ASSOCIATION OF AMBAS

BE IN BRILLIANT COMPANY

AMBA ACCREDITATION GUIDANCE FOR BUSINESS SCHOOLS

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Introduction

The Association of MBAs is the international impartial authority on postgraduate business education and was established in 1967. AMBA's charitable objective is to advance management education at postgraduate level whilst its accreditation service is the global standard for MBA, DBA and MBM programmes. AMBA currently accredits programmes at over 245 Business Schools and is the only professional membership association connecting MBA students, graduates, accredited Business Schools and MBA employers in more than 80 countries.

AMBA Governance

AMBA is a charity registered in the UK and governed by a Board of Trustees known as the International Management Board (IMB). A full list of AMBA trustees can be found on the AMBA website at mbaworld.com. Accreditation oversight is devolved by the IMB to the International Accreditation Advisory Board (IAAB) and a full list of IAAB members can be found in Appendix 1. The AMBA Articles of Association can be found on the AMBA website.

Who is this document for?

This document is for Business School staff who are considering accreditation of their MBA, MBM or DBA programmes or those Schools with a re-accreditation visit due.

What is the document for?

This document is intended as an introduction only. It should not replace communication with AMBA staff who can provide support and critical information before your AMBA assessment visit.

The guidance in this document provides details about the AMBA accreditation process for the following programmes:

- Masters in Business Administration (MBA)
- Masters in Business and Management (MBM)
- Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

AMBA ensures high quality, timely and customer-focused accreditation based on a unique formula of a dedicated account manager for support and advice, a peer review panel and appropriate documentation. AMBA currently offers a number of routes for accreditation:

Accreditation for New Schools: Institutions following this route will be required to make a full application through all four stages of the process (outlined in Appendix 2), submit relevant documentation including a Self-Assessment Form and Self Audit Report and receive a visit from an AMBA accreditation panel. Please see section 2.1 for more details.

Re-Accreditation: AMBA accreditation is awarded for a defined period of time, and Schools are prompted when their accreditation is due for renewal. Schools will need to complete the final two stages of the process (outlined in Appendix 2) and also submit relevant

documentation including the Self-Assessment Form and Self-Audit Report and receive a visit from an AMBA accreditation panel. Please see section 2.2 for more details.

Advanced Accreditation: In order to provide additional value to Schools with a long history of success in the AMBA accreditation process, AMBA has developed an Advanced Accreditation Process (AAP) for Schools which have been awarded three consecutive five-year accreditations with no conditions and with no significant risks (e.g. large scale distance learning provision, multiple off-site provision, franchises, recent mergers or substantive changes to the Business School or MBA portfolio since the last assessment visit).

The AAP will involve the following:

- A full one-day peer reviewed assessment visit; and
- Reduced documentation (mostly data rather than narrative).

AAP still requires assessment teams to undertake a similar amount of preparation to that required by the standard process, with a significant proportion of the auditing undertaken prior to the meetings with School staff.

Business Schools undergoing the AAP will still need to provide evidence that all the accreditation criteria are being met for continued accreditation to be awarded. Care has been taken to ensure that the rigour of the process is maintained. While every effort will be made to add significant advice on *quality enhancement* during the AAP (which is an important element of the AMBA accreditation process) the focused nature of this visit will be primarily based on *quality assurance*. Schools eligible for AAP may therefore choose to undergo the standard procedure if they wish to receive more extensive developmental feedback. Please see section 2.3 for more details.

If you have any questions about AMBA accreditation please do contact: accreditation@mbaworld.com

1. CORE PRINCIPLES OF AMBA ACCREDITATION

1.1 Rationale

AMBA's rigorous assessment criteria ensure that only highest calibre programmes achieve AMBA accreditation. Unlike other business education accreditation bodies AMBA focuses on individual programmes rather than entire provision of Business School or Institution. This unique, in-depth and detailed approach means that the highest standards of teaching and learning are guaranteed by AMBA accreditation.

AMBA believes that programmes should demonstrate best practice and reflect changing trends and innovation in postgraduate management education. The AMBA accreditation process reflects this commitment to fostering innovation and challenges Business Schools to continuously perform at the highest level.

1.2 Guiding Principles

The AMBA accreditation scheme is designed to provide stakeholders such as potential MBA students and employers with a quality indicator so that they can make informed choices and decisions. AMBA represent its stakeholders by ensuring that AMBA only accredits programmes which demonstrate current best practice in management education, coverage of relevant syllabus topics, and provision of support for students and alumni which enhance the overall learning experience.

As a registered charity, accreditation also facilitates AMBA's work to improve standards in postgraduate management education and share best practice with emerging markets and developing Business Schools. AMBA's experienced peer review teams, thought leadership and research and lobbying and representation of the management education sector all contribute to achieving this.

For many potential students AMBA is the first port of call when considering further studies. Prospective MBA students value AMBA accreditation, as its portfolio approach means that AMBA reviews every MBA programme delivered at each institution. Students can be assured that an AMBA accredited School provides comparable quality and learning experience with each MBA programme they deliver. AMBA also reviews the provision of MBM and DBA programmes offered by its accredited Schools.

The AMBA accreditation criteria is overseen by the International Accreditation Advisory Board (IAAB) which is formed of Deans and senior academics from AMBA's global accredited Business Schools. A full list of IAAB members can be found in Appendix 1. Relevance and consistency is key to the accreditation process; the accreditation criteria are reviewed fully every five years. The IAAB conducted the last full review of the AMBA accreditation criteria in 2016, following extensive con

distance or blended learning and to enhance the focus on areas such as programme outcomes and impact as well as student diversity.

2. ACCREDITATION PROCESS

2.1 New Schools

There are four stages for Business Schools without prior AMBA accreditation. At each stage there are documents to submit and corresponding payments in order to progress to the next stage. You can view an overview of the four stages in Appendix 2 and they are also listed and explained below:

- Initial Stage
- Pre-Assessment Stage
- Assessment Stage
- Post-Assessment Stage

2.1.1 Initial Stage

Interested Business Schools are advised to first contact the AMBA accreditation team at accreditation@mbaworld.com so that they may discuss the programmes you deliver and the relevant AMBA accreditation criteria with you. This time can be used to answer any questions you have about the criteria or process. The team will be happy to meet with you in person at AMBA's London office and correspond via e-mail and telephone. AMBA accreditation staff may also be able to visit you locally, even if you are based overseas. You can view and download copies of the AMBA accreditation criteria online.

