



## Introduction

This short booklet is designed to help you to apply for the MBA Programme and complete your Application Form for the Competency Report.

Learners applying for an MBA are expected to have **at least three years' experience in a management role**. You are required to complete a Test Competency Report and this will be discussed at your admissions interview with members of the programme team.

## Key Steps

**Step 1:** Apply online for the Masters in Business Administration via <https://www.griffith.ie/apply-online>

**Step 2:** You should prepare:

- A letter of application outlining why you are a suitable candidate for the Masters in Business Administration
- A brief (one A4 page) outline of your current, most recent role or future role:
  - Your job title.
  - The organisation's name.
  - The organisation's contact details (address, phone, fax, email, website, etc.).
  - The person to whom you report/reported (name, job title, address, phone, fax, email).
  - A description of who reports to you (the number of people and their key role or roles).
  - A list of your key duties and responsibilities.
  - An organisational chart which details your own position, responsibilities and reporting structures.
  - For non-EU learners, a short note (one A4 page) on your current visa status e.g. whether you have a current Graduate Scheme Visa, Experiential Learning Visa or full Work Visa and its expiry date.
- An up to date CV (2 - 3 A4 pages) that includes a summary of your current and past positions and current and past education.
- A short (one A4 page) profile of your current or past organisation and the sector in which it operates. This should include the history, age, performance, products/services, served markets, competitive position and list of competitors, and general goals and objectives.

If you are currently or soon to be employed you are advised to use these same documents as a basis for discussion with your employer organisation or industry/sector body prior to commencing your studies on the MBA Stage. This will ensure that your employer is fully aware of your studies.

**Step 3:** Prepare a Test Competency Report. This involves reflecting on and discussing your development as a manager thus far in your career. The full Competency Report is explained later in this handbook. For your **Test Competency Report** you should select one or two themes e.g.:

- Self-management
- Leading change

Choose two or three core competencies in each theme e.g.:

- Self-management: Time Management
- Leading change: Creative and Innovative

Use the guidelines to develop an example that demonstrate each competency i.e. two for 'time management' and two for 'creative and innovative'. The purpose of the Test Competency Report is to be sure that you have enough experience to complete the entire report.

**Step 4:** Submit the letter of application, role outline, CV, organisation profile, CV, and Test Competency Report, via email, to the MBA Year Head

**Step 5:** Arrange an interview with the MBA Year Head. At the interview you may be asked to provide further details on your suitability for studying the MBA. The MBA Year Head will evaluate the outline using the following:

- Capacity to test and expand your capabilities within the broad requirements of the MBA Competency Framework.
- Capacity to complete a company or industry report within the agreed timeframe.
- Relevance to your current employer and/or future employment prospects.
- The suitability for measurement and assessment.
- Ability to obtain a visa for those requiring one.

**Step 6:** The MBA Assessment Committee will approve or reject your application in principle. The decision will normally be communicated to you by email.

**Step 7:** Once approved to study and you are currently employed you should formally submit to your employing organisation the details of your Competency Report and seek written, signed confirmation of the organisation's agreement to use that experience as a basis of study. A scanned

copy of this should be kept for inclusion in the final report(s). You cannot formally register for the programme (or apply for a visa if required) until this task is completed satisfactorily.

**Step 8:** For non-EU learners you may need to obtain a new or extended visa prior to the commencement of your studies. This will require completion of additional requirements such as a sponsor letter from your employer, a sponsor letter from the Graduate Business School, a sponsor letter from the GCD International Office and a letter of approval from the Department of Justice/GNIB. These requirements will be discussed further at the interview stage.

## **MBA Application and Test Competency Report**

Your MBA Application and Test Competency Report should be in the following structure and should be produced to a professional management standard – a document capable of being presented to the Board of your company:

- A **Title Page**, including word count, with your name and application number, etc.
- **Table of Contents**, including page numbers.
- A letter or note of application outlining why you are a suitable candidate for the MBA award.
- A brief **outline of your current or most recent role**:
- Your job title.
- Your organisation's name.
- The organisation's contact details (address, phone, fax, email, website, etc.).
- The person to whom you report(ed) - (name, job title, address, phone, fax, email).
- A description of who reports to you (the number of people and their key role or roles).
- A list of your key responsibilities and duties
- An organisation chart which details your own position, responsibilities and reporting structures.
- For non-EU learners, a note on your current visa status e.g. whether you have a current Graduate Scheme Visa, Experiential Learning Visa or full Work Visa and its expiry date.
- An up to date **CV** that includes a summary of your current and past positions and current and past education.
- A short (one A4 page) **profile of your current or past organisation(s)** and the sector in which it operates. This should include the history, age, performance, products/services, served markets, competitive position and list of competitors, and general goals and objectives.
- A **Test Competency Report** which includes a Test Competency Framework (see following pages), two, three or – four completed sections and a note on any references used.

The easiest way to complete the test competency section is to cut-and-paste the competencies from this document to your application.

