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A. Introduction

A significant number of MBA students are sponsored by their employer to prepare them for the next level of management within their organisation. London Business School's top ranked MBA develops effective global leaders with a sophisticated understanding of business, through a flexible 15-21 month rigorous research-based curriculum with an emphasis on real-life applications.

Drawing on the experience of students who have secured sponsorship from consulting companies, blue-chip banks, SMEs and the public sector, we have compiled this guide to help you create a business case to present to your organisation. Feedback from our students suggests that creating a coherent and compelling business case is a pivotal tool when approaching any organisation for sponsorship.

Many companies, when approached with such a request may be asking, 'why should we make this investment?' and 'what's in it for us?' This guide can help you answer these questions and clearly convey the benefits a world renowned MBA programme from London Business School can provide to you and your organisation.

We hope the following provides a useful framework upon which to build a solid case. There is no guaranteed success, but thorough preparation and perseverance has paid dividends for our sponsored students.

We hope you are successful!

B. Return on investment

Make sure you clearly articulate to your Line Manager your expected benefits to the company. Define measurements to assess how your contribution will increase during or after the programme in terms of skills and knowledge acquired, that will benefit both the organisation and you as an individual.

During the MBA programme you will develop the skills and knowledge you need to become an effective global business leader. Through the core courses you will gain a complete business toolkit and you will tailor your experience with the electives in order to specialise in key areas of interest to your organisation and to your potential new role and responsibilities.

For example, the “Perspectives on Business Ethics” core course will give you the opportunity to examine the challenges and complexities faced by businesses and their leaders as they endeavour to maximise returns while responsibly managing their duties to both stakeholders and society. Through the ‘Operations Management’ core course you will earn the quantitative tools for describing, analysing and improving business processes, tools which will help you and your employer generate insights on how data and managerial input can be effectively used to match supply with demand.

What you learn in the classroom is just one element of how your London Business School experience can deliver value for your employer upon return to work. Your powerful peer group with which you will share knowledge and networks consists of extraordinarily individuals with varied career backgrounds, including finance, consulting, engineering, the media, the military, sport, IT, pharmaceuticals, aerospace, marketing, healthcare and not-for-profit sectors. You will also develop your strong network by joining world-class conferences, forums, lectures, summits and speaker series - the list of events on campus is endless. London Business School’s reputation and location bring some of the most inspirational and thought-provoking leaders in the world giving you the chance to be exposed to new and innovative ideas at the forefront of global business. It is important to highlight the overall benefits for your organisation of establishing links with London Business School (LBS). As their ambassador on campus, you can be the bridge linking your organisation to world-class faculty, major global events and the global alumni network.

B.1. Key programme features

Once you have defined the business need, the next step is to conduct your analysis. Support your choice of programme by identifying the most relevant components to your organisation.

- **Leadership Launch**

Leadership Launch is a series of courses organised in five themes, representing the key skills that leaders can and must develop, such as:

- Deliver through Others
- Communicate Powerfully
- Know and Develop Yourself
- Solve Complex Problems
- Lead and Implement Change

Leadership Launch provides a varied and stimulating learning environment through simulations, panel discussions, group workshops and coaching. You are encouraged to tailor the programme to both your organisation's and your own development needs. This is a great opportunity to develop the leadership skills required to re-invent yourself and lead your team to the next level in order to exceed organisational targets and meet cross departmental business needs.

- **Global Business Experiences (GBEs)**

The GBEs are a unique opportunity to learn about global business through a week-long immersion in one of five international locations. GBEs are academically focused and are designed to be fast-paced, engaging and demanding. Each GBE is tailored to its location, offering a rare opportunity to gain insight from local industry, governmental leaders as well as the cultural landscape. You will be pushed outside your comfort zone, working with classmates you have not yet worked with before in an unfamiliar environment. The GBE week consists of faculty lectures, guest speakers, site visits, workshops, panels, company visits as well as opportunity to engage and network with local London Business School alumni in the region.

- **International Exchange Programme**

The London Business School MBA has one of the world's largest international exchange programmes. Each year approximately 40 per cent of second-year MBA students spend a term abroad at one of over 30 partner schools. We also host a similar number of students from our partner schools. Read the list of our partner schools here: [Partner Schools](#)
While on the exchange you will build new business networks and experience a new culture. To ensure you get the maximum cultural benefit you will not normally be allowed to visit a country that you have lived in for more than three years as an adult.

- **Study Group**

An important element of your MBA will be working with a highly diverse study group; this invaluable experience will significantly enhance your cross cultural team work skills upon your return to your employer, as well as developing an understanding of best practice in other industries and functions. When you arrive at London Business School, you will be assigned to a study group of six or seven people from diverse cultural and professional backgrounds. An example of a typical MBA study group might consist of: an American LPGA Tour golfer, a Mexican management consultant, a South Korean insurer, a British marketing manager, a Portuguese telecoms specialist and a former member of the Turkish Treasury!

- **Network**

As a student and graduate of the MBA at London Business School (LBS) you will:

- Have lifelong access to blue-chip corporate partners and their industry network.
- Become part of the LBS community made up of over 46,000 alumni in over 150 countries.

