



Tel Aviv University  
**TAU Recanati**

The Leon Recanati Graduate School of Business Administration

# Melbourne Business School

**Asi Bieda, Term 1 2011**

## *About MBS*

Melbourne Business School is located in Carlton, the "little Italy" suburb of Melbourne. It is relatively close to the city centre (15 minutes walk or minutes by trams). About 600 students are studying in the MBA program, most of them in the Full-Time program. 70% of the students are not Aussies (Australians) they are coming from all over the world – East Asia of course, as well as Europe, South America and US. This fact really contributes to a multi-cultural atmosphere in class and outside the lectures. The Faculty is also aware of it, so lecturers are trying to speak as clearly as possible, write on board with capital letters, and assignments are not marked according to the level of English. Ranking of this School according to Financial Times: 53 in the world, 1<sup>st</sup> in Australia (2011). I had the impression that marketing is the strong field of the school.

MBS is part of the university of Melbourne, but it is not located inside the university campus itself, just nearby. It means that MBS students enjoy the university facilities (restaurants, gym, swimming pool, shops, ATMs, etc.) on one hand, but also have privacy in other facilities, such as library, cafeteria, student lounge, study rooms, etc. on the other hand.

As an Exchange student, you have to enroll to at least 4 subjects in a term (like Full-Time students). Subjects are classified to "core" and "elective", and exchange students have to take only elective

courses, unless they get permission from TAU and MBS exchange student program coordinators. Examples and recommendations of courses will be given later on.

The entire method of studying in MBS is different from that in Tel-Aviv. Most of the lectures are given in "open conversation" form, meaning that the lecturer raise a topic about a case study given as a pre-read for class, or a question about a subject and a conversation is held about this topic. The class requires a lot of participation from students, so major part of the learning is done from your fellow students and not necessarily from the lecturer. Most of the assignments are group ("syndicate") assignments, done by small groups of 4-6 students, which assigned by Student Services. These assignments can include short exercise sets, questions regarding case study, or a group project. The group meetings are held in the "syndicate rooms", which are impressive meeting rooms dedicated especially for this role. Each room is equipped with a docking station to connect your laptop and a LCD TV.

Other student facilities are the student Lounge, included comfortable sofas and a spoiling coffee machine. The Library itself is a good place for individual studying, or acquiring data for assignments. There are some lockers for the students use as well.

In class, each student has to present his/hers name tag in front of him. This makes life much easier, as by couple of weeks students know each other by names and so as lecturers! It gives the class more intimate "family" feeling.

It is not uncommon to see students wearing business suits. Sometimes it is even required for presentations of projects in some of the courses, or for other events. I know that we are not used to it here in Tel-Aviv so I mention it in advance...☺

The term consists of 13 weeks of studying, followed by 1 exam week (Monday to Friday). That means there is no much time to study for each exam after term ends, so my advice is to study

during the semester. In some courses there is also a “midterm exam” in week 7, consist of all the material that was discussed till then. The exam can include multiple-choice questions, short open questions, dealing with an unseen business case study, or writing a report (can be done in a form of take-home exam).

Grades are standardized to a mean of 75 (H2B). The highest grade is H1 – high distinction, which means that only 5% of class is in that range.

The school stuff in general is very friendly and accessible. Each student can approach the “student services” at any time regarding any issue. They have an open desk that is open most of the day. You can also meet lecturers directly if you need to discuss a specific problem.

There is a free WIFI network for students use in the campus. There are no computer labs, so most of the students bring their own laptops with them to class. It is very useful to bring a laptop with you.

Social life – there is a BBQ welcome event in the first week of the semester, in which you have the opportunity to sign in to one of the SRC (student union) clubs. There is a soccer club, photography club, wine and philosophy, etc. if you don’t find one that is interesting you, you can open a club of your own!In addition there is a midterm and nice end of term party, which are organized by the SRC.

### Recommended courses

1. Financial Institutions (with Sam Wylie)
2. Brand Management
3. Negotiations.

Other courses (which I have heard good things about them):

- Entrepreneurship
- Corporate Finance
- Business Strategy

### *About Melbourne*

Although it is a huge city, the 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest in Australia (4.2 million people), Melbourne is a very calm, European style: trams crawling in the streets, houses are built in Victorian style, students and tourists from all over the world are everywhere. It is multi-cultural, livable (there is different festival every week) and it seems that there is also something to do or see. People are in general very very friendly. Living in the city is quite simple and very enjoyable.

The weather in one word is extreme – the locals use to say that there are 4 seasons in one day, and sometimes it seems so true – you can expect frequent changes in the weather along the day. In general,

### *Accommodation*

This is a tough part, as MBS doesn't have student dorms. You can consult with MBS exchange program coordinator and ask her to send you a list of student apartment houses prior to your arrival. These lodges are safe (secured) and very comfortable (fully-furnished), but the apartment themselves are relatively small, so if you come with your partner, the best thing is to rent an apartment. In this case you can use websites like realestate.com.au or others to find apartments for rent and to check them after you arrive to Melbourne.

Renting prices vary and depend on the location of course. You can expect to pay around \$300 a week for a 2 bedrooms apartment in the school area (Carlton, North Melbourne, Parkville,

Fizroy suburbs). In this case you can just walk to school. There are more far locations in which prices are lower and they are nicer (like South-Yarra, Caulfield or St. Kilda) then you have to take public transport to school: trams/trains/busses. This is not so bad, as the public transportation system in Melbourne is much better than in Israel!

### *Traveling*

There are a lot of nice destinations in case you want to take a short trip from the city. I recommend Yarra Valley (wine tasting), Philip island (watching the penguins), taking a ferry to Tasmania, or going on the amazing Great Ocean Road. If you want to take longer trips, you can catch a flight to Sydney (2 hours), or Uluru (Ayers rock), the famous red rock in the heart of Australia, which is an amazing experience (3 hours flight). In general Australia is huge and there is a lot to see if you have the time and the money, and I didn't mention yet the great opportunity to take a flight to the neighbor islands – New Zealand!

### *Cost*

Well, Australia is in general not a cheap country. I guess you will need around 2000 (in case you come alone) to 3000 (in case you come with your partner) dollars a month for all your expenses (accommodation, food, transport, going out and drinking beer...)

I recommend opening a bank account in one of the 4 big banks (ANZ, Commonwealth, NAB, Westpac). As a student visa holder it is very easy, and you can get a debit card and use it to purchase whatever you like).

### *Sports*

You can join the university gym for about \$60 a month, or one of the gym network branches which is close to where you live (like fitness first for example) for around \$100 a month.

### *Summary*

Studying in MBS is a great choice. People are very friendly, the studies are in a high level and social life is cool. I'm sure that you will enjoy it as I did.

If you have more questions about MBS, Melbourne or anything related, please do not hesitate to contact me by Email: [asi.bida@gmail.com](mailto:asi.bida@gmail.com).

Thanks and Good luck.

Asi