

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final award	MSc Strategic with Forensic Accounting The Strategic with Forensic Accounting is an MSc degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards	Postgraduate Diploma Strategic with Forensic Accounting Postgraduate Certificate Strategic with Forensic Accounting
Awarding body/institution	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution	Recognised Body
Location of delivery	Marylebone campus
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month	One year full time. September start.
QAA subject benchmarking group(s)	Business and Management
Professional statutory or regulatory body	TBC
Date of course validation/Revalidation	Feb 2021
Date of programme specification approval	April 2021
Valid for cohorts	from 2021-2022
Course Leader	Sudha Mathew
Course URL	westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate
Westminster course code	PMACC01F (FT)
HECoS code	100105 - accounting
UKPASS code	

Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum [entry requirements](#) for all postgraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information.

For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements.

More information can be found here: westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply

Recognition of Prior Learning

Applicants with prior certificated or experiential learning at the same level of the qualification for which they wish to apply are advised to visit the following page for further information: westminster.ac.uk/recognition-of-prior-certified-learning.

Aims of the course

The aim of the MSc in Strategic with Forensic Accounting is to promote systematic understanding of knowledge and a critical awareness of current problems and provide new insights that are in the forefront of accounting reporting and practice. The programme deals with key themes relating to how companies plan and implement accounting standards, measure performance and success, and integrate business lifecycle strategies and information systems into the accounting and financial decisions of global organisations. The delivery of the content will use varied and inclusive teaching methods that enable students to engage with the material and their peers.

Students have the benefit of gaining knowledge of 1. The professional level modules offered by ACCA (Association of Certified Chartered Accountants), as the modules are mapped to the professional level papers offered by ACCA and 2. Fraud examination and forensic accounting. The programme's aim is to provide a sound theoretical basis for systematic understanding and critical analysis of applied practices in accounting topics. It will also provide knowledge of how strategic financial decision-making takes place in corporations.

The programme content is mapped to the ACCA strategic professional level curriculum which is the next level up from the applied skills level (F papers). It offers students the opportunity to potentially become fully ACCA certified accountants. The course does not exempt students from the professional papers and students would have to sit the professional papers with ACCA externally. Students can register with the ACCA in order to be eligible for the ACCA Professional exams (additional fees apply).

Students will be exposed to a coherent and specialised body of knowledge relevant to the practice of Accounting at an advanced level. It provides knowledge in a range of topic areas including reporting, tax, audit, and forensic accounting, as well as provides opportunities to explore and understand the relevant practices and policies in order that they might pursue a professional or academic career in this field. Students will also gain transferable skills such as team working and leadership skills in addition to becoming effective communicators.

Specifically, the topics that will be covered in the programme include advanced financial reporting, financial management, business strategy, governance, risk, assurance, taxation, forensic accounting and ethics, while preparing you for a research project in a specific area

of your choice in strategic or forensic accounting. The modules are innovative in terms of using real world examples and case studies to develop the skills necessary to become a strategic business leader.

Optional modules in Semester 2 will allow students to focus their studies on areas of interest including financial management and taxation, at an advanced level.

The programme aims to enhance employability and launch the student onto a remarkable career path. Being located in the heart of the city of London, students will have the opportunity to engage with professional networks and industry.

Employment and further study opportunities

On successful completion of this course students can find careers in business development, audit and assurance, business restructuring, commercial finance, compliance and risk, consulting and advisory, corporate and business consulting, corporate finance, cyber security, education and training, finance and administration, financial services, global business services, project management and much more.

Today's organisations need graduates with both, good degrees and skills, relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Guest speakers are invited to speak about their career and progression, giving students to interact and form networks useful for employment.
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements, which will inform the service delivered to students.

The MSc in strategic with forensic accounting aims to create post graduates who

- Can become leaders and can take a strategic management role in Financial accounting/Auditing/Forensic Accounting.
- The course will enable students to develop the knowledge and skills to enable them to potentially complete the ACCA professional papers and become fully qualified ACCA members.

Course learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These threshold statements of achievement and are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course.

On successful completion of the course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of tools and practices used in advanced accounting topics.

- Apply knowledge gained to critically analyse financial statements for planning, reporting and solving complex and difficult financially related problems.
- Evaluate the strategic position of the organisation against the external environment and the availability of internal resources, to identify feasible strategic options.
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills required for fraud examination, including the legal environment where forensic accounting is practised.
- Differentiate various strategic reporting methods, which involves assessment, interpretation and evaluation of the reporting decisions made by management and their implications for a range of stakeholder and entities.
- Critically evaluate auditing concepts to everyday business activities including the internal control function and demonstrate how an auditor plans and undertakes audit work.
- Demonstrate critical understanding of how organisations operate, the environment they operate in, and understand the changing nature of business.
- Develop the ability to communicate effectively, have leadership and team working skills, as well as have the ability to manage time by prioritising activities effectively.
- Demonstrate professional skills demanded by effective leaders to improve business and management practise as well as corporate social responsibility.
- Apply and respect the fundamental imperative of ethical practice based on honesty and integrity.

