The background image shows the entrance of a light-colored building with a classical pediment. A circular window is centered in the pediment. Below it is a small rectangular window. The main entrance is an arched doorway with a wooden door featuring a decorative diamond-patterned metal grille. A stone-paved path leads to the door, flanked by green bushes. A dark blue semi-transparent rectangle is in the top-left corner, and a bright blue rectangle is behind the 'Class of 2019' text.

Student Biographies

[MBA]

Class of 2019

Abraham Avenant

Nationality: South African

Industry: Civil Engineering

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

As I became more involved in the management of a division and a company at large, I realised that my first line of study doesn't necessarily equip me for the next level of general management.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

It's listed as the top business school in Africa. The diversity of topics and in the faculty and student body was another key motivator for me.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been wonderful. I am thinking about things in a totally different way.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

To learn as much as possible and apply those learnings as quickly as possible.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I am still learning a lot. I'm ensuring that I apply what I've learned as quickly as possible. I also try to keep up to date with new developments in the field of management.

Which new ideas excite you?

Diversity in general - learning how to work with people from different backgrounds and cultures.



Tintswalo Baloyi

Nationality: South African

Industry: Gas and Finance

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

As an engineer, I need to improve my business acumen.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The focus on values and personal development in business leadership.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been a rollercoaster ride so far. I've learnt so much about myself and my business acumen has definitely improved.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want a better understanding of finance, my leadership style, and to build my professional network.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I'm reading a lot more about current affairs.

Which new ideas excite you?

Innovation that focusses on social issues. Also, the notion that people management is a skill and not just something you do to tick boxes.



Dewald Benadie

Nationality: South African

Industry: Alcoholic Beverages and FMCG

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

My core values: enjoyment, lifelong learning, and ambition. The time was right for me to take the leap.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The UCT GSB has impressive credentials and international alliances that I find very appealing, as well as an international reputation for thought leadership and academic excellence that will provide me with an undeniable benefit in advancing my career.

The UCT GSB alumni that I've interacted with outside of official GSB events are all passionate about the school, and about the culture that embraces diversity, specifically.

However, the school's emphasis on values-based leadership and personal growth also influenced my decision. It is evident that the UCT GSB successfully balances international excellence with local relevance. I chose the GSB because the school's mission and values resonate with me.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It has been a life-changing experience, challenging me intellectually and emotionally, and demanding continuous self-reflection and introspection. It goes without saying that I've greatly enhanced my professional knowledge and skills in the functional areas of business, and developed a far greater understanding of the increasingly complex and uncertain environment in which we operate. Above all, I've had a tremendous amount of fun along the way and I've connected with a group of truly phenomenal and inspiring individuals, forming new friendships that will last a lifetime.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to have the confidence to live more authentically - to achieve a greater degree of congruence between my values, my actions, and my lived experiences. I also want to live with purpose.

That means doing the things I enjoy, having fun inside and outside of work, and pursuing lifelong learning, personal growth and a career change that will shape the life I want to lead.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I have an inquisitive mind - I'm equipping myself for a journey of lifelong learning and continuously developing my critical thinking skills. I'm learning how to be more resilient and adaptable in an increasingly complex and turbulent world.

Which new ideas excite you?

Firms of the future and the potential for advanced technologies to reshape the world around us for the better.



Aima Biga

Nationality: Ghanaian

Industry: Legal Services, FMCG, Distribution,
Manufacturing, and Construction

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I currently operate in a legal role within a commercial environment. As a result, I wish to study and understand commerce better in order for me to contribute more holistically.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The GSB offering world-class business studies within the African context.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It has been very challenging and this is completely new turf, but all in a good way because I feel that I am developing.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I look forward to positive impacts both personally and professionally.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By trying to take in as much of the course content as I possibly can, as well as engaging with the rich intellectual diversity offered by my colleagues.

Which new ideas excite you?

The Fourth Industrial Revolution, its impact, and how as an individual and leader, I can adjust and contribute to this societal change in a positive and meaningful way.



Yap Boum II

Nationality: Cameroon

Industry: Healthcare

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I want to find innovative ways to transform healthcare in Africa and I consider an MBA the catalyst for that.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's reputation of excellence in building the future of Africa.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Really transformative.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

To build my professional network.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

That's a work in progress.

Which new ideas excite you?

The prospect of providing quality healthcare to all Africans.



