

Going **BEYOND** Awards

MBA LEBANESE REFUGEE SCHOLARSHIPS

Edinburgh Business School, United Kingdom

Program Description

Edinburgh Business School at Heriot-Watt University has partnered with Theirworld, a global charity committed to ending the global education crisis and unleashing the potential of the next generation, to offer fully funded Master of Business Administration (MBA) scholarships to Syrian and Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon and vulnerable Lebanese citizens. The sponsorships are jointly funded by The People's Postcode Lottery and Edinburgh Business School. Edinburgh Business School is a leading provider of business education and has been offering a practice oriented distance learning MBA for more than 30 years.

The programme is designed to equip students with the contemporary business skills to make a positive impact in their current and future workplaces, and in turn contribute to their communities. The MBA consists of nine courses; seven core courses and two electives covering a breadth of business subjects including leadership, entrepreneurship and a capstone strategy course. Edinburgh Business School welcomed the first cohort of 20 students to the Theirworld programme in September 2020. Applicants were asked to submit an application to tell us their personal story, the challenges they faced and overcame and explain how they have made a positive impact on their local communities.

Those students selected for the programme were judged by a panel from Edinburgh Business School and Theirworld to have displayed exceptional thinking, demonstrated a commitment to paying forward to help their local community and have a clear rationale for the benefits the MBA programme would bring them. The Edinburgh Business School MBA programme is designed for self-study. All courses are designed around comprehensive asynchronous online offering that contains all necessary learning materials and guidance for students to successfully complete their studies.

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A key part of this is the opportunity for students to engage with each other within an online learning community. For the Lebanese cohort this meant the opportunity to build networks with both a small group of students experiencing similar challenges to themselves and being part of a wider global multicultural student community. In addition to the distance learning courses, the School offered the students further support at no cost in the form of:

a) synchronous revision webinars delivered by Edinburgh Business School's faculty. The students benefitted from interaction, discussion and the dedicated faculty time to better prepare for the assessments.

This special provision was designed and delivered exclusively for this cohort with the support of Edinburgh Business School's online team. b) dedicated administrative support, mentoring, guidance and advice. c) students were given the option to study and sit for their assessments in Arabic language given the multi-lingual legacy of the EBS MBA. However, many of the cohort opted to study and sit for their assessments in English. d) with the onset of the pandemic, Edinburgh Business School worked with Theirworld representatives to provide tablets to each student to ensure their ability to continue their studies whilst in lockdown. The study plan was designed to follow a part-time mode, whereby the students could continue working or caring on full-time basis and yet be able to commit to studying the MBA programme.

The part-time, distance learning nature of the MBA programme was essential to the accessibility of the programme to those living in refugee camps. The removal of formal educational entry requirements, being replaced by the written submission and panel interview offered the opportunity to access high-quality management education to students who may not otherwise be able to pursue an MBA.

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Program Impact and Success

Despite the challenges of the pandemic and the deteriorating economic and social conditions in Lebanon over the past two years, 18 of the initial 20 students remain on the programme. Many have continued to report problems with no electricity and limited internet availability; yet despite this, the results have been impressive. In 2021 the students' pass rate for the core Accounting module was 83%, exceeding the average student pass rate on this module of 65%. Five out of the students from the first cohort have managed to fast track their studies and complete the requirements for the MBA programme, with two of the five students expected to graduate with distinction in December 2022.

We have provided details of three of the students from the programme that highlight the capacity building generated through studying for the Edinburgh Business School MBA, and the potential for the programme to support wider societal goals around alleviating poverty, enhancing educational quality, and tackling inequalities. For Orwa Tayara, a student from Homs in Syria, the MBA represents the chance to achieve a goal that seemed out of reach: "I left due to the war, leaving behind many wishes and dreams in pursuing my master's studies. After eight years now as a refugee in Lebanon, I have begun to realise this dream. "I hope that after obtaining my master's degree from the university, I will be one of the influencers in Syrian society, helping children." Baraah Mahmassani is using her MBA knowledge to empower Lebanese women and to support educational projects.

Finally, Nahed Mansour is a Palestinian refugee living in a refugee camp in Tripoli. She will graduate in December 2022 with an MBA with distinction. Throughout her studies, Nahed has seen her MBA as a way to take control of her life and give her the skills to further develop her humanitarian work with an international non-governmental organization where she works as a Project Manager supporting vulnerable Syrian and Palestinian refugees.

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Nahed is now looking at opportunities to complete a PhD in Political and Humanitarian Studies that will empower her to advocate for her community in impactful evidence-based way.

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SDG IMPACT (WHAT SDG'S DOES THE PROGRAM ADDRESS?)

- SDG 4 – Quality Education
- SDG 5 – Gender Equality
- SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities



Theirworld

HERIOT WATT UNIVERSITY | EDINBURGH BUSINESS SCHOOL

Online Arabic MBA scholarships for vulnerable Lebanese nationals and refugees living in Lebanon

Theirworld and Edinburgh Business School are offering 20 scholarships to vulnerable Lebanese nationals and refugees, living in Lebanon. The scholarship will sponsor successful applicants through the Edinburgh Business School's online Arabic MBA programme, starting in August 2020.

Successful applicants will benefit from local academic support, will sit their exams in Lebanon, and will be awarded a Masters degree at the end of their studies.

- Applicants should have:
- Excellent written and verbal English
 - Ideally a bachelor degree
 - Be aged 25+

Apply now
Download a scholarship application pack from Ebsglobal.net/Lebanon-scholarship

Applications close
19 April 2020

Further information
Contact our Arab World office at:

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LOOKING FORWARD

As the circumstances remain difficult for Syrian and Palestinian refugees and nationals in Lebanon, Edinburgh Business School and Theirworld have decided to offer the same opportunity for another cohort to study our MBA programme on a free-of-cost basis. We have now selected a 2nd cohort for this initiative, and the students have just started their MBA programme learning journey with us in September 2022 with the aim of completing their MBA by August 2024.

LINK PROGRAM WEBSITE IF APPLICABLE:

<https://theirworld.org/projects/mba-project-edinburgh-business-school/>