepen their professional network, and capitalise on the opportunity for personal and professional reflection.

Most EMBA participants are moving into or already hold senior leadership roles. Yet, at a certain point, they realise that the skills and knowledge that had supported their career progression to date are no longer sufficient to lead on a broader scale. Their

their knowledge of all essential leadership topics to lead with confidence.

One recent shift in this regard has been the number of leaders who have experienced strong career progression in technical or scientific domains, and who now find themselves in leadership roles, often with limited training therein. An EMBA offers leadership insights, tools, and a strategic mindset to successfully combine technical expertise with management knowhow.

Another recent shift has been observed in networking expectations. Building a solid network, particularly within one's community and broader geographical region, has historically been a recurrent motivation for pursuing an EMBA. Today, the focus is on building and strengthening a global network. This has been observed in the increased interest in our International Executive MBA programme, which offers students a general management EMBA with a targeted global focus and international experience, as well as numerous opportunities to grow their network in several countries.

A further shift has been the increased interest in devoting more time to one's personal and professional development. Students in our EMBA programmes routinely cite self-reflection and significant personal growth as key takeaways.

Senior leaders also increasingly wish to upgrade their skill sets, particularly in areas such as digital transformation, data, and AI while gaining a global mindset to better navigate the complex, uncertain, international business environment. This represents a shift to a greater focus on critical thinking and decision making, but also to strengthening negotiation skills and executive presence.

In programmes such as our emba X programme, there has been a gradual yet clear shift regarding

participant motivation. The objective of climbing the corporate ladder and reaching the top is giving way to identifying how someone can have meaningful impact on their organisation and society at large while further expanding their knowledge, network, and mindset to do so.

What are some of the latest trends in career development and the skills most in demand?

With the exceedingly rapid pace at which the global business environment is evolving and the increasing importance of innovation, AI, and data management to name only a few, EMBA programmes now offer curricula focusing on both the fundamentals of business and technical literacy. Competence and confidence in both domains are essential for leaders.

An additional trend in career development which perhaps addresses the skills most in demand is the focus on critical and soft skills. Critical thinking, negotiations skills, self-leadership, leading with empathy, effective communication, executive presence, and emotional intelligence are not simply good to have, but key aspects of holistic, high-impact leadership.

Furthermore, as traditional linear career paths give way to more dynamic, non-linear trajectories, skills such as adaptability, effective collaboration, and stakeholder management across highly diverse seniority and skill levels are essential. The ability to learn, unlearn, and relearn, as we say in emba X, will be required.

Are there career services or coaching programmes for EMBA participants? What is the focus of these services?

EMBA programmes are routinely sought by experienced professionals navigating



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complex leadership and organisational challenges. As an EMBA is not only about knowledge acquisition alone, but also about transformation, coaching is what makes leadership transformation real.

Many EMBA participants find themselves at a pivotal point of career exploration. For this, personal development alongside academic training is essential. An integral element of our Executive MBA programmes is the PDP, or Personal Development Programme. Students find this exceedingly useful as it incites reflection on their career, their role as a leader and their personal development in a holistic sense. The PDP comprises coaching, career services, interview training, personal branding reviews, and an integrated vitality check.

Coaching and career services bridge the gap between a student's current challenges—team conflicts, organisational resistance, career decisions— and their longer career vision by creating space to reflect more, react

less, and align decisions with long-term goals rather than short-term pressures.

How does an EMBA contribute to personal development and building a life-long learning mindset?

An Executive MBA supports personal development by broadening perspectives, developing critical and soft skills, inciting motivation to explore different career options, and to look more closely at what could be further down the line. Participants also experience significant personal growth through valuable exchanges with their cohort and expanded network, challenging long-held views and opening the door to enhanced open-mindedness and unexplored opportunities. An EMBA leads students out of their comfort zone into one of personal and professional discovery.

The intensity of balancing work and study also builds discipline and curiosity, while

feedback from peers and faculty fosters continuous improvement. Over time, this leads to greater adaptability and enhanced curiosity, often resulting in the motivation to learn throughout one's career and beyond.

What EMBA or executive education opportunities can springboard women aspiring to leadership growth?

Whether due to family constraints, financial barriers resulting from ongoing gender pay gaps, or lower representation in senior leadership roles, women are consistently under-represented in EMBA cohorts. For those who do participate, however, an EMBA can exert a significant impact on women's leadership growth and career progression.

An EMBA provides a platform for senior-level peers and executives to learn from and challenge each other through new, diverse perspectives and ongoing interaction, otherwise quite challenging to achieve in corporate settings. An EMBA allows students to strengthen strategic thinking, executive presence, and confidence in one's competencies and leadership. It is precisely the goal of gaining such confidence that female EMBA candidates often cite as their greatest motivator for joining an EMBA programme. This inevitably results in substantial leadership growth and personal development and, when combined with employer support and recognition of an EMBA as readiness for increased responsibility, career progression follows.

Joining an EMBA programme brings immediate value to the participant's current employer. How can companies support their key talent for EMBA studies?

Companies who recognise the value of an EMBA and proactively support top talent during their EMBA pursuits ultimately foster a win-win endeavour, benefiting from the academic knowledge, strengthened leadership skills, and new perspectives gained by the employee and subsequently brought into the organisation.

An EMBA, on top of a very demanding job and family responsibilities, represents an intense period personally, professionally and financially. Hence, companies offering their EMBA candidates the time, financial contribution and upper management commitment to their development demonstrate clear signs of support for their top talent.



