

**Department  
BUSINESS STUDIES  
Campus Geel**

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**KHK**

KATHOLIEKE  
HOGESCHOOL  
KEMPEN

# **The International Business Module (in English)**

**Spring term 2010  
1 February 2010 - 18 June 2010**



**KATHOLIEKE HOGESCHOOL KEMPEN  
Campus Geel**

**Department  
BUSINESS STUDIES**

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# 1. OBJECTIVES

The International Business Module was first organised in 1999. The aim of the programme is to provide international guest students with practical business knowledge and a range of skills that will better equip them for future professional business life. By offering a placement with an internationally oriented company in Belgium and/or by having students do real business projects, we try to give students the experience of what it actually means to be working in a corporate environment and to guide them as much as possible in this learning process.

This brochure provides further information on the programme for the academic year 2009-2010. Whereas in the past the programme was organised for international students only, it is now partially incorporated as a module in a bachelor-after-bachelor degree course for (Belgian) students specialising in Strategic Small and Medium Sized Enterprises and Retail Management. This is a one-year programme for graduates who want to learn more about Business Economics, either because they want to work in a corporate environment or because they are interested in running their own business one day.

Like multinational companies, small and medium sized enterprises increasingly have to profile themselves internationally. By attending this programme students will learn to look at management issues and business disciplines from an international perspective. We also try to bring together various business fields in a small business project, the aim of which is to simulate a true life experience of what managing a real company could be.

The module is taught in English and consists of 8 weeks of courses and of a 10-week work placement or business project. The courses run from 1 February 2010 until 2 April 2010. The first week is a welcome and introduction week, during which there are some general introductory courses. As from the second week the full programme with the Belgian students starts. The placement or business projects fully start on 12 April and last until 18 June.

The taught programme consists of the following modules, each of which accounts for a number of ECTS credits. Together with the business project a total of 30 ECTS credits will be granted.

- International Trade and Business Communication
- Marketing
- Logistics
- Entrepreneurship and Management
- Business Project / Placement

Courses are taught by staff of the Business Studies Department. The programme also comprises a number of study tours (e.g. to the port of Antwerp), business seminars and visits to companies. Some business people and other lecturers will be invited as guest speakers.

