



University of
South Australia

International Graduate School of Business

MBA News

October 2008

MBA Achieves 5-Stars

UniSA's Master of Business Administration (MBA) program is now the highest ranked in the State and among the country's top eight with a five-star rating in the 2009 Good Universities Guide released in early September 2008.

The rankings are determined by the Graduate Management Association of Australia based on its assessment of the standard and value of a program, and are considered one of the nation's most highly regarded guides to MBA selection.

The Good Universities Guide announcement follows the Australian Financial Review's BOSS magazine's latest ranking of MBA programs which rated the UniSA program seventh nationally.

MBA Program Director in UniSA's International Graduate School of Business Bob Gilliver said he was thrilled about this latest recognition.

"I am delighted that our MBA, a flagship program of the University, has been

awarded the maximum five-star rating in the Good Universities Guide," he said.

"The fact that our MBA is now the highest ranked MBA in South Australia - both by the Good Universities Guide and by BOSS magazine - is a credit to the work of all our academic and professional staff in developing a program of the highest standard.

"The five-star ranking further recognises the benefits of our practical and student-focused approach to helping students become better managers, and better future community leaders," he said.

"We also build maximum flexibility into our study modes that fit with people's lives. Students can complete their MBA, while working and balancing their personal lives.

UniSA Vice Chancellor Professor Peter Høj is equally thrilled with the news and says the five-star ranking is a reflection of the University's commitment to excellence.

"I am pleased and proud that UniSA's MBA program has received such an honour," Vice Chancellor, Professor Høj said.

"It is a terrific reflection of the dedication and effort by both academic and professional staff at the International Graduate School of Business to develop such a quality MBA program.



Gilliver says that the strength of the program is its focus on flexibility and practical application - qualities which resonate strongly with the business world.



Special points of interest:

- Details of the 2009 MBA Alumni program have been announced.
- Our MBA specialisation in Sustainable Business grows in popularity.
- Big focus on experiential learning about to be built into the UniSA MBA.
- Our annual MBA Expo recruitment drive around Australia.



MBA (Sustainable Business)

Our fastest growing specialisation in the MBA is now the MBA (Sustainable Business).

Most managers undertaking this new specialisation are reporting to us the lack of any other relevant, academically based programs, available around this vital area. Managers wanting to do this unique MBA specialisation are required to undertake:

- Fundamental Concepts of Sustainable Business
- Environmental and Natural Resource Economics
- Climate Change and Corporate Management
- Risk and Uncertainty Analysis for Sustainable Business

The courses are offered only in the online mode.

We recently surveyed our students around this clear trend, and feedback included:

“The courses are exactly what I wanted - focused on business sustainability issues and not science based”

“I believe the corporate & business sector needs to drive the changes required within the wider community”

2009 MBA Alumni Program

The 2009 program of activities and events for our Adelaide MBA Alumni, has recently been released.

In what promises to be a busy year in 2009, there will be MBA Alumni events taking place every month. These will be a mixture of networking opportunities, social activities and continuing education.

Three senior academic staff from the School will conduct Master classes during 2009, exclusively for our MBA Alumni.

These sessions will focus on the discipline areas of Marketing, International Business and Change Management, and will provide a great chance for Alumni to find out the very latest developments in these areas.

To provide opportunity for networking amongst Alumni, there will also be three late afternoon “cocktail conversations” guaranteed to provoke humour and serious discussion. This series “kicks off” with a panel of several of SA’s high

profile football administrators, discussing the “Future of Football”.

Our MBA sponsor, IBM will also lead one of these cocktail conversations on the topic of “Where is IT taking us”.

Three top local Government CEOs will talk about the role of local government in sustainable business decisions.

The social program includes a Graduation Welcome to new Alumni, wine tasting & a unique “Taste of China” evening.

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Career Workshop Highlight

Our most popular Career Workshop for 2008 was held recently with 43 MBA students registering to attend.

This was Workshop four in our 2008 series, on the topic of “Career Transitioning” and was again conducted by Robert Godden (right) from the well known executive search firm Morton Philips.



These bi-monthly workshops are part of our commitment to provide MBA students with opportunities to develop specific career skills and improve their chances of winning promotions and making significant career changes.

The popularity of this workshop had a lot to do with the direct relevance of the content, to MBAs.

Whilst the MBA does inevitably spark ambition and confidence in students, many still feel hindered by their discipline background, and struggle with how to break free of their many years of management experience in one particular industry or discipline area.

In this Career Workshop, Robert took the students through a variety of planning horizons to transition themselves into more senior general management roles.

Experiential Learning Projects

October 2008

In recent months, we have been given a very significant grant from within the University to enable us to develop some exciting experiential learning activities in and around the MBA.

Seven different projects have been approved, and work is now underway to ensure that these become integral elements of the MBA, during 2009.

The first of the projects is a new scheme whereby MBA students can spend up to 100 hours attached to businesses or projects. This may range from community service such as serving on the Board of a not-for-profit organization for six months, or live consulting projects around corporate and social responsibility.

For students more interested in entrepreneurial activities, there may also be chances to work with venture capital associates on business plans.

The second project is a new scheme whereby MBA students are mentored by senior business executives (including MBA Alumni), during their MBA. This scheme may be especially suitable for international students.

Third, is a series of new workshops to develop capabilities such as leadership, communication, presentation skills, networking and teamwork. This project seeks to reflect the reality that most of our MBA students now have portfolio careers, with several major career shifts. Time spent in the MBA is their opportunity to reflect, up-skill and reinvent.

Our fourth initiative is a redesign of our Industry Placement Scheme for MBA international students in Adelaide.

Project five is an information technology project to allow our doctoral research activities across the whole School to inform MBA teaching.

This occurs using a technique called 'tagging' which allows searchable databases of doctoral theses and publications to be available to lecturers.

Our sixth project is one to allow all our practice based and MBA experiential workshops to be adapted for use by students in the Online MBA.

Finally, for the Online MBA itself we have funds to develop our learning objects & experiential features for use by our students through mobile devices and multimedia.

.....develop some exciting experiential learning activities in and around the MBA.....

Industry Placements



Over the last three years, 30 MBA students have completed industry placements as part of their MBA.

Successful completion of a placement equates to one elective in the MBA. The scheme is only available to international full-time MBA students and a placement can only be done by a student in the second half of their MBA.

The IGSB locates placements for the students, each of which runs for 11 weeks. Students are not paid.

In many cases we attach academic mentors to the students, or small groups of students, to maximize the learning outcome for them.

The diversity of projects and industries is evident from a review of just some of the recently successfully completed projects:

- Housing Affordability in Adelaide, a research project for Devine Homes.

- A report into the commercial viability of a Disabled Access registration scheme for Arts venues in Adelaide (done for Arts Access SA).
- A marketing plan for the Stroke Research Foundation at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Adelaide.
- Review and recommendations around consumer problems associated with mobile phones, done for the SA Govt's Office of Consumer & Business Affairs.
- A marketing plan to attract new international students to one of Adelaide's best known private secondary schools.

The 2008 MBA Expos around Australia

Bouncing off new our 5-Star Rating, this year's round of MBA Expos in all State capital cities saw over 120 new candidates seek out our Online and Adelaide MBA.

We exhibited in Perth, Canberra, Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney.

One of the trends which was evident from enquiries was the demand to be able to complete the MBA more quickly. Our range of flexible options, such as study in China and Europe resonated particularly well.

Overall, the calibre of candidates was

higher than in past years with 95% of those seeking us out, being degree holders with at least 5 years of management experience.

All of Australia's 45 MBA Programs were represented at the Expos this year in

various cities. Two significant European players, IESE (Spain), and MIP (Milan), also attended, further strengthening our recent experience about the strength of the Australian market.

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CEO Visit - Mark Withers

As part of our "View From The Top" series of visiting CEOs, we recently welcomed Mark Withers to the IGSB, to spend some quality time with our MBA students. As CEO of the City of Charles Sturt, Mark runs a business with \$600m of Assets, turnover of \$80m, and employing 500 people.

Mark's insights into the complexities of running



businesses in the local government arena, provided our MBA students with rich material for discussion.

The external environment and pressures in which local government operates, and the differing priorities and skill-sets required of a CEO in that space, could all be compared

with our earlier visiting CEOs this year who came from Adelaide Brighton, and Mitsubishi.

Consistent with our focus on offering more sustainable business courses in and around the MBA, Mark showed clearly that as a contemporary CEO in local government, he is committed to building socially, environmentally and economically sustainable communities.

GMAC 2008 MBA Report

The Graduate Management Admissions Council is the owner and manager of the GMAT Test, and provides a wide range of services to business schools around the world. GMAC has recently released their 2008 Global MBA Graduate Survey results, which has highlighted the following global trends around MBAs

- The overall value of a graduate business degree remains high and the value proposition for business schools is positive.
- The main drivers of overall value are the school's ability to meet student expectations and the quality of the curriculum.
- In 2008, 63% of business school graduates would definitely recommend their school and 28% would probably recommend their school.
- Schools are meeting the expectations of students, and students are learning the skills they had hoped to develop in the program.