Executive Presence in a Global Career

What high-potential leaders need beyond technical expertise



Monika Matuszewska
Founder and
Certified Executive Coach
LaMatu

Monika Matuszewska is a certified executive coach, facilitator, and founder of LaMatu, an Amsterdam-based consultancy specialising in career transitions, leadership development, and intercultural communication. Monika's academic background includes four Master's degrees, including CEMS Master's in International Management, reflecting a strong foundation in international business, management, and cultural studies. Before founding LaMatu, she built a 16-year international corporate career across multinational organisations including IBM, Philips, IKEA, Nikon, and L'Oréal.

For many Executive MBA candidates, the decision to pursue an EMBA comes at a pivotal moment. You may already have a strong track record, deep functional expertise, and years of management experience. You may be leading teams, influencing stakeholders, and operating across markets. Yet, at a certain level, career progression is shaped by more than performance alone.

Senior leadership requires visibility, credibility, and the ability to communicate with impact across different cultures, functions, and levels of authority. This is where executive presence becomes a critical success factor.

What is executive presence

Executive presence is often misunderstood as charisma, confidence, or personal style. In reality, it is more nuanced. It is the way people experience your leadership before, during, and after important interactions. It shows in how you enter a room, handle high-stake conversations, respond under pressure, conduct negotiations, manage conflict, and make decisions. In international environments, it also depends on your ability to read context,

adapt your communication style, and remain clear without losing rapport.

For EMBA candidates, this matters because the programme itself often becomes a transition point. Many participants are preparing for a larger mandate: a move from specialist to general manager, from local to regional responsibility, from operational leadership to strategic influence. Technical knowledge may have brought you this far. The next stage often requires a more conscious leadership identity.

The building blocks

A strong executive presence starts with **clarity**. This clarity is important for leaders to articulate well what they stand for, the value they bring and how they contribute to the organisation's strategic direction. It is particularly important in boardroom presentations, stakeholder meetings, appraisal meetings, and interviews for senior roles. Without it, even highly capable professionals can sound hesitant, overly detailed, or reactive. With it, they communicate with greater authority, inspire confidence, and create stronger alignment around their ideas.

The second element is **communication**. Global leaders need to translate complexity

into meaning. They must be able to speak to different audiences: senior executives, technical experts, clients, investors, employees, and peers from different cultural backgrounds. The ability to influence across all those levels requires more than fluency in English. It requires cultural intelligence, emotional awareness, and the ability to adjust tone, level of detail, and decision-making language, depending on the situation.

The third element is **confidence under pressure**.

Executive presence becomes visible when conversations are difficult. A senior leader may need to challenge a decision, give direct feedback, manage conflict, ask for resources, or hold a team steady through uncertainty. Confidence in these moments does not mean being loud or dominant. It means staying grounded, listening well, choosing words carefully, and holding your position with professional composure.

The fourth element is **visibility**. Many high-potential professionals believe that good work should speak for itself. In senior leadership, this is rarely enough. Visibility is not self-promotion in a superficial sense. It is the practice of making your contribution, thinking, and leadership potential visible to the right people in the right way. This includes how you present your achievements, build strategic relationships, contribute in meetings, and position yourself for future opportunities.

Finally, executive presence in a global career requires **intercultural sensitivity**. Leadership behaviours are interpreted differently across cultures. Directness, humility, decisiveness,

consensus-building, emotional expression, and hierarchy do not carry the same meaning everywhere. International leaders need to understand these differences without reducing people to stereotypes. The most effective leaders develop range: they know how to remain themselves while expanding the ways in which they can connect, influence, and lead.

The EMBA as a laboratory

An Executive MBA can be a powerful environment in which to develop this range. It brings together professionals with different industries, nationalities, leadership styles, and ambitions. The classroom becomes a laboratory for observing yourself in relation to others. How do you speak up? How do you listen? How do you handle strong opinions? How do you build credibility with people who do not share your background, language, or assumptions?

For candidates considering an EMBA, executive presence is worth developing before, during, and after the programme. It can strengthen your admissions interviews, your contribution in class, your networking, your leadership opportunities, and your post-EMBA career transition.

The invitation is simple: do not wait until you receive a larger title to start showing up as a more intentional leader. Begin by noticing how you communicate, how you are perceived, and where your leadership presence can become clearer, calmer and more strategic. In a global career, expertise opens doors. Executive presence helps you walk through them with impact.



Still Learning, Still Leading

**The best executives never stop developing;
the EMBA is built for them**

Career transformation is often associated with moving industries or climbing to the C-suite. How has your understanding of what “transformation” means for senior professionals changed?

For a long time, career transformation was viewed as moving up: earning a promotion,



Mona Dhillon
Provost and EVP
Hult International Business School

Mona Dhillon is Provost and Executive Vice President at Hult International Business School, where she leads academic strategy across the school's Master's MBA and DBA programmes in Boston, London, Dubai, and online. With a career spanning business education, curriculum innovation, and organisational leadership, she is responsible for ensuring Hult graduates are equipped to lead in a rapidly changing world of work, including the launch of Hult's new AI Lab, a credit-bearing component embedded across its postgraduate degrees.

changing industries, or reaching the C-suite. I think that has become too narrow a definition. Today, transformation is less about changing your title and more about changing your capacity to lead.

Senior professionals are navigating unprecedented complexity while simultaneously helping their organisations adapt to technological disruption, shifting workforce expectations, and global uncertainty. This requires more than technical expertise. It demands the judgement to make decisions without perfect information, the adaptability to keep learning, and the ability to lead others through continuous change. Increasingly, the most significant career transformation is not to change roles – it is to become a different kind of leader.

