



ROYAL AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, CIRENCESTER

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

MBA International Food and Agribusiness

NB

The information contained in this document is intended only as a guide to the programme. It does not constitute a legally binding document or contract between the individual and the Royal Agricultural University.

The information contained herein is correct at the time of going to print, but the University reserves the right to make changes to the structure of the programme, assessment methods, etc. at any time without prior notification. Any changes made however will be made known as soon as possible.

Dr Codrin Chiru - Programme Manager

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1. Awarding institution	Royal Agricultural University
2. Teaching institution	Royal Agricultural University (RAU) and Utah State University (USU)
3. Final award title(s)	MBA International Food and Agribusiness
4. Academic level on Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)	Level 7
5. UCAS code(s)	Not applicable
6. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) and other reference points, e.g. FD qualification benchmark	QAA FHEQ subject benchmark statement: Master's degrees in Business and Management (2007); Master's degree characteristics: type 3 (2010)
7. Details of accreditation by a professional/statutory body	Not applicable
8. Mode of study	Full-time (part-time route available)
9. Language of study	English
10. Date of production/revision	December 2014 (for validation February 2015)

11. Educational aims of the programme

11.1 Introduction

The increasing globalisation of the agri-food industry has highlighted the need for managers with experience of social, cultural, production, and consumption conditions in the major markets of the world. This competitive and innovative programme will provide students with the transnational knowledge and skills to function confidently and competently in different regions of the world in a sector which is becoming increasingly dynamic and complex.

11.2 Distinctive features of the programme

The IFAB MBA has been designed to develop managers with vital key skills and competencies in the vibrant and thriving food and agribusiness sector. The programme core modules were designed to provide a global context to the disciplines being studied. Modules content include international case studies, visits from relevant international industry experts, senior professionals and scholars, and study visits to organisations and businesses. In addition, the School has a very diverse group of academic staff with international agribusiness industrial and academic experience.

The programme provides a specific and invaluable opportunity for students to experience transatlantic study (if they wish) in the agribusiness industry from

both a European and USA context and perspective afforded by the option for those students to undertake their term one modules at Utah State University (USU).

The School has recently agreed that the undergraduates will be awarded a further industry qualification with the Chartered Institute of Management. The intention is that very shortly our postgraduate students will be included in this agreement. The CMI qualification itself is widely recognised by employers, with 75% suggest those with professional qualification are better prepared for the workplace.

The University's Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Programme (E&EP) provides comprehensive support, advice and expertise to students, staff and alumni who wish to start their own business. E&EP is embedded in the University curriculum and is also offered on an extra-curricular basis. The E&EP is open to all University students, alumni and staff. Should students already be running their own business or should they wish to start one, they can link their work on/in their businesses for their 'Applied Research Challenge' module.

11.3 Educational aims

The increasing globalisation of the food industry has highlighted the need for dynamic managers with experience in social, cultural, production, and consumption realities across the world. The global food business is one of the largest industries worldwide, being expected to significantly grow in the upcoming years and to reach 5.3 trillion USD by the end of 2017.

The industry faces challenges on several strategic fronts: rapid technological innovation, demographic shifts between urban and rural areas, migration and access to skilled staff, climate change, water availability issues, food security, sustainability and authenticity issues. The most recent global demographics claim the need for an additional 70% increase in food and agribusiness levels in order to feed an estimated world population of 9.1 billion by 2050. The business leaders of the future will need to be technically knowledgeable, business savvy, holistic thinkers, problem solvers and able to provide values based leadership in an industry where integrity and trust are vitally important.

The Association of Business Schools (ABS) noted in its QS Global 200 Business Schools Report for 2012/2013 that employers rated most highly the provision of Finance, leadership and Strategy in those Schools considered Emergent Global Players, such as Cranfield Management School and Oxford Brookes Business School. The development of RAU's School of Business & Entrepreneurship as a "global emergent" player in business management education is aligned with the Rau's mission statement "to be a centre of excellence for developing the leaders of tomorrow in sustainable development relating to the rural economy, built environment and food chain, and to provide leadership regionally, nationally and internationally through its education, research and knowledge exchange activities".

In order to meet the above mentioned challenges we aim to prepare our students to integrate in the emergent Transnational Capitalist Class (Sklair, L. 2012) to operate effectively in today's globalised business world.