In writing up each of the chosen competencies include one example which shows how you were able to meet the requirements of the competency (or sometimes two examples if one is not sufficient to demonstrate fully that you meet the requirements). You should:

1. Describe the **context or situation** (or situations if you use more than one example) that provided you with the opportunity to demonstrate how you needed to use/experience this competency. Describe what it was in the situation that required your intervention. Describe it as a problem to be solved or an issue to be resolved.
2. Provide an **analysis** of how and why the situation is an example of this particular competence (mention, where possible, specific models, techniques, tools, etc. that you learned about in Stages 1 and 2 of the Programme that helped you to do this). Record any conclusions you came to about what needed to be done.
3. Explain what **actions** you took (what you did) and the reactions from other stakeholders you had to deal with.
4. Describe the **outcome**. How did relevant people or organisations react? What was the impact? How successful was your intervention?
5. Provide an evaluation of what you learned from the experience. Discuss how this has helped you to develop as a manager.

As an experiential learning situation we need to know the problem or issue, we need to know your analysis of that problem, then your solution, followed by the outcome of your intervention, and finally your reflections on what the whole incident/experience taught you and what you learned from it that would help to define you as a promising manager.

Sometimes it is difficult to write about each of these five steps - and the final one can be most difficult. However, do your best to cover all five points.

To complete these competencies write in the key attributes boxes (on the following pages) the short description of each competency. The box expands to meet the description of each experience you are able to provide. **The same experience may, of course, be used with more than one competency where applicable.** But **do not** use a situation for more than **three** competencies and **do** provide a separate analysis, outcome and evaluation as these will be different.

## MBA Competencies

### 1. Building Coalitions

#### Core Competencies:

#### Key attributes:

<b>1.1 Influencing/ Negotiating</b>	Promotes ideas and proposals persuasively, shapes stakeholder opinions, projects a positive image, works through conflicts, and negotiates win-win solutions.
<b>1.2 Political Savvy</b>	Cultivates an active network of relationships inside and outside the organisation, relates well to others (bosses, peers, colleagues, direct reports), and stays in touch with employees at all levels.
<b>1.3 Oral &amp; Written Communications</b>	Delivers clear, convincing and well-organised presentations, projects credibility and poise even in highly visible adversarial situations.
<b>1.4 Partnering Networking Alliances</b>	Develops networks and builds alliances, engages in cross-functional activities; collaborates across boundaries, and finds common ground with a wide range of stakeholders. Utilises contact to build and strengthen internal support bases.



## 2. Self-Management:

### Core Competencies:

### Key attributes:

<b>2.1 Self Appraisal &amp; Analysis</b>	Is constantly & objectively analysing own performance and demonstrates willingness to allow others to evaluate.
<b>2.2 Flexibility</b>	Is open to change and new information; adapts behaviour and work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles. Adjusts rapidly to new situations warranting attention and resolution.
<b>2.3 Mature Confidence</b>	Realistically appraises own stress and weaknesses, shares credit and visibility, maintains and projects confidence even when not supported by others.
<b>2.4 Judgement</b>	Applies broad knowledge and experience when addressing complex issues, defines strategic issues clearly despite ambiguity, takes all critical information into account when making decisions, and makes timely and tough decisions.
<b>2.5 Time Management</b>	Manages time effectively.
<b>2.6 Project Management</b>	Demonstrates effective Project Management tools & capabilities.

### 3. Leading Change

#### Core Competencies:

#### Key attributes:

<b>3.1 Continual Learning</b>	Grasps the essence of new information; masters new technical and business knowledge; recognises own strengths and weaknesses; pursues self-development; seeks feedback from others and opportunities to master new knowledge.
<b>3.2 Creative &amp; Innovative</b>	Develops new insights into situations and applies innovative solutions to make organisational improvements; creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking and innovation; designs and implements new or cutting edge programs/processes.
<b>3.3 External Awareness</b>	Identifies and keeps up to date on key national and international policies and economic, political, and social trends that affect the organisation. Understands near-term and long-range plans and determines how best to be positioned to achieve a competitive business advantage in a global economy.
<b>3.4 Critical Thinking</b>	Formulates effective strategies consistent with the business and competitive strategy of the organisation in a global economy. Examines policy issues and strategic planning with a long-term perspective. Determines objectives and sets priorities; anticipates potential threats or opportunities.
<b>3.5 Resilience</b>	Deals effectively with pressure; maintains focus and intensity and remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks. Effectively balances personal life and work.
<b>3.6 Strategic Thinker/Shaper</b>	Develops distinctive strategies to achieve competitive advantage, translates broad strategies into specific objectives and Action Plans, and aligns the organisation to support strategic priorities.
<b>3.7 Vision/Visionary</b>	Possesses a clear vision for the business or operation, maintains a long-term be a picture view, foresees obstacles and opportunities, generates ideas.
<b>3.8 Entrepreneurial</b>	Champions new ideas and initiatives, identifies new business opportunities and makes them a reality, fosters innovation and risk-taking.
<b>3.9 Global Perspective</b>	Keeps abreast of important trends that impact the business or organisation (technological, competitive, social, economic), understands the position of the organisation within a global context.