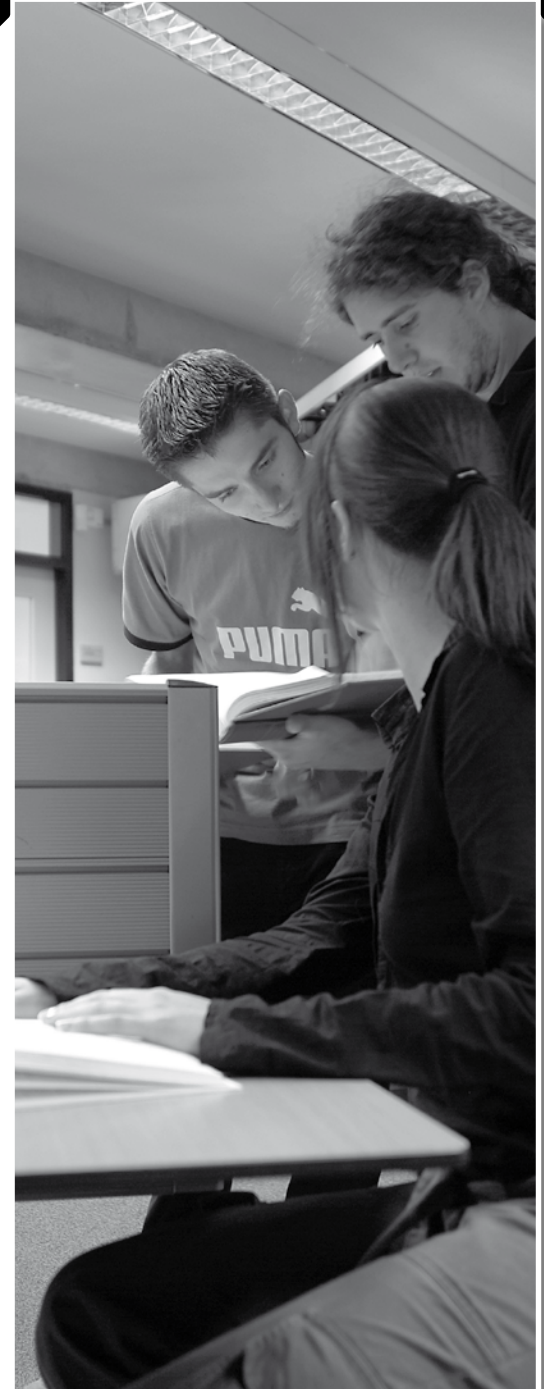


## 2. COURSES

### 2.1 Overview

Theme		ECTS credits 30
International Trade and Communication	Business English	4
	Belgium in an International Perspective	
	Management of Diversity	
	European Union, Selected Topics	
	European Law	
Logistics*	Logistics Management	4
Marketing*	Marketing Management	4
Entrepreneurship and Business Management*	Integrated Business Simulation	4
	Selected Topics, International Week	
	Business Psychology	
Practice	Business Project or Placement	14
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30 ECTS</b>

\* Belgian SME-management students attend this course as well.



## **2.2 Course descriptions**

In this section you will find information on the objectives and contents of the International Business Module courses. Information on type of assessment and on course materials will be given in the introduction week.

### *INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND COMMUNICATION*

#### **Introduction to Dutch**

Students will get a survival course in Dutch (the mother tongue of our students). They will learn what to do and say in a variety of situations they will come across: socialising, shopping, going to the bank, asking directions, etc. At the end of the course students will be able to have a short conversation in Dutch about everyday subjects.

The Dutch course is not part of the learning agreement.

#### **Business English**

Students will further develop the four basic skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) in a range of business contexts. They will have to be sufficiently equipped to report on their work in speaking and writing for the various business courses that are taught.

Students listen to and read authentic materials on current business topics. They are asked to reflect upon the topics that come up and to express their opinions. They will have to work in teams during which their spoken and written language skills will be further developed.

Due attention will be paid to giving presentations (amongst others for the business simulation project), writing memos, and interviews.

Students already need to have an advanced level of English.

#### **Belgium in an International Perspective**

Students will gain insight into Belgian culture and politics, both from a Belgian and a non-Belgian point of view. In teams they have to

be able to compare the Belgian situation with those of their home countries and report about any differences and similarities.

At first students will be provided with some basic information about Belgian history, politics, economy, tourism, culture etc. Of course, Brussels, as the capital of Belgium and the European Union will be looked upon in detail. After this first theoretical input students will have to compare one of the topics with their respective home countries. To conclude this course students will report on their research in class.

#### **Management of Diversity**

Students will be able to critically reflect on their own intercultural values, referring to different intercultural theories and to analyse cases with intercultural differences. They will get to know strategies of how to handle this.

The programme includes significant academic input. Case studies, simulation exercises, lectures, group discussions and exercises on the theory of the module are used throughout the teaching.

Students will be assessed on the basis of a paper that describes an intercultural situation including students' experiences. The analysis of the underlying elements and the critical reflections about how to handle it are the key elements of the evaluation. Students should therefore demonstrate their problem solving capacities and their creative abilities in relation to the concrete professional situation.

#### **European Union, Selected Topics**

Belgium, and certainly Brussels is at the heart of the European Union. Students will have to get a basic understanding of the functions of the various European institutions. The students will get to read about the EU and work out a project they choose themselves. The emphasis will be on working in the European Union and on the free movements of goods, services, labour and capital.

## **European Law**

This course tries to give students a basic understanding of EU law. It starts with the development of the European Union and a survey of what it covers (fundamentals and jurisdiction). Next, it goes into the actors (institutions and member states as legal instruments). Lastly, there is an analysis of decision making in the European Union.

## *MARKETING MANAGEMENT*

The Marketing Management courses focus on the following subjects.

