Aston Business School
Birmingham

BSM933 INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Academic Year 2012/13

Number of Aston Credits: 15

Number of ECTS Credits: 7.5

Staff Member Responsible for the Module:

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Pre-requisites for the module:

None.

Mode of Attendance:

On Campus

Module Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

The international dimension (changes in comparative and competitive advantage, integration of markets and globalisation, government policies) is becoming increasingly important for business activities within Europe and worldwide. Nations are more economically integrated than at any other point in history. The aim of this module is to provide a systematic understanding of the fundamental aspects of the global business environment that influence business decisions and behaviour. This course is designed to provide a basic understanding of the challenges and opportunities involved in the operation of multinational enterprises. Major areas of discussion include the economic, political, social and cultural influences on the operation of multinational enterprises, as well as key concepts in international management. Managers must understand the structural economic factors that determine locational advantages, the way government policies both promote and restrain the integration of national economies with the global economy, and the impact of volatility in the global macroeconomic environment on international business strategy.

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Module Content:

Week 1: Introduction to module.
The evolution of international business

Week 2: Managing international environments
- Culture and business
- Expatriates in multinational firms

Week 3: Firm competitiveness and national competitiveness
- Porter's diamond

Week 4: Why do firms invest abroad? 1/2
- Vernon's international product life cycle
- Johanson & Vahlne's internationalisation model

Week 5: Why do firms invest abroad? 2/2
- Dunning's OLI model

Week 6: How do multinationals organise and manage subsidiaries?
- Bartlett & Ghoshal's *Managing across Borders*

Week 7: How do firms invest abroad?
- Entry modes

Week 8: How do firms invest abroad?
- Entry modes

Week 9: Course review and revision

Week 10: **Timed essay**

Corporate Connections:

The module makes extensive use of case studies of major international companies.

International Dimensions:

The course is entirely international in terms of its content, case-study material and examination.

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Method of Teaching:

The module employs a combination of lectures, case study discussion, and syndicate group work. Lectures are used to impart the basic knowledge on key theories, models and ideas of international business strategy and provide guidance on the use of appropriate techniques. Case studies and exercises permit students to experience the application of theories and techniques, while class discussions permit their evaluation and appraisal.

Method of Assessment and Feedback:

1. **Group report and presentation in the tutorial** (weeks 3-8): based on a written summary available to the whole group via Blackboard (Wiki) that deepens the weekly topic, **worth 20%** (continuous assessment).
2. **Timed essay**: 2,500 words, choose two questions out of four, question are equally weighted. Question paper will be released to students via Blackboard in week 9 to be submitted tbc, **worth 80%** (summative assessment).

Types of feedback available in the module: Students will receive feedback on their continuous assessment from peers and tutors, as well as a subsequent mark which is worth 20% and is thus mainly formative in nature and will clarify marking criteria and assessment style to students. Moreover, class discussion of cases and examples provides informal feedback within the group.

Learning Hours:

Contact hours (lectures/case study work)	27
Revision	3
Directed learning and reading	50
Private study and group report preparation	46
Assessment	24
Total	**150**

The following essential and recommended readings are subject to change. Students should not therefore purchase textbooks prior to commencing their course. If students wish to undertake background reading before starting the course, many of the chapters/readings are available in electronic form via on-line library catalogues and other resources.

Essential Reading

Hill, C.W.L. (2009); *International Business: competing in the global marketplace*; 7th ed.; McGraw-Hill.

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Please consult the weekly reading list that is released on Blackboard.

Indicative Bibliography:

Bartlett, C.A., and Ghoshal, S. (2002); *Managing across borders: The transnational solution*; 2nd ed.; Harvard Business School Press.

Dicken, P. (2007); *Global Shift*, 5th ed.; Sage.

Jones, G., and Hill, C.W.H. (2010); *Case Studies in Strategic Management*; 9th ed.; Cengage.

Peng, M. (2009), *Global Business*, Cengage.

Porter, M.E. (2004); *Competitive Advantage: creating and sustaining superior performance*, Free Press.

Recommended Journals:

Journal of International Business Studies

Strategic Management Journal

Journal of World Business (Colombia)

Management International Review

Thunderbird International Business Review

Transnational Corporations

International Business Review