How do you ensure the EMBA programme keeps pace with (or stays ahead of) the environments your students are operating in?

The assumption behind the question is that a curriculum can somehow stay ahead of the world. I'm not sure if that is the right goal. The world changes too quickly. Our job is to ensure our students can lead confidently in environments none of us can fully predict.

We do that in two ways. First, we stay deeply connected to practice. Our faculty are experienced executives who continue to work with organisations facing the same strategic, technological, and leadership

challenges as our participants. That keeps our curriculum grounded in what is happening now, not what happened five years ago.

Second, we design the programme to develop capabilities that endure beyond any single trend. Technologies, industries, and business models will continue to evolve, but the ability to exercise sound judgement, lead through uncertainty, ask better questions, and make decisions with incomplete information will always matter. If we can strengthen those capabilities while continuously refreshing what we teach, our graduates will stay ahead, regardless of how the environment changes.

Where do you see the biggest gap between what organisations need from leaders today and what education for executives has traditionally delivered?

The biggest gap is that organisations need leaders who can exercise sound judgement in situations where there are no clear answers, yet executive education has traditionally been very good at teaching people how to analyse problems that already have solutions.

Technical expertise and analytical capability remain essential, but they are no longer enough. Today's leaders must make consequential decisions with incomplete information, navigate competing priorities, lead through ambiguity, and bring others

with them. Those are fundamentally human capabilities.

That's why education programmes for executives must move beyond knowledge transfer. Frameworks and models provide a common language, but leadership is developed through application, reflection, and experience. At Hult, we immerse executives in authentic business challenges where they must make decisions, collaborate under pressure, and learn from the consequences. Our goal is not simply to expand what leaders know. It is to strengthen how they think, how they exercise judgement, and how they lead when certainty is not available.

How has Hult approached the integration of AI into its programmes, and what do you want students to take away from that experience?

The conversation with employers has changed. It is no longer enough for senior leaders to understand AI. They need to demonstrate how they use it to improve decision making, increase productivity,

and create value, while exercising the judgement as to where human insight remains indispensable. This is the capability organisations are increasingly looking for, and it is the capability we set out to develop.

At Hult, AI is woven into the fabric of EMBA education rather than treated as a standalone subject. Students use AI across the curriculum to solve authentic business challenges, evaluate strategic options, and improve how they lead and make decisions. For our EMBA participants, the feedback loop is immediate. Ideas explored in the classroom on the weekend are applied in their organisations the following week, and that experience is brought back into the next discussion. They are not preparing for an AI-enabled workplace; they are already leading in one. Our role is to help them become more effective leaders by combining the power of AI with the judgement, ethical perspective, and critical thinking that only people can provide.

With McKinsey's latest State of AI survey reporting that 88 percent of organisations are regularly using AI in at least one business function, that capability is no longer a

specialism. It is a baseline leadership expectation.

How do you expect this approach to AI to show up in students' careers in the years ahead?

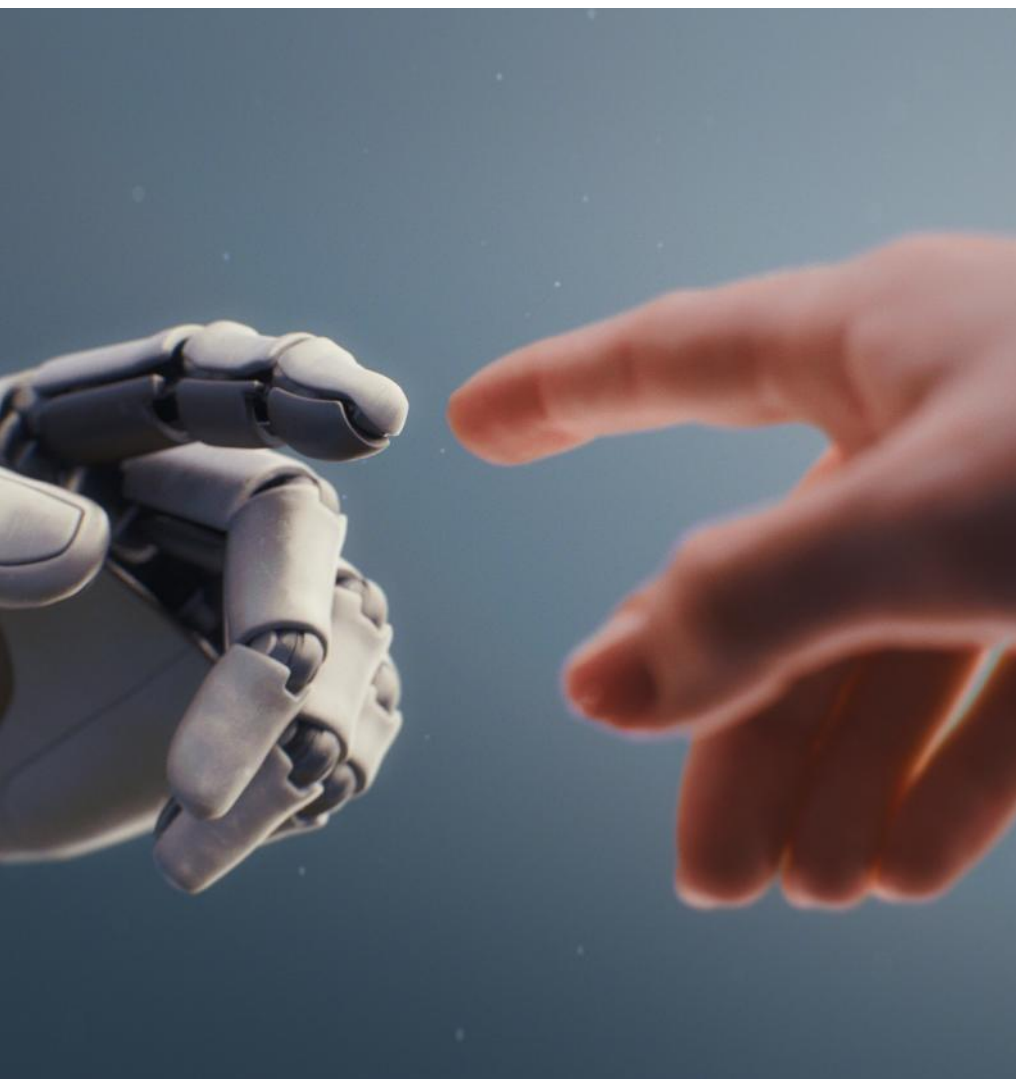
For our Executive MBA students, the impact starts immediately. They do not graduate and then begin applying what they have learned. They bring new ideas into their organisations every week. They experiment, refine, and see the results in real time. That is one of the advantages of executive education: learning and leadership happen simultaneously.

