

The Royal Agricultural University

Programme Specification:

MSc Business Management (Agri-Business)

Postgraduate Diploma in Business Management (Agri-Business)

Postgraduate Certificate in Business Management (Agri-Business)

**(RAU Joint Institute for Advanced Agritechology at
Qingdao Agricultural University (RAU at QAU))**

2026-27

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION [ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-27]

This Programme Specification is designed for prospective students, current students, academic staff and potential employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the teaching, learning and assessment methods, learning outcomes and content of each module can be found in the Module specifications.

Section 1 – Material Programme Information

Criteria	Detail
Validating body	The Royal Agricultural University
Teaching Institution	Qingdao Agricultural University (QAU)
Subject Area	Other Subject Areas (Partners)
Entry Award(s)	MSc Business Management (Agri-business)
Final Award and exit route(s)	Postgraduate Certificate in Business Management (Agri-business) Postgraduate Diploma in Business Management (Agri-business) MSc Business Management (Agri-business)
Programme title	MSc Business Management (Agri-business)
Location(s) of study	Qingdao Agricultural University (QAU)
Full time study	2 Years
Part-time study	N/A
Language of study	English
Programme start month	September
Period of validation	September 2023 – August 2028
Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body	Not applicable
Type of Accreditation	Not applicable
Accreditation due for renewal	Not applicable
UCAS Code	Not applicable
Quercus Code	QAUBMA1F
HECoS Code	Not applicable
QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and other reference points	<u>QAA UK Quality Code of Higher Education (2024)</u> <u>QAA Business and Management (including Master's) (2023)</u>
Academic level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	Level 7
Approval at AQSC	July 2023

Entry Requirements

Criteria	Detail
Entry requirements (this should be the standard University entry requirements unless otherwise approved by the Academic Board)	A minimum of China GPA 2.9 which is equivalent to 2.2 honours degree from a UK university. Mature candidates with significant relevant work experience and lower academic qualifications may also be considered for entry, following interview with the programme managers.
English language	English language at or above equivalent IELTS score of 6.5 average with no element below 5.5. or Obtained first degree in an English-speaking country. or Pass RAU internal integrated English language proficiency (EAP reading and writing) test 60%.

Section 2 - Programme Structure

The structure of all University awards complies with the University's [Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes](#) which includes information about the:

- Rules for progression between the stages of a programme;
- Consequences of failure for referrals, compensation and exist awards;
- Calculation and classification of awards.

MSc Business Management (Agri-business) (180 credits)

The accumulation of 180 credits through the assessment of programme elements as detailed below:

Year 1:

Semester 1: Students will undertake English language studies

Semester 2: Study modules

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
Q4413	Research Skills	7	15	Core	2
Q4000	Sustainable Agricultural Systems	7	30	Core	2
Q4260	Marketing Strategy	7	15	Core	2
Q4263	Entrepreneurship and Business Planning	7	15	Core	2

Year 2:

Semester 3: Study modules

Semester 4: Dissertation writing

Q4001	Leadership and Business Strategy	7	30	Core	3
Q4086	Financial Management	7	15	Core	3
Q4023	Operations Management	7	15	Core	3
Q4414	Research Dissertation	7	45	Core	3+4

Postgraduate Diploma in Business Management (Agri-business) (120 credits)

Year 1:

Semester 1: Students will undertake English language studies

Semester 2: Study modules

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
Q4000	Sustainable Agricultural Systems	7	30	Core	2
Q4260	Marketing Strategy	7	15	Core	2
Q4263	Entrepreneurship and Business Planning	7	15	Core	2

Year 2:

Semester 3: Study modules

Q4001	Leadership and Business Strategy	7	30	Core	3
Q4086	Financial Management	7	15	Core	3
Q4023	Operations Management	7	15	Core	3

Postgraduate Certificate in Business Management (Agri-business) (60 credits)

Year 1:

Semester 1: Students will undertake English language studies

Semester 2: Study modules

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
Q4000	Sustainable Agricultural Systems	7	30	Core	2
Q4260	Marketing Strategy	7	15	Core	2
Q4263	Entrepreneurship and Business Planning	7	15	Core	2

Section 3 – Programme overview and Programme Aims

The aim of this programme is to provide students with an academically rigorous and professionally relevant education that will serve their career needs throughout their personal and professional development. The degree combines essential management knowledge with relevant practical and professional skills to prepare students for the challenging business world.

