



Business  
Qualifications

# An alternative route to a business degree at a fraction of the cost?

For forty years, ABE (the Association of Business Executives) has been offering qualifications in business and management worldwide. It doesn't exist to make a profit – any surplus earned is available for reinvestment in its core business, which is the opening up of educational and development opportunities for individuals, businesses and communities around the world, currently in more than 70 countries. At any one time, about 50,000 students are studying for its qualifications. ABE graduates are to be found in ministerial posts and as senior corporate executives in many African and Asian countries.

However, ABE is facing up to some tough challenges, and adapting and responding to a rapidly changing and globalising market. John Goldup recently joined ABE as its Chief Executive Officer, having previously worked as Deputy Chief Inspector in Ofsted, the English education inspectorate. He puts it like this: "The global demand for real business and management skills is growing all the time, but one of the problems with expanding markets is that they attract some very poor quality providers to fill the gaps. ABE is absolutely committed to delivering high quality at low cost. Our programmes are delivered by more than 300 approved colleges worldwide – global standards, locally delivered."

Globally, ABE provides a quality route to a business degree at a tiny fraction of the cost of the traditional full time university route. It has more than 80 progression agreements with UK and other universities, which will admit students with an ABE Level 6 Diploma direct to the third

year of an honours degree course, very often with the option of continuing to study in their own country. Many will also give ABE graduates advanced standing on their MBA programmes. Equally, ABE is meeting the needs of students who require the enhanced employability that an introductory business qualification will give them. As part of a comprehensive portfolio review, it will be introducing a Level 3 qualification in business management later this year, and a new practically oriented Business Start-Up



John Goldup,  
CEO of ABE

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programme. The exponential expansion of small businesses is powering global growth, but too many of them fail because the enthusiasm of the entrepreneur is not matched by his or her business know-how.

ABE is also active in the UK, focusing its offer not only on international students, but also on home students who have a huge contribution to make to the business world and economic growth, but have been priced out of the university sector. Even with the costs of the top-up year, students can achieve a degree through ABE study at one of its approved colleges in the UK and progression to a top-up year with one of our university partners for around half

the cost of a three-year university degree. Further education colleges can attract funding of almost £2,000 per student for all of ABE's Level 4 courses in business, marketing, information systems, human resources and travel, tourism and hospitality management, and business start-up and entrepreneurship.

The unit structure of ABE qualifications makes them highly flexible. As one student in Kenya put it, "I didn't get the chance for direct entry to university due to finances but with ABE whenever I get the money I pay and sit for exams. So it gives everyone an opportunity to become a professional in affordable ways". Or another one in Trinidad and Tobago – "I have appreciated being able to take the modules at a pace that fits with my other life commitments. I have taken several years to achieve the qualifications but I have them now."

John Goldup says that the future lies less with fragmented competition and more with the development of an increasingly wide range of partnerships. "We are continually talking with universities, with colleges, with employers, with providers who are developing whole new ways of online learning, with other awarding organisations where we can offer programmes that are complementary to each other, with training providers which want their learners to be able to access accredited units alongside their own training."

*If you want to know more about ABE, go to our website at [abeuk.com](http://abeuk.com).*

*And if you can't find what you're looking for, just email the Chief Executive direct at [john@g@abeuk.com](mailto:john@g@abeuk.com).*



**"Despite my various academic qualifications, I did not hesitate when an opportunity to pursue professional qualifications through ABE presented itself. They equipped me with relevant and practical skills that assisted greatly in the establishment of the first private university in Namibia, the International University of Management."**

Hon. Dr David Richard Namwandi,  
Minister of Education for Namibia