

Course Brief

Doctor of Business Administration [DBA] (AQF 10)

1. AQF Qualification Type

Level 10 Doctoral Degree (Professional)

2. Duration

Standard Full time: 3 years

Standard Part time: 6 years

Candidates have a maximum of 4 years (full-time) or 8 years (part-time) to complete this course.

3. Indicative Candidate Workload/Volume of Learning

The DBA course accounts for 240 Credit Points.

Aligned with the volume of learning requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), one AIB 10 credit point subject nominally involves 150 hours of study. Study-related activities for research higher degree awards may include directed learning such as workshops, webinars, independent study, interaction with staff and peers, reflection, regular engagement with research supervisors, individual study, research activities including in the workplace, assignment work and other.

4. Delivery Modes

Online only

5. Admission Requirements

Applicants must meet one of the following Academic Qualifications criteria:

- A Master's in Philosophy; or
- A Master's Degree (AQF Level 9) at Credit or higher-level Grade Point Average with an appropriate research component (for example, research methods subject or research project); or
- A Bachelor's Degree with Honours (AQF Level 8) with minimum upper second class honours or equivalent.

Applicants must meet English language requirements: See [Appendix A – English Language Requirements](#).

Work Experience: It is desirable that applicants have access to a workplace for their assignments and research.

6. Course Rationale

The Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) is designed to provide graduates with a systematic and critical understanding of a substantial and complex area of management theory and practice, and specialised research skills for the application of theory in a professional context to meet the needs of organisations, industry and the economy. The course aims to develop graduates who will be able to apply their original contribution and their specialised cognitive, technical and research skills in contexts requiring them to demonstrate autonomy, authoritative judgment, adaptability and responsibility as an expert and leading practitioner. Graduates of the DBA could utilise their systematic and critical understanding of management practice and specialised research skills in leadership roles in the private, public, higher education or not-for-profit sectors or as consultants and/or executive managers in their own business.

7. Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

The CLOs are mapped against the requirements of the AQF Level of this course as follows:

No.	On completion of this course candidates should be able to:	AQF Level Mapping
1.	Demonstrate substantial knowledge of the disciplinary and sector literature in one or more business-related disciplines including knowledge about application to professional practice and applied research methodologies.	Knowledge
2.	Investigate and critically evaluate the literature in one or more business-related disciplines to formulate original research questions that address the needs of the workplace, organisation or industry setting.	Knowledge; Skills
3.	Demonstrate responsibility, accountability, initiative, and creativity in investigating and reporting on research and generating new knowledge in a workplace, organisational or industry setting.	Application of Knowledge and Skills
4.	Develop a proposal and obtain ethics approval for a systematic investigation in a business-related context in a professional workplace, organisational or industry setting, generating a significant contribution to knowledge in the context of professional practice.	Application of Knowledge and Skills
5.	Communicate research through a substantial thesis which is externally examined to international standards.	Skills; Application of Knowledge and Skills
6.	Independently conduct research leading to conclusions constituting a significant and original contribution to knowledge and professional practice.	Application of Knowledge and Skills

8. Course Rules

General Rules:

To qualify for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Business Administration, a candidate shall accrue 240 credit points with the breakdown presented below:

- 1) Core Coursework Subjects of 40 credit points:
 - 9917AAR Advanced Applied Research
 - 9915RM Research Methodologies
 - 9911LRC Literature Review and Critique
 - And one of the following subjects:

- 9912ALAR Action Learning Action Research
- 9001CSR Qualitative Case Study Research
- 9913MMR Mixed Methods Research
- 9916QM Quantitative Methods

- 2) Research Subjects of 200 credit points:
- 9920RPRDBA Research Proposal (DBA); and
 - 1002TDBA Research Thesis (DBA).

Other Protocols:

The AIB Research Orientation Module is mandatory and must be completed within 4 weeks from the commencement of the course.

All subjects in the course are compulsory, that is ‘Core’.

The 1002TDBA Research Thesis (DBA) will be 50,000 to 80,000 words in length (excluding references and appendices) and will present an original contribution to knowledge in a business, commerce or management-related field – particularly in relation to professional or management practice.

Candidates are required to:

- As an important, pivotal milestone, prepare and submit a research proposal as part of their 9920RPRDBA Research Proposal (DBA) subject, in close consultation with the Research Supervisory Panel. The Research Proposal will be assessed by a specially convened Research Proposal Assessment Panel.
- Give an oral presentation on their Research-in-Progress to the AIB academic community at least once a year for the duration of their candidature.
- Conduct the research project ethically and responsibly under the guidance of a Research Supervisory Panel and to make satisfactory progress with their research as assessed on a regular basis by the Principal Supervisor and according to AIB research policies and procedures.

