

# ***Firms and Management in Comparative Perspective***

***BMAN 22000***

**Credit rating 20**

**Unit coordinator:**    **Unit coordinator:**    Laszlo Czaban

***Alliance Manchester Business School***

*Undergraduate*

## **Level 2**

### **Course unit overview**

Firms and Management in Comparative Perspective introduces students to the comparative analysis of firms and management. The first aim is to provide students with a framework for understanding the range of major influences and national histories that affect firm organisation and management decision-making. The second aim is to introduce students to the nature of the Anglo-Saxon (US/UK) and Japanese business systems. French, German, Chinese and former Soviet systems will be examined in Semester Two. Students will analyse some of the main features of national business systems in order to understand how these influence the way firms behave. By the end of the course, students should be able to apply the conceptual frameworks learnt in course lectures, assigned readings, video viewings and lecture discussions to understand differences in firms and management in terms of their "embeddedness" in national business systems, yet also understand how all of these national business systems are affected by, and contribute to, neoliberal globalization.

### **Aims**

- Outline the main historical and institutional contexts which are involved in the formation of distinctly national forms of business systems.
- Understand how national institutions and contexts affect different aspects of managerial and corporate structure and behaviour, and to appreciate the ways in which national institutions may be changing
- Develop the analytical skills necessary to compare national circumstances and follow public debate.

### **Learning outcomes**

- By the end of the course students should be able to:  
Articulate an explanation for how different forms of business organisation are unique to different national and cultural contexts.
- Conceptualise how a variety of features associated with national business systems may affect different aspects of firm behaviour and management decision-making.
- Apply business system concepts to understand the differences in firms and management in the Anglo-Saxon (US/UK), Japanese, German, French, Korean and Chinese contexts.

### **Employability skills**

Other

Value of the course in terms of student development and employability:

The course is designed to provide students with a very detailed overview of the political-economic foundations of a number of important national economies. These details should be helpful for students in terms of building their understanding of the complexity and diversity of the 'global' economy. This knowledge of national business systems should also prepare them well for overseas exchange study,

and for future employment.

### **Syllabus**

Firms and Management in Comparative Perspective introduces students to the comparative analysis of firms and management. The first aim is to provide students with a framework for understanding the range of major influences and national histories that affect firm organisation and management decision-making. The second aim is to introduce students to the nature of the Anglo-Saxon (US/UK) and Japanese business systems. French, German, Chinese and former Soviet systems will be examined in Semester Two. Students will analyse some of the main features of national business systems in order to understand how these influence the way firms behave. By the end of the course, students should be able to apply the conceptual frameworks learnt in course lectures, assigned readings, video viewings and lecture discussions to understand differences in firms and management in terms of their "embeddedness" in national business systems, yet also understand how all of these national business systems are affected by, and contribute to, neoliberal globalization.

### **Teaching and learning methods**

The course is delivered through one double-length lecture slot per week. During this slot there will be room for student discussion and interaction.

Lecture hours: 40

Private study: 160 hours - approx 6.5 per week

Total Study Hours: 200

Total study hours: 200 hours split between lectures, classes, self study and preparation for classes, coursework and examinations.

### **Informal Contact Methods**

1. Office Hours

2. Other :

Contact by email for private meeting.

### **Assessment methods**

The course is assessed by one 2,500 word essay (50%) and a 2 hour seated examination (50%).

### **Feedback methods**

Students are invited to submit a 400-word outline of their assignment for formative feedback to help them with their final submission.

Informal advice and discussion during or after lectures, or at drop-in sessions (agreed via email)

Students receive an extensive feedback on their performance of the essay.

Students will receive an overall assessment on the exam performance.

### **Requisites**

### **Recommended reading**

The textbook for this course is McCann, L., (2014) *International and Comparative Business: Foundations of Political Economies* (Sage Publications). An electronic version of this book is available for access via a link on Blackboard.

In addition, the course will draw on the following books (a full reading list will be provided on Blackboard):

Bamber, G.J. et al, eds., (2011) *International and Comparative Employment Relations*,

London: Sage, 5 edition

Dore, R.P. (2000) Stock Market Capitalism: Japan and Germany Versus the Anglo-Saxons. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Graham, F., (2003) Inside the Japanese Company, London: Routledge

Lazonick, W. and O'Sullivan, M. (2000) 'Maximising shareholder value: a new ideology for corporate governance', *Economy and Society*, 29(1) 13-35

Further reading is provided on a week by week basis.

**Scheduled activity hours**

Assessment written exam	2
Lectures	40

**Independent study hours** 158 hours

**Additional notes**

Pre-requisites: None

Co-requisites: None

Dependent courses: None

Programme Restrictions: Available as a free choice option to Second Year students who have received prior agreement from their registering School. Not available to First Year students under any circumstances. Not available to BSc in Management/Management (Specialism), IMABS, IM & ITMB.

BMAN22000 is available to study abroad and exchange students admitted through the University of Manchester's International Programmes Office who will be studying for a full academic year

**Timetable**<https://ughandbook.portals.mbs.ac.uk/Non-AllianceMBSstudents/Teachingtimetables.aspx>

For Academic Year

Updated:

Approved by: