Programme Curriculum for Master Programme in Accounting and Finance

1. Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of programme</th>
<th>Master Programme in Accounting and Finance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Scope of programme</td>
<td>60 ECTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Master level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programme code</td>
<td>EAGAF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decision details</td>
<td>Board of the School of Economics and Management, 17 April, 2015</td>
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<td>Amendment details</td>
<td>Dean of the School of Economics and Management, 13 Sept, 2016; 2017-06-16</td>
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2. Programme description

The target audience of the master programme in Accounting and Finance consists of students who are aiming for careers as, for example, chief financial officers (CFO), controllers, treasurers, or accounting experts, or in other financial management or accounting functions, in assurance or management consultancy, or as financial analysts or investment bankers. An accounting and finance background is an excellent springboard for a career in the top echelons of industry, as evidenced by the many senior corporate executives that have this background. The programme also provides a thorough preparation for academic research in accounting, management control, or corporate finance.

A career in management accounting and control or corporate finance and related sectors of the economy requires an advanced level of understanding of the theories and practices of accounting and corporate finance. The programme meets this need by providing a comprehensive, rigorous, yet applied treatment of key areas of accounting and corporate finance. The programme is founded on the idea that learning is fruitful when a subject matter is applied in practical decision contexts. Hence, strong emphasis is put on training participants’ abilities to apply their knowledge in decision situations.

All participants follow common core courses as well as specialization courses within their chosen specialization. The common core courses cover techniques for collecting, analyzing, and reporting financial information. They enhance essential accounting and finance capabilities including analyzing and interpreting financial statements, assessing performance, designing management control packages, and understanding corporate financial policies such as capital structures, cash management, payout policies, and contracting between a firm and its management and stakeholders.
To cater to participants’ specialized interest, the programme is organized into two specializations. Depending on ambitions and interests, participants choose to specialize in:

- Accounting and management control
- Corporate financial management

Applicants must specify which specialization they are applying for in their Statement of Purpose (motivation letter) that has to accompany the application.

Management control is a critical function in organizations to ensure that decisions and behaviors are consistent with objectives and strategies related to performance. On the specialization in Accounting and management control participants will learn about how performance measurement can improve decision-making and strengthen motivation. Other areas covered are contemporary management accounting techniques related to costing and pricing of products, as well as assessment of capital costs. Knowledge of research approaches and methods will be integrated parts of the courses. Case assignments and experiments are important in the course work to facilitate participants’ understanding of linkages between strategy and performance, organizational characteristics, and the design of management control systems.

Corporate finance is a place where business strategy, processes, and information combine. The specialization in Corporate financial management provides techniques and models to assist in financial decision-making and the insight to determine whether these decisions make sense in a strategic competitive context. Participants will improve their skills in analyzing the need for and design of corporate restructurings, in evaluating the impact of corporate restructurings on corporate performance and firm value, and in solving complex and unstructured practical corporate financial problems. They will also improve their understanding of how to finance and manage the risk of ventures, be they start-ups or incumbent firms and corporate transactions.

Given the high level of academic performance expected from participants, a significant amount of independent study and preparation is required for successful completion of the programme.

Career opportunities
There is a broad and extensive labour market for graduates of programmes in accounting and finance both nationally and internationally.

Connections to further studies
After completion of the programme, participants are eligible for applying to further studies at the advanced level in business administration as well as to doctoral programmes in business administration.

3. Learning outcomes
The programme builds on previous studies at the undergraduate level including knowledge obtained in business administration, accounting, and corporate finance. In accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance, the Degree of Master of Science (60 credits) is awarded to participants who at the completion of the programme accomplish the following:

Knowledge and understanding
- Participants should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of financial analysis and communication, performance assessment, and corporate financial policies.
- Participants specializing in Accounting and management control should demonstrate knowledge and understanding within management control, including both a broad command of the field and
deeper knowledge of certain parts of the field, together with insight into current research and development work, as well as demonstrate methodological knowledge and insight into current research and development work within the field.

- Participants specializing in **Corporate financial management** should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of financial analysis, corporate valuation, designing financing solutions, and corporate and financial restructurings, as well as demonstrate methodological knowledge and insight into current research and development work within the field.

**Skills and abilities**
- Participants should demonstrate an ability to integrate knowledge and to analyze, assess, and deal with complex phenomena, issues, and situations, even when limited information is available.
- Participants should demonstrate an ability to independently identify and formulate issues and to plan and, using appropriate methods, carry out advanced tasks within specified time limits.
- Participants should demonstrate an ability to use theories and methodologies learnt to analyze and assess practice.
- Participants should demonstrate an ability to clearly present and discuss their conclusions and the knowledge and arguments behind them, in dialogue with different groups, orally and in writing.
- Participants should demonstrate the skill required to participate in research and development work or to work in other advanced contexts.

**Judgement and approach**
- Participants should demonstrate an ability to make assessments within their chosen specialization, taking into account relevant scientific, social, and ethical aspects, and demonstrate an awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work.
- Participants should demonstrate insight into the potential and limitations of science, its role in society, and people’s responsibility for how it is used.
- Participants should demonstrate an ability to identify their need of further knowledge and to take responsibility for developing their knowledge.

**Independent project (degree project)**
For a Master of Science (60 credits) participants must have completed an independent project (degree project) worth at least 15 higher education credits in accounting and finance, within the framework of the course requirements.

**4. Course information**
The programme is organized into two specializations, where the specializations combine common core courses with unique specialization courses. The course structures within the specializations are predetermined to facilitate consecutive enhancement of participants’ knowledge of accounting and corporate finance. There are no possibilities for participants to combine courses across specializations beyond elective courses as listed for each specialization.

The programme of study on all specializations is divided into two semesters and further subdivided into four study periods. Period 1 extends from late August to late October, period 2 from late October to mid-January, period 3 from mid-January to late March, and period 4 from late March to early June. Periods 1-3 are devoted to course work, whereas period 4 is devoted to writing the degree project.
### Study period 1 (September-October)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period 1</th>
<th>Period 2</th>
<th>Period 3</th>
<th>Period 4</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sept-Oct</td>
<td>Nov-Jan</td>
<td>Jan-March</td>
<td>April-June</td>
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#### Core courses

- **BUSO94** Corporate finance (5 ECTS)
- **BUSO73** Financial accounting and communication (5 ECTS)
- **BUSO71** Accounting and management control (5 ECTS)

#### Specialization in Accounting and management control

- **BUSN76** Performance measurement and management (7.5 ECTS)
- **BUSN77** Accounting and management control in different contexts (7.5 ECTS)
- Elective course (7.5 ECTS) subject to variation

#### Specialization in Corporate financial management

- **BUSO95** Corporate valuation (7.5 ECTS)
- **BUSO96** Designing Finance (7.5 ECTS)
- Core course (7.5 ECTS) subject to variation
- Elective course (7.5 ECTS) subject to variation

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**Course information, common core courses**

During study period 1 all participants follow three common core courses:

- **BUSO94 Corporate finance**, which provides advanced knowledge of corporate finance, covering topics such as the interaction between internal and external financing and risk management, contracting between a firm and its management and stakeholders, dividends and stock repurchases, and ownership structures. It also deals with econometric techniques.
for analysing corporate finance data, with an emphasis on choosing and using appropriate modeling techniques for cross-sectional and panel data.

- **BUSO73 Financial Accounting and Communication**, which gives participants thorough understanding of principles for analysing advanced accounting problems and the language used when supplying financial information and explaining and legitimating corporate actions, outcomes, decisions etc.

- **BUSO71 Accounting and Management Control**, which gives participants thorough understanding of advanced management accounting and control issues from both a theoretical and a practical perspective. Throughout the course participants are confronted with the latest developments in management accounting and control in research as well as practice.

During periods 2 and 3 participants follow courses within their chose specialization, while period 4 is devoted to the degree project. The subject for the degree project is chosen and initial work on the project is begun during period 3. The work with the project is then continued full-time during the second half of the second semester. A supervisor will be assigned to each degree project.

**Course information, specialization in Accounting and management control**

The specialization in Accounting and management control provides advanced treatments of theories, applications, and relevant empirical research methods within the area of management accounting and control. It provides advanced knowledge and skills in performance measurement and its relation to motivation and decision-making, as well as contemporary management accounting techniques and methods of costing and pricing of products and assessment of capital costs. The specialization includes the following courses:

- **BUSN76 Performance measurement and management**, which provides participants with advanced knowledge about the use of performance measurement to improve decision making and the motivation of individuals. The process of collecting, analyzing, and reporting financial and non-financial performance may relate to an individual, group, organization, or system. This process may be guided by a balanced scorecard approach or similar framework, linking performance measurement with objectives and strategies. Special emphasis is given to how biased decision-making related to assessment of performance can be avoided, and how different forms of financial and non-financial incentive schemes influence individual motivation.