#### 4. Results Driven:

##### Core Competencies:

##### Key attributes:

<b>4.1 Motivation</b>	Maintains a positive outlook, resists stress and works constructively under pressure, responds resourcefully to change in ambiguity.
<b>4.2 Accountability</b>	Assures that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organisation. Holds self and others accountable for rules and responsibilities. Can be relied upon to ensure that projects within areas of specific responsibility are completed in a timely manner and within budget. Monitors and evaluates plans; focuses on results and measures attainment of outcomes.
<b>4.3 Customer Service orientation</b>	Balances the interests of a variety of clients; readily readjusts priorities to respond to pressing and changing client demands. Anticipates and meets the need of clients; achieves quality end-products; is committed to continuous improvement of services.
<b>4.4 Decisiveness/ Execution</b>	Assigns clear authority and accountability, directs change while maintaining operational effectiveness, integrates and aligns efforts across units and functions, monitors results, tackles problems directly and with dispatch.
<b>4.5 Problem Solving</b>	Identifies and analyses problems; distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant information to make logical decisions; provides solutions to individual and organisational problems.
<b>4.6 Technical Credibility</b>	Understands and appropriately applies procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialised expertise. Is able to make sound hiring and capital resource decisions and to address training and development needs. Understands linkages between administrative competencies and mission needs.
<b>4.7 Stakeholder Success Focus</b>	Sets and pursues aggressive goals, drives for results, demonstrates a strong commitment to organisational success, works to do what is best for all stakeholders (customers, shareholders, and employees).

## 5. Business Acumen:

### Core Competencies:

### Key attributes:

<b>5.1 Financial management</b>	Understands the meaning and implications of key financial indicators, manages overall financial performance, uses financial analysis to create and evaluate strategic options and opportunities.
<b>5.2 Human Resource Management</b>	Assesses current and future staffing needs based on organisational goals and budget realities. Uses merit principles, ensures staff are appropriately selected, developed, utilised, appraised, and rewarded; takes corrective action.
<b>5.3 Technology Management</b>	Uses efficient and cost-effective approaches to integrate technology into the workplace and improve program effectiveness. Develops strategies using new technology to enhance decision-making. Understands the impact of technological changes on the organisation.
<b>5.4 Industry Knowledge</b>	Knows what it takes to be successful in the industry, has a thorough knowledge of the industry's history, customers, and competitive environment.
<b>5.5 Business Situation Versatility</b>	Knows how to get things done in complex, multilevel organisations. Accepts and understands the nature of change.
<b>5.6 Multi-Disciplinary Functionality</b>	Understands the role and interrelationship of each organisational function (marketing, sales, operations, finance, human resource), has experience and skill in managing cross-functional and organisational lines.
<b>5.7 Critical Analysis</b>	Formulates effective strategies consistent with the business and competitive strategy of the organisation in a global economy. Examines policy issues and strategic planning with a long-term perspective. Determines objectives and sets priorities; anticipates potential threats or opportunities.

## 6. Leading People:

### Core Competencies:

### Key attributes:

<b>6.1 Interpersonal Skills</b>	Promotes a free flow of information and communication throughout the organisation (upward, downward and across), listens actively and encourages open expression of ideas and opinions.
<b>6.2 Conflict Management/Resolution</b>	Identifies and takes steps to prevent potential situations that could result in unpleasant confrontations. Manages and resolves conflicts and disagreements in a positive and constructive manner to minimise negative impact.
<b>6.3 Leveraging Diversity</b>	Recruits, develops, and retains a diverse, high quality workforce in an equitable manner. Leads and manages an inclusive workplace that maximises the talents of each person to achieve sound business results. Respects, understands, values, and seeks out individual differences to achieve the vision and mission of the organisation. Develops and uses measures and rewards to hold self and others accountable for achieving results that embody the principles of diversity.
<b>6.4 Integrity/ Honesty/Ethics</b>	Establish open, candid, trusting relationships, treats all individuals fairly and with respect, behaves in accordance with expressed beliefs and commitments, maintains high standards of integrity.
<b>6.5 Team Building/Trust</b>	Plays a variety of leadership roles (driving, delegating, supporting, and coaching) as appropriate, adopts a style and approach to match the needs of different individuals and teams.
<b>6.6 Empowering</b>	Creates a climate that fosters Personal Investment and excellence, nurtures commitment to a common vision and shared values.
<b>6.7 Attracting &amp; Developing Talent</b>	Attracts high-calibre people, develops teams and talent with diverse capabilities, and accurately appraises the strengths and weaknesses of others.
<b>6.8 Organisational Awareness</b>	Understands how the organisation works, where the power coalitions are and who controls them, recognises strengths & weaknesses and has a comprehensive understanding of the Value Chain.