Over the longer term, I think the greatest advantage will not be mastery of any particular AI tool. Those tools will continue to evolve. The lasting value is developing the confidence and judgement to integrate new technologies into decision making without losing sight of the human dimensions of leadership. The executives who will stand out will not be those who know the most about AI. They will be the ones who know how to use it to make better decisions, build stronger teams, and create greater value. Those capabilities will remain relevant long after today's technologies have changed.

What qualities will separate strong executives from exceptional ones over the next decade, and why is a Hult EMBA the right place to develop them?

As AI makes knowledge and technical expertise increasingly accessible, the qualities that will distinguish exceptional executives become even more human. The ability to navigate complexity without oversimplifying it, lead people through change they did not choose, and exercise sound judgement when certainty is impossible – those are the capabilities that will define great leadership. They are not learned by memorising frameworks. They are developed through experience, reflection, and repeated exposure to complex, real-world decisions.

That is why the EMBA matters. Leadership cannot be mastered through case studies alone. It is developed by leading through uncertainty, reflecting on those experiences with exceptional peers and faculty, and returning to work with greater clarity, confidence, and judgement. The best education for executives doesn't take leaders away from the real world – it helps them become better leaders while they are living in it.





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Before You Begin

A practical guide to navigating EMBA admissions

The Executive MBA application process asks something difficult from candidates: to answer the questions “who have you become?” and “why does that matter now?”.

For leaders who have spent a decade or more building expertise, it’s not often that they are asked to step back and look at their career as a whole. The EMBA admissions process is, in that sense, a first act of the programme itself.

Understanding what that process requires and what admissions committees are looking for in an application is the best preparation any candidate can start with.

More than a track record

Executive-level programmes typically look for candidates who are ten to twenty years into their career. They already have management experience, real accountability, and an organisation that supports their decision to pursue the degree. They are not yet at the destination, which is precisely what makes them interesting to admissions teams.

Schools are not evaluating potential, as they might with a younger MBA candidate. They are evaluating impact. How have you led and what have you learned from getting things wrong? How clear are you on where you want to go next? A strong EMBA application

reveals a leader in motion rather than simply documenting a career.

This is what should determine the approach to the whole application. It is not enough to write an essay that blindly lists achievements. What admissions teams are reading for, beneath the titles and the track record, is self-awareness – the ability to look at your own leadership and articulate it with both confidence and humility.

“Take time to be thoughtful and be your authentic self. We want to really get to know you throughout the application process,” says Barbara Craft, Director of Admissions for the Wharton School (US) MBA Programme for Executives.

Getting the green light

Unlike a full-time MBA, the EMBA is designed to be completed without leaving work. That is one of its defining strengths and one of its defining characteristics. For most candidates, attending means negotiating a sustained commitment with their employer: protected time and flexibility with the schedule. The employer should understand that weekends or intensive blocks will periodically take priority.

Start that conversation early. An employer who knows what the programme involves and actively supports it makes the experience significantly more manageable. More than

that, it signals to admissions teams that the candidate's leadership is valued enough for an organisation to flex around it.

"Be transparent about the requirements of the programme and how your studies will affect your day-to-day work life," advises Abdulaziz Alayed, Class of 2024 at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business (US). *"Also, be sure to emphasise both the value of a Booth MBA and the skills and knowledge you will bring to your company as a Booth graduate. And start the dialogue early."*

Three chances to impress

The EMBA application typically has three main components: essays, references, and an interview.

When it comes to essays, it is vital not to treat them as an extended CV, moving mechanically through achievements and titles. Instead, admissions teams are looking for evidence of how you think, lead, and reflect. An essay that reveals insight into a leadership challenge, including what went wrong and what you learned, will consistently outperform one that simply documents success.

References carry significant weight as well. It's always better to ask a direct manager or close collaborator who can speak specifically about your leadership impact and growth. This will make a stronger case than a reference from a prestigious name who does not know you well.

"I'd advise applicants to connect with their recommender as soon as possible and have a conversation to remind them of your contributions to your company so that they can write you a great letter of recommendation," highlights Wendy Tsung, Assistant Dean, MBA for Executives programme at Yale School of Management (US).

The interview, where required, is typically less about credentials; those are already on the page. It is more about clarity and self-awareness. Admissions teams are evaluating whether this is someone who will contribute meaningfully to a class of senior professionals and peers.

A helping hand

Working with an admissions consultant is a legitimate and widely-used way to strengthen an EMBA application. A good consultant helps candidates find their

narrative, sharpen their essays, and prepare for interviews.

AI writing tools are similarly useful for drafting and refining, but be careful: an essay that no longer sounds like the person who will walk into the interview is a liability, not an asset. Admissions teams read hundreds of applications. They notice when the voice on paper doesn't quite match the person in the room.

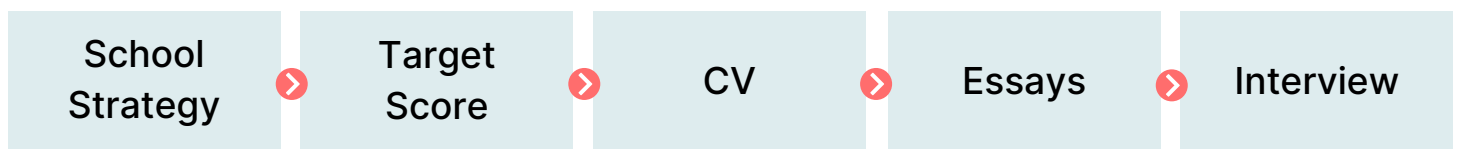
The EMBA application is one of the few moments in a senior career that asks for reflection. It is not a performance review, not a board presentation, but an honest account of who you are as a leader and where you want to go next.



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Don't Go It Alone

An admissions expert on what it takes to secure a place on a top EMBA programme

EMBA candidates are very different applicants from traditional MBA candidates: they are typically mid-career, manage teams and may be sponsored by an employer. How does that shape the story they need to tell in their application?

I generally meet two types of EMBA candidates.

The first is looking to advance their career by rising to a C-Suite or senior executive position. That candidate has a fairly straightforward story that is usually confirmed by their recommenders.

The second is aiming toward a mid-career pivot. Maybe they are leaving the corporate world to become entrepreneurs. Perhaps they are trading in their startup job for a role at a global hi-tech firm, or looking to move from the non-profit to the private sector. Whatever the case, this group's most important task will be convincing the AdCom that despite the non-linear nature of their career path, their experience plus the EMBA are all they need to achieve it.

Where do EMBA applicants tend to get stuck first and what is your advice for breaking through that early wall?

EMBA applicants usually have demanding jobs with immense responsibilities. Many have families, children, and already overflowing

schedules. Creating competitive applications often requires a much greater investment than they were expecting, and that's where many get stuck: allocating sufficient time.

My advice is to start as early as possible; schedule application work into your calendar; inform your friends, family, and colleagues and ask for their support; and don't go it alone. Remember: if you get in, the programme is going to demand even more time from you, so the application is actually a great preparation for what is to come!

EMBA essays may ask candidates to articulate their leadership philosophy or future goals. But for someone 10-15 years into their career, that can feel hard to put into words. How do you coach candidates to find their narrative?

EMBA clients come to the process with vast experience, both personal and professional, which often makes it hard to pinpoint what's relevant for the application. When I coach EMBA clients therefore, I first get to know everything I can about their background, the choices they've made, and the experience they've had – basically anything and everything that has led them to become the person they are today.

Next, we look at their career aspirations – short- and long-term – and articulate them using highly specific language. Finally, once we have the outcome we are targeting, we



Joy Pincus
Founder & Director
JP Coaching

Joy Pincus has been working as a full-time Admissions Coach for over twenty years. Her clients from over 25 countries, have gained admission to every top MBA programme in the world. Her candidates have also come from numerous fields and industries, including finance, consulting, hi-tech, bio-tech, engineering, law, psychology, military, healthcare, and more. Joy also specialises in EMBA, MiM, and part-time MBA programmes, as well as numerous other master's degree programmes.

go back to identify the relevant moments in their life and then connect them together to arrive at their narrative.

Admissions teams review hundreds of applications. What is the thing that makes them put one essay down and lean in on the next?

Today more than ever, Admissions Committee members are looking for authenticity. Applicants who rely on AI often forget, in their quest to deliver something aesthetically pleasing using minimal effort, that an actual human is going to read it, and that this human is looking for qualified people (not algorithms) to attend their programme.

So since it's still pretty easy to discern whether an essay was created by a person or a programme, the candidate who allows their authentic self and their humanity to shine through by using their own words, thoughts, and stories is most likely to grab the AdCom's attention.

With AI writing tools now widely available, where is the line between getting legitimate help and misrepresenting yourself and what's at stake if candidates get that wrong?

AdCom members have emphasised recently that they can spot an AI-written essay a mile away, and that it both diminishes the candidate's uniqueness and informs the committee they couldn't be bothered writing their essays themselves. Some schools are fine with using AI to order your thoughts or check spelling and grammar (especially if you are a non-native English speaker). But using it to create your content is bound to backfire. It can lead to rejection, and even – if undeclared usage of AI is later discovered – the withdrawal of acceptance due to plagiarism.

You recently joined the AIGAC Board – the professional association for graduate admissions consultants. How can prospective applicants use AIGAC membership when choosing a consultant?

With so many consulting firms and independent coaches out there, it can be hard to know whom to trust. AIGAC comprises carefully vetted consultants with industry experience, who commit to putting their clients' interests ahead of their own. The annual international AIGAC conference attended by our members and representatives from virtually all top US and global MBA programmes keeps us up to date on any new developments and has led to trusted

relationships between AIGAC consultants and Admission Committee members.

