

# **BU5023 Operations Management**

**2011-12**

**15 credit points**

**prerequisites: none**

**Please note that this is a draft syllabus with provisional weeks for teaching topics. The final version will be posted at the end of Week 1 of teaching.**

## **Course coordinator**

Dr Alison Smart, [alison.smart@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:alison.smart@abdn.ac.uk)  
Room S3, Edward Wright Building

## **Course lecturer**

Dr John D Lamb, [J.D.Lamb@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:J.D.Lamb@abdn.ac.uk)  
Room S17, Edward Wright Building

# **BU5023 Operations management**

## **Course objectives**

Operations Management is a broadly based subject area. It deals with the management of the assets, processes and human resources that are used to produce goods and/or services. All organizations require the skills of Operations Managers in transforming their inputs, which might include materials, energy, information or patients, into outputs in the form of goods and services. A good comprehension of operations management is therefore essential in understanding the workings of any organization.

The aim of this course is to help course members to gain an understanding of key areas of operations management. It will demonstrate how some of the major elements concerned with the production of goods and services are shaped through effective operations management. This is an introductory course and the range of topics covered will be broad: it is designed to give students a general introduction to some of the many topics that come under the general heading of 'Operations Management'.

## **Learning outcomes**

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- demonstrate how Operations Management, in manufacturing, service and public sectors, fits within the overall organization, and with other functions;
- outline the strategic role of Operations Management;
- describe the main process and layout types and the links between the two;
- understand the importance of materials and supply chain management to ensure effective Operations Management, and be able to apply appropriate frameworks and tools to designing and managing supply chains;
- be able to demonstrate the application of quality management within an organizational context, and show how appropriate quality management tools can be applied in a range of organizational contexts;
- be able to describe the features of projects and demonstrate the application of appropriate tools for managing projects;
- understand the main features of lean and JIT and the potential benefits and problems of their applications;
- be aware of issues in operations risk and be able to apply tools for identifying and mitigating risk in an operations management context
- appreciate the role of performance measurement and improvement within the operations function;
- apply a number of decision-making tools to problems faced by managers of an operation;
- apply operations concepts and techniques to address real operations problems.

## **Student responsibility for learning**

As postgraduates we expect all students to be responsible for their own learning. Students should complete the assigned readings, which complement rather than repeat the material taught in lectures. It is therefore essential that all students have access to and read the required course textbook. The course assessment (mid-semester and final examinations) will cover material from across all areas of the course (including lectures, required readings, broader background reading, and relevant business headlines during the semester) and

simply learning and regurgitating material from the lecture handouts will not enable you to pass this course. You will be required to take your own notes (the lecturers' slides will not be provided though handouts of complex diagrams and the expected learning outcomes for each topic will be provided to aid you in learning and note-taking. After the first week these will be posted in advance on the course Blackboard site).

## Lectures

Lectures will be taught in three cohorts. You must attend the session for the cohort to which you have been assigned: transfer between cohorts will be permitted only in truly exceptional circumstances *and only with the explicit permission of the course coordinator*. You will be told which timetabled slot to attend. The lecture times are:

Group A: Tuesdays 0930 – 1230 KQG5

Group B: Tuesdays 1400 – 1700 Taylor A21

Group C: Thursdays 0930 – 1230 Weeks 12 – 19, 21 – 23 KQG5,  
Week 20 (Graduation Week) 0930-1100 NK1, 1100-1230  
FN2.

You should note that missing lectures will leave you not only in danger of losing your class certificate, but also with a significant amount of work to catch up. It is **not** the responsibility of the lecturing staff to help you with material you miss, though we will endeavour to help if you have a certified medical or family emergency.

It is expected that you will come to lectures having read and prepared the specified case studies. Students who have not done so will be asked to leave; lack of preparation will interfere not only with your own learning, but also hold up other students in the group. It is therefore essential that you ensure that you have access to a copy of the required textbook.

