Master of Business Information Systems
UniSA's School of Information Technology and Mathematical Sciences is the largest IT School in South Australia, with very dynamic programs leading to exciting careers in various industry sectors. Its mission is to provide students with a first-rate educational experience, giving them the tools and knowledge to exceed even their own expectations.

We are dedicated to educating and producing tomorrow's leaders through a comprehensive choice of industry-relevant degree programs, which combine real-world experience with the expertise to succeed in a career in any of the diverse disciplines that fall under the ICT umbrella.

The Master of Business Information Systems (BIS) is the perfect example of this objective, with its strong focus on direct industry involvement in the student learning experience, combined with UniSA's leading edge teaching and learning environment.

Since its introduction in 1989, the program has seen over 200 of UniSA's finest students graduate and enter the workforce, many going on to become leaders in their respective industry sectors.

The content of the BIS academic program maintains its relevance to industry needs through an innovative ongoing review and development process that draws upon the School's strong relationships with its industry partners.

The quality of the program is exemplified by how sought-after BIS graduates are in today's highly competitive business marketplace. BIS alumni have gone on to establish highly successful and influential careers both nationally and internationally. Graduates of the program can enter the workforce confident that with the skills, knowledge and experience accumulated over the course of their studies at UniSA, they are well-placed to flourish in their chosen field.

The School of IT&MS has long recognised the value of BIS graduates; to industry, the university and the community in general. We therefore feel more than justified in helping to ease the financial burden students experience when undertaking such demanding studies. We are able to accomplish this, in large part, through the generous contributions of our industry partners.

I urge all ICT or business students who have an ambition to embark on a great career to seriously consider applying for a place in the BIS program.

Professor Andy Koronios
Head, School of Information Technology and Mathematical Sciences
The Master of Business Information Systems (BIS) program represents a unique convergence between the disciplines of Business, IT and Information Systems (IS), together with a substantial component of direct industry experience through a series of three placements. It provides graduates with a combination of knowledge and skills highly valued by industry when seeking to bridge the gap between management and IT.

It is a selective program, with each student undergoing a rigorous evaluation process before being accepted into the program. Students must attain a minimum credit average in a suitable undergraduate degree, as well as pass an interview process with academic and industry representatives, to ensure they have the necessary interpersonal communication skills to make an impact in today's competitive business environment.

Students in the BIS program are intelligent, articulate, engaged, highly skilled and highly employable. This is supported by a professional employment rate near 100% for BIS graduates.

Experience. The Difference.

A feature of the BIS program that sets it apart is the emphasis on direct industry experience.

Students in the program undertake three semester-long placements - two undertaken individually and one as part of a group - with some of the School of IT&MS's most prominent industry partners.

With each ensuing placement, the students develop a range of specifically targeted skills, identified in collaboration with industry as being desirable attributes for graduate recruits.

These include:
- An understanding of organisational behaviour, in the context of information and communications technology (ICT)
- Awareness of workplace ethics
- Professional report writing
- Project management skills, including planning, team-based problem solving and negotiation, risk analysis and contingency planning
- The ability to undertake stakeholder consultations
- Systems analysis, design and implementation
- Knowledge Management theory and practice
- A knowledge of corporate strategic practice
- Self-management skills
- Demonstrating the ability to undertake independent learning
- ICT strategy and planning

About the Program
ICT in its myriad forms is ubiquitous across all facets of our modern lifestyle, so those who leave university with the tools to operate and innovate in this domain are already well-placed to build a successful career. However anyone who has applied for a job upon graduation knows the frustration of employment opportunities that stipulate applicants must demonstrate “experience” in the relevant field.

In today’s competitive business environment, employers want new recruits who are able to start making a productive contribution to their organisation immediately. This is particularly apparent in the ICT sector, where continuous development and innovation result in a fluid and highly mobile workforce.

UniSA’s core identifier is the phrase - Experience. The Difference. Nowhere is this better exemplified than in the graduates from the Master of Business Information Systems (BIS), who enter the workforce with a solid portfolio of direct industry experience. This is attained via three semester-long placements with some of the School of IT&MS’s most prominent industry partners.

Through its innovative cross-disciplinary course structure, the Master of BIS will provide you with the tools to establish a successful career as a future IT leader. For those with ambitions to succeed in IT in a management capacity, skills beyond a technical understanding of your field will be essential. Interpersonal communication, knowledge of business processes and an analytical capability are all necessary when navigating a path to success. The BIS program provides students with all of these, alongside that most precious of commodities – experience.

The BIS provides motivated students with a unique opportunity to engage with some of the country’s most prominent organisations in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

It is no secret that many of these organisations initiate an engagement with UniSA in order to have access to potential future employees. By undertaking multiple placements with our industry partners, you will have an advantage over other graduates, having proven yourself in a genuine workplace environment.

“The BIS program prepares students for the growing demand for business professionals who understand the IT challenges and contemporary issues faced by business.

“The Program’s three industry placements prepared me well for my current role at PricewaterhouseCoopers. Not only was I equipped with relevant knowledge and understanding required of my role, but I had the practical experience of managing my own projects and communicating key information to business leaders that influenced real business decisions, all before I even entered the workforce. Students graduate from the BIS program as leaders, a skill that is highly valuable for anyone open to a range of opportunities and with the ambition for a lucrative career.

“The CVs of a BIS graduate certainly stand out with a post-graduate level degree and relevant work experience, making it easier to secure full time employment after your studies.”

Jarrad Cutting
Risk & Controls Solutions Consultant
PricewaterhouseCoopers
2010 Graduate
Master of Business Information Systems
Immediately after graduating from UniSA’s BIS program I began managing an international team of software testers. Testing and releasing the world’s most popular browser for mobile devices is an amazing, rewarding and challenging job. I’m accountable to over 150 million users every day of the week, on more than 2000 different mobile devices.