Prospective EMBA applicants can peruse the entire AIGAC membership list on our website.

What do the candidates who thrive in the admissions process and genuinely own their application tend to have in common?

All EMBA applicants come to the process having been tested by life. They've weathered difficulties, disappointments, and failures and emerged wiser and more empathetic, which automatically works in their favour.

On top of this, those candidates who truly thrive tend to put the entire process in perspective. They don't take themselves too seriously. They understand that they don't have to be perfect or put on airs, but rather can simply be their authentic selves and express their experience, goals, and characteristics with simplicity and honesty. This leads to a process that enhances their chances of admission, gives them a window of understanding about their life journey and future aspirations, and – as an added bonus – makes them an absolute pleasure to work with, for any consultant.





EMBA

Features 2026-2027

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PROGRAMME PRESENTATION

The Bauer Executive MBA is designed for experienced professionals ready to broaden their business perspective, strengthen their leadership capabilities and advance to the next level of their careers. The programme combines rigorous business fundamentals with practical, executive-level learning that can be applied immediately to real organizational challenges.

Recognized among leading Executive MBA programmes, the Bauer EMBA is ranked No. 34 overall and No. 17 among public institutions in Fortune Magazine’s EMBA rankings. Bauer is also tied at No. 69 among public business schools in U.S. News & World Report’s graduate business school rankings. These recognitions reflect Bauer’s commitment to delivering a high-quality executive education with strong value for experienced professionals.

A convenient weekend format allows students to continue advancing their careers while progressing through the programme alongside an accomplished cohort of professionals from diverse industries, functions and backgrounds. The cohort experience encourages collaboration and the exchange of ideas, giving students the opportunity to learn not only from faculty but also from the professional experiences and perspectives of their peers.

Through leadership development, experiential and collaborative learning, executive networking and a global business experience, students gain a broader understanding of how organizations operate and compete in an increasingly complex global marketplace. With Houston as an extension of the classroom, Bauer EMBA students benefit from proximity to one of the country’s most influential business communities.

Graduates leave the programme with an expanded professional network, greater strategic perspective and the confidence to lead across functions, industries and markets.

HOUSTON, USA

STUDENT BODY

Admission rate: 2:1
Male vs. Female ratio: 10:3
Age range: 30-57 years
Average age: 40 years
Degree background: Business – 23%; Engineering – 54%; Teaching – 8%; Mathematics – 8%; Communication – 8%
International student diversity:
Europe: 8%
North America: 46%
Middle East: 23%
Asia and Oceania: 23%

CAREERS

Salary increase after graduation: 26%
Industry placement post-graduation:
Banking/Finance- 23%; Manufacturing- 15%;
Power/Utilities/Energy- 31%; Other- 31%

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

University degree: Bachelor’s or equivalent
Aptitude tests:
Not Required
Language tests:
IELTS (min. required score) - 6.5
TOEFL iBT (min. required score) - 100
PTE (min. required score) - 69
Other - Duolingo - 105
References: 2
Minimum work experience: 7 years
Minimum managerial experience: 4 years

COSTS

Application fee: USD 50
Tuition fee:
USD 74,700 Total Texas Resident Cost
USD 108,000 Total US – Non-Texas Resident Cost
USD 115,000 Total International Cost
Scholarships: 20% Bauer Excellence Initiative Scholarship

CONTACTS

Name: Melissa Lightell
Email: mllighte@bauer.uh.edu
Telephone: 1 713 743 1969
Website: www.bauer.uh.edu/mba/executive/

PROGRAMME INFO

Programme name	Executive MBA
Programme format	Modular
Specialisation	Leadership
Language of instruction	English
Starting dates	Fall 2027
Accreditations	AACSB
Ranking	34th overall and 17th among publics by Fortune Magazine EMBA Rankings; tied 69th among public business schools U.S. News & World Report Best EMBA Graduate Business Schools



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Leading with Purpose

On responsible leadership and why the best learning happens during the programme

How would you describe SKEMA as home to the Global Executive MBA?

I would say SKEMA is a very natural home for a Global Executive MBA because it combines academic excellence, international reach, and a real connection to business realities. It is a school that is serious, recognised, and ambitious, but also quite agile in the way it evolves.

I think it stands out through its global DNA and its ability to connect academic quality with real-world relevance. In the GEMBA, we are not only preparing people to perform, but also to lead in a more thoughtful and responsible way. That balance matters a lot today.

What values are instilled in SKEMA GEMBA and what are some of the shared values students bring to the programme?

We really try to develop responsible, open-minded, and impactful leadership. There is a strong emphasis on curiosity, humility, and the ability to work across cultures and perspectives. And the participants themselves usually bring a lot of maturity, ambition, generosity, and willingness to learn from one another.

Our ambition is to educate leaders who are not only competent and strategic, but also lucid and grounded. We want them to be able to make strong decisions in complex environments, while keeping in mind the broader human, social, and environmental consequences of those decisions.

What aspects of the student experience bring the highest value during the 20-month GEMBA programme?

For me, a lot of the value comes from the mix. The online format makes the programme compatible with demanding careers, and the Residential Weeks bring intensity, energy, and real human connection. On top of that, peer learning is huge: participants learn a great deal from each other.

GEMBA also serves corporate, entrepreneurial, and social career paths and industries equally. It works very well for executives in corporate environments who want to step up strategically, for entrepreneurs who want to grow with a stronger structure and perspectives, and

also for people driven by impact who want to connect performance with purpose. The programme is broad enough to support different ambitions.