Once you are ready to make a formal application, please contact AMBA at accreditation@mbaworld.com so that you can be allocated a specific account manager who will progress your application through to completion.

New Schools must confirm that they understand the AMBA accreditation process and criteria by sending a *formal letter of intent*, agreeing to the relevant terms and conditions. An example of this can be found in Appendix 3. Once this has been received by AMBA an invoice will be sent to the School for payment of the *non-refundable registration fee*. For more information on fees please see Appendices 4 and 5. The institution will then be asked to submit their *Application Form* which will be reviewed by their account manager. AMBA will provide a template *Application Form* for use.

Your AMBA account manager will be able to provide you with guidance and support when completing the form which is basic at this stage and is used to determine that

i) the main quantifiable criteria for accreditation are being met by the School and the programme/s; and
ii) to ensure that Schools do not progress any further and complete unnecessary work or payments without this check being carried out by a member of AMBA staff.

Once the *Application Form* has been reviewed, and any issues resolved, the School will be formally invited to become a *candidate for accreditation* and will progress to the next stage.

Please note that, once AMBA has received the *non-refundable registration fee* and *Application Form* from your School, it is anticipated that it can take up to four weeks for AMBA to confirm the School's eligibility.

2.1.2 Pre-Assessment Stage

Once your School is formally candidate *for accreditation* AMBA will send a second invoice for payment of the *non-refundable Pre-Assessment fee*. For more information on fees please see Appendix 4 and 8. You will also be sent a template *Self-Assessment Form* (SAF) for completion. This will be sent onto the I*AAB Eligibility Committee* for review. The I*AAB Eligibility Committee* will confirm whether the accreditation application can progress any further, based on an evaluation of the SAF against AMBA's key criteria. Please note that the SAF cannot be processed until the *non-refundable Pre-Assessment fee* has been paid.

In any instances where eligibility is denied, full written feedback will be provided to the School including guidance on whether any issues can be resolved and when further attempts should be made. Once AMBA has received the *non-refundable Pre-Assessment fee* and extended SAF from your School, it is anticipated that it can take up to four weeks to receive confirmation on continuing the application.

2.1.3 Assessment Stage

The AMBA account manager will inform your School whether eligibility has been confirmed. In some cases AMBA will arrange for a member of AMBA staff to complete a *pre-assessment visit*. This can be useful for Schools who are new to accreditation and require further additional support. In such instances your School will be asked to bear any costs incurred by this visit.

Once eligibility is confirmed by the *IAAB Eligibility Committee*, and any necessary *pre-assessment visit* is complete, tg9 0 Td w (i)T5-2 /TT2 11.e(0)952(er)4.[(S)2-(0)8.9(10.8)-2.1 (0)-95 Tc

Once the assessment visit dates are set your account manager will start work setting the accreditation assessor panel. In order to comply with UK Anti-Bribery and Corruption legislation, Business Schools may not suggest panel members. The panel information will be provided by AMBA as soon as it is confirmed. You will also be sent the *Base Room Requirements* and a template *Agenda* for the assessment visit that will indicate which members of School staff should attend each panel meeting. An example of the accreditation visit Agenda can be found in Appendix 9. Information on the accreditation visit, what to expect, and how to prepare, can be found in section 2.4. The *Base Room Requirements* can be found in Appendix 10. AMBA uses the same template Agenda at all assessment visits to ensure each School has the same opportunity to present themselves to the AMBA assessment panel.

Following the accreditation visit from the AMBA panel, a full invoice for travel, accommodation and subsistence incurred by the panel during the visit will be compiled and submitted to the School. This is known as the *Recharges Invoice*. Please do not ask assessors to send their expenses directly to your institution. It is anticipated that *Recharges Invoice* will take up to four to six weeks to compile and submit to you. Please see Appendix 5 for further information concerning this.

2.1.4 Post-Assessment Stage

Once the accreditation visit is complete the panel will produce a final report, usually within six weeks. This report will be sent to your School for fact-checking, once AMBA has received full payment for any costs incurred by the panel (see Appendix 5.) During this stage AMBA welcomes any amendments your School would like to make to the factual parts of the documentation. Please note that it is not possible to change any opinions or analysis in the panel's report. Once AMBA has received your feedback the report will be submitted to the *IAAB Endorsement Committee* who will review the recommendations from the assessment panel and make a final decision. Please see Appendix 7 for a full list of *IAAB Endorsement Committee* members. You will receive an update from your account manager once the decision has been endorsed (usually within four weeks) and a copy of the final version of the *Accreditation Report* for your records. The report will also contain information about when your School will be due for re-accreditation. You can read a list of all the steps in the endorsement process in Appendix 8.

Please continue to section 2.6 for information on finalising the accreditation.

2.2 Re-Accreditation

Schools which have previously been accredited by AMBA, and who are due for re-accreditation will follow the final two stages of the accreditation process. You can view an overview of these stages in Appendix 2 and they are also listed and explained below:

- Assessment Stage
- Post-Assessment Stage

2.2.1 Assessment Stage

AMBA will send your School a reminder between twelve and nine months before your re-accreditation visit is due. You will be asked to sign the *AMBA Cost Schedule* (see Appendix 4b) to confirm that you are happy with the charge for the re-assessment visit and to pay for any assessor expenses incurred during the visit. In preparation for the assessment visit, Schools should view and download copies of the AMBA accreditation criteria online.

You will need to arrange dates for the assessment visit with AMBA and provide a named point of contact for AMBA to liaise with. The following documents will be required three weeks before the assessment visit:

- *Self-Assessment Form (SAF)*
- *Self-Audit Report (SAR)*

Your AMBA account manager will be able to provide you with guidance and support when you are completing these documents. An invoice for the *Assessment Fee* will be issued by AMBA between eight and twelve weeks before the accreditation visit. For more information on fees please see Appendices 4 and 5.