Our range of core business management modules ensures that students receive a solid grounding in the essentials of the discipline.

Our portfolio of modules, taught by RAU experts in business, agricultural, equine, environment, agri-food and land-based disciplines, provides students with the opportunity either to embed their studies in a rural context, or to concentrate their studies in pure business management disciplines.

The objectives of this Educational Programme are to:

- Provide students, in particular those with a non-business education, with a rigorous grounding in business and management and the required Master's-level knowledge, understanding and skills;
- Enhance the scholarship of students by equipping them with a range of transferable, conceptual, analytical and reflective skills which may be applied to the problems of business in the private and public sectors;
- Provide opportunities to develop research skills at Master's level;
- Provide a challenging and stimulating framework of study for full time students;
- Facilitate personal, academic and professional development through a coherent programme of study;
- Provide an opportunity for students to identify and analyse the agri-business context of the application of their learning;
- Provide opportunities for students to develop critical perspectives on theories and to review and evaluate the appropriateness and potential value of concepts, models and techniques that underpin the constituent business management subjects;
- Provide students with both multidisciplinary and integrated perspectives that can be employed in the analysis of business problems that arise in the agricultural sector;

- Provide students with opportunities for blended learning using appropriate information and communication technologies;
- Provide students and in particular students who have not acquired managerial work experience prior to admission to the MSc Business Management (Agri-Business), with a recognised qualification which will improve their career development and promotion prospects.

United Nations Global Compact

The United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) is a United Nations initiative launched in 1999 to encourage businesses worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies. The UNGC initiative has around 13000 corporate participants in over 170 countries. The UNGC is a principle-based framework for businesses, identifying ten principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption. These ten principles are embedded into our curriculum and inform our teaching practices and material, such as case studies and assessments. The UNGC is mapped to our modules to ensure that at each stage of the programme we are identifying how this initiative is developed as part of business strategy and management practice.

Principles for Responsible Management Education

As signatories to Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), RAU is committed to integrating corporate responsibility and sustainability within all operations. PRME is a United Nations initiative seeking to inspire and champion responsible management education, research and thought leadership globally. Corporate responsibility, sustainability and ethical behaviour are fundamental to the principles of business and as such are embedded throughout all our programmes

Section 4 – Programme Sustainability

Sustainability is central to the programme's focus on business and agri-business. The programme examines how organisations can create economic value while responding to environmental, social, and ethical challenges across a range of agri-business contexts.

The programme content engages with sustainable enterprise, responsible leadership, innovation, resilient supply chains, responsible consumption and production, climate action, and the role of business in supporting sustainable food and farming systems. This aligns particularly with SDGs relating to zero hunger, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, responsible consumption and production, climate action, and partnerships for the goals.

The programme also contributes to SDG 4: Quality Education through its postgraduate-level curriculum, inclusive approach to learning, and emphasis on employability and professional development. Students are supported to apply knowledge critically, make evidence-based decisions, and consider the wider impact of business activity on organisations, communities, the environment, and the broader agri-business context.

Section 5 – Programme intended learning outcomes

MSc Business Management (Agri-Business) 2026-27

The aim of this programme is to provide students with an academically rigorous and professionally relevant education that will serve their career needs throughout their personal and professional development.

On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to demonstrate the following Learning Outcomes (LOs):

Knowledge and Understanding

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Synthesise trends and opportunities for business growth or organisational development to capitalise on these through the critical application of a range of tools and techniques.	Q4086, Q4001, Q4263, Q4000, Q4260, Q4263
2.	Manage and develop people within organisations by applying organisational theory and behaviour, employee relations, HRM and the management of change.	Q4001, Q4263, Q4023
3.	Explore contemporary strategic management concepts, theories, models and analytical frameworks and their application to the development of appropriate business policies and strategies including types of organisations and their environments and the complex interrelationships between and within these environments.	Q4000, Q4001, Q4263, Q4260
4.	Develop and apply critical understanding of financial decision-making by exploring the evidence-based use of data and resources and the appropriate analysis and management of financial resources.	Q4086, Q4263, Q4000
5.	Develop an extensive understanding of markets and customers; the development and operation of markets, the expectations of customers and other stakeholders, the importance of customer service orientation, the processes and institutions involved in the production of goods and services and the management of resources and operations.	Q4260, Q4263, Q4023, Q4000