### **Marketing Management**

Students learn what precisely to understand by marketing: how to get to know a market, how to be successful in various fields of marketing. Students gradually learn to develop and carry out adequate marketing strategies.

### **Information management and Business Intelligence**

The students have to be able to recognise the impact of information flows in an organisation and the importance of turning the use of it into a success factor for any manager. They have to be able to situate the key concepts, demonstrate the added value in specific situations and get acquainted with related ICT systems supporting an efficient information management.

Information management concepts will be elaborated, starting from actual problems in obtaining and critically selecting the required information for (management) decisions.

In order to build a good information management system, data management principles will be discussed.

One of the trendy topics is turning information into knowledge and managing this as a valuable good: knowledge management will be discussed.

Since time is a rare good for a manager, it is crucial that some time-saving aspects of working with the overflow of data/information are presented.

On top of that, related concepts such as ERP, SCM and CRM will be seen from a "state of the art" perspective, and existing information management systems will pass the scene, as well as market leaders Business Intelligence tools.

Students will learn how to work with BI and ERP tools.

### **e-Networking**

At the start of a professional career, students will have to be able to create a network.

The concept, added value, opportunities and threats of e-networking will be elaborated.

Students will start their first e-network.

### **Qualitative Market Research**

In-depth interviews and focus groups require specific expertise in market research. Students will learn how to design this kind of research.

## *LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT*

The Logistics Management courses focus on the following subjects.

### **Logistics Management**

Students will get insight in the logistic function in business, both for companies in manufacturing and in services. They will learn to cope with the entire flow of goods in Belgian and European companies from the purchase of raw materials until the finished product with the customer. They will also get a clear picture of logistic operations and distribution activities by visiting specialised companies.

The students will have to work out a project themselves and present it orally.

### **Logistics Selected Topics**

Students will become familiar with the following transportation aspects:

1. use of electronic data interchange in transportation,
2. quality management in transportation and logistics,

3. general management in the forwarding business.

Some of the software that is used in the transportation business can be used on the institute's computers.

### **Transportation and Mobility**

This course combines the basic insights of Transportation Economics with the logistic principles in the different transportation modes. Shippers and the shipping industry have different views on world-wide logistics, they also adopt different strategies. By presenting an overview of the existing players in the complex market, students get more acquainted with typical transportation issues.

A specialised visit to a port or inland terminal with discussions 'on the spot' will be organised. The course offers an integrated approach of problems linked to transportation and mobility, i.e.:

- a multimodal approach: complementarity and integration of the various modes of surface transportation (road, rail, waterways);
- a multi-criteria approach: taking socio-demographic, economic, technological, environmental, safety and other factors into account.

In this course students will get the opportunity to visit the port of Antwerp. That visit will be prepared with documentation from the Port Centre in Lillo (Antwerp). The information is on the following:

1. Antwerp as a European main port
2. Ship owners opt for Antwerp
3. At the heart of Europe's transport systems
4. Space for infrastructure and equipment
5. Supply chain management and integrated logistics
6. Houston on the river Scheldt
7. Public and private - a combination that works
8. Technology and motivation for high productivity

9. Efficient data logistics
10. Antwerp as an environmentally friendly port

## *ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MANAGEMENT*

### **Integrated Business Simulation**

Today's business environment is one of high complexity, fast moving changes and tremendous challenges, yet never excluding substantial risks of failure. Absolute flexibility and logical thinking on the part of inner company decision makers is therefore a highly treasured quality. Some people may be blessed with a good deal of this asset naturally. Others will find themselves lucky that this ability can be developed through decision making training, which is precisely the aim of this course. It uses an integrated business simulation to do just that. The idea is that the business simulation offers a true life framework of what could be a real company, a framework in which one meets all the challenges of real business life and in which the quality of decision making is on the test.

The prime requirement is that students familiarise themselves with the company, its working methods and some procedures and financial information on which the simulation is based. Once this first hurdle is taken, students will receive guidelines with respect to strategic thinking.

