Course Structure and Background Knowledge

1. **Do I need to have a background in information technology (IT) to successfully complete the MBIS?**
   No. The MBIS has been designed to cater for students who come from a variety of backgrounds, including students with a background in IT, information systems (IS) or a non-IT area. For students without undergraduate experience of IS or IT, you will complete a semester of ‘foundation’ units that give you the necessary knowledge to be able to complete the rest of the course. These units are roughly equivalent to undergraduate study in terms of knowledge gained.
   
   The four foundation units for the MBIS are:
   - FIT9123 Introduction to business information systems
   - FIT9130 Systems analysis and design
   - FIT9131 Programming foundations in java
   - FIT9132 Introduction to databases

2. **Where do I get information about units and the course structure?**
   The first place you should look for information about the course and units is the Monash Handbook: http://www.monash.edu.au/pubs/handbooks/
   
   The course page in the handbook describes the course structure and which units you need to study. The unit pages provide a brief summary of the unit, as well as specifying any pre-requisite requirements that you need to meet before enrolling.
   
   The Faculty of Information Technology website also has links to more detailed unit guides for each unit that outlines assessment requirements, lecture topics, and other detailed information.

3. **Do I have to study the course in any particular order?**
   There is a general structure to the course that you should follow. The course has three parts: A, B and C and you should generally follow them in order.
   
   Part A consists of the four foundation units. You might receive credit or exemptions for some or all of these units if you have a background in information systems or information technology. They should be completed first if you need to study them.
   
   Part B consists of FIT5057 Project management and seven MBIS elective units. Most students should study these eight units after completing Part A.
   
   Part C is the capstone to the course. There are two options: the industry experience program or the minor thesis research program. For students doing the industry experience program, this must be completed in the final semester, after Parts A and B. For students doing the research program, though, this will be completed over the final two semesters, which means that the final four units in Part B will be completed at the same time as the Part C units (ie. in your final two semesters).
You can, in theory, complete Part A and B units at any stage prior to Part C. However, it is VERY strongly recommended that you complete Part A first. Note the pre-requisite requirements for elective units, and also note that Part A units are compulsory: you have to pass them or receive credit/exemption for them. The earlier you attempt them, the less likely you will run into problems with enrolment if something goes wrong and you have to repeat.

4. What happens if I need to leave the course early?
Depending on how much of the course you’ve completed, you may qualify for a Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma in Business Information Systems. Students studying a specialisation may qualify for a Graduate Diploma in Information and Knowledge Management. See the alternative exit section of the Monash Handbook entry for the course for details (http://www.monash.edu.au/pubs/handbooks/).
Unfortunately these alternative exits are not available to students enrolled in the MBIS at Monash University Malaysia.

Unit Selection, Study Mode and External Electives

1. Which units should I enrol in first?
In your first two semesters, you should have the four foundation units for the first semester, and FIT5057 Project management and three MBIS elective units for your second semester.
If you’ve been granted credit or exemption for any of these units, replace them with MBIS electives. If appropriate, move FIT5057 from your second semester to your first, so that you complete it as soon as possible.

2. Which MBIS electives should I choose?
All of the units in the MBIS elective list will be useful for you if you are intending to become a business analyst. You should choose electives that you find interesting – no one unit will give you a particular advantage over another in terms of finding work after you graduate, unless you’re intending to target a specific area of the IT industry.
If you choose units that are interesting to you, you’ll be more motivated and find the study easier. This should be a higher priority than what your friends have studied, or the kind of assessment used in the unit.
If you’re intending to complete one of the specialisations, select units from the list provided in the course’s Handbook page (http://www.monash.edu.au/pubs/handbooks/).

3. What is the easiest way to find out about unit offerings?
You can also find detailed information about all Faculty of IT units via the Faculty’s website at http://www.infotech.monash.edu. The Faculty's enrolment page includes links to sample course maps that can assist with your planning.

4. Can I change my enrolment?
Yes. You can change your enrolment at any time until the start of the relevant semester. If you chose electives when enrolling in the MBIS, and after completing a semester of study realise that you’d like to choose different electives, you can simply modify your enrolment via WES. The sooner you do this the better, but the deadline for changes is Week 2 of the relevant semester.

5. Can I study part time?
If you’re a domestic student, yes you can. You can enrol in 1, 2, 3 or 4 units per semester. Note that you have a maximum of 6 years to complete the course, though.
If you’re studying on an international student visa, you are required to be enrolled in full-time study.
6. Can I overload (study more than a full-time load)?
Generally, no. In some circumstances, you can apply to overload and study five units in a semester. You must have completed at least one semester full time already, and have averaged at least a credit to qualify.

7. Can I study electives from outside of the course?
Yes, you are permitted to study 12 credit points (two units) from outside of the course in Part B. The unit must be at level 5 (the first numeral of the unit code, eg. FIT5195). If the unit is from outside of the Faculty of Information Technology, you may need to obtain permission from the other faculty first. You may also study any FIT level 5 unit as part of the industry experience program in Part C of the course. You have to meet the normal pre-requisite requirements for any unit that you wish to enrol in.

8. Does the MBIS have an Exchange Program?
Yes we do, however the short duration of the course means that it can be difficult to pursue this option. External study must either replicate Monash units within the course, or count towards the 12 credit points of external electives.

Typically, exchange programs require a minimum of 24 credit points of study to be undertaken during the program, meaning the other institution would needs to offer units equivalent to at least 12 credit point of specific MBIS units. For further information, see the Monash Abroad website, and contact the administration staff at Level 6, Building H.

Professional Accreditation and Specialisations

1. Which professional bodies accredit the MBIS?
The MBIS is accredited as an Information Technology degree by the Australian Computer Society. This is the peak industry body for the IT industry in Australia, and all graduates from the course can be recognised as IT professionals.

Students who complete specialisations can also be recognised by three other professional bodies. Students who complete the Library and Information Science specialisation may be recognised by the Australian Library and Information Association. Students who complete the Archives and Recordkeeping specialisation may be recognised by the Australian Society of Archivists, or Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia.

2. What is a specialisation?
A specialisation is a group of units on a specific topic area. It’s similar in nature to a major or minor. We have two specialisations in the MBIS: Library and Information Science, and Archives and Recordkeeping. See the handbook for the units that you have to complete to receive the specialisation.

3. Do I have to complete a specialisation?
No, and most students enrolled in the MBIS won’t. The two specialisations are only of benefit to people wishing to obtain professional accreditation in the areas of library and information science, or archives and recordkeeping.

4. How do I complete a specialisation?
You need to pass the specified units in Part B of the course (MBIS electives). The list of specified units is outlined in the MBIS course page in the Monash Handbook (http://www.monash.edu.au/pubs/handbooks/).

You will also need to complete a special version of the Professional Practice unit as part of the industry experience program in Part C of the course. Instead of studying FIT5122, you will need to study FIT5104 Information and knowledge management professional practice.

5. Can I complete both specialisations?
Yes, you can. You will need to make use of the free elective space in Part C of the course, and enrol in the correct units in the correct semester.
6. **Is there a particular order I need to enrol in specialisation units?**

   Generally, no. The specialisation units make up Part B of the course, so should usually be studied after completing the foundation units (Part A) and before the capstone units (Part C).

   However, specialisation units are only offered once per year, so you may need to study some units in your first semester when you would otherwise be studying the four foundation units. You might also need to use the elective slot available in Part C if you are studying the industrial experience project option. Ask one of the course directors for assistance if you are unable to work out how to fit in all of the required units.

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**Credit and Exemptions for Previous Study**

1. **What is the difference between credit and exemption?**

   Credit and exemption are similar concepts and are assessed in exactly the same way. The purpose of credit is to use previous study to contribute to your completion of the MBIS, where that study covers the same material as material in the MBIS. If you are granted credit for a unit, you will receive 6 credit points towards the course, the same as if you had studied and passed the unit at Monash. This reduces the amount of study you need to complete to finish the course (a total of 96 credit points is required for the MBIS).

   The purpose of exemption is to free you from the requirement to complete a specific unit in the MBIS, and replace it with an elective unit that will be of more interest to you. Exemptions, therefore, only apply to mandatory units within the course: the four foundation units in Part A of the course, and FIT5057 Project management in Part B of the course. Credit or exemption cannot be used for Part C. With an exemption, you are given 0 credit points, but are free to study an elective unit instead. You can enrol in any unit that has the exempted unit as a pre-requisite requirement, too.

2. **I’ve completed an undergraduate degree in IT or IS. What credit can I apply for?**

   In general, you cannot use undergraduate study for credit in a postgraduate course. The exception is the foundation units, which are equivalent to undergraduate knowledge. This means that if you’ve studied material that covers one or more of the four foundation units, you can apply for credit or exemption even if your study was at an undergraduate level.

3. **I’ve completed a postgraduate degree. What credit or exemption can I apply for?**

4. **You can apply for exemption for the foundation units, as well as FIT5057 Project management. You can apply for credit for any unit in Parts A or B of the course.**

5. **I’ve completed study that’s not a Bachelor or Masters degree (eg. a diploma, or other course). Can I apply for credit or exemption?**

   In most cases, no. You can’t generally use diploma or certificate study at a TAFE or polytechnic college, or similar, for credit in a postgraduate course. Similarly, professional education courses, or other non-university education is ineligible.

   The exception is in the case of diplomas or graduate certificates/diplomas where the course is a subset of a broader Bachelors or Masters-level course. If the subjects/units are the same as those studied by Bachelors or Masters students, then we can consider an application based on that study.

6. **I completed my previous study more than 10 years ago. Can I use it for credit or exemption?**

   Usually no. If, however, you’ve been actively employed in the area since graduation and can demonstrate that you’ve used the knowledge in a professional setting, ensuring that the knowledge is up to date and fresh in your mind, then we may grant an exemption to the 10-year limitation.

7. **Which parts of the course can I use credit or exemption for?**

   Credit can be granted for any units in Parts A or B of the course, for previous postgraduate study. Undergraduate study can be used for Part A.
Exemption only applies to mandatory units in Parts A or B. This means the four foundation units, or FIT5057 Project Management.

8. Can I change my credit to an exemption (or vice versa)?
Yes. Talk to the administration staff at the Faculty of IT reception desk, level 6, Building H.

9. How similar to the Monash unit does my previous study need to be?
You need to be roughly as familiar with the Monash unit material as someone who has just studied and passed the unit. Units studied at different institutions differ, though, so the general rule of thumb we use is that the previous study should cover 80% of the content of the Monash unit.

This coverage can be based on more than one unit. For example, you might have completed two different programming units, and you can demonstrate coverage of 80% of FIT9131 by including both previously studied units in your application.

10. What documents do I need to provide for a credit/exemption application?
You need to provide documentation that proves you successfully completed the previous study. This means an original or certified copy of your testamur and transcript (list of subjects or units completed and your mark/grade).

You also need to provide documentation that allows us to compare the content of the subjects or units that you studied and the Monash unit. The documentation can be a copy of a subject description web page, or similar, that outlines the topics covered by the subject or unit. A lecture schedule or weekly topic list would be ideal.

You should read the detailed unit guide for the unit(s) for which you are applying for credit or exemption. Make sure that the documentation for your previous study addresses the learning outcomes or weekly topics covered in the Monash unit. Do not include previous study in your application that doesn’t directly address the Monash unit.