

Study programme: Master of Business Economics

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KU Leuven uses the [COBRA method](#) to work on the quality of its study programmes. In this report the programme committee reports every four years on the quality of its programme(s) and describes the identified strength(s) and planned action(s) of its Master's programme of Business Economics.

Besides the COBRA methodology, the quality of education of the Faculty of Economics and Business is also guaranteed by the procedures of EQUIS, an accreditation organisation specifically for business schools. In 2022, the faculty successfully went through an extended procedure and gained another five-year accreditation, based, among other things, on the successful follow-up of the development objectives set for the period 2017-2022. These development objectives addressed the further support and promotion of the internationalisation tendencies at the faculty (in terms of policy implementation, the faculty team as well as the student-public) as well as the continuing critical reflection and optimisation of the various study programmes (and their corresponding intra and extra-curricular activities). Moreover, an ongoing focus for the programmes is how the study process can make students even more aware of their disciplinary future self - from before their start at the faculty up to their careers. These faculty goals have been translated into program-specific actions in recent years (see below). The new faculty development objectives, leading up to the next visitation in academic year 2027-2028, relate to further embedding and monitoring the "Ethics, responsibility and sustainability" learning pathway and further developing a future-oriented educational approach (digital learning, teaching and evaluation). These development objectives will be translated into programme-specific goals in the coming years.

Strengths of the study programme(s)

- The Master of Business Economics is a broad programme with a focus on multidisciplinary. In the bachelor's programme, students experience a thorough training in all domains within an enterprise. From this foundation, the master's programme continues to focus on deepening in one or a combination of business domains, through a wide range of majors and minors within the disciplines in which the lecturers-researchers are active.
- Work is done on personal development through human sciences in the programme and through various extra-curricular activities that contribute to identity formation.
- A major strength of the programme is its academic component. Through research-based teaching, students acquire the necessary theoretical knowledge that is scientifically based.
- The programme has plenty of room for in-depth choice and specialisation, both through the wide choice of majors and minors, and through the extensive freely elective space.
- Within the programme, attention is paid to international dimension by offering students the opportunity to an international and multicultural study experience (the extended master). The international dimension is also very important in teaching and research.
- Within the programme, attention is paid to the link with practice through internship course units, guest lectures, working on cases, or course units (partly) taught by guest lecturers with a strong link to practice.
- Evaluation in training is characterised by a variety of forms of evaluation and a high degree of transparency (e.g. via sample exams, debriefing and feedback).
- The study programme places strong emphasis on activating learning forms supported by educational technology, with the aim of supporting students in acquiring progressive insights into the learning content. This is done in combination with active monitoring of study results, supported by the FEB management team, which ensures that students' chances of success are adequately highlighted within the programme without compromising the quality of the programme.
- Within the POC TEW, there is a strong alignment between the Dutch-language and English-language programme and between the various research groups that offer majors or minors in the programme.

This COBRA report is a result of the past four-year COBRA cycle (2015-2019). Each study programme that participated in the COBRA cycle has drawn up this document, which specifies the strengths and planned actions of the study programme. These strengths and actions result from the dialogue between the programme and its stakeholders (primary actors, alumni, professional field and international experts from the discipline). This report aims to give a comprehensive indication of the study programme's realised quality. The COBRA report will be made available in the programme guide, so it will be accessible to the public.



Planned actions

The Master's programme in Business Economics continues to improve the quality of education and to monitor it in various ways. Within the framework of EQUIS, a number of objectives have been formulated at faculty level (see above). These objectives have been translated by the Permanent Educational Committees (PEC) of the programme in Business Economics into the following generic actions:

- Increasing intra-curricular internship opportunities
- Incorporating the professional skills and ERS (Ethics, responsibility and sustainability) curricula of FEB programmes.

Specifically for the master's programme in applied economics, the POC undertook or plans the following action:

- The range of intra curricular internship opportunities has been expanded through the inclusion of several internship OPOs in the free elective, for both 3 and 6 credits.
- As part of the professional skills learning line, the programme seeks to communicate to students how the course units and skills developed contribute to the development of their (disciplinary) future self and ensure that graduates of the programme can permanently develop in a professional environment that is constantly changing.
- As part of the Ethics, responsibility and sustainability learning line, the programme will explore how themes of ethics, corporate social responsibility and sustainability can be further incorporated into the curriculum, in consultation with the other programmes organised by the FEB.
- Within the framework of the learning line internationalisation, the programme pays attention to international/global competences and supports initiatives that make it possible to work on these skills both 'at home' and abroad.
- Through the project improved choice offerings, the programme is committed to further optimising the planning and organisation of the majors and minors, in order to increase the planability and studyability of the programme and enable students to make conscious choices to develop their future selves.
- As part of the optimisation of master's theses project, the programme is taking a close look at the master's thesis process so that students can write the thesis in optimal conditions.

In addition to the initiatives mentioned above, the education committees at the level of the programme, the campus and the faculty regularly review the content of the programme(s), internationalisation aspects, the profiling of different programmes, good practices with regard to education, professionalisation activities for lecturers, etc. They formulate proposals for improvement, prepare these proposals both administratively and in terms of their content, and take the necessary steps to implement them. All relevant parties of the faculty are represented in the education committees, in particular the programme directors, lecturers, assistants, educational staff, study career counsellors and students. Besides representation in the education committees, students also provide input on the programme via the student survey on education and they are regularly heard via hearings on concrete topics. Initiatives for optimisation within programmes, but also training and cross-campus initiatives are followed up via the faculty education plan. In addition to this, the faculty's education plan also includes a number of initiatives to improve the quality of the programme.

Within the Faculty of Economics and Business, there is also a strong focus on developing a clear vision for the various study programmes and on refining their profile, for example by working on a learning outcomes framework for the faculty, developing learning outcomes for the specific study programmes within this framework and explicating the vision of study programmes in their blueprints.