Neill Braybrooke

Nationality: South African

Industry: Information Technology

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I want the MBA to assist me with moving from a technical position to a managerial position.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's reputation and accreditation.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

The experience has been great.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to be equipped with the necessary skills to run any company and to grow personally.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I make sure I align my course deliverable with topics that are important or interesting to me.



Vincent Bridgens

Nationality: Namibian

Industry: Mining and Manufacturing

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I was at a point, professionally, where I needed a more generalist skillset to pivot on my career trajectory.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's prestigious pedigree, the diversity of students, as well as the location.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been very useful in improving my business acumen.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I would like a broader set of general business skills.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

In becoming a more well-rounded leader.

Which new ideas excite you?

I find design-thinking methodology extremely exciting.



Khensani Buhlungu

Nationality: South African

Industry: Production

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

For personal and career growth.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

It's the best business school in Africa.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

I feel smarter!

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to learn more, network and add the skills the programme fosters to my CV.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By gaining knowledge and seeing how that links to my goals.

Which new ideas excite you?

Sustainability - especially in business, society, and governance.



Maria Luísa Manuel Cange

Nationality: Angolan

Industry: Retail, Mining and Banking

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I've had the opportunity to work across industries and this made me realise that there are certain changes I needed to make to succeed as a young engineer and woman leader. Personal and career development are my main reasons for doing an MBA.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

It's the best business school in Africa and it's well-known for fostering critical thinking skills and personal development.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been a journey of discovery so far, both personally and professionally. The group dynamics are extremely interesting because it's so diverse.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

My primary objective is personal growth.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

With the tools and expertise to drive meaningful impact in communities in Africa. We have a very unique socio-economic landscape.

Which new ideas excite you?

What really excites me is the competence of women leaders and how they conquer spaces in business and industries that were previously seen as a "man's job." Having said that, the gender equality agenda still has a long way to go, but we're getting there.



Tafadzwa Chawasemerwa

Nationality: Zimbabwean

Industry: Financial Services and FMCG

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

For personal and career growth.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

It's simply the best business school in Africa.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been exciting, really intense, and also very enlightening.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to hone my business acumen and leadership skills.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By living in the moment and building my leadership skills.

Which new ideas excite you?

Definitely complexity theory, leadership and sustainability, as well as context-based strategy and business in emerging markets.



Yossabel Chetty

Nationality: South African

Industry: Online Sports Betting

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I started my own business three years ago and over the last year I signed on a big client. This forced me to change the way I run my business. I don't have a formal business background and I realised that to thrive at that capacity, expand my client base, and to emerge as a socially conscious leader I would need to equip myself with the necessary skills. The MBA programme cultivates these skills.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The UCT GSB's international relevance combined with its local impact.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been a very enriching experience so far. I love the emphasis on groupwork and the lengths that we go to on the programme to develop strong team dynamics.

All the courses have been amazing - I never thought I would enjoy accounting. I'm not saying I love it, but I'm definitely not as afraid of the subject as I was a few months ago. The leadership course is definitely a favourite. I just have to get through all the readings.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to understand how to drive business initiatives forward with ethical leadership and socially conscious practices.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I believe that future company leaders can no longer afford to be solely cashflow and profit driven, no matter how big or small the business is. Leadership in a new world requires us to consider our position in the context of our communities, country, and even the world, so that we can achieve more not only for ourselves, but also for society as a whole.



James Chiswell

Nationality: British

Industry: Banking

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I want to broaden my skillset, change career, and have the opportunity to live abroad and meet a diverse group of interesting people.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's diversity and its focus on sustainability and social innovation.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

I am very impressed with the GSB – there are so many available resources and helpful, welcoming people. The course content has been interesting and the quality of lecturing is extremely high. There is a great atmosphere on campus and it is a very productive environment to be studying in.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I would like to move into a new career as a more well-rounded and adaptable individual.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I'm working on dealing with ambiguity and uncertainty, and networking to meet as many new people as possible.

Which new ideas excite you?

The corporate focus that's slowly shifting to sustainability, and social and environmental responsibility.



Jay Chouhan

Nationality: Motswana

Industry: Health and Education

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I'm wanting to make a career change and also to equip myself with key business and entrepreneurship skills.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The UCT GSB's location, as well as the school's offering within an emerging market context.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Amazing.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to make a career change and possibly start a new business.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By learning as much as I can, keeping an open mind, unlearning and relearning, and pushing myself out of my comfort zone.