Then participants are set to go. Decision making will be performed in a series of consecutive financial years, each showing the company's results. These can be purely financial results: i.e. the balance sheet and the profit and loss account. However, also other achievements such as in the field of market share, comparative pricing, ranking compared to competitors and such are examined and interpreted.

As the simulation progresses, the degree of difficulty will gradually increase. Once initial decision making is mastered, participants are faced with a consecutive series of additional techniques in order to improve future results.



Techniques such as budgeting, cash flow and success/failure analysis are gradually introduced.

Participants will be requested to set up management teams for a number of companies operating in one market. Every management team will be made up of the following roles: a managing director, a financial manager, one or more production managers, one or more marketing managers. Each member of every management team will take part in the company's decision making process from that particular point of view. In order to properly be aware of his or her authority, the members of the team will each receive precise guidelines within which decisions can be made.

During each decision round members are given ample time to communicate and make up their minds about a company strategy. Every decision run will result in a choice to be made for each of a number of parameters, such as the amount of yearly production, the number of points of sale, the number of sales representatives, loans to be placed and the sales price to be applied.

Consecutive decision rounds will show the results of strategic choices versus that of the competition. As participants go through the process of successful and unsuccessful decisions, they will gradually learn to react properly, learn to anticipate and learn to analyse to the company's benefit. It is a process of giving in, considering and convincing, a matter of solid and responsible decision making based on hard facts in some instances, on mere guessing in some other instances and on strategic decision making in most instances.

During the course of the consecutive decision rounds, the management teams are expected to keep a record of their decision making background. This will serve as a basis for a conclusive presentation for the meeting of shareholders. Students will receive some ba-

sic hints pertaining to presentation techniques that should prepare them to face the shareholders. Through sound reasoning and effective presentation the management team will have give a clear explanation for the company's results during the past decision making rounds and it should endeavour to convince shareholders to further support the company on its way to success.

Evaluation of the project will be done on the basis of 2 different aspects.

Students will be evaluated on the basis of their contribution to group activities during the decision making rounds. In addition their individual as well as their team achievement during the conclusive presentation will be taken into account.

### **Business Psychology**

The course first discusses two basic terms in industrial psychology: "corporate culture" and "corporate structure". The students have to have a clear understanding of both concepts and have to be able to apply them to real situations.

Secondly the course goes into the theme of corporate social responsibility (CSR). A guest speaker will introduce the theme theoretically and apply it to situations in Belgium and elsewhere. There will also be a visit to Coca Cola Belgium, where representatives of the firm explain how CSR works with Coca Cola. Students are expected to understand the concept of CSR and to apply it to new situations.

Students critically reflect on the topics discussed in a paper and apply them to situations from their respective countries.



## **3. WORK PLACEMENT / BUSINESS PROJECT**

Next to attending courses students will be involved in a business project.

We have our students carry out real assignments and projects for companies, either on the company's premises or at the Business Centre BEMT, close to the KHK campus in Geel. Alternatively, students do a ten-week work placement for a company in their field of study. Placements are offered in the field of marketing, customer relations, logistics, administration and ICT. Students either get to do some well defined tasks or they are integrated in the day-to-day running of the department involved.

The companies that are chosen always work internationally, often with the country of origin of the student involved. The language used is English or French and an advanced knowledge of one of these languages is required. The student is assigned a supervisor who will closely monitor the student. We work with companies in the Kempen region (Geel, Turnhout, Herentals, Mol, etc.), but some students are relocated to Antwerp or Brussels.

Since students are registered as KHK students, they will be insured while they are at work, also when they are at the company premises.

No remuneration is offered, neither for Belgian nor for international students for any of these business projects. However, there may be some financial allowances for commuting costs.



## 4. ASSESSMENT

Courses are tested either individually or with a project that covers various subjects. Grades are clustered for the four main fields of the programme (cf. p. 5). Students that pass all clusters will have earned 16 ECTS credits. After completing the placement or business project this will total 30 ECTS credits. They will then obtain the International Business Module Certificate.

Both the taught part and the work placement or business project will be assessed with the following grading scale. Results will be sent to the international coordinator of the student's home institution.