## Office Hours

Both lecturer are happy to meet with students who have questions about the course.

Dr Smart's Office Hours: Monday from 3 – 4 pm (Weeks 2 – 12 of teaching)

Thursday from 2 – 3 pm (Weeks during weeks 2 – 12, excepting  
Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November.)

Wednesday 8 - 9 am (Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November only)

Dr Lamb's Office Hours: See [www.abdn.ac.uk/~cms127/diary](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/~cms127/diary) or email [j.d.lamb@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:j.d.lamb@abdn.ac.uk)  
for an appointment

## Sending emails to lecturers

Please do not email Dr Smart for appointment outside office hours, except in an emergency. Any emails sent to members of staff should be sent only from University of Aberdeen email accounts (otherwise they are like to be seen as spam) and should clearly state BU5023 in the subject line. All emails should be written in standard formal English with appropriate salutations ('Dear X', not 'Hi') and should be checked be written with careful attention to grammar and spelling.

### Provisional teaching timetable

U. Wk	Week	Topic(s)	Lecturer
12 w/c 26.09.11	1	Introduction to operations management Readings: Slack <i>et al.</i> (2009) Chapter 1 <b>Case study: Dealing with Operations Variety</b> (available in class)	AUS
13 w/c 03.10.11	2	Operations strategy Readings: Slack <i>et al.</i> (2009) Chapter 2 <b>Case Study: Dressing Wilson</b> (Slack et al. Chapter 2 p. 59)	AUS
14 w/c 10.10.11	3	Process design: Layout and Flow Readings: Slack <i>et al.</i> (2009) Chapters 4 and 5 <b>Case Study: Northwest Construction Bank – The New Mortgage Centre 1</b> (Slack et al. Chapter 4, p. 129)	JDL
15 w/c 17.10.11	4	Capacity Management Readings: Slack <i>et al.</i> (2009) Chapter 8 <b>Case Study: Blackberry Hill Farm</b> (Slack et al. Chapter 8 p. 270)	JDL
16 w/c 24.10.11	5	Mid-term examination – no lecture. <b>Please note that the exam for all cohorts will be held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> October</b>	
17 w/c 31.10.11	6	Supply Chain Management Readings: Slack <i>et al.</i> (2009) Chapters 3 and 7 Liker J. and Wu Y-C. (2000) 'Japanese automakers, US suppliers and supply-chain superiority' <i>Sloan Management Review</i> 42 (1, Fall) pp 81 – 93. <b>Case Study: Supplying fast fashion</b> (Slack et al. Chapter 7 p. 238)	AUS
18 w/c 07.11.11	7	Inventory Readings: Slack <i>et al.</i> (2009) Chapter 9 <b>Case Study: Supplies4medics.com</b> (Slack et al. Chapter 9 p. 304)	JDL
19 w/c 14.11.11	8	Lean/Just-in-Time Readings: Slack <i>et al.</i> (2009) Chapter 11	JDL
20 w/c 21.11.11	9	Managing Quality Readings: Slack et al. Chapter 12 Case Study: Toyota <b>'Toyota falls short of its high expectations'</b> Financial Times 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2005 <b>'Toyota suffers backlash after sales suspended'</b> Financial Times 28 <sup>th</sup> January 2010 Both Financial Times articles can be accessed via the University of Aberdeen Library e-Journals listing, and are found on Proquest ABI Inform. You will need to be on campus to access them, or to login via the proxy	AUS
21 w/c 28.11.11	10	Operations Improvement Readings: Slack <i>et al.</i> (2009) Chapter 13 <b>Video case</b>	AUS
22 w/c 05.12.11	11	Operations Risk and Resilience Readings: Slack <i>et al.</i> (2009) Chapter 14 <b>Case Study: The Chernobyl failure</b> (Slack et al. Chapter 14 p. 490)	AUS
23 w/c 12.12.11	12	Project Management 1 Readings: Slack <i>et al.</i> (2009) Chapter 15	JDL

Unless otherwise stated, the case studies are to be found at the end of the reading chapters specified for each week. Please note that some readings will be made available on Blackboard before the class – it is your job to check that there is no additional reading posted for each week.