Intellectual, Professional, Key skills

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Apply critical and creative thinking to the analysis and evaluation of business problems and management issues, including the ability to identify assumptions and implicit values, evaluate evidence, appraise the logic of arguments and/or the ability to generalise appropriately.	Q4260, Q4001, Q4023, Q4414, Q4086, Q4263
2.	Synthesise, analyse and interpret information from a variety of sources, including the integration of theory and practice.	Q4413, Q4414, Q4086, Q4001, Q4263, Q4023, Q4000
3.	Make appropriate use of numeracy, quantitative and qualitative skills, including the use of models and conceptual frameworks for business situations and management issues.	Q4413, Q4414, Q4086, Q4263, Q4023, Q4001

4.	Critically assess the uses and limitations as well as strengths and weaknesses of different research methods and techniques (qualitative and quantitative) for conducting and evaluating business research.	Q4413, Q4414, Q4001, Q4263, Q4023, Q4000
5.	Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.	Q4413, Q4414, Q4001, Q4023, Q4000, Q4260, Q4263, Q4086

Programme specific skills

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Interpret and analyse financial and economic data using statistical or financial functions and procedures, including those routinely available in spreadsheets and other statistical/econometric software packages.	Q4413, Q4086, Q4000, Q4263
2.	Critically apply knowledge and understanding to complex issues, both systemically and creatively, so that theory is converted into practice from a critical and informed perspective, thereby enhancing organisational effectiveness and competitiveness.	Q4414, Q4260, Q4001, Q4023, Q4000, Q4086
3.	Critically apply problem solving and decision-making techniques, including establishing criteria, identifying, formulating and solving business problems, and identifying and evaluating options or solutions.	Q4414, Q4086, Q4001, Q4263, Q4023
4.	Demonstrate reflectivity, confidence and professionalism in your ability to apply the skills and knowledge learned in the degree to real world problems.	Q4413, Q4414, Q4001, Q4263, Q4000
5.	Appraise the industry, market and/or business climate to evaluate the current opportunities for responsible business or management decision-making.	Q4414, Q4086, Q4260, Q4001, Q4263, Q4023

Section 6 – Approach to Learning and Teaching delivery

The format of the programme is a mixture of residential learning and blended learning approaches supported by a range of learning materials and activities presented on the RAU International VLE.

A Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) and Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) can be obtained by the successful completion of modules accumulating 60 credits (PGCert) or 120 credits (PG Dip) as specified in the module map in section 2.

The delivery is through a mixture of lectures, seminars, speakers, case studies, workshops and with guided learning activities presented through the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) which is also used to host other supporting material including videos, webinars, quizzes, podcasts and/or other relevant resources.

Teaching will include group discussions, tutorials, facilitated discussions, workshops, guided preparation, independent study and a research project. Assessment will be a balance between individual and group work and may consist of a range of formats such as critical

essays or reflections, professional plans or reports, written assignments presentations, policy summaries, and research dissertation.

Each module is supported by a comprehensive resource list that is maintained through the RAU Library Talis system in addition to resources provided by the Joint institute.

Teaching mode:

In the first semester, students will focus on learning English for Academic Purpose (EAP) to improve their English proficiency.

In semesters two and three, the teaching mode will normally be conducted over an 8-week period per module (30 credits or a combination of two 15 credit modules), i.e. Preparation (2wks), teaching (3wks, mainly delivered on Saturdays and Sundays), formative assessment (2wks) and summative assessment (1wk). Students will complete 60 credits per semester.

During preparation weeks, based on the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) in each module, lecturers will provide assessment briefs and set up all required learning activities which may be a mixture of reading materials, written or pre-recorded videos, guidelines for preparations and other learning tasks on international VLE module page, which will be ready for students to self-study.

The aim of the face-to-face teaching is to ensure students have fully understood and progressed appropriately towards assessment to meet all intended learning outcomes following the designed structure in preparation weeks.