Your AMBA account manager will be able to confirm the names of the panel members between two and three months before the assessment visit. In order to comply with UK Anti-Bribery & Corruption legislation, Business Schools may not suggest panel members. You will also be sent the *Base Room Requirements* and a template *Agenda* for the visit which indicates which members of School staff should attend each panel meeting. An example of the accreditation visit *Agenda* can be found in Appendix 9. Information on the accreditation visit, what to expect and how to prepare can be found in section 2.4. The *Base Room Requirements can be found in Appendix 10*. AMBA uses the same template Agenda at all assessment visits to ensure each School has the same opportunity to presenting themselves to the AMBA assessment panel.

Following the accreditation visit from the AMBA panel, a full invoice for travel, accommodation and subsistence incurred by the panel during the visit will be compiled and submitted to the School. This is known as the *Recharges Invoice*. Please do not ask assessors to send their expenses directly to your institution. It is anticipated that the *Recharges Invoice* will take four to six weeks to compile and submit to you. Please see Appendix 5 for further information on this.

2.2.2 Post-Assessment Stage

Once the assessment visit is complete the panel will produce a final report, usually within six weeks of the date of the accreditation visit. This report will be sent to your School for fact checking once AMBA has received full payment for any costs incurred by the panel, see Appendix 5. During this stage AMBA welcomes any amendments your School would like to make to the factual parts of the documentation. Please note that it is not possible to change any opinions or analysis in the panel's report. Once AMBA has received your feedback the report will be submitted to the *IAAB Endorsement Committee* who will review the recommendations from the assessment panel and make a final decision. Please see Appendix 7 for a full list of *IAAB Endorsement Committee members*. You will receive an update from your account manager once the decision has been endorsed (usually within four weeks) and a copy of the final version of the *Accreditation Report* for your records. The report will also contain information about when your School will be due for re-accreditation. You can read a list of all the steps in the endorsement process in Appendix 8.

Please continue to section 2.6 for information on finalising the accreditation.

2.3 Advanced Accreditation

Schools which are eligible for the Advanced Accreditation Process (AAP) will be notified in advance. Please see page 3 for details on eligibility. When re-accreditation is due, eligible Business Schools will follow the final two stages of the accreditation process. You can view an overview of these stages in Appendix 2 and they are also listed and explained below:

- Assessment Stage
- Post-Assessment Stage

2.3.1 Eligibility

Schools may only be eligible for AAP on the following basis:

- Three successive five-year accreditation periods with no conditions; and
- No substantiated complaints received from stakeholders.

However, for Schools that display the following features, the AAP approach will require further consideration and such Schools are not expected to be eligible:

- multiple programme accreditation (DBA/MBA/MBM);
- large scale distance learning provision;
- multiple off-site provision;
- franchises; and
- recent mergers or substantive changes to the Business School or MBA portfolio since the last assessment visit.

Other instances of complexity may also necessitate further consideration.

2.3.2 Assessment Stage

AMBA will send your School a reminder between twelve and nine months before your re-accreditation visit is due. You will be asked to sign the *AMBA Cost Schedule* (see Appendix 4b) to confirm that you are happy with the charge for the re-assessment visit and to pay for any assessor expenses incurred during the visit. In preparation for the assessment visit, Schools should view and download copies of the AMBA accreditation criteria online.

You will need to arrange dates for the assessment visit with AMBA and provide a named point of contact for AMBA to liaise with. You will need to submit *SAF* at least three weeks before the assessment visit takes place. There is no requirement to complete the *SAR.* Your AMBA account manager will be able to provide you with guidance and support, if needed, when you are completing the *SAF*.

An invoice for the *Assessment Fee* will be issued by AMBA between eight and twelve weeks before the accreditation visit. For more information on fees please see Appendices 4 and 5. Your AMBA account manager will be able to confirm the names of the panel members approximately 2-3 months before the assessment visit. In order to comply with UK Anti-Bribery & Corruption legislation, Business Schools may not suggest panel members. You will also be

sent the *Base Room Requirements* and a template *Agenda* for the visit which indicates which members of School staff should attend each panel meeting. An example of the Advanced Accreditation assessment visit *Agenda* can be found in Appendix 9. Information on the accreditation visit, what to expect and how to prepare can be found in section 2.4. *The Base Room Requirements* can be found in Appendix 10. AMBA uses the same template Advanced Accreditation assessment visit *Agenda* at all AAP assessment visits to ensure each School has the same opportunity to presenting themselves to the AMBA assessment panel.

It should be noted that Schools undergoing AAP have a reduced agenda of one day rather than two, and the documentation is reduced as the SAR is not required. All Schools undergoing the AAP will still need to provide evidence that all the accreditation criteria are being met for continued accreditation to be awarded. While every effort will be made to add significant advice on *quality enhancement* during the AAP, which is an important element of the AMBA accreditation process, the focused nature of this visit will be primarily based on *quality assurance*. Schools eligible for AAP may therefore choose to undergo the standard procedure if they wish to receive more extensive developmental feedback.

Following the accreditation visit by the AMBA panel, a full invoice for travel, accommodation and subsistence incurred by the panel during the visit will be compiled and submitted to the School. This is known as the *Recharges Invoice*. Please do not ask assessors to send their expenses directly to your institution. It is anticipated that the *Recharges Invoice* will take up to four to six weeks to compile and submit to you. Please see Appendix 5 for further information on this.

2.3.3 Post-Assessment Stage

Once the assessment visit is complete the panel will produce a final report, usually within six weeks of the date of the accreditation visit. This report will be sent to your School for fact-checking once AMBA has received full payment for any costs incurred by the panel. During this stage AMBA welcomes any amendments your School would like to make to the factual parts of the documentation. Please note that it is not possible to change any opinions or analysis in the panel's report. Once AMBA has received your feedback the report will be submitted to the *IAAB Endorsement Committee* who will review the recommendations from the assessment panel and make a final decision. Please see Appendix 7 for a full list of *IAAB Endorsement Committee members*. You will receive an update from your account manager once the decision has been endorsed (usually with four weeks) and a copy of the final version of the *Accreditation Report* for your records. The report will also contain information about when your School will be due for re-accreditation. You can read a list of all the steps in the endorsement process in Appendix 8. Please continue to section 2.6 for information on finalising the accreditation.