- **BUSN77 Accounting and management control in different contexts**, which provides participants with knowledge about how management control is influenced by different strategies, organizational characteristics and objectives, and market and societal factors. Special emphasis is given to complex situations that require balancing management control systems towards multiple and competing demands. Contexts covered include management control and management accounting techniques to support innovation strategies, management control in not-for-profit organizations, and management control in professional services firms with knowledge-intensive work.

- **Elective course, period 2**. Elective courses may be subject to variation and may be cancelled due to limited student demand, but examples are:
  - **BUSN64 Strategic cost management**, which provides participants with deepened and thorough knowledge of investment analysis, credit analysis, and costing within a strategic framework. It provides participants with tools to investigate business problems, specialized knowledge about investment planning and costing on an aggregate level, and detailed knowledge about model building. The course also familiarizes participants with major and recent literature in their field as well as introduces important research techniques.
  - **BUSO95 Corporate valuation**, which focuses on analysing businesses, corporate performance, and financial reporting. Participants will gain in-depth knowledge of
valuing companies, primarily using cash-flow-, income-, and comparables-based valuation methods. The course emphasizes analysing accounting data and appraising, interpreting, and restructuring financial statements for use in financial analysis and corporate valuation.

- **BUSN 61 International accounting**, which gives participants thorough understanding of principles for analysing advanced accounting problems. It also examines and analyzes accounting practices and norms in, and differences between countries, as well as analyzes and compares the work of leading accounting standard-setting bodies with an international influence, such as the EU, the IASB (the International Accounting Standards Board), and the FASB (the Financial Accounting Standards Board).

- **Elective course, period 3**. Elective courses may be subject to variation and may be cancelled due to limited student demand, but examples are:
  - **BUSN67 Accounting information systems**, which provides deep knowledge of the models for and structure of accounting information systems as well as risk assurance systems. The course provides understanding of data- and information flows in organizations, systems architecture, and validation and security in the accounting information system. It also focuses on the role of accounting information systems in decision making.
  - **Corporate risk management**, which deals with strategies and tactics of value-enhancing risk management, with particular emphasis on integrated and enterprise-wide risk-management solutions. The course also deals with risk-control mechanisms such as internal controls, insurance solutions, and risk management using derivatives, such as forwards, futures, swaps, and options.
  - **Frontiers in accounting**, which provides advanced knowledge about the theoretical and historical basis of corporate financial communication and assurance. The course focuses on issues currently under debate in the area. It further provides skills in critically discussing and applying different methods in accounting research.

*Course information, specialization in Corporate financial management*

The specialization in **Corporate financial management** covers all main areas of corporate finance, such as corporate valuation and credit ratings, choosing and designing financing solutions, and corporate and financial restructurings. The specialization includes the following courses:

- **BUSO95 Corporate valuation**, which focuses on analysing businesses, corporate performance, and financial reporting. Participants will gain in-depth knowledge of valuing companies, primarily using cash-flow-, income-, and comparable-based valuation methods. The course emphasizes analysing accounting data and appraising, interpreting, and restructuring financial statements for use in financial analysis and corporate valuation.

- **BUSO96 Designing finance**. The aim of the course is the optimization of corporate capital and risk structures through active capital management. The course provides applied knowledge of how to assess and design corporate financing transactions, including venture capital, equity, straight, hybrid, and structured fixed-income securities and insurance products. It also trains participants in assessing credit risk and doing corporate credit ratings.

- **Elective course, period 3**. Elective courses may be subject to variation and may be cancelled due to limited student demand, but examples are:
  - **Corporate risk management**, which deals with strategies and tactics of value-enhancing risk management, with particular emphasis on integrated and enterprise-wide risk-management solutions. The course also deals with risk-control mechanisms such as internal controls, insurance solutions, and risk management using derivatives, such as forwards, futures, swaps, and options.
- **Accounting information systems**, which provides deep knowledge of the models for and structure of accounting information systems as well as risk assurance systems. The course provides understanding of data- and information flows in organizations, systems architecture, and validation and security in the accounting information system. It also focuses on the role of accounting information systems in decision making.