ECTS grading scale		
ECTS Grade	% of students normally achieving the grade	definition
A	10	<b>Excellent</b> - outstanding with only minor errors
B	25	<b>Very good</b> - above the average standard but with some errors
C	30	<b>Good</b> - generally sound work with a number of notable errors
D	25	<b>satisfactory</b> - fair but with significant shortcomings
E	10	<b>sufficient</b> - performance meets the minimum criteria
FX		<b>fail</b> - some work required before the credit can be awarded
F		<b>fail</b> - considerable further work is required

To pass the courses it is essential that students speak and write English at an advanced level.



## 5. SCHEDULE

Part	Week	Programme
INTRODUCTION WEEK	01/02/10	Welcome, introduction, seminars, visits and courses
Part 1 Courses International Business Module	08/02/10	Courses week 1
	15/02/10	MID TERM BREAK
	22/02/10	Courses week 2
	01/03/10	Courses week 3
	08/03/10	Courses week 4
	15/03/10	Courses week 5
	22/03/10	Courses week 6
	29/03/10	Courses week 7
	03/04/10	EASTER BREAK
	12/04/10	Practice week 1
	19/04/10	Practice week 2
Part 2 Placement or business projects	26/04/10	Practice week 3
	03/05/10	Practice week 4
	10/05/10	Practice week 5
	17/05/10	Practice week 6
	24/05/10	Practice week 7
	31/05/10	Practice week 8
	07/06/10	Practice week 9
	14/06/10	Practice week 10
	21/06/0	Communication of results and award of certificates



## **6. APPLICATIONS, REGISTRATION AND COST**

No tuition fees are charged for students the Katholieke Hogeschool Kempen has a bilateral Socrates contract with. However, participants will be charged 50 Euros for course materials. There will also be additional expenses of around 60 Euros for the various visits we do.

To register please send a full CV (using this site <http://europass.cedefop.eu.int/>) and covering letter (hard copy in duplicate and electronic version) to:

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Course Leader International Business Module  
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Participants should specify in which field (marketing / logistics / administration / ICT) they prefer to work for their placements or business projects. Date and place of birth are also needed for registration at school.

Please notice that the number of places is limited to 25 international students. So it is recommended to apply before the end of October 2009.

It is essential that applicants have an advanced level of English. The Katholieke Hogeschool Kempen may interview candidates by telephone to test levels of spoken English. Students that have not sufficient English will not be admitted to this programme.



## **7. ACCOMMODATION**

The college does not own any form of student accommodation, but it commits itself to finding accommodation for visiting students with private landlords. It is important that students have accommodation arranged before arrival so unless students tell us to do otherwise, we allocate rooms to them.

Flats and houses are usually shared with a group of people. Kitchen, toilets and showers are mostly shared. The rent ranges from 170 to 250 euros per month (bills included) depending on the location and the size of the room. Most rooms now have Internet connection, but supplements may have to be paid for it. Students also pay a share of the community tax (the equivalent of half an academic year) and contribute in the fire insurance costs. There is usually a deposit of one-month rent.

Since Geel is a provincial town and since the college is just outside the city bypass, students are recommended to rent a bike from the college. The charge is 3 euros per week and a deposit of 50 euros has to be paid.



## **8. ON ARRIVAL IN BELGIUM**

Students that come by plane probably arrive at Brussels National Airport (Zaventem) or at Brussels South (Charleroi). There are direct train (or bus) connections from the airports to Brussels. Geel is about 1.5 hour travel from the airports. The best way of travelling is from Brussel Noord (Bruxelles Nord) to Antwerpen-Berchem. There students change trains to the Neerpelt line, which calls at Geel.

All students are strongly advised that they carry a visa or valid passport. All students must register with the police within seven days of arrival. For police registration students need three passport photographs, evidence of sufficient financial support (e.g. proof you have a grant) and a letter of admission (which they will get from the university college upon arrival). Students are also strongly advised to take out travel insurance and third party liability insurance for their stay in Belgium.



# NOTES

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