2.4 The Accreditation Visit

Appendix 9 provides examples of the *Agenda* used for the various types of accreditation visits that AMBA delivers. AMBA will convene a panel which will include an AMBA representative and three academic staff from other AMBA accredited Business Schools. AMBA maintains a *Faculty of Assessors* in excess of 100 individuals and are all experienced postgraduate educators; many are Deans of Business Schools, Programme Directors/Managers or Module/Unit Leaders. AMBA will endeavour to ensure no local competitor Schools are placed on your panel, however if you have any questions or concerns please discuss with your account manager.

Unlike other accreditation organisations, AMBA pays their panel members a consultancy fee, and AMBA strives to ensure that the service you receive from the panel is professional and consistent. If you have any feedback on your assessment panel, please speak in complete confidence with your AMBA account manager. All members of the AMBA *Faculty of Assessors* receive initial training and regular refresher sessions. In most cases AMBA aims to select at least one member of the panel from the continent in which your School operates, and AMBA also aims to add an international member to every panel so that your School can gain the most from the peer review process. AMBA also ensures that any new assessors (maximum one per team) are always paired with an experienced team of panel members.

Schools are required to provide the assessment panel with a base room that can be used throughout accreditation visit. This should be a separate room to that used for the formal meetings. The base room should be private, and the panel will work here and leave personal items such including luggage. In addition to the documentation submitted to the panel in advance of the visit, all Schools are asked to provide base room documentation, a list of which can be found in Appendix 10. Your AMBA account manager will also let you know if any specific additional documents should be provided.

AMBA will arrange travel for the panel members to your city, however it is strongly recommended that your School organises airport transfers in addition to pick up and return to the hotel each day. It is recommended that the panel travel as a group where possible throughout the assessment visit. AMBA asks Schools to organise suitable hotel accommodation for the panel members. Your AMBA account manager will advise the best time and way to arrange this.

Hotel accommodation should be of a high standard, and preference should be given to establishments which are located close to the School. Long commutes between the Hotel and the School should be avoided. Panel members are happy to walk to the School from the Hotel if it is a suitable distance, however Schools are advised to check with the account manager about this, as panel members may have heavy bags and documents or lack suitable outdoor clothing.

2.5 Accreditation Outcomes

At the end of the second day of the visit, the assessment panel will provide initial verbal feedback to your School, which will include a preliminary accreditation decision and a set format is used to deliver this. The format includes commendations, recommendations and

conditions of accreditation. Please bear in mind that this feedback is preliminary in nature and will need to be ratified by the *IAAB Endorsement Committee* in the post-assessment stage of the process.

The Accreditation panel who visit your School have only the following options available to them:

New Schools:	Accreditation for 5 years
	Accreditation for 3 years
	Deferral of accreditation (with a reduced visit within one year),
	Denial of accreditation
Re-Accreditation:	Accreditation for 1 year
	Accreditation for 2 years
	Accreditation for 3 years
	Accreditation for 5 years
	Removal of accreditation

In instances where a shorter period of accreditation has been awarded (e.g. one or two years), the School is usually asked to report back to AMBA within a defined period of time, in order to indicate how any changes are being implemented to address any concerns raised. This is called a *Progress Report*, and is usually supported by documentary evidence. In some circumstances AMBA may arrange for a reduced assessment team (usually two members) to visit the School to ensure that the concerns have been addressed and resolved sufficiently.

In instances where Schools have multiple delivery sites or partners, AMBA is required to visit at least one overseas location during the accreditation cycle. This will be pre-arranged with the School and will be a one day visit undertaken by an AMBA representative. A full template agenda will be provided by AMBA.

Any report and findings made during the accreditation visit are confidential to AMBA and the School. Other than the School's accreditation status (i.e. accredited or non-accredited), AMBA does not share the outcomes of the assessment such as length of accreditation or the written reports with third parties, and all AMBA accreditation assessors are trained to understand the importance of confidentiality.

2.6 Finalising the Accreditation

Your accreditation is only complete once your account manager has sent you a copy of the IAAB-endorsed *Accreditation Report.* You will also receive an official confirmation letter from

AMBA. If you are a new School your certificate of accreditation will be sent to you in a frame. Re-accredited Schools will receive their certificate by post in a scroll so that it can be inserted into the original frame.

AMBA will only enter the details of your accreditation onto the AMBA website site once the final invoice for the panel expenses has been paid. If you would like a formal presentation of AMBA accreditation at the next annual Global AMBA Conference, please let your account manager know.

Please note that in order to maintain AMBA Accreditation, Schools are required to:

- Submit for desk review any new MBA programmes that are introduced between the date of the current assessment exercise and the next scheduled review, including MBA delivery in new locations and formats.
- Participate in the AMBA research and outreach activities such as the annual *Application and Enrolment Report* (also referred to as the *Dean's Report*)*;*
- Pay their annual AMBA membership subscription.

2.7 Appeals

In exceptional circumstances Schools may appeal specific aspects of the *IAAB*-endorsed accreditation decision such as; failure to follow due process or a disregard of material facts. Appeals on the basis of accreditation judgements will not be accepted. Appeals are

3. MAINTAINING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH AMBA

3.1 Promoting your AMBA Accreditation

Promoting your AMBA accreditation is an essential part of demonstrating the world-class quality of your institution in the highly competitive market for potential students. AMBA can help you to promote your accreditation and reach potential students in a number of ways.

3.1.1 Maintain your profile

Please keep your Business School profile and listing, shown on the AMBA website, up to date. The accredited programme search page is the most frequently visited on the AMBA website, with over 13,500 views per month, and can direct potential students to your own website or programmes. To make any changes to your School's listing please contact AMBA via accreditation@mbaworld.com .

3.1.2 Using the AMBA Logo

The Association of MBAs is recognised worldwide as a quality brand, and Schools are encouraged to use the 'AMBA Accredited' logo on marketing collateral, website and course literature. Once your portfolio is accredited you will receive information and support from AMBA which includes this logo and guidelines on how to use it.

3.1.3 Accredited MBA Fairs

Each year AMBA hosts Accredited MBA Fairs which provide an excellent opportunity for Schools to meet with pre-screened, high calibre potential MBA students in an 'accredited only' event. AMBA also participates in similar events held globally, and will inform local Schools when these events are taking place so that you may participate. If your School would like AMBA to hold an event in your area please let AMBA know by contacting the team at accreditation@mbaworld.com.