During the formative two weeks, students will discuss learning and assessment with fellow students and submit any component of assessment due. There will also be designated time to discuss learning and assessment with lecturers through module page forum or other appropriate communication channels. Lecturers will set up proper formative assessments, to monitor student learning and provide feedback that can help students to identify their strengths and weaknesses to achieve intended learning outcomes. Where appropriate, there may be invited speakers or talks to further strengthen students' industrial awareness or personal, academic and professional development. These may be delivered, for example, by members of Joint Institute Industry and Entrepreneurship Committee who are all local, national or international successful entrepreneurs.

In the last week, students will submit final components of their summative assessments.

In the final semester, students will focus on the independent completion of their dissertations under the supervision of an appointed supervisor.

Section 7 – Approach to Assessment

Assessments are designed to appraise students' learning fairly and consistently, according to the intended learning outcomes. We use clear, descriptive assessment guidelines (made available to students) to grade assessments. Lecturers communicate their expectations clearly to students and use explicit schema to facilitate consistency of marking within and between modules and to ensure good feedback on individual performance. All assessments that contribute to degree classifications are subject to scrutiny by the External Examiners.

The Dissertation is the capstone demonstration of postgraduate skills, requiring students to conceive, justify, design in detail and execute a substantial piece of independent academic research. For the most able postgraduate students, the Dissertation can generate work of a MSc Business Management (Agri-Business) 2026-27

standard appropriate for submission to practitioner and academic journals in the appropriate field.

We place high value on effective, inclusive communication in any relevant format. This priority is reflected not only in how assignments are specified, but also in how they are marked - good command of written and spoken English is vital for work-based projects and for graduate employment.

We believe teamwork is particularly relevant in some business and management contexts, and where appropriate, assessments are designed to be groupwork based. All group assignments allow for an element of individual assessment, in order to recognise differences in individual performance where appropriate. Peer feedback can also play a significant part in team activities and is encouraged.

Overall, the programme is taught and assessed through:

Learning and Teaching			Assessment		
Directed	Independent	Placement	Exam	Coursework	Practical
19.6%	80.4%	0.0%	0.0%	95.0%	5.0%

Section 8 – Course work grading and feedback

Assessment is an integral part of the learning experience of students. All University programmes are assessed by a range of assessment activities, each developed to provide the most appropriate means of demonstrating the student's achievement of a specified learning outcome. An assessment may assess more than one learning outcome.

The University operates standard pass criteria which can be found in the [RAU Academic Regulations](#) (paragraphs 116-156).

The normal basis for awards will be the overall average score in the final assessment, graded as follows:

Distinction weighted average of	70% and above
Merit weighted average of	60% - 69%
Pass weighted average of	40% - 59%
Fail weighted average of	0% - 39%

In addition to assigning a percentage mark to each assessment, the tutor will also provide feedback comments; focussing on the strengths and weaknesses of the work. All marks (grades) are subject to internal moderation and external scrutiny by the programme's External Examiner(s), and final confirmation at the exam board. Students must ensure they retain all coursework in case the External Examiner(s) wishes to see it.

Section 9 – RAU Graduate Framework

At the RAU we have chosen five values to underpin our learning community. These are the values which we will all work by and for which we want the RAU to be known for. We aim for our graduates to be:

Collaborative

We believe in the power of working together. We are stronger as a community of practice - inspiring each other, identifying shared goals, and providing reciprocal support leads to greater success.

Open-minded

We are receptive to new ideas and we value the diversity of experiences and skills. We are committed to listening to everyone across the RAU community.

Resourceful

We adopt creative approaches to achieve our goals while setting higher standards, promoting professionalism and sustainability.

Responsible

Individually and collectively we take accountability for our actions working with integrity to achieve the highest ethical standards.

Inclusive

We acknowledge the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals and are committed to maintaining an environment that seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination and respects diverse traditions, heritages, and experiences.



We inspire our graduates...



RAU VALUES Collaborative, Open-minded, Resourceful, Responsible & Inclusive.



PROFESSIONAL APPROACH

To be reflective, self-aware team members with excellent communication skills approaching new challenges with flexibility and confidence.