Learning, teaching and assessment methods

In the core areas of study that range from advanced financial reporting to business strategy, governance, risk, assurance, forensic accounting, fraud examination and ethics students will gain deep knowledge and skills to be a professional accountant. Students through the course will become conversant with current issues and have the ability to apply current techniques and tools in their profession. Many modules takes a case study approach to develop the skills necessary to become a business leader. Optional modules will allow students to focus on areas of interest including financial management and taxation, all at an advanced level.

Learning: An inclusive learning environment is planned where the social identities and diverse backgrounds of students can thrive. The teaching will encourage active, experiential and reflective learning, with scope for group work and problem-based learning using case studies and analysis, evaluation and synthesis. The learning experience requires independent learning, critical evaluation, reflection, discussion and debate, as well as the opportunity, through the project, to research, in significant depth, a specific and relevant topic. A key feature of study within this program is the explicit development of transferable skills and aptitudes relevant for personal and career development within the Accounting profession. One of the modules - Business leader, aims specifically to enable students to develop the management skills needed for a senior accounting manager in an organisation. The modules have been specifically designed to assist participants to define, develop and refine those managerial skills that will aid them in employment. Transferable professional and personal skills form part of the learning outcomes and assessment strategies in a number of the modules on the course.

For the modules that cover the content of ACCA strategic level papers, students will be provided ACCA material to support them in their studies. For the modules including strategic business leader, corporate governance, strategic business reporting, advanced auditing, advanced taxation, strategic performance management, advanced financial management, study texts, exam kits and pocket notes including access to online resources will be made available to students. This material will be supplied by the university.

Teaching: A variety of teaching methods will be used to deliver the content of the course, using the interactive technology to improve student engagement and assess understanding. Teaching will use a blended approach of asynchronous and live teaching sessions. Students would be expected to read the material posted on the module blackboard site for the week before attending the live lecture. The live teaching will be through classroom-based lectures and seminars involving student participation including exercises, group work, presentations, discussions, videos, workshops and role-plays and computer-aided techniques. Sessions typically involve a combination of tutor input and student participation and activity. There will be a degree of self-directed learning – based around information provided for each module, involving structured reading, analysis and problem solving. Students' personal contributions will therefore be a critical factor in influencing the successful achievement of the learning outcomes. Students' own current experience will be used wherever possible and, where appropriate, emphasis is placed on individual and group learning.

Assessment: The assessments are designed to ensure that the course learning outcomes are achieved through the module learning outcomes. Assessments are also designed to test students understanding of current market conditions as well as the current challenges and opportunities facing the financial markets as a whole.

The assessment framework for the course is designed to give all students equal opportunities to learn. This is done by offering a variety of assessments which will be based on real world problems and will be socially, culturally and globally relevant to the diverse student pool. Clear marking guidelines will be made available to the students along with the assessment details and formative feedback will be provided to help students to better understand and improve their assessment.

The assessments will be designed to

- Enable students to demonstrate an ability to go beyond the mere exposition and reproduction of textbook facts, but use learnt concepts, approaches, models and theories to apply to practical situations.
- Provide evidence in their work of both analytical and critical ability, that is, to show an awareness of how all Accounting practice is informed by theoretical presuppositions upon which analysis and critique can and should be exercised.
- Formative assessments will be used for the coursework to give students to learn from mistakes made, as well as provide timely feedback on the assessments.

The assessments related to the ACCA professional papers will prepare students to take these examinations externally. Modules are assessed using various appropriate methods drawn from the following list:

- Critical analysis and evaluation of a case;
- In-class tests;
- Blog/Online Journal
- Generating a financial report based on given data;
- Group presentation assignment;
- Case study based coursework
- Research Project;
- Examinations;

Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year.

The Study will involve students taking a set of core modules with one option module.

Credit Level 7				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7ACCN033W	Corporate Governance	Core	20	10
7ACCN038W	Strategic Business Reporting	Core	20	10
7ACCN035W	Forensic Accounting and Fraud Examination	Core	20	10
7ACCN039W	Strategic Performance Management	Core	20	10
7ACCN037W	Strategic Business Leader	Core	20	10
7ACCN030W	Advanced Audit and Assurance	Core	20	10
7ACCN036W	Research Project	Core	20	10
7ACCN034W	Financial Crime and Law	Core	20	10
7ACCN031W	Advanced Financial Management	Option	20	10
7ACCN032W	Advanced Taxation	Option	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot do your first choice of modules.

Professional Body Accreditation or other external references

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Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations.

How will you be supported in your studies?

Course Management

The course team comprises of the course leader and module leaders. The course leader also has personal tutoring responsibilities.

Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Campus Registry. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students. Further information on Blackboard can be found at westminster.ac.uk/blackboard.

Learning Support

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their College. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at westminster.ac.uk/student-advice. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at westminster.ac.uk/students-union.

How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in **2021**. The panel included internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers.

The course is also monitored each year by the College to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including evidence of student achievement, reports from external examiners in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course.

A Course revalidation takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with Revalidation panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through student engagement activities at Course/Module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to expressly represent the views of their peers. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.
- There are also School Staff Student Exchange meetings that enable wider discussions across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key College and University committees.
- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.
- The University also has an annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey or PTES which helps us compare how we are doing with other institutions, to make changes that will improve what we do in future and to keep doing the things that you value.

Please note: This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks, which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.

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