3.1.4 AMBA Awards

The AMBA awards recognise high achievers from the MBA arena, and every year accredited Business Schools and students are invited to participate in the competition which currently includes MBA student of the Year, MBA Innovation, MBA Entrepreneurial Venture, MBA Employer, and the Lifetime Achievement Award

3.1.5 Publications and Media partners

AMBA has a relationships with a range of media partners. Schools can also promote themselves via publications AMBA produce for pre and post MBA students.

3.1.6 AMBA Socials

AMBA hosts free networking events for students and alumni of all AMBA accredited Business Schools. These events are held globally and previous locations have included India, New Zealand, Russia, Greece, France, South Africa and the Ukraine. All event details can be found at www.mbaworld.com/events.

3.1.7 AMBA Conferences

AMBA organises three annual Conferences: Global, Asia Pacific and Latin America. AMBA Conferences are a great way to meet other AMBA-accredited School staff, to share ideas, best practice and to engage with current trends within Business and Management Education. All AMBA-accredited Schools are eligible and encouraged to nominate speakers, themes or topics for the conference programme, and if interested should contact events@mbaworld.com.

3.2 Business School Services

3.2.1 Research

AMBA accredited Schools receive exclusive access to the latest research publications, global statistics and a direct line to the AMBA Director of Research. AMBA also provides advocacy and lobbying through AMBA's policy work for the postgraduate management education sector.

3.2.2 Refreshers and CPD

Students and Alumni who join AMBA as members receive exclusive access to free online webinars, group discussions, live Q&As and interactive face-to-face and online events that are continuing professional development (CPD)-certified.

3.2.3 Careers Support

AMBA can provide access for Schools, students and alumni to:

- Employer training videos, written tutorials and interactive career resources;
- Access to an online network of employers who are devoted to MBA recruitment and are actively searching for their next employees;
- Global MBA-level jobs that you can search and apply for online;
- Interactive, multi-media tools, including a CV builder, aptitude tests, career assessments and bite-size online courses;

- MBA news feeds, professionally selected career articles and global business stories; and
- Global AMBAssador programme: offering unique and progressive career opportunities for the ambitious individual.

3.2.3 Events

Accredited Schools receive exclusive invitations and discounted access to AMBA conferences, networking and development events for Business School staff including specific events for MBA Directors/Programme Managers and Business School marketing, admissions and alumni staff.

3.2.4 AMBA Community

Students and alumni of AMBA accredited Business Schools are eligible to join AMBAs brand new and exclusive online community which allows students and graduates to come together, network and discuss key business issues.

Staff from AMBA Accredited Business Schools are also eligible and encouraged to join the online community which currently runs three distinctive 'clubs' to bring University professionals together. The current clubs are for Deans, Accreditation Directors/Managers, and alumni and careers staff.

3.3 Contact the Team

If you have any questions about AMBA please do contact:

Accreditation Team: accreditation@mbaworld.com

Events Team: events@mbaworld.com

Membership Team (including community enquiries): membership@mbaworld.com

Marketing: marketing@mbaworld.com

PR: d.woods@mbaworld.com

Research: j.menzies@mbaworld.com

Visit AMBA's websites: www.mbaworld.com
www.ambaguide.com
community.mbaworld.com

Follow AMBA on Twitter: @Assoc_of_MBAs

APPENDIX 1: INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION ADVISORY BOARD (IAAB)

Angus Blackwood	Trustee	AMBA, UK
Professor Robert Dixon	Former Dean	Durham Business School, Durham University, UK
Proffessor Che Ruhana Isa	Dean	Faculty of Business and Accounting, University of Malaya, Malaysia
Elena Liquete	Executive Director, MBA Programmes	Henley Business School, UK
Professor Andrew Lock (Chair)	Former Dean	Leeds University Business School, University of Leeds, UK
Dr Philip McLaughlin	Former Dean and Director	Bordeaux Ecole de Management, France
Dr Mark Oakley	Former Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)	Aston University, UK
Carlos Ramos MBA	International Adviser	AMBA, Argentina
Professor Manola Sánchez	Dean	Universidad Adolfo Ibañez, Chile
Professor Luis Torras	Former Academic Dean	EADA Business School, Spain
Professor Steef van de Velde	Dean	Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University, Netherlands
Professor Zhongming Wang	Director	Global Enterprise Centre, Zheijiang University, China
Professor Jens Wuestemann	President	Mannheim Business School, Germany

IAAB EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Andrew Main Wilson	Chief Executive	AMBA, UK
George Iliev MBA	Director of Development	AMBA, UK
Katherine O'Flynn	Director of Accreditation	AMBA, UK
Mark Stoddard	Director of Operations	AMBA, UK

APPENDIX 2: AMBA ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Initial Stage (Internal Eligibility)

1) Institution expresses interest in accreditation
2) Institution sends formal 'Letter of Intent' agreeing to assessment terms & conditions
3) Institution pays non-refundable Registration fee (valid for one year)
4) Institution completes Application Form
5) Institution invited to be a formal candidate for accreditation

Pre-Assessment Stage (IAAB Eligibility)

1) Institution pays non-refundable Pre-Assessment fee (valid for three years)
2) Institution completes Self- Assessment Form
3) Application sent to IAAB Eligibility Committee
4) Pre-assessment visit takes place

Assessment Stage

1) School completes Self-Audit Report
2) Preparation of Assessment Visit
3) Institution pays Assessment fee
4) Official Assessment Visit
5) Initial feedback/recommendation given to institution
6) Institution pays Assessor Expenses invoice

Post-Assessment Stage

1) Report compiled by Assessment Team
2) Factual checking of Report by School
3) Report considered by IAAB for endorsement
4) Final Accreditation decision of 3 or 5 years for new schools or deferral of one year. For re-accreditation 1, 2, 3, or 5 years may be awarded or removal of accreditation.
5) Payment of annual accreditation subscription
6) Full re-assessment due at the end of accreditation cycle

The Association of MBAs accreditation process is intentionally designed in specific stages to ensure a general consistency of outlook between the programmes under assessment and the accreditation criteria. Institutions should not start work on the next stage of the assessment until formally invited to do so by a member of the Accreditation Team.

APPENDIX 3: EXAMPLE LETTER OF INTENT

Before AMBA can begin the accreditation process, it needs to have received a letter of intent from you. **Before you complete this letter, you should request the relevant cost schedule for your region from the Accreditation team.** This letter must be written on your School's headed paper and signed by the Head of School (Dean or equivalent). It must include the following wording:

> This letter states the commitment of <name of school> to formally proceed with the AMBA accreditation process. I confirm that <name of school> accepts the Association of MBAs' criteria for accreditation, and I confirm that we have read and accept the attached cost schedule and process diagram.

In addition, please attach a copy of the accreditation costs (which AMBA will provide for you) and a copy of the process schedule (see Appendix 2) all signed by the Dean / Head of School to show that you understand and agree to them.

This should be addressed to: Association of MBAs,

APPENDIX 4a: AMBA ACCREDITATION ASSESSMENT FEES – 1st assessment

The following fees apply to institutions undergoing AMBA accreditation for their MBA programmes first time:

1. **Registration Fee £2,000** will be invoiced to the School once the letter of intent is received by AMBA. The School will then need to submit their Application Form.

2. **Pre-assessment fee £5,000** will be invoiced to the School once the Application Form has passed the 'internal eligibility' stage and the institution has been accepted as a formal candidate for accreditation. The School will then need to submit their Self-Assessment Form.

3. **Assessment Visit Fee £15,000** will be invoiced to the School once the dates for the assessment visit is set. Payment for the visit will be required no later than eight weeks before the visit date.

4. **Assessment Visit Panel Expenses**: Institutions are required to pay additional costs including travel, over-night accommodation and subsistence for all Accreditation Assessors and Association staff (usually 4 people in total). Travel is booked by AMBA as Business Class in instances where journey time exceeds five hours. Any expenses incurred will be recharged at cost on completion of the assessment visit. Payment of the Recharges Invoice will be due within 30 days of receipt.

5. **Outreach Programmes**: The assessment of outreach programmes such as overseas campuses will be undertaken, as necessary and at a cost of **£5,000** for each site visit in addition to any expenses incurred.

6. **Additional Programmes**: The assessment of MBA and DBA programmes can be arranged at the time of the MBA assessment visit. The fees for MBM programme/s is **£5,000** and for DBA programme/s **£4,000**.

7. **Business School Member Subscription Fee**: Once accredited status has been confirmed, the institution continues to be becomes a Business School Member of AMBA at an annual fee of **£4,500**. This is a non – negotiable license fee for accreditation. The subscription year operates to 31st March of each year.

8. **New Programmes**: The assessment of new MBA or new MBM programmes introduced during the accreditation cycle (in-between on site assessment visits) will be undertaken initially as a desk review/s at a cost of **£2,500** per programme.

9. **Cancellation**: All non-refundable costs incurred by AMBA as a result of arranging an assessment visit which is subsequently cancelled by the institution will be re-charged to the institution. In addition a cancellation fee of **£5,000** will also be applied. This fee and all relevant expenses will also be charged to the institution in cases where AMBA

cancels the assessment visit due to the institution failing to meet their obligations, such as submitting the Self-Audit Report at least three weeks prior to the assessment date.

10. **Further Notes**: The costs detailed above are correct at the current date, provided as indicative only and may be subject to review. The terms for accreditation shall be construed in accordance with English Law and any dispute arising out of or in connection with the guidelines including any question regarding existence, validity or termination shall be considered in accordance with English Law. All fees are non-refundable. Please note that fees can vary according to region and reduced fees are available for School in some emerging markets. Please contact AMBA to check.

APPENDIX 4b: AMBA ACCREDITATION ASSESSMENT FEES
Business Schools seeking re-accreditation

The following fees apply to institutions undergoing re-accreditation:

1. **Assessment Visit Fee**: **£15,000**. The assessment fee is payable once the date of the onsite assessment visit has been confirmed by the School and AMBA.

2. **Assessment Visit Panel Expenses**: Institutions are required to pay additional costs include travel, over-night accommodation and subsistence for all Accreditation Assessors and Association staff (usually four people in total). Travel is booked by AMBA as Business Class in instances where journey time exceeds five hours. Any expenses incurred will be recharged at cost on completion of the assessment visit. Payment of the Recharges Invoice will be due within 30 days of receipt.

3. **Outreach Programmes**: The assessment of outreach programmes such as over-seas campuses will be undertaken, as necessary and

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APPENDIX 5: ACCREDITATION VISIT- ADDITIONAL FEE INFORMATION

During the assessment visit, the assessment panel of four will incur expenses for:

- Subsistence (food, drinks, Wi-Fi, printing);
- Travel relating to the assessment visit, including airport transfers; and
- Any other reasonable expenses attached to the assessment visit.

Hotel Accommodation is booked and paid for by the School in advance of the visit for all four members of the assessment panel. This may also include the cost of meals the day before the visit. On average a panel member will not require more than three nights' accommodation, and no less than one night. Where long-haul travel occurs (e.g. including a time-difference of more than eight hours, a fourth night's accommodation for panellists will be required. This will depend largely upon their origin and travel time/availability.

All AMBA Accreditation Assessors are required, as paid consultants to adhere to AMBAs own expenses policy which states that only expenses related to the assessment visit activities can be claimed. All panel members are asked to submit receipts and expense claims directly to AMBA (not via the host School) and they are scrutinised by AMBA before the final re-charge invoice is generated. Schools are also entitled to request full copies of all receipts if they so wish.

AMBA adheres to UK Anti-Bribery & Corruption Legislation. AMBA assessors are not encouraged to invite guests (such as family members) to assessment visits. When this occurs guests should play no part in the assessment visit and the assessor will need to pay the hotel directly for any additional expenses such as double occupancy rate and additional breakfast. Business Schools should not invite panel guests to join formal activities, such as dinners.