- **Frontiers in accounting**, which provides advanced knowledge about the theoretical and historical basis of corporate financial communication and assurance. The course focuses on issues currently under debate in the area. It further provides skills in critically discussing and applying different methods in accounting research.

5. **Degree**

Upon completion of the programme a Degree of Master of Science in Business and Economics (60 credits) will be awarded in compliance with the National Higher Education Ordinance (SFS 2006:1053). The major will be in Business Administration with specialization in Accounting and Finance (*Ekonomie magisterexamen: huvudområde företagsekonomi, specialisering redovisning och finansiering*).

6. **Admission requirements and selection criteria**

The general admission requirements are as follows:

- An undergraduate degree (BA/BSc).
- A good command of the English language, both spoken and written, equivalent to English course B (advanced level) in the Swedish secondary system. Equivalence assessments will be made according to national guidelines.

The program-specific admission requirements are as follows:

- At least 60 ECTS in business administration, or equivalent knowledge obtained through courses in related fields (for example, courses in accounting, business, commerce, corporate finance, international business, management, management science, marketing, and organisational studies). A major in corporate finance, financial accounting, financial management, or management accounting is preferred.
- At least one completed introductory course in each of accounting and corporate finance.
- At least 15 ECTS in financial accounting, management accounting and control, and/or corporate finance at the intermediate or advanced undergraduate level.
- At least one course in econometrics or statistics, covering cross-sectional and/or panel regression analysis.

**Recommended prior knowledge**

Each specialization provides advanced treatments of theories, applications, and empirical research methods within the specialization. The lecturing is designed on the assumption that participants hold adequate subject-specific background knowledge. Hence, it is strongly recommended that applicants hold knowledge as follows when entering the specialization:

- **Specialization in Accounting and management control**: knowledge of management accounting and control equivalent to an advanced undergraduate level course in accounting.
- **Specialization in Corporate financial management**: knowledge of corporate finance equivalent to that provided in an advanced level undergraduate course in corporate finance.
Participants on both specializations are assumed to at least hold prior knowledge as follows:

- basic knowledge of accounting and accounting systems
- understanding of the structure and format of financial statements, including the consolidated statements of financial position, profit or loss, changes in equity, and cash flows
- ability to calculate profitability, profit margins, asset turnover, and growth
- ability to calculate net present values
- ability to analyse capital structures, including calculation of the weighted average cost of capital
- knowledge of the trade-off between risk and return and the capital asset pricing model
- basic knowledge of cross-sectional regression analysis, including the classical linear regression model, autocorrelation, and heteroscedasticity

Selection criteria
Selection is based on academic qualifications from university studies and a Statement of Purpose (motivation letter) in which applicants state their reasons for applying to the programme and the chosen specialization. The Statement of Purpose should also contain a self-assessment of the applicant’s prior knowledge of the subject area of the preferred specialization.

To be eligible for admittance, applicants must specify which specialization they are applying for in their Statement of Purpose. It is important to note that the choice of specialization is binding and applicants who are admitted to the program will automatically be admitted to their chosen specialization. The number of seats on each specialization is limited and any possibilities to change specialization will be limited.

7. Other information
Courses at the School of Economics and Management are graded according to the criterion-referenced principal grades A-F:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTIC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-85</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A distinguished result that is excellent with regard to the following aspects – theoretical depth, practical relevance, analytical ability and independent thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-75</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-65</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-55</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>The result is of a satisfactory standard with regard to the above mentioned aspects and lives up to expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>54-50</td>
<td>Sufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>49-0</td>
<td>Fail</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The result satisfies the minimum requirements with regard to the above mentioned aspects, but not more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The result does not meet the minimum requirements with regard to the above mentioned aspects.</td>
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It is up to the teaching professor to decide whether the credits of a course should be converted into a total of 100 points for each course, or if the scale above should be used as percentage points of any chosen scale instead.

*Academic Integrity*

The University views plagiarism very seriously, and will take disciplinary actions against students for any kind of attempted malpractice in examinations and assessments. The penalty that may be imposed for this, and other unfair practice in examinations or assessments, includes suspension from the University.