The curriculum has been designed to give students a thorough understanding of all these important areas and the opportunity to reflect on these in the light of their previous work experience. The programme aims to create an educational framework that includes core elements of eco leadership, such as: ethics of leadership in the food sector, corporate social responsibility, sustainability and coping with change and transformation, all of which are of particular significance within the food chain.

The objective of the programme is to produce graduates with characteristics and skills required by an increasingly challenging, competitive and globalised food industry, for senior and strategic positions as managers, advisers, planners and consultants who can demonstrate high levels of capability, competence, knowledge and skills in:

- Business expertise, managerial and strategic thinking within the agribusiness food sector which builds on a previous work experience;
- Holistic perspective and understanding of the complexities in the global food business;
- Creation and implementation of a research design using appropriate methodologies;
- Leadership and team management.

Although industry-orientated, the programme has a strong academic underpinning, complemented by case study and group project work alongside study visits to and from relevant industry organisations and businesses.

12. Intended learning outcomes

Learning outcomes describe what the students should know and be able to understand if they make full use of the opportunities for learning that the programme provides. By studying the MBA in International Food Agribusiness, students will acquire knowledge and understanding of the context, core concepts and theories of the subject and further develop key skills that will enable them to apply their academic studies to the industry on graduation.

The programme outcomes, as listed below, relate well to the educational aims and to the QAA subject benchmark statement for Master's degrees in business and management (2007) with knowledge and understanding fully in line with the subject-specific requirements. The academic level of the programme, in respect of intellectual skills listed below demonstrates appropriateness of the programme outcomes and alignment with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) at Masters Level (see section 4.3 above).

In addition, the programme specification outlines the learning outcomes in terms of how they are to be found and assessed whilst the module reference sheets underpin the intended learning outcomes and can be cross-referenced to the programme learning outcomes in the curriculum map.

i. Knowledge and understanding

The student will know and understand:

A1. Engagement with extant theoretical and practical management literatures and ideas that underpin management thought and practice

A2. A critical understanding of debates within key areas of research in management and business studies.

A3. An ability to understand how global technological, economic, environmental and social influences shape the modern food and agribusiness world.

A4. An understanding of the importance of key personal skills in management and their application in areas such as leadership, communication, presentation and decision making.

Teaching and Learning Strategies: knowledge and understanding will be acquired via: 1) Lectures, 2) Seminars, 3) Tutorials, 4) Visits, 5) Workshops, 6) Co-operative work, 7) Case study, 8) Group project work and 9) Applied Research Challenge (Research Proposal and Management Project).

Students are given directed/ guided independent learning tasks and are encouraged to increase their depth of knowledge and understanding through private study and completion of assessments, which include coursework, case studies, reports, presentations and final research project.

ii. Intellectual/ Cognitive skills

The student will be able to:

B1. Interpret data and abstract meaning.

B2. Critically analyse literature.

B3. Identify and solve problems.

B4. Demonstrate independence of thought.

B5. Develop skills of critical self-reflection.

B6. Demonstrate skills necessary to plan, conduct and report original research.

Teaching and learning strategies: Intellectual skills are developed through the teaching and learning programme via a variety of means, including discussion of key issues and topics, directed learning and problem-based and experiential case studies. Through the Applied Research Challenge students can demonstrate their thinking and research skills.

iii. Practical / professional skills

The student will be able to:

C1. Evaluate business performance.

C2. Write for different audiences.

C3. Locate and critically appraise data and information from a variety of sources.

C4. Critically investigate a bibliographically-based piece of research.

C5. Choose between theories appropriate to various business situations.

C6. Manage project work effectively – team working and project management skills.

C7. Produce a business plan to a professional standard through applying survey techniques, e.g. questionnaires and interviews.

Teaching and learning strategies: practical/ professional skills are developed through the teaching and learning programme via a variety of means including case study project work, presentations, industry visits and through Applied Research Challenge, in which students will demonstrate their capacity to recognise, analyse and resolve organisational problems, deliver a personal critical reflection within a Research Proposal and undertake a Management Project. In addition, there will be a series of professional development workshops at the beginning of the programme on the fundamentals of team-working and project management skills.

iv. Transferable skills

The student will be able to:

D1. Learn through self-reliance.

D2. Interpersonal skills/produce work in groups.

D3. Work effectively independently.