APPENDIX 6: ELIGIBILTY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

New Schools applying for accreditation are reviewed first by an AMBA Accreditation team member who examines the Application Form. Schools that pass this stage are then asked to submit the Self-Assessment Form which is reviewed by the Eligibility Committee. Schools cannot progress any further until the Eligibility Committee have approved their Self-Assessment Form and a full list of Eligibility Committee members is shown below:

Eligibility Committee Members

Dr Mark Oakley	Former Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)	Aston University, UK
Professor Philip McLaughlin	Former Dean and Director	Bordeaux Ecole de Management, France
Professor Martyn Jones	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International)	Kingston University London, UK
	Head of Quality	AMBA

APPENDIX 7: ENDORSEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Each Accreditation report, produced by the panel is subject to review by three members of the Endorsement Committee. Accreditation recommendations are not finalised until they have been endorsed by this committee and a full list of Endorsement Committee members is shown below:

Endorsement Committee Members

Professor Andrew Lock (Chair)	Former Dean	Leeds University Business School, University of Leeds, UK
Professor Philip McLaughlin	Former Dean and Director	Bordeaux Ecole de Management, France
Dr Mark Oakley	Former Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)	Aston University, UK
Carlos Ramos MBA	International Adviser	AMBA, Argentina
Professor Martyn Jones	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International)	Kingston University London, UK
	Head of Quality	AMBA

APPENDIX 8: AMBA ENDORSEMENT PROCESS (POST-ASSESSMENT STAGE)

The final endorsement of accreditation is made by the International Accreditation Advisory Board, based on a recommendation from the peer review team in the format of a comprehensive report. Once an onsite visit has taken place, the process for endorsing the peer review team's recommendation is as follows:

1. The assessment report is compiled by the AMBA panellist;

2. The report is agreed by the Peer Review Assessment Team (four members);

3. The report is returned to School for factual verification;

4. The report is submitted to three members of the Endorsement Committee

5. The final accreditation decision is confirmed or rejected with the following possible outcomes:

    a. Accreditation for one, two, three or five years for re-accreditation and three or five years for new Schools or;
    b. Deferral of accreditation (with a reduced visit within one year, available for new Schools only) or;
    c. Definitive denial of accreditation.

6. If accreditation is endorsed, a full on-site peer reviewed re-assessment is carried out at the end of the agreed accreditation period (maximum of five years).

12a. MBA ASSESSEMENT AGENDA

DAY 1

TIME	AGENDA ITEM	PERSONNEL
13.00-14.00	*Lunch with Dean & key staff*	*Dean* *MBA Programme Directors* *Other key staff*
14.00-14.30	Tour of Facilities (Teaching, IT and Library facilities.)	Assessors
14.30-18.00	Private meeting of assessment team In base room	Assessors (See base room requirements)
19.00-22.00	*Optional Dinner*	*Assessors* *Dean and small group of School Staff*

DAY 2

TIME	AGENDA ITEM	CRITERIA	PERSONNEL
09.00-10.45	Institutional Integrity Faculty Quality & Sufficiency Programme Leadership Student Experience Impact	2 3 4 5 10	Dean (15 min. presentation) Programme Director/s Senior academic faculty Admissions/Marketing/ Careers/Alumni staff
10.45-11.00	*Private Break*		*Assessors*
11.00-12.45	Learning Outcomes Curriculum Assessment Rigour Delivery & Interaction	6 7 8 9	Programme Director/s, Senior academic faculty and Dean (optional)
12.45-13.30	*Private lunch*		*Assessors*
13.30-14.30	Private meeting with students, graduates & employers		Current students, Graduates and Key employers
14.30-15.30	Open discussion with MBA faculty		MBA Teaching team (Non-management faculty only)
15.30-16.30	Private meeting of assessment team		Assessors (base room)
16.30-17.00	Feedback to School		Dean and any other personnel as School desires (small group)

12b. MBA / MBM JOINT ASSESSMENT AGENDA

DAY 1

TIME	AGENDA ITEM	PERSONNEL
13.00-14.00	*Lunch with Dean & key staff*	*Dean* *MBA / MBM Directors* *Other key staff*
14.00-14.30	Tour of Facilities (Teaching, IT and Library facilities)	Assessors
14.30-18.00	Private meeting of assessment team In base room	Assessors (See base room Requirements requirements)
19.00-22.00	*Optional Dinner*	*Assessors* *Dean and small group of School Staff*

DAY 2

TIME	AGENDA ITEM	CRITERIA	PERSONNEL
09.00-10.45	Institutional Integrity Faculty Quality & Sufficiency Programme Leadership Student Experience Impact	2 3 4 5 10	Dean (15 min. presentation) MBA/M Programme Directors Senior academic faculty MBA/M Admissions/Marketing/ Careers / Alumni staff
10.45-11.00	*Private Break*		*Assessors*
11.00-12.00	Learning Outcomes Curriculum Assessment Rigour Delivery & Interaction	6 7 8 9	MBA Programme Directors, Senior academic faculty and Dean (optional)
12.00-13.00	Learning Outcomes Curriculum Assessment Rigour Delivery & Interaction	6 7 8 9	MBM Programme Directors Senior Academic faculty and Dean (optional)
13.00-13.45	*Private lunch Assessors*		
13.45-14.45	Private meeting with students, Graduates & employers		Current MBA/M students, MBA/M Graduates and

12c. MBA / DBA JOINT ASSESSMENT AGENDA

DAY 1

TIME	AGENDA ITEM	PERSONNEL
13.00-14.00	*Lunch with Dean & key staff*	*Dean* *MBA & DBA Directors* *Other key staff*
14.00-14.30	Tour of Facilities (Teaching, IT and Library facilities)	Assessors
14.30-18.00	Private meeting of assessment team In base room (See base room requirements)	Assessors
19.00-22.00	*Optional Dinner*	*Assessors* *Dean and small group of School Staff*

DAY 2

TIME	AGENDA ITEM	CRITERIA	PERSONNEL
09.00-10.45	Institutional Integrity Faculty Quality & Sufficiency Programme Leadership 4 Student Experience Impact	2 3 5 10	Dean (15 min. presentation) MBA/DBA Programme Directors Senior academic faculty MBA/DBA Admissions/Marketing/ Careers / Alumni staff
10.45-11.00	*Private Break*		*Assessors*
11.00-12.00	Learning Outcomes Curriculum Assessment Rigour Delivery & Interaction	6 7 8 9	MBA Programme Directors, Senior academic faculty and Dean (optional)
12.00-13.00	Learning Outcomes Research Output Assessment Rigour Delivery & Access	6 7 8 9	DBA Programme Directors Senior Academic faculty and Dean (optional)
13.00-13.45	*Private lunch*		*Assessors*
13.45-14.45	Private meeting with students, Graduates & employers		Current MBA/DBA Students, Graduates and Key employers
14.45-15.30	Open discussion with MBA/DBA faculty		MBA/DBA Teaching team (Non-management faculty only)
15.30-16.30	Private meeting of assessment team In base room		Assessors
16.30-17.00	Feedback to School		Dean and any other personnel as School desires (small group)

APPENDIX 10: ACCREDITATION VISIT BASE-ROOM REQUIREMENTS

Set-Up

- ☐ The base room should provide sufficient desk space to enable 4/5 people to work with large volumes of documentation.
- ☐ Luggage may also need to be stored in the base room.
- ☐ The base room should ideally not be used for any meetings during the visit.
- ☐ The base room must include at least one working pc/laptop with internet access.
- ☐ The base room must include a printer located in the base room so that assessors can print securely.
- ☐ Wi-fi codes should be provided for the assessor team.
- ☐ Full student and teacher access to the virtual learning environment (if applicable) should be available for the assessment panel in the base room.
- ☐ If possible a key to the base room should be provided so that personal items may be left in there during meetings.
- ☐ An internal telephone should be provided in the base room.