“As well as this, I manage public releases and feature development, bringing together a team of developers from across the globe. No two days are the same.”

Marian Hackett
Quality Assurance Manager
Opera Software
2009 Graduate
Master of Business Information Systems

Getting paid to study?
During the year that you are enrolled in the BIS program, you will receive a stipend of $9000 paid in fortnightly installments.

Resources for students
It has been confirmed that students undertaking the Master of BIS will have 24 hour access to the IT Innovation Studio at City West. This is a space where you can interact, study, work on assessments or just relax. These facilities provide all amenities and also the opportunity to hold meetings with your industry host in a fully equipped state-of-the-art facility.

Application dates
Applications to the BIS program are via SATAC with closing dates:
• Study Period 2 - 1 October
• Study Period 7 - 1 October
• Study Period 5 - 1 May

Note: for SP7 all domestic and international applications will be via UniSA Apply Online.
w3.unisa.edu.au/applyonline/default.asp

How to apply
Australian students
Application to this unique Commonwealth supported program is via SATAC.
Web: satac.edu.au
SATAAC Code: 4CM023

International students
Application is via UniSA International Apply Online.
www.unisa.edu.au/Study-at-UniSA/International-students/

“How UniSA’s BIS program placements gave me the skills and experience necessary to excel in this position straight after graduating without hesitation. The academic content was diverse and interesting, promoting a depth of understanding in many areas relevant to the field. My industry mentors pushed me to achieve far more than I expected. As a result I push myself and my team to achieve great things every day.”

Marian Hackett
Quality Assurance Manager
Opera Software
2009 Graduate
Master of Business Information Systems
By participating in the BIS program as a placement host, industry partners have the opportunity to make a significant contribution to the knowledge and skills base of some of Australia’s finest IT management students. As a result of this, not only are the students and the individual organisations benefiting, but so too is the community at large, with highly skilled, workplace-ready graduates who are able to hit the ground running upon entry to the workforce.

BIS students are highly motivated, engaged and ambitious. Because of this, the significance of the contribution they stand to make to their placement host organisation, not to mention the South Australian and national economies over the course of their working lives, should not be underestimated.

By hosting a BIS placement, an organisation has the advantage of assessing potential future employees before they are available to the broader business community.

Industry partners can also derive great value from participation in the BIS program, in that important work that may otherwise have been deferred due to personnel, financial or time constraints can be undertaken in a low-cost, yet potentially high yield manner.

Students undertaking such an experientially-rich mode of study invariably incur costs above and beyond those of more coursework-focussed programs. BIS students receive a stipend during their time in the program which offsets some of the additional cost incurred.

Funding for these payments is sourced directly from industry partner placement hosts. Experience has consistently proven that the benefits extracted through a BIS placement more than compensate for the financial contribution a partner makes to the program.

“DFEEST has been a partner of the BIS program over a number of years. Having students undertake a project means that we have less expectations but also less constraints – it is really a warrant for the student to use his or her imagination to explore opportunities and solutions.

“Governments can benefit tremendously from engaging with students. There is no shortage of problems seeking solutions in the public sector but often there is neither time nor money to do anything. Students can be very useful in that they not only tackle work that might not get the attention it deserves but also bring a fresh outside perspective.”

Carolyn Anderson
Director, Information Economy
SA Department of Further Education, Employment, Science & Technology (DFEEST)
“The Department for Communities and Social Inclusion is proud to be an industry participant in the BIS program. This program provides the Department with the opportunity to challenge students with innovation projects”.

“Over the years of our involvement with the program we have found the quality of the students, and their work to be of the highest standard”.

“The program has benefits for staff, providing them with the opportunity to mentor and coach the students through their project. I commend this program to any organisation.”

Philip Hogg -
Chief Information Officer
SA Department for Communities and Social Inclusion

Example Projects

Host Organisation - DFEEST
A regional (Willunga and surrounds) ICT needs assessment in light of the first-phase rollout of the National Broadband Network

Host Organisation - SA Courts Administration Authority
Analysis and assessment of Electronic Document Management System environment

Host Organisation - South Australian Council of Social Service (SACOSS)
Whole of business information systems and processes review

Host Organisation - APA Group (Australian Pipeline Authority)
IT Service Delivery - Use of the Configuration Management Database (CMDB)

Host Organisation - Adelaide City Council
Online services strategy: Review, analysis and comparison

Host Organisation - ANZ Bank
Process mapping of corporate financial processes
The Master of BIS is a selective program, with students required to satisfy rigorous eligibility requirements.

Students undertake three placements; two individual and one as part of a group. Individual placements are the equivalent of 15 weeks part-time. Group projects have a duration of 11 weeks part-time over the summer semester.

The first individual placement focuses on developing the students' managerial skills in areas such as:
- Business practices;
- The role of IS in business operations, and;
- The operation, management and tools of the IS function.

The second individual placement is more of an independent consulting project, managed entirely by the student and focusing on skills such as:
- Project management
- Consultation and business analysis
- An understanding of the role of information systems in the support of business operations.

Industry hosts pay the university $9000 +GST when hosting either of the individual placements, a cost more than compensated for by the quality of work produced.

Industry partners are encouraged to commit to hosting at least two individual project students before hosting a group.

Host organisations stand to benefit on a number of fronts, including:
- Early access to highly productive potential future employees
- Contributing to the education and professionalisation of tomorrow's ICT leaders
- Energy can be dedicated towards work that might otherwise not have been given sufficient attention due to staffing or resource constraints.

Ask UniSA

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