Which new ideas excite you?

The digital revolution, social financing and innovation as a whole.



Chota Chungu

Nationality: Zambian

Industry: Major Sporting Events, Financial Services, and the Public Sector

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I would like to make a career change and I feel the MBA offers me the skillsets to really challenge myself and push my own boundaries.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's reputation and its contextual relevance within the African market – it's the top business school on the continent. The diverse student body was another attraction for me.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

I've really enjoyed it. My classmates bring such richness in experience to the classroom which really adds a lot of depth to the discussions. We also know how to have fun and that's helped us bond in the short periods we spend together.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to become more business savvy. I want to understand how to look at businesses, develop key decision-making skills and make informed decisions. It's important for me to feel like I have what it takes to sit at C-suite level and make a valuable contribution.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

Well, there are certain areas of interest that I've identified as my personal weaknesses or strengths. I'm making the effort to spend more time on improving those areas outside of the MBA programme. So far, I have received the best support from the school and my cohort to help me grow.

Which new ideas excite you?

Social finance, business model innovations, and strategy.



Lisa Clarke

Nationality: South African

Industry: Retail, Advertising, and Consumer Research

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I wanted to be challenged, to learn from experienced professionals and to be taught skills that I wouldn't be exposed to in my current position.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The UCT GSB's affiliation with the Global Network for Advanced Management.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

The MBA has been a fantastic experience so far. I've learnt a lot, been pushed out of my comfort zone, and I've met some amazing people.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to finish the MBA with a good professional network and a clear career path.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I'm pushing myself to explore different industries, technologies and ways of thinking.

Which new ideas excite you?

Using artificial intelligence and machine learning to support analytics functions.



Kyle Dutton

Nationality: South African

Industry: Finance and Sports

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

To try and provide a catalyst for my small business, build a network and create a safety net.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

Firstly, the school's reputation and secondly, the convenience of its location.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been great. I've really enjoyed every moment. I think the modular format suits me because the short term goals and planning make it easier for me to handle the programme's intensity.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I'm searching for practical learnings that I can transfer into my business venture.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By embracing new ways of learning and sharing ideas.

Which new ideas excite you?

The technological advancements that will change sport in the near future.



Elmarie Eises

Nationality: Namibian

Industry: Medicine

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I would like to become more marketable in the job market. I also wanted to develop more personally and to expand my horizon.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

It's a prestigious university and internationally recognised.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

I've come to know myself on a deeper level. In addition, I'm able to relate to the concepts I'm learning about and see where I can apply them to my life and my profession. I like the fact that I can learn and adopt new skills. Overall, my experience here has been one of a kind, challenging me in every way possible.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I hope to be more knowledgeable in business. I would like to make sound business decisions going forward, which I believe gives me a competitive advantage over my peers within the laboratory fraternity. I know stepping into the industry with this MBA will justify a higher salary and, as a result, more promising financial security for me.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I think staying relevant means that I have to read a lot, and not just the prescribed readings, but also the daily news. I am learning so much from my fellow candidates and the GSB faculty, and by applying a few practices in my daily life helps me adapt and grow in this changing world.

Which new ideas excite you?

Business and society. I didn't quite know about the extent to which some businesses actually involve themselves in corporate social responsibility. Some actually go out into communities to investigate and answer to the needs of those communities. This is inspiring and I now have a better understanding of the role that business plays in society.

Innovation in emerging markets is also really intriguing. In that context, innovation is often needs-based and benefits the community, as well as the entrepreneurs.



Jak Erasmus

Nationality: South African

Industry: FMCG and Energy

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I wanted the necessary skills and confirmation thereof to operate at a certain level.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The diversity at the school.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been a challenging experience thus far but I've enjoyed it. The wide range of opinions and perspectives is welcoming and refreshing.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to broaden my skillset and possibly plan my own venture.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I'm equipping myself for the new world by showcasing that I have an MBA from a reputable university and that I have the necessary skills to execute any task that might be required of me.

Which new ideas excite you?

3D printing.



Fiona Fortes

Nationality: South African

Industry: Publishing

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I returned to South Africa in 2017 after 13 years of working abroad and I was looking to build my professional network and integrate into the local business context. I also wanted to understand the background to business decisions more generally in order to effectively contribute to making these decisions. I also wanted to challenge myself, and to grow as a leader.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

A successful MBA programme at the UCT GSB would be one in which I was challenged, wherein I built my professional network, and where I learnt how to find better solutions in an emerging market context.