SUSTAINABLE MINDSET

To commit to environment and regeneration, demonstrating an understanding of global complexity and system thinking.



INNOVATIVE THINKER

To have commercial acumen and curiosity, seeking innovative solutions to the real-world.



TECHNICALLY SKILLED

To enter the workplace as technically and digitally skilled practitioners who value practical knowledge and scientific evidence.

Section 10 – Progression

The Royal Agricultural University has a strong reputation for developing highly skilled, sought-after, employable graduates from within the rural economy and also from a diverse range of backgrounds.

The University is committed to developing employable graduates and the curriculum has been designed to enhance employability at all levels of study. Employability is seen as an intrinsic aspect of all degree programmes the development of essential postgraduate attributes is embedded in all core modules.

The MSc Business Management (Agri-business) core modules emphasise themes of leadership, financial literacy, organisational operation, strategy, and development, dealing with specific and complex contexts, and business planning. We pride ourselves on being able to help our students acquire the skills they need to foster their initiative and creativity as responsible global citizens and managers. Our graduates have gone on to pursue careers worldwide taking on a variety of important roles including the following within and beyond the Agri-Business sector:

- International Development Manager
- Business Owner
- Investment Analyst
- Project Manager
- Marketing Manager

The University and the Joint-Institute have links with a wide range of businesses, through the University's Growth Hub, Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise partnership and a long history of successful Alumni, including the QAU Industry and Entrepreneurship Committee with hundreds of committee members who have been successful entrepreneurs.

Students may also choose to further their academic studies with an MSc by Research and/or PhD.

Section 11 – Student support, wellbeing and counselling

Both RAU and QAU offer a wide range of support to students including practical advice and guidance as well as emotional support.

Disability and Neurodivergent support

We support students with a range of disabilities, learning difficulties, and other health and mental health conditions, helping them to access funding via [the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities](#).

When students inform Student Office they have a disability, they will be offered support based on your specific needs which can include:

- **Alternative exam arrangements** such as extra time, rest breaks, or a smaller room.
- **Access to support workers** such as study skills tutors, specialist mentors, readers and scribes.

Mental Health Support

The RAU China team will work closely with RAU China Office and QAU team to support students with the ups and downs of university life, offering drop-in sessions, providing expert advice and support for students in crisis or with more complex needs, and together the team runs events and campaigns throughout the year to encourage positive wellbeing.

Academic Support Tutor Programme

All students have access to the Academic Support Tutor (AST) programme, which provides high-quality academic support for students. ASTs provide timetabled group tutorials and individual support for students who are most at risk. Group tutorials focus on providing high-quality academic support at the appropriate academic level; advice and guidance in relation to the course; and advice about making study choices on the course (in line with the AST Handbook). Individual support focuses on continuation and may be in person or online.

Section 12 – Enhancing the Quality of Learning and Teaching

The programme is subject to the University's rigorous quality assurance procedures which involve subject specialist and internal peer review of the course at periodic intervals, normally of 5 years. This process ensures that the programme engages with the applicable national Subject Benchmarks and references the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

All programmes are monitored on an annual basis where consideration is given to:

- External Examiner's Reports
- Key statistics including data on retention and achievement
- Results of the Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Feedback from Student Course Representatives
- Annual Programme Monitoring

Although this programme is taught at Qingdao Agricultural University (QAU), China, it will be managed by the RAU Joint Institute (JI) for Advanced Agritechology at Qingdao Agricultural University (RAU AT QAU). The RAU AT QAU will be managed by the Joint Management Committee (JMC), which will be chaired by the President of QAU, with a Deputy president / chair from the RAU. All academic matters will be managed by the Academic Committee (AC) according to RAU's Regulations for postgraduate degrees. The AC will be chaired by a senior member of RAU staff and will report to the RAU's Academic Board.

Students reading for this Business Management (Agri-Business) degree will effectively have a contract with the Royal Agricultural University that consists of:

- the terms laid out in the Student Contract document
- this Programme Specification and associated Module documents (Module Reference Sheets, Handbooks etc)
- the RAU's [Regulations](#) and [Policies](#) (adapted for the JI) including the University's [Admissions Policy](#).