D4. Communication/ Presentation Skills.

D5. Use information technology skills to assist senior management development.

Teaching and learning strategies and assessment

Teaching and learning strategies: Transferable skills are incorporated, acquired and assessed within case studies and are related to relevant assessments. Strategies for this include written examinations, tutorials, coursework, presentations, seminars and the Applied Research Challenge.

Students are given directed/ guided independent learning tasks and are encouraged to increase their depth of knowledge and understanding through private study and completion of assessments, which include coursework, case studies, reports, presentations and final research project.

Students are expected to have basic knowledge and skills of IT&C (e.g. office programmes for word processing, spreadsheet applications, presentation, Internet and email). These skills should be demonstrated and further developed throughout various means (tutorials, individual/group assignment presentations, coursework etc).

13. Programme structure and requirements

13.1 Length/ duration of study

The MBA International Food Agribusiness consist of a one-year full-time programme (a part-time route is also available) which comprises six taught core business modules, four taught core industry-specific modules, a choice of elective modules and an Applied Research Challenge (the latter in place of a 'traditional' dissertation).

Students will have the option to study the first term at either the Utah State University (USU) or the Royal Agricultural University (RAU), with the remaining study periods undertaken at the RAU. The taught element will continue into term three in the first stage of the Applied Research Challenge module, with the final Management Project being submitted in September. \

13.2 Detailed Programme/ Module Structure

Core Business Modules (10 credits)	(4xxx) Sustainable Business Strategy	Total 60 credits
	(4xxx) Operations Management	
	(4xxx) Agricultural Economics	
	(4xxx) Leadership and Change	
	(4xxx) International Marketing Management	
	(4xxx) International Financial Management	
C o r e - e l e c t i v e	(4095) International Agri-food Marketing	Total 45

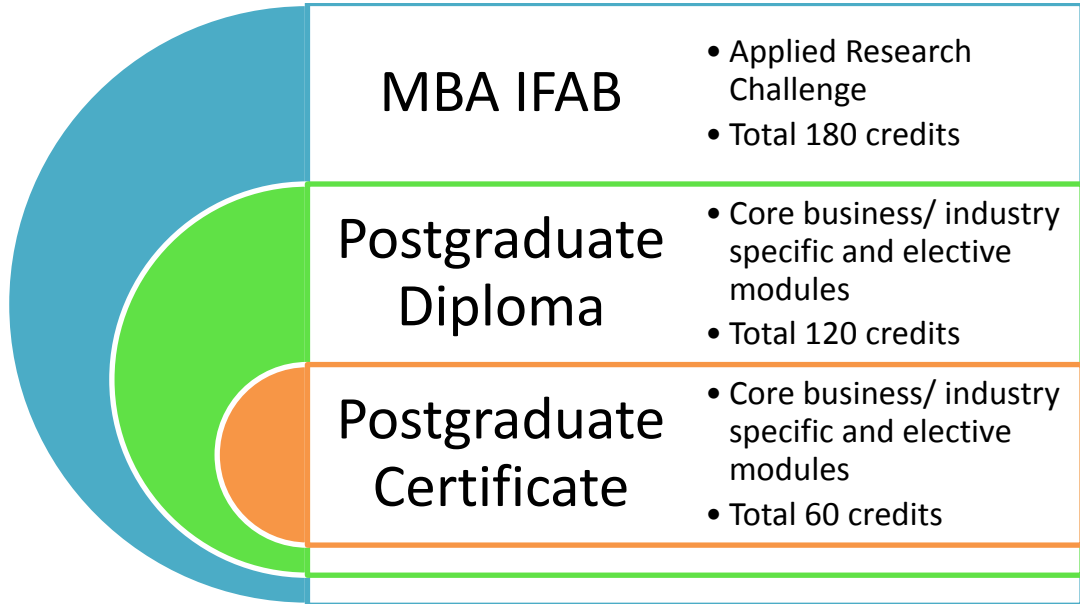
	(4111) Critical Issues in Food Technology and Innovation	credits
	(4014) Food Chain	
	(4xxx) International Agribusiness Finance and Investment	
Elective Modules	Choice of one (15 credits)/two (7.5 each) electives from: ¹ (4080) Development Project Management; (4xxx) Retail & Shopper Marketing; (3096) Wine Industry; (4078) International Business; (4205) Critical Issues in Ethical Leadership; (3211) Practical E-business and E-commerce. (4xxx) Economics of the Environment; (3084) Entrepreneurship.	Total 15 credits
Applied Research Challenge	(4xxx) Applied Research Challenge	Total 60 credits

¹ This is an indicative list of elective modules.

13.3 Programme Map (standard form)

Term 1																			
	International Financial Management		International Marketing management		Leadership and Change		Agricultural Economics		Operations Management		Sustainable Business Strategy								
Credits	10		10		10		10		10		10								60 credits
Term 2	Food Chain		Critical Issues in Food Technology & Innovation		International Agri-food Marketing		International Agribusiness Finance and Investments				Elective(s)								
Credits	15		7.5		7.5		15				15								60 credits
Term 3	Applied Research Challenge																	60 credits	
Credits																			
Term 4	Hand in - Management Project - September																		

13.4 Programme Awards/ Credit Accumulation



In order for a student to be awarded the IFAB MBA they must achieve 180 credits in total. Interim awards are also offered at Postgraduate Certificate level (60 credits) and Postgraduate Diploma level (120 credits). The award of MBA will be based on the average of the overall mark for both the taught modules and Applied Research Challenge mark (details of the weightings can be found in the Academic Regulations available on the University website). The final MBA classification will be graded on the weighted average as follows:

Pass – 40-59%; Merit – 60-69%; Distinction – 70% and above

13.5 Student workload

All full-time academic programmes at the RAU are constructed using a selection of modules, each of which requires engagement with a variety of learning activities. Successful completion of module assessments will result in the award of credits, and students are required to achieve a total of 180 credits over the 12 months of the full-time programme.

The credit system is used to ensure a balanced workload across each programme, with each credit point representing a notional learning time of 10 hours of student work. Thus a 10-credit module will require a notional input of 100 hours and a 15-credit, 150 hours of work.

Within this time, students can expect to participate in formal timetabled activities; such as lectures, seminars, tutorials, practicals and visits. Thus the majority of module activities; such as reading around the subject, preparing for tutorials and seminars, preparing for, and completing, module assessments and revision for, and sitting, examinations; will take place outside of these scheduled activities, but are an essential part of a student's learning journey.

Students are encouraged to utilise and engage with all the learning opportunities, resources and support available throughout duration of your studies at the RAU in order to progress successfully through the course.

14. Student support services

Students are supported academically by the programme management group (PMG), plus the Dean of the School of Business and Entrepreneurship and all the leaders of the constituent modules of the programme. In addition, students have access to and can use the following people, resources and activities to support them during their time at the RAU:

- An induction programme (including team building sessions,) on joining the University which will introduce the programme of study and the study skills they need to complete it successfully;
- Series of professional development workshops, commencing in induction week;
- Access to the University's Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Programme (E&EP) provides comprehensive support, advice and expertise to students, staff and alumni who wish to start their own business;
- The RAU Student Handbook and virtual learning environment (Gateway);
- Module handbooks, describing in detail the teaching programme for each module of study;
- Extensive library and other learning resources, including study skills packages;
- A personal tutor, whose role is to assist the student with the progress of their academic studies as well as advise on pastoral care issues;
- Student email and open and personal access to academic staff, including the Programme Manager;

- Access to a Student Liaison Officer, Student Welfare Officer (who can provide counselling on personal problems) and the University health centre;
- Access to a Disability Officer, who provides assistance and guidance on teaching and learning support for students with dyslexia (or other forms of specific learning difficulties) and other disabilities, including a dyslexia specialist to help develop learning skills;
- English language support (for students whose first language is not English);
- Careers advice sessions with careers guidance personnel.
- Entrepreneurship contest.

15. Criteria for admissions

15.1 Standard entry requirements

Students will be expected to have:

- An honours degree at upper second level, or an equivalent academic;
- Qualification from a comparable international institution;
- A minimum of two years' post-graduation work experience;
- For students whose first language is not English, a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 average (with no element below 5.5) or its equivalent will be required.

15.2 Non-standard entry

Mature candidates with significant relevant work experience and lower academic qualifications may also be considered for entry, following personal interview with the programme manager. Students with other qualifications, including overseas awards (and alternative English Language qualifications) will be required to contact the Registry before submitting an application to discuss the suitability of their ward for entry onto the programme.