Daleen Fourie

Nationality: South African

Industry: Construction (Architecture) and Enterprise Development

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I've been in the process of changing careers for the past couple of years and an MBA plays an integral role in this.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The GSB's focus on entrepreneurship and emerging markets.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

UCT is amazing. The staff, the facilities, and the students. I am so proud to be a part of this institution. The MBA at the UCT GSB has exceeded all of my expectations. I never expected to learn and grow so much in such a short timeframe.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I'd like to acquire the financial skills that will enable me to pursue a career in development finance.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

Reading and staying curious are the keys to success and leading a fulfilling life.

Which new ideas excite you?

Collaboration between government, business and academia. Big data also excites me, specifically how we apply it in emerging markets.



Zaid Gangraker

Nationality: South African

Industry: The Environment and Engineering

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I wanted to gain a better understanding of business because my background is very technical. I also enjoy the business elements of my day-to-day job such as business processes, finance, and project management. An MBA seemed like a logical extension of that.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

As a UCT alumnus, I didn't hesitate to further my studies at the GSB.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It really has been fantastic. I've been exposed to new, pivotal knowledge that has enriched me in so many ways.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I hope to enter the corporate world in a management position.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I think the MBA has most definitely added sharper arrows to my quiver. The new material that I've been exposed to is vital in understanding business and, more importantly, how businesses succeed.

Which new ideas excite you?

I am really passionate about systems in organisations and how one can drive efficiencies into processes in order to provide a degree of optimization and automation. I am a firm believer that turnaround time and quality are key differentiators across industries.



Shivani Ghai

Nationality: Indian

Industry: Consulting and Fuel

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

The time was right. I got my business project to a steady, self-sustaining point, made my peace with my personal struggles, and decided to wipe the slate clean and start fresh.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's focus on sustainability, social development, and emerging markets. Also, who doesn't want to live in Cape Town?

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Absolutely amazing. The faculty is so passionate and caring. My cohort already feels like family. The whole experience has caused such a strong paradigm shift within me. I will never look at the world through the same lens again.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want a chance to make an impactful difference in the world. This may sound vague but I'm definitely not going back to sitting behind a desk.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I come to class every day like it's my first day. I live and breathe the course content because every lecture is like going to a guest-speaker series. I'm doing a lot of reading and learning on my own but with a more unconventional approach.

I'm also taking every opportunity I can to learn from the start-ups that work in the Solution Space on campus - those teams are legendary visionaries.

Which new ideas excite you?

The notion that corporations are acknowledging their role in sustainability. We've focused a lot on this in class and I think it's the way of the future if we want to preserve our beautiful planet for many generations to come.



Snehta Goodur

Nationality: Mauritian

Industry: Business Consulting, Property Development, and Healthcare

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

In an everchanging business landscape, one is required to keep up with those changes by constantly improving your skills. I needed the MBA to complement my technical skills and develop a distinctive leadership style as well as the confidence to lead people.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's international recognition and accreditation.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been an incredible learning experience - learning from industry experts and networking with highly intelligent individuals.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I aim to enhance my strategic thinking abilities by engaging with the course content, as well as individuals from diverse backgrounds. My ultimate goal is promoting women entrepreneurs in Africa.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By staying up to date with how the business landscape is changing, locally and globally. I'm also keeping my skillset relevant by doing an MBA and other technical courses. I believe that the next generation of managers will require a combination of good leadership skills and technical know-how.

Which new ideas excite you?

The Fourth Industrial Revolution and how technology can be used to provide sustainable solutions for numerous African problems.



Joseph Gruter

Nationality: South African

Industry: Construction, Mining, and Power Generation

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I want to broaden my way of thinking and my skillset.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The GSB's excellent reputation and the convenience of the location.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to become a director at my company and move the company forward.



Khanyile Gwija

Nationality: South African

Industry: Chemical Engineering

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

For career growth, development, and to diversify my skillset outside of engineering.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

It's the best business school in Africa.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been bittersweet. It's always refreshing to be away from work and interact with people outside of my current organization. However, it's challenging to juggle work, the MBA, and raising a family at the same time.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to develop management skills and foster the ability to lead multi-disciplinary teams across functions.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By networking and building a variety of connections.