How does SKEMA anticipate the needs of prospective EMBA students and the market to ensure that the curriculum is highly relevant?

We do not design the programme in isolation. The GEMBA Advisory Board plays an important role in helping us stay connected to market needs, industry expectations, and broader shifts in leadership. It brings together a mix of senior executives, business leaders, alumni, and academic voices who can challenge us, share perspectives from different sectors and geographies, and help us keep the programme aligned with real organisational needs. Beyond that, we also learn a great deal from our participants, faculty, and corporate ecosystem. That ongoing dialogue helps us continuously adapt the curriculum to major transformations such as AI, sustainability, and global complexity.

What are the key aspects of responsible management in a tech-driven environment?

For me, the key point is that technology should never be treated as neutral. Responsible management means understanding not only what technology can do, but also what it does to people, organisations, and society. So we need leaders who can combine innovation with ethics, critical thinking, and long-term responsibility.

How do GEMBA participants develop a mindset and gain practical experience in driving business aligned with sustainable development goals? How do they impact the real business environment?

A lot of it happens through the constant link between the classroom and real life. Participants bring real challenges from their organisations, reflect on them collectively, and often test ideas directly in their professional environment. So the impact is not postponed until after graduation. It often starts during the programme itself.

How big and active is the SKEMA alumni network?

SKEMA has a large and international alumni network, which is clearly a major asset. For

GEMBA participants, it creates opportunities for exchange, visibility, career development, and sometimes business partnerships as well. It is valuable during the programme, but even more over the long term.

The Youth Talks research that you are also heading finds that student expectations towards education are changing. How does this apply to GEMBA today?

What we see very clearly is that people are no longer looking only for knowledge. They want relevance, flexibility, interaction, meaning, and transformation. That applies very strongly to GEMBA participants: they want a programme that helps them grow professionally, of course, but they also question themselves, evolve as leaders, and better understand the world they operate in.



Marine Hadengue
Associate Dean GEMBA
SKEMA Business School

Marine Hadengue's work focuses on responsible management, innovation, entrepreneurship, and the transformation of higher education. Alongside her academic role, she serves as Executive Director of the Higher Education for Good Foundation (HE4G), a non-profit organisation that helps institutions redesign their programmes for more sustainable societies. Marine led Youth Talks, a pioneering initiative that became the first and largest worldwide consultation using open-ended questions and AI to analyse how young people think about the future.

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in the Age of AI

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of global business in an
interconnected world



Harness AI and technology
for responsible growth



Create sustainable value for
organisations and society



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- A multicultural perspective on business**

thanks to **international cohorts and international residencies** equipping you with agility, cultural acumen, resilience, and a deep understanding of global business environments.

- A collaborative approach to leadership** with **group work and collaborative learning** through innovative approaches such as **Multi-Competency Teams**, the **Strategic Project**, the **ESG Project** and the **Leadership Seminar**.
- A strong focus on trending topics** such as **Leadership, Innovation, Artificial Intelligence, Entrepreneurship, ESG and Geopolitics**.

5. A network of excellence that provides a wealth of perspectives and experience through connections built with **EMBA peers, faculty, industry experts, and alumni**, spanning diverse industries, functions, and regions.

#12

ESSEC Executive MBA
QS Executive MBA
Rankings 2026

#8

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91%

of graduates hold a position with international exposure

68%

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40%

are promoted during the program

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PARIS, FRANCE

STUDENT BODY

Male vs. Female ratio: 60:40 on average
Age range: 32-55 years on average
Average age: 38 years
Degree background: Engineering – 29%, Business/Management – 18%, Finance/Accounting – 14%, Humanities – 11%, Sciences – 11%, IT/Computer Sciences – 8%, Economics – 5%, Other – 4%
International students: 80%
International student diversity:
 Europe: 50%
 North America: 5%
 Central/South America: 5%
 Middle East: 15%
 Asia and Oceania: 15%
 Africa: 10%

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

University degree: A first academic degree
Aptitude tests: Not Required
Language tests:
 TOEIC- 830 (or equivalent)
References: 2 professional references
Minimum work experience: 7 years
Minimum managerial experience: 3 years

COSTS

Application fee: EUR 150
Tuition fee:
 ESSEC & Mannheim EMBA: EUR 65,000
 ESSEC Online EMBA: EUR 40,000-48,000
 ESSEC Hybrid EMBA: EUR 53,000-63,600
 ESSEC Weekend EMBA: EUR 63,600
Scholarships: ESSEC scholarships cover from 5% to 25% of the full tuition, depending on the candidate's profile. Can be combined with the Early Bird offer.

CONTACTS

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PROGRAMME INFO

Programme name	ESSEC Executive MBA Programmes
Programme format	Part-time: Modular (4 to 5,5 days every month and a half), Weekend (3,5 days every 4 weeks), Hybrid (70% online, 30% in-person) or Online (100% online)
Language of instruction	English
Starting dates	ESSEC & Mannheim EMBA: October 2026 & October 2027 ESSEC Online EMBA: December 2026 ESSEC Hybrid EMBA: March 2027 ESSEC Weekend EMBA: May 2027
Accreditations	AACSB, EQUIS, AMBA
Ranking	#11 Executive Education, FT, 2026

An Executive MBA Designed for Today's Global Leaders

Combining the flexibility today's executives need with a curriculum centred on Leadership, AI, Innovation & Entrepreneurship, ESG and Geopolitics

ESSEC has just launched a new Online Executive MBA. What is the core idea behind it and why now?

