

Full-Time, Part-Time or Online? Which Type of MBA Program Suits me Best?

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Graduates with Bachelor's degrees and people who have been working in a company for several years have a vast choice of on-the-job training. The Master of Business Administration (MBA) is becoming increasingly popular in the fields of economics and management outside the U.S. as well. An MBA program teaches management skills with a practical relation in an international context, generally over a course of one or two years. MBA candidates can decide if they want to complete the program on a full-time or part-time basis, on the weekends while on the job, in block weeks in a more compact manner or even online. The main differences between the individual formats mainly relate to the residential periods and terms abroad. While full-time students attend classes at the school every day, completing assignments and exams on a regular basis, there is less residential time for part-time students. They have to work from home more often instead. Students who are enrolled in a part-time program generally work at their jobs full-time, therefore spending significantly less time on campus. The decision whether to complete the full-time, part-time or online program mainly depends on the applicant's professional and private circumstances.

Full-time MBA

Maximilian Mayer decided to apply for the full-time MBA program of HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management two years ago and is now about to graduate. He knew from the very beginning that he wanted to complete the full-time program after obtaining his Bachelor's degree in a dual program. The MBA student spent almost three years in Frankfurt where he worked at a bank before moving to Leipzig. Mayer particularly stresses the internationality of the MBA programs. "I mostly decided for the full-time version because I wanted to experience the international life on the HHL campus. Although I am in Germany I sometimes feel like I am studying abroad. My program has many international students, which strongly influences everyday academic life," says the future MBA graduate. Mayer also appreciates the practical nature of the MBA program. "We always apply our theoretical knowledge to practical examples in the lectures and seminars. The case studies in particular focus solely on very specific problems. Last term, for instance, we spoke about Walmart's strategy of expanding into Europe," says Mayer. In top of the compulsory classes, HHL also offers extracurricular activities. "This year, two classmates and I were primarily responsible for organizing the Entrepreneurship Conference," explains Mayer. HHL offers many events of this kind and students often have the opportunity to chair smaller or larger teams, obtaining valuable experience in leadership positions. Maximilian Mayer will continue his MBA program in Canada next term. "All of my class mates are given the opportunity to spend a term abroad," says Mayer. "Although life on campus is already very international I do not want to miss out on the chance of studying abroad."

MBA on weekends

In contrast to Maximilian Mayer, Uwe Jakopaschk is completing his MBA program at HHL on a part-time basis. In 1997, he obtained a degree in engineering and decided for the part-time program, which mainly takes place on weekends, for two reasons: "Firstly, I did not want to give up my job to study and secondly, I have a family with a child and therefore I depend on my work financially," explains Jakopaschk. Another reason why the family man chose the part-time version is the fact that he wanted to use his extensive professional experience in the program and apply newly acquired knowledge directly to his job. Every four weeks, Jakopaschk spends a residential weekend on the HHL campus while preparing and reviewing the content of the lectures in between. "At first, I was struggling with timing," the part-time student shares. "I had to coordinate my job, my studies and my private life and it took me a while to work out the right timing for this challenge." In doing so, Jakopaschk greatly benefited from the support of his family and his employer. "My family backs my decision 100 percent and my employer allows me to organize my time through flexible working hours," says Jakopaschk. The weekend-based part-time MBA program is perfectly tailored to the needs of the students. Learning material and tasks are provided online in good time so that the students have enough time to complete their homework and prepare for the next residential weekend. In addition to the residential weekends, the students spend one week on campus in the first and second year of the program and travel to Boston for a week to complete a seminar there. The students, who have had nine years of professional experience on average, can build networks and establish international contacts together. At the end of the program, there is the Master's thesis consisting of the students' own professional experience and the content they were taught.

MBA online

American alumna Lorna Moon is one of the HHL Euro*MBA graduates and decided for this blended learning format to get to know the European style of teaching. "I already had a Bachelor's degree in business and wanted to make sure I was not repeating the same American style learning for my MBA," Moon says. She particularly liked the various learning methods of the Euro*MBA which are reflected in the learning materials and assignments.

"Therefore, HHL's Euro*MBA program was exactly the right choice for me," Moon points out. Students enrolled in an online MBA program complete their academic tasks off campus. "This was a great benefit because it allowed me to complete my MBA without having to leave my job," explains Moon. "I was also able to apply things that I was learning to my job right away and the whole company benefited from my new input."

MBA with international partners

Dr. Michaela Kunert has been enrolled in the part-time Global Executive MBA (GEMBA) program since September 2014. She already works in a leadership position and chose the GEMBA program mainly for its internationality. Over the course of two years, Dr. Kunert will spend eight weeks in five different countries as part of her studies. "I have been working for one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies for many years, which is why I am particularly interested in the global perspective of the program. I also find the idea of exchanging best practices and obtaining insight into other industries and businesses very appealing," Dr. Kunert explains. The GEMBA program includes three modules abroad in China, Brazil and India while the residential periods alternate between Leipzig and Barcelona. "I find it particularly exciting to learn about cultural differences and working methods around the globe when spending time abroad," says Dr. Kunert. Another benefit of the program is the fact that the content taught in class can be applied on the job straight away. The topic of the Master's thesis can be chosen according to the relevant and strategic challenges of the candidate's company. At the end of the program, students can not only look back on experiences obtained in different countries but rely on their international network. "During the modules abroad, we constantly meet and interconnect with new people from various industries who we can contact later," Dr. Kunert points out. The participants of the GEMBA program come from all over the world, which makes this academic format particularly attractive.

Full-time, part-time or online MBA - all programs prepare their graduates for an international career in a leadership position. The decision on which format is the most suitable largely depends on the personal interests and professional circumstances of the candidate. When making this decision, applicants should include their employers and families and seek advice from the respective university.

More information:

<http://www.hhl.de/mba>
<http://www.hhl.de/part-time-mba>
<http://www.hhl.de/GEMBA>

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HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management

Die HHL ist eine universitäre Einrichtung und zählt zu den führenden internationalen Business Schools. Ziel der ältesten betriebswirtschaftlichen Hochschule im deutschsprachigen Raum ist die Ausbildung leistungsfähiger, verantwortungsbewusster und unternehmerisch denkender Führungspersönlichkeiten. Neben der internationalen Ausrichtung spielt die Verknüpfung von Theorie und Praxis eine herausragende Rolle. Die HHL zeichnet sich aus durch exzellente Lehre, klare Forschungsorientierung und praxisnahen Transfer sowie hervorragenden Service für ihre Studierenden.
www.hhl.de



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Full-time MBA	Part-time MBA (weekend format)	Part-time MBA (compact block week format)	Online MBA
<i>„Career change“</i>	<i>„Career advancement“</i>	<i>„Career booster“</i>	<i>„Career advancement“</i>
100% focus on studying on campus	Job compatibility (without financial losses)	Classmates with extensive professional and leadership experience	High flexibility
Network and student life	Immediate knowledge transfer to practice	Strong focus on expanding leadership competencies (coaching & training)	Job compatibility
Strong international focus (international classes and term abroad)	Great learning effect through participants' diverse extensive professional experience	Strong international focus (international classes and study locations)	Low cost
Extensive choice of electives in curriculum	Corporate sponsorships possible	Compact and intensive teaching	Tax deductibility
Early contact with potential employers	Tax deductibility	Tax deductibility	High level of self-motivation required