## **Website**

Any course materials and notices to students will be put up on Blackboard. Students should check the site regularly for information. Staff will be unsympathetic to students who miss events because they failed to check the Blackboard site.

A discussion board, in which you can ask questions relating to the course will be available on Blackboard. If your question relates to a personal matter (eg sickness, or a good reason for not attending the lecture), please email the course coordinator. Otherwise, please check this discussion board to see if your question has already been answered there, and if it has not, post your question to the relevant discussion board. We will check the board several times per week.

## **Course textbook and additional reading**

**Required textbook:** Slack, N., Chambers, S., Johnston, R. and Betts, A. (2009) *Operations and Process Management: principles and practices for strategic impact* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, FT Prentice Hall, Harlow. The book is available from the University Bookshop or can be ordered from Amazon.co.uk or other online suppliers (though check the delivery lead time if ordering online).

A limited number of copies of the text are available from the library but there are not sufficient available for every student and we advise students to purchase a copy of the textbook as you will require it every week. If you choose to use another textbook – and it is up to you to check how well the readings map onto the required text - it is your responsibility to get copies of the case studies and other required readings assigned for in-class discussion.

Some additional readings are required and, unless otherwise specified, can be accessed through the electronic journals provision at the University of Aberdeen website. A list of additional readings will also be provided – these suggest readings in particular areas of the course that we feel should be of interest to students studying operations management: they are designed to provide additional background materials and have been identified as a means to increase your depth and breadth of knowledge of operations management. You are encouraged to read broadly in order to enhance your understanding of operations management and its role within the organization. This includes reading major business newspapers such as the Financial Times and well regarded newspapers such as the Guardian, Independent, Times and Telegraph, as well as magazines such as the Economist, and specific business publications such as the Harvard Business Review.

## **Assessment**

Assessment will be by degree examination and mid-semester examination weighted as follows:

Mid-semester examination: 20% of grade for course

Final written examination: 80% of grade for course

Work will be graded on the University's Common Assessment Scale (CAS). A full explanation of the CAS scale can be found at <https://abdn.blackboard.com/webapps/cmsmain/webui/institution/Business%20School> (note that you must be logged into Blackboard for this link to work).

### *The mid-semester exam (20% of grade for course)*

The in-course assessment will be a multiple-choice and short answer examination to be held during week commencing 24<sup>th</sup> October 2011. Full details of the examination will be provided in Week 2 of teaching. Note that *all questions will be compulsory*, so it is important that you keep up with the course material and review it regularly.

### *The written examination (80% of grade for course)*

The written examination will take place in the diet immediately following the course. You will be able to choose any three from the six questions on the paper.

## **Attendance**

Attendance at lectures is compulsory – failure to attend will jeopardise your class certificate and could result in you being removed from the MBA programme. There are no separate tutorials for this course – instead case studies will be discussed in lectures.

This course adheres to the common Business School policies set out below:

- Attendance Policy
- Lateness Policy
- Medical Certification Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Common Assessment Scale
- Resit Policy
- Undergraduate Progression Policy
- Honours Entry Policy
- Postgraduate Progression Policy
- Undergraduate Degree Classification Policy
- Postgraduate Degree Classification Policy
- Class Representation Policy
- Co-Curriculum Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Support for Disabled Students
- Feedback Policy

These are available at the BU5023 MyAberdeen site ([www.abdn.ac.uk/myaberdeen](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/myaberdeen)) - click on "BU5023 (2011-12) Operations Management" and then "School Policies", or go directly to:

<https://abdn.blackboard.com/webapps/cmsmain/webui/institution/Business%20School>