The 1002TDBA Research Thesis (DBA) contains Sub-Codes used to operationally represent administrative, financial and academic progression milestones within this subject [1002TDBA_A, 1002TDBA_B, 1002TDBA_C, 1002TDBA_D]; further details are provided for Candidates in the Research Candidate Handbook.

9. Course Structure

The Course content is detailed below.

Subject Type	Subject Title	Subject Code	AQF Level	Credit Points
Coursework:				
Core coursework subject	Advanced Applied Research	9917AAR	Level 9	10
Core coursework subject	Research Methodologies	9915RM	Level 9	10
Core coursework subject	Literature Review and Critique	9911LRC	Level 9	10
One of the following:				
Core coursework subject	Qualitative Case Study Research	9901CSR	Level 9	10
Core coursework subject	Action Research Action Learning	9912ARAL	Level 9	10
Core coursework subject	Mixed Methods Research	9913MMR	Level 9	10

Core coursework subject	Quantitative Methods	9916QM	Level 9	10
Research:				
Core Research Subject	Research Proposal (DBA)	9920RPRDBA	Level 9	40
Core Research Subject	Research Thesis (DBA)	1002TDBA	Level 10	160

Proportion of Research: 200 of 240 Credit Points = 83%

Nature of Research: Complete 9920RPRDBA Research Proposal (DBA), conduct Research and write a substantial Research Thesis (DBA) 1002TDBA.

10. Pre-Requisites or Assumed Knowledge

AQF Level	Subject Code	Subject Title	Pre-Requisite (to be completed before attempting the subject)
9	9001CSR	Qualitative Case Study Research	9915RM Research Methodologies
9	9912ALAR	Action Research Action Learning	9915RM Research Methodologies
9	9913MMR	Mixed Methods Research	9915RM Research Methodologies
9	9915RM	Research Methodologies	9917AAR Advanced Applied Research
9	9916QM	Quantitative Methods	9915RM Research Methodologies
9	9911LRC	Literature Review and Critique	9917AAR Advanced Applied Research
9	9920RPRDBA	Research Proposal (DBA)	9917AAR Advanced Applied Research 9915RM Research Methodologies 9911LRC Literature Review Critique And one of the following subjects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9912ALAR Action Learning Action Research • 9001CSR Qualitative Case Study Research • 9913MMR Mixed Methods Research. • 9916QM Quantitative Methods
10	1002TDBA	Research Thesis (DBA)	9920RPRDBA Research Proposal (to be completed or be enrolled in concurrently)

11. Assessment Approach

Assessment is based on the expert review of written work. In all assessment AIB emphasises the application of knowledge and skills. Assignments focus on a work-based issue or enable the candidate to use a workplace as the focus of the assignment.

Assessment items in coursework subjects comprise of an appropriate mix of assignment tasks which could include projects, reports, presentations, forum posts, reflective pieces, time-bound tests, quizzes and oral presentations.

In the research component, all assessments are customised to the candidate’s research and designed to help the candidate progress with their research thesis. Specifically, the assessment items are a Research Proposal, an Ethics Application (where required), and the final Research Thesis. The final Research Thesis is examined externally as per the requirements set out in the AIB research policy and procedures.

12. Exit Points, Articulation Arrangements and Pathways

Exit Points:

Candidates who successfully complete all four Core Coursework subjects, as per Section 9 Course Structure above, may, if meeting requirements set out in AIB research policies and procedures, exit with a Graduate Certificate in Research Methodologies.

Articulation Arrangements: Refer to the Articulation Register.

Pathways:

The Master of Management (MMgt) can provide a direct or conversion pathway to the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) as set out in AIB research policies and procedures:

- Direct pathway: Successful completion of the Master of Management at Credit level or above provides a pathway to the DBA.
- Conversion pathway: MMgt candidates are eligible to convert to the DBA if the following conditions are met:
 1. Completed all coursework subjects at Credit level or above; and
 2. Completed 9919PPRMMgt Project Proposal at Credit level or above.

Conversion from the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) to the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) must occur before the final year of full-time candidature. The conversion pathway for DBA to PhD, as set out in AIB research policies and procedures, involves assessment by an Assessment Panel of a written application of upgrade endorsed by the Research Supervisory Panel.

13. Constructive Alignment

The Course Learning Outcomes (CLO) are as per section 6 of this Course Brief.

Graduate Qualities ¹	CLO1	CLO2	CLO3	CLO4	CLO5	CLO6
Commit to ethical practice, professional integrity and principled behaviour.			x	x	x	x
Communicate effectively in all mediums and genuinely listen to the views of others.			x	x	x	x
Critically evaluate information from diverse sources to make informed and timely decisions.	x	x				

¹ Graduate Qualities as per [Graduate Qualities Policy](#), V6 (29 September 2022).

Graduate Qualities¹	CLO1	CLO2	CLO3	CLO4	CLO5	CLO6
Be curious and adaptive; seek out new knowledge and ideas and be receptive to different approaches and perspectives.	x	x		x	x	x
Engage respectfully and effectively with others and embrace and welcome diversity.		x			x	x
Be strategic, resilient and authentic leaders, mindful of the impact of decisions and behaviours on others.			x	x	x	
Be committed to social, cultural, business and environmental sustainability.			x		x	x

Appendix A – English Language Requirements

Applicants must meet the English Language Requirements in one of the following categories:

CATEGORY 1

Applicants whose First language is not English need to demonstrate proficiency in English with a score¹ as outlined in the table below.

English Language Test	Postgraduate Coursework (GradCertMgt, GCRM, MBA, MMgt)	Postgraduate Research (DBA, PhD)
Academic IELTS	6.5 or better <i>(with no individual band lower than 6.0)</i>	7.0 or better <i>(with no individual band lower than 6.0)</i>
TOEFL IBT	79 or better <i>(with writing and reading no lower than 20 and listening and speaking no lower than 18)</i>	94 or better <i>(with no individual band lower than 20)</i>
Academic PTE	58 or better <i>(with no individual band lower than 50)</i>	65 or better <i>(with writing and speaking no lower than 65, listening and reading no lower than 58)</i>
Cambridge English CAE and CPE (from 2015)	176 or better <i>(with no individual band lower than 169)</i>	185 or better <i>(with writing and speaking no lower than 185, and listening and reading no lower than 176)</i>
CTC General Certificate of Education (GCE)	A levels with C or better in English	A levels with A in English

CATEGORY 2 – For Postgraduate Coursework

Evidence of successful completion of Secondary Education in English.

Applicants who have successfully completed Secondary Education (equivalent to Australian Senior Certificate of Education) that was taught and assessed in English in one of the countries listed below where English is the first language:

- Australia
- Canada (except Quebec)
- New Zealand
- Republic of Ireland
- South Africa
- UK - England
- UK - Northern Ireland

¹ AIB will accept an English Language Test with the outlined scores taken any time in the two years up to the date of commencement at AIB.

- UK - Scotland
- UK - Wales
- United States of America

CATEGORY 3 – For Postgraduate Coursework and Research

Evidence of successful completion of Tertiary Education in English

Applicants who have successfully completed Tertiary Education (equivalent to AQF Level 5 or above for Postgraduate Coursework and equivalent AQF Level 8 or above for Postgraduate Research) that was taught and assessed in English in one of the countries listed below where the medium of instruction was in English².

American Samoa	Mauritius
Antigua and Barbuda	Namibia
Australia	Nauru
Bahamas	New Zealand
Barbados	Nigeria
Belize	Papua New Guinea
Bermuda	Philippines
Botswana	Republic of Ireland
Cameroon	Samoa
Canada	Seychelles
Cook Islands	Sierra Leone
Dominica	South Africa
Falkland Islands	Solomon Islands
Fiji	St Kitts and Nevis
Gambia	St Lucia
Ghana	Tanzania
Gibraltar	Trinidad & Tobago
Grenada	Uganda
Guyana	UK – England
Jamaica	UK – Northern Ireland
Kenya	UK – Scotland
Kiribati	UK – Wales
Singapore	United States of America
Liberia	Vanuatu
Malawi	Zambia
Maldives	Zimbabwe

² Medium of Instruction in English is assessed against the Country Education Profiles on Australian Education International (AEI) or the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC UK). English Instruction will only be accepted if AEI or NARIC UK states that English is the language of instruction relevant to the country, education level or Institution.

For Postgraduate Coursework: Alternative English Language Waiver Pathway

If English isn't your first language, and you are not able to supply evidence outlined in Categories 1, 2 or 3, you may be eligible for an exemption from AIB's English language requirements based on your residence and professional experience.

Applicants need to have lived and worked in an English-speaking country for at least five years prior to the commencement of the course in which they are enrolling to be assessed for an English language waiver.

Applicants are asked to provide documentation to support their application for a waiver, which includes passports/visas and a work reference letter from a direct manager, that covers at least the last 5 years immediately prior to application, on company letterhead with dates and contact details of their direct supervisor. The letter must include a statement that English was the language used (both written and oral) in the performance of their duties/responsibilities.

In line with Australian government requirements, countries approved for waiver are limited to: American Samoa, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Canada (excluding Quebec), Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, Gibraltar, Guyana, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom (including Northern Ireland), United States of America, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.