16. Teaching, learning and assessment

The curriculum is designed to enable the student to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of the subject, intellectual/thinking, practical/professional and key transferable skills which correspond to those developed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications. Students will be encouraged to expand their understanding and critical appreciation of key international food and agribusiness management topics and issues as they progress through the programme.

16.1 Teaching and Learning Strategies

Students will experience a carefully planned and diverse programme of teaching and learning, guided by the explicit aims and identified learning outcomes (as outlined above in sections 11 and 12) which will include:

lectures, seminars, visits, workshops, co-operative work, case study, group project work, reflective reports, presentations, industry visits, and problem-based and experiential case studies. Students are also given directed/ guided independent learning tasks and are encouraged to increase their depth of knowledge and understanding through private study and completion of assessments.

Although vocationally and industry-oriented with theoretical material applied to real-world issues, challenges and situations, this MBA has a strong academic underpinning with the range of teaching methods in alignment with the nature and level of the constituent modules. Formal lectures will be complemented by tutorials, seminars, workshops, case study and group project work, study visits to and from relevant organisations and individuals within the agribusiness industry. In addition, students will have access to senior level business contacts.

With an emphasis on practical and applied research the programme culminates in the student's completing the Applied Research Challenge module. In this module students are provided with a conceptual framework from which research philosophies, strategies and methods associated with business management can be critically reviewed. It will also help them to develop their research competencies, in particular those relating to data collection and analysis that enable students to design, undertake and evaluate independent research in an organisational or industry setting. This gives students the unique opportunity to pursue a research project that most fits their career plans and prospects;

In addition, the students will have access to:

- (a) **A study enrichment programme** - consisting of regular/ annual lectures and talks provided by relevant international industry experts, senior professionals and scholars, and study visits to organisations and businesses.
- (b) **Study materials** - indicative reading is specified in the module reference sheets/ course readers with the necessary private study being supported by access to the RAU virtual learning environment (Gateway) and the full library resource facilities.
- (c) **The University's Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Programme (E&EP)** provides comprehensive support, advice and expertise to students, staff and alumni who wish to start their own business. E&EP is embedded in University curriculum and is also offered on an extra-curricular basis. The E&EP is open to all University students, alumni and staff. Should students already be running their own business or should they wish to start one, they can link their work on/in their businesses for their 'Applied Research Challenge' module.

16.2 Assessment Strategies

A wide variety of assessment methods are used including the writing of professional reports, presentations, competitive reviews, reflective essays, case studies analysis, critical academic papers, marketing plan, business evaluation projects and written examinations, culminating in the writing of a substantial piece of applied practical research as part of the Applied Research Challenge module.

This programme is inclusive of disabled people (e.g. hearing impaired, vision impaired, speech impaired, dyslexic and mobility impaired) with particular regard to teaching, learning and assessment, in accordance with Part 10: Inclusive Practice of the University's Teaching Quality Handbook and the [Equality Act 2010](#). Students are encouraged to disclose any impairment to the Disability Officer so that the appropriate support can be provided. Students have the right to request that the nature of their impairment be treated as confidential.

17. Work-based learning

Not applicable.

18. Quality assurance procedures

The framework of policies and structures of the University which form the basis for quality assurance and standards for academic programmes are described in the Teaching Quality Handbook and include procedures for:

- Programme and module development, monitoring and review;
- Students assessment, progression and awards;
- Assessment, moderation and External Examining.

18.1 The Programme Management Group (PMG)

The function of the Group is to ensure that the programme provision:

- aligns with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ – Level 7) and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA);
- recognises and adheres to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code in terms of academic quality and standards and to subject benchmark statements: Master's degrees in Business and Management (2007); Master's degree characteristics: type 3

18.2 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

The PMG will undertake a number of activities to ensure its function in relation to continuous maintenance, review and improvement of quality and standards relating to teaching, learning and assessment. These will include mechanisms such as:

- preparation and scrutiny of annual module leader review reports to identify any issues, areas of good practice for dissemination and consideration of future development;
- regular PMG meetings;
- responses to External Examiner reports regarding commentary on quality and standards of the programme;
- preparation of the Annual Programme Manager Report (APMR), approved by the Dean and scrutinised by the University Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC);
- periodic review and revalidation (including external consultation and input);
- regular stakeholder meetings with industry representatives/ employers via, for example, the School Advisory Council.