Contact:

- ☐ The institution should nominate someone as the assessment team's contact person during the visit. This contact should be accessible at all times during the visit and provide an e-mail address and telephone number so the assessment team can contact them if needed.

Contents

Documentation to be made available in the base room should include items generally too bulky to include in the self-audit documentation. **The base room should include all of the following items of evidence / documentation where they exist, and are listed below against the relevant AMBA criteria.**

The Institution

- ☐ Marketing materials for all programmes that are being assessed
- ☐ Marketing strategy for School / programmes seeking accreditation
- ☐ Evidence of teaching quality, to include details of;
    - ☐ national teaching audits (if applicable;)
    - ☐ management research;

- ☐ consultancy;
- ☐ research contracts;
- ☐ involvement in industry;
- ☐ external examiners' reports (where they are used).

☐ Evidence of satisfactory outcomes from the institution's own internal, external and national audit processes. This might include minutes of relevant meetings over a period of three years.

☐

- ☐ institution where this qualification was obtained,
- ☐ number of credits granted.
- ☐ Tables a, b and c should already have been supplied in the Self Audit Report

- ☐ Details of any careers data survey
- ☐ Details of any surveys of students offered places on programmes, but declined

Curriculum

- ☐ Module descriptors for **every core/mandatory module** should be available for all programmes that are being assessed. Module descriptors should also be made available for every **elective/optional module which has been delivered in the last academic year.** Attention will be especially paid to the coverage and assessment of the core-curriculum against AMBAs criteria 7.5 i-xiii. All core modules should have module descriptors should be translated into English.
- ☐ Course outlines for any formal study trips including details of assessment and calendar of activities including academic study, company visits, and cultural immersion.

In addition, for **every module** (compulsory and those options/electives which have run in the last academic year) and for each programme submitted examples of the following must be provided:

- ☐ marked coursework to include borderline passes, as well as average and high scoring examples, and evidence that this has been used to provide feedback to students.
- ☐ student examination papers; to include borderline passes, as well as average and high scoring examples, and evidence that this has been used to provide feedback to students.
- ☐ both individual and group projects (with marking sheets), to include borderline passes, as well as average and high scoring examples.
- ☐ literary based dissertations with marking sheet, (if applicable) to include borderline passes, as well as average and high scoring examples.
- ☐ Examples of capstone or integrative element of the programme (such as project) with marking sheet to include borderline passes as well as average and high scoring examples.
- ☐ Teaching and Learning Strategy
- ☐ For Distance Learning / Blended Learning provision, examples of any specific / bespoke learning materials provided.
- ☐ Sample of Teaching materials (core text etc.)

APPENDIX 11: AMBA ACCREDITATION APPEALS PROCESS

On receipt of the final accreditation decision provided by the International Accreditation Board (IAAB), the School has the opportunity to appeal the decision. AMBA's appeal process is outlined below:

I. The School has the right to appeal an accreditation decision made by the IAAB. Appeals can only be accepted based on the grounds of a failure to follow due process or a disregard of material facts. Appeals simply on the basis of accreditation judgements will not be accepted.

II. An IAAB Appeals Sub-committee will be established, consisting of three members of the IAAB to be nominated by the IAAB Chair, who were not a member of the original IAAB Endorsement Committee and who have no conflict of interest with the School or the accreditation process of the School.

III. The School may make written representations in writing to the Appeals Sub-committee, in which the School will have the opportunity to provide all the evidence that will be considered. It is incumbent on the School to provide all the information and evidence necessary to state its case for appeal at this time.

IV. The appeal should be sent to the relevant Accreditation Director with responsibility for the appealing School, within two weeks of receiving the final endorsed accreditation report.

V. The IAAB Appeals Committee will consider any appeal made and return its official decision within four weeks of receipt of the appeal.

VI. The Appeals Sub-committee will come to a majority verdict, and this decision will be final. In the case of significant disagreement amongst the Appeals Committee of the IAAB, the matter may be referred to AMBA's International Management Board (IMB).

APPENDIX 12: TIMEFRAMES

AMBA TASKS	ESTIMATED TIMEFRAME
Initial Stage	
Review School Application Form	Within four weeks of receipt of Application Form
Pre-Assessment Stage	
Confirm eligibility	Within four weeks of receipt of Self-Assessment form
Assessment Stage	
Issue Panel expenses to School	Within four weeks of assessment visit
Post-Assessment Stage	
Issue assessment report to School	Within six weeks of assessment visit
Endorse report	Within four weeks of receipt of School comment

SCHOOL TASKS	ESTIMATED TIMEFRAME/DEADLINE
Initial Stage	
Submit Letter of Intent	At time convenient to School
Pay Registration Fee	At time convenient to School
Submit Application Form	Within one year of payment of Registration Fee
Pre-Assessment Stage	
Pay Pre-Assessment Fee	Within one year of payment of Registration Fee
Submit Self-Assessment Form	Within three years of payment of Pre-Assessment fee
Assessment Stage	
Submit Self-Assessment Report	Within three years of payment of Pre-Assessment fee
Pay Assessment Fee	At least eight-twelve weeks before assessment
Pay Panel Expenses Invoice	Within thirty days of receipt of invoice
Post-Assessment Stage	
Review factual elements of Panel Report	Within two weeks of receipt
Pay Annual Accreditation Subscription	One month after accreditation and then annually in March each year of accreditation