I think the starting point was recognising that the profile of today's executives has changed. They're leading international teams, travelling frequently and balancing demanding careers with personal commitments. Many want to pursue an Executive MBA but need a format that fits their reality. The idea behind this programme was to offer that flexibility without compromising on quality, combining the academic rigour, interaction,

and collaborative learning experience people expect from ESSEC.

Who would be a typical candidate for this programme?

The programme is designed for experienced professionals who are ready for their next leadership challenge. Some are senior managers preparing for executive roles, others are entrepreneurs growing their businesses, consultants, or professionals who spend a lot of time travelling. They all have at least seven years of professional experience but on average fifteen, and are looking for a programme that fits around their lives while challenging the way they think and lead. What they all have in common is curiosity and a willingness to learn from an international cohort.

The curriculum is structured around Leadership, AI, Innovation & Entrepreneurship, ESG, and Geopolitics. How do these pillars work together and complement each other in practice?

We deliberately didn't want participants to see these as separate topics, because that's not how business works today. Leadership is the common thread, but every leadership decision is now influenced by technology, sustainability and an increasingly complex global environment. We also wanted participants to put these ideas into practice, not just discuss them in class. That's why projects like the Strategic Project and the ESG Project ask them to tackle real business challenges by bringing all of these dimensions together.

How do you build peer relationships executives can benefit from without any of the programme being in-person?

People often assume networking only happens in the corridor between classes, but I don't think that's necessarily true. Strong relationships come from working together over time. Our participants collaborate in Multi Competency Teams (MCTs) that stay together throughout the 18-month programme. They

solve problems together, challenge each other's thinking, and learn how to work across cultures. Those shared experiences create trust, and that's really what lasting professional relationships are built on.

What does the workload look like week-to-week for a busy executive?

The programme is designed to fit around demanding professional lives. During the week, they work through self-paced content such as video lectures, readings, case studies, and quizzes whenever it suits their schedule. Then every other Saturday they come together for live sessions with faculty and classmates. There are also group projects and assignments, but the structure is designed so participants can keep progressing professionally while studying.

The programme promises to develop executives into more thoughtful, impactful leaders. How do you measure that?

Leadership isn't measured by exam results alone. We look at how participants develop their strategic thinking, decision making, self-awareness and ability to lead others through increasingly complex situations. Much of this is demonstrated through applied projects, collaborative work, and reflection. Ultimately, the strongest measure of success is the impact participants have in their organisations and the confidence with which they take on new leadership challenges.

How do you expect the skills this programme develops to hold their value years after the first cohort graduates?

The business world will keep changing. That's the only certainty. The technologies will evolve and new challenges will emerge. But the ability to think critically, adapt, lead diverse teams, and make sound strategic decisions doesn't go out of date. That's really what we're trying to develop. If our graduates leave with the confidence and mindset to keep learning throughout their careers, then I think the programme will continue to deliver value long after they graduate.



Prof. Steven Seggie
Academic Director, ESSEC
Executive MBA programmes

Steven Seggie is a professor of marketing, entrepreneurship and innovation in the marketing department at ESSEC Business School, and the Academic Director of the ESSEC Weekend, Hybrid and Online Executive MBAs. He received his doctorate from Michigan State University and previously worked at Ozyegin University in Istanbul and Bilkent University in Turkey. His areas of research and teaching include customer-driven innovation, new product launch, inter-organisational relationships and scientometrics.



Technology, Innovation, and Leadership



Ecole Polytechnique combines research, teaching, and innovation in cutting-edge science and technology at the international level. The ambition is to promote a culture of excellence driven by science and open a long-standing humanist tradition. The school educates responsible men and women capable of carrying out complex and innovative activities to meet society's current and future challenges.

PROGRAMME PRESENTATION

The Executive Master is École Polytechnique's flagship degree program for senior executives.

Designed to address the challenges of international leadership, it serves as a true springboard to top executive

positions, meeting the expectations of executive committees worldwide.

Technology, management, and leadership come together in this programme, offering a deep dive into cutting-edge innovation across advanced research fields.

The modular and flexible format is structured to fit seamlessly into your professional schedule, enabling you to learn while continuing to work.

Open to professionals from all sectors and academic backgrounds (engineering, business schools, political science, etc.), this programme is tailored for those who wish to understand innovation to better drive it forward.

PALAISEAU, FRANCE

STUDENT BODY

Male vs. Female ratio: 70:30
Age range: 35+ years
Average age: 44 years
International students: 32%

CAREERS

Salary increase after graduation: 49% of participants who received salary increases are greater than 20%

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

University degree: Everything depends on the candidates' training projects.
Minimum work experience: 10 years
Minimum managerial experience: 5 years

COSTS

Application fee: EUR 250
Admission fee: EUR 61,000 (excluding VAT)
Tuition fees: Max 10K to 3 categories: Women in tech, public sector, and start-up founders

CONTACTS

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Website: Polytechnique.edu/executive-master

PROGRAMME INFO

Programme name	Executive Master
Programme format	Modular
Specialisations	Technology, Innovation, Leadership
Language of instruction	French and English
Application deadlines	August 2027
Starting dates	September 2027

OTHER STUDY LOCATIONS

Campuses	Palaiseau, Ecole Polytechnique
Study abroad	UM6P (Morocco), ISAE SUPAERO (Toulouse), Berkeley (San Francisco), Columbia (New York), TUM (Munich)