18.3 The Programme Committee

The role of the Committee (which includes student representation) will be to discuss general issues relating to teaching, learning resources, curriculum and careers guidance. The Committee which will normally meet twice a year will consist of the following:

- The programme manager (with responsibility for all aspects of the day-to-day academic management and administration of the programme);
- The Dean of SBE;
- Link tutor for collaborative partnership (USU);
- Academic staff representatives (module leaders and those with significant responsibility for or input to the programme);
- Two student representatives, elected by their peers.

19. Marking guides and assessment regulations

Details of the University's marking criteria for coursework and examinations and the regulations for assessment and progression are available on the intranet/ and Gateway: <http://www.rau.ac.uk/study/academic-policies-and-procedures/assessment-regulations-and-marking-criteria>.

20. Ownership of programme specification

The Programme Management Group, under the general auspices of the School of Business and Entrepreneurship, has responsibility for the management of the programme.

21. Curriculum map

The curriculum map, showing where programme learning outcomes relate to module outcomes, is appended at **Annex 1** below.

22. Career prospects

The IFAB MBA programme aims at attracting students from overseas as well as UK students, who wish to enhance their career prospects across the global and increasingly complex and competitive food and agribusiness industry sectors. The programme will prepare students for senior management roles and senior level strategic positions within companies, agencies, or institutions where international business is a major activity across a wide-range of areas which may include:

- Food processing;
- Procurement;
- Public relations;
- Research & development;
- Policy/Government service;
- Agricultural and food marketing;
- Supply chain management.

Some of the previous graduates of our MBA programmes have gone on to develop successful careers as food experts/ consultants in transnational companies, while others have secured management positions in the UK food industry. The programme has also attracted international students who have returned to their home countries to be promoted to senior management positions.

Completion of this programme enables talented and business-minded graduates to progress into successful careers across all areas of the global agribusiness sector in such areas as:

- Business Management in a wide variety of organisations;
- International Food Expertise/Consultancy (employed in private companies, governments or international organisations such as FAO, World Bank or European Commission);
- Project co-ordination - overseeing international projects and operations;
- Operational support: building international relations for an organisation.

23. Further information

Further information is available on the University website and, for current students, via the intranet and programme and module pages on Gateway.

24. Module reference sheets

Module reference sheets are provided at Appendix 1:

- (4xxx) Sustainable Business Strategy*
- (4xxx) Operation Management*
- (4xxx) Agricultural Economics*
- (4xxx) Leadership and Change*
- (4xxx) International Marketing Management*
- (4xxx) International Financial Management*
- (4095) International Agri-food Marketing
- (4111) Critical Issues in Food Technology and Innovation
- (4xxx) International Agribusiness Finance and Investments*
- (4014) Food Chain
- (4xxx) Applied Research Challenge*

Choice of electives from:

- (4080) Development Project Management;
- (4xxx) Retail & Shopper Marketing;
- (3096) Wine Industry;
- (4078) International Business;
- (4205) Critical Issues in Ethical Leadership;
- (3211) Practical E-business and E-commerce.
- (4xxx) Economics of the Environment;
- (3084) Entrepreneurship.

* denotes redesigned modules.

Annex 1: Curriculum Map (for specific detail of outcomes and where assessed)

Programme outcomes	Sustainable Business Strategy	Operations Management	Agricultural Economics	Leadership and Change	International Marketing Management	International Financial Management	International Agri-Food Marketing	Critical Issues in Food Tech & Inno	Food chain	International Agribusiness Finance and Investments	Applied Research Challenge
Knowledge and Understanding											
A1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x
A2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
A3	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
A4	x			x	x	x	x				x
Intellectual Skills											
B1	x	x				x				x	x
B2	x		x	x		x	x	x			x
B3	x	x	x				x			x	
B4		x	x	x	x				x		x
B5				x							x
B6		x			x						x
Practical/ Professional Skills											
C1		x				x	x			x	
C2	x		x	x	x						x
C3	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x
C4		x		x							x
C5	x	x	x	x		x	x			x	x
C6		x					x	x	x		
C7		x									
Transferable Skills											
D1	x			x		x					x
D2					x		x				
D3	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
D4					x		x	x	x	x	
D5			x								x