- **Sample analysis**

Programme Feature	Return on investment
Core course: Managing Organisational Behaviour	Increase employee motivation and create a high performing team.
Core course: Perspectives on Business Ethics	Maximise returns while responsibly managing the organisation's duties to both stakeholders and society.
Elective course: Business Project	Apply in practice the knowledge you have acquired in the classroom, by delivering a project that addresses a business problem in your employers' organisation.

B.2. Programme structure

The MBA at London Business School is a full-time programme with exit points at 15, 18 and 21 months. The curriculum supports your individual as well as your organisation's development needs through an increased choice of dynamic learning methods, and flexibility. The MBA uses a variety of teaching methods to help you develop the skills and knowledge you need to become an effective global business leader. Applying your learning is also an important element of the educational experience and our London location forms a key backdrop throughout your time here.

During the first year of the programme you will gain competence in core areas, covering a comprehensive management tool kit. The second year provides the opportunity to tailor and customise your experience, depending on your organisation's and individual needs. During your first year you will complete your core courses, and during the second year you can customise the programme to your needs by choosing 10-12 electives. This gives you the flexibility to graduate in 15 months, and return to your organisation sooner.

B.3. Recommendation

Before you commit to asking your employer for support towards your studies you should be absolutely sure that you want to continue pursuing your career within the organisation after graduation. Keep in mind that you will be exposed to a huge range of different opportunities during your time at the School and MBA graduates typically see a significant increase in their salaries.

You should not only weigh up the level of financial contribution you wish to ask for, but also think about how return to work will be managed. Will you be asking to re-join at a higher level and will there be capacity for this in 15-21 months after your departure? Will you expect a higher salary on return? Is there a 'high-potential' or fast-track leadership scheme that will recognise your new skills?

We suggest that you think about these issues carefully before approaching your employer with the recommendation. Organisations that are willing to sponsor individuals on a full-time MBA only do so when they are considered to be extremely valuable employees. You should be up front about the potential opportunities an MBA at London Business School could offer for

your career, while reiterating that your preferred option would be to stay with your employer and use the MBA as a platform to improve your impact, performance and leadership potential. After you have gathered specific evidence that our MBA programme will benefit you and your company, you will need to ensure that you highlight the aspects of your personal development that are most important in the context of the business need and your career development plans:

General:

“I believe it is the right time for me to pursue an MBA. It will be not only a huge benefit to myself as the next leader of this organisation, but will benefit the teams I will manage through the improvements I will be able to implement immediately on my return from the programme and long into the future. The programme will increase my opportunities to advance in different areas of the business. I cannot progress to more senior positions without developing my skills in key areas of business. The MBA will equip me with a broad range of business acumen, as well as developing on my leadership potential, enabling me to continue to progress successfully within our organisation.”

Specific:

‘Having worked within x department I need to broaden my understanding of x...’

‘To date, within our organisation I have achieved...’

‘In order to progress within the organisation, it is vital I develop X skills....’

If your organisation offers internal development programmes or even external training with other institutions you may need to clarify why an MBA at London Business School would be preferable to a number of short development programmes. In this case, you should emphasise the ability to learn from world leading faculty who, alongside teaching, consult and sit on the boards of major multinationals and conduct ground-breaking research in their fields of expertise. The rigour of the programme sets it apart from shorter courses, as well as the opportunity to learn from and collaborate with your diverse and experienced peer group. Once you have graduated, remember that you and your company have access to a powerful and influential professional network for life.

C. Asking for employer support

I. Financial support

Think carefully about the level of financial contribution you require, making sure you have up to date information on tuition fees. You may also need to request additional funds for accommodation, travel and materials. Think about different funding models so you have a “package” to request, and can offer different positioning. Outside of 100 per cent funding,

students on recent intakes have been financially supported in a variety of ways, including matching funding, percentage splits, reduced hours, tuition reimbursement at key stages and bonus payments.

The agreement you finally come to will most likely be the result of a back and forth negotiation between you and your employer. The monetary contribution you receive is most commonly dependant on how long you are going to be contractually obliged to remain with the organisation. If you require a significant level of funding, be prepared to be very flexible with this detail.

II. Time

You Indicate clearly in your request the extent of the time required. It may be helpful to put the detailed schedules into an appendix, and to give a short table within the business case showing the requirements for the MBA and, if appropriate, comparison with any other programmes.

Please take into consideration that **you can graduate from the MBA programme in 15, 18, or 21 months**, depending on your electives choice and other programme requirements. The minimum time required to complete the MBA is fifteen months. Since you may be able to return to your organisation sooner, this is a very important negotiating tool. Your absence from work is likely to be considered as much of an investment for your employer as any financial contribution they make.

III. Commitment and Conclusion

Your statement of commitment is critical and should show your commitment to the organisation, and to being a successful student on the programme. There are a variety of ways of demonstrating this commitment, and as previously explained, agreements will most typically encompass lock-in periods, reimbursement of tuition and other costs (whole or percentage). The statement of commitment ensures that you take responsibility for your learning and repay the investment that has been made for you by your company.

D. Contacts

We hope this guide is helpful and wish you the very best of luck!

If you require any further information about the MBA or London Business School to support your business case, please contact the Recruitment team:

Tel: +44 (0)20 7000 7500

Email: mba@london.edu

Should your employer wish to have a direct point of contact at the School to answer any questions or concerns they have, or to build a relationship with London Business School, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact:

Greg Moore

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