Which new ideas excite you?

The idea that managers or leaders are multipliers or diminishers. I was amazed when I found out about my own, accidental diminishing management style. I have since been working on minimizing my diminishing behaviour and applying a multiplication approach.



Gareth Harrington

Nationality: South African

Industry: Retail, Medical, Events, and Marketing

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

Personal growth, expanding my knowledge, and possibly making a career change.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The opportunity to do the MBA in a modular format, rather than full-time.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

There have been ups and downs, and it isn't as challenging as I expected.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

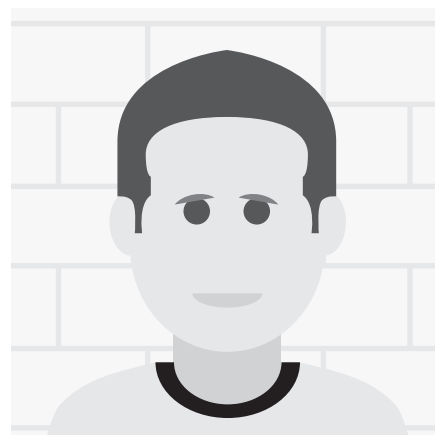
Develop hard skills, make a possible career shift, and consolidate what I have learnt over 10 years of work experience.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I'm gaining as much knowledge as I can and I'm working with people of varying ages and demographics.

Which new ideas excite you?

Interacting with people and people's behaviour within organisations.



Nolianga Imasiku

Nationality: Zambian

Industry: Public Sector

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

Having worked for some time now, I felt ready to take the next big step in my life. This entails my involvement in businesses in Zambia and across Africa. However, before taking this step, I felt that I needed to equip myself with the skills the MBA programme offers, as well as the exposure to the broad UCT GSB's network.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

I was attracted by the GSB's position on doing business in Africa, as well as the institution's expertise in social innovation, leadership development, and fostering critical thinking skills. The alumni network was another significant consideration in coming to my final decision.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

So far, exposure to the diversity of character and backgrounds of not only the MBA students, but the broader UCT GSB community has been amazing to experience. I am part of an amazing group that I have worked with throughout the term. They are constantly helping me be a better person, team member and leader. Lastly, the up-to-date content in the curriculum has been great to engage with and a lot of the professors have successfully made it fun.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I would like to build my leadership skills and my professional network. I also want to get a better understanding of doing business in Africa.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I am equipping myself for the world by embracing diversity, approaching the course content with an open mind and engaging with it. I'm also getting involved with the broader UCT GSB community which offers a wide range of expertise and experience.

Which new ideas excite you?

Complexity theories, social justice, networking skills, and the application of lean thinking methodologies.



Michelle Karim

Nationality: South African

Industry: Financial Services

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

It's the right time in my career.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The MBA curriculum.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been most enjoyable.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to gain a holistic view of business, as well as sharpen my overall skillset.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By taking time to reflect and getting the most out of the experience.

Which new ideas excite you?

There is so much possibility beyond just working for a company.



Dilen Kistnen

Nationality: Mauritian

Industry: Finance and Banking

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I want to acquire the necessary skills to be able to lead a team. I realised that I lack leadership skills and I do not feel confident enough to assume these roles, yet.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The quality of the education.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Excellent. The lecturers are brilliant and the courses are extremely relevant and interesting.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to develop the necessary tools and skills to be a good leader.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By keeping abreast with the changes happening in the financial world and applying what I'm being taught at the GSB to the maximum.

Which new ideas excite you?

Big data and the avenues it creates in the business world.



Lukasz Lata

Nationality: Polish

Industry: Telecommunications and Consulting

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I would like to expand my horizons and change my career. My wife and I would like to move to South Africa and the UCT GSB provides great opportunities for networking.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

It's the best business school in Africa.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been a pleasure to be exposed to so many inspiring people that have a lot of interesting stories to tell.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

Networking and building relationships. This involves meeting the right people and being inspired by the possibilities of what I could achieve in the future.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I'm listening to the ideas and connecting them to the world out there. I observe which organisations do what I'm learning about on the MBA programme and which organisations align with my values. This is helping me identify opportunities for my own career development after graduation.

Which new ideas excite you?

Leadership, integrated reporting, governance, and sustainability.



Morné Louw

Nationality: Namibian

Industry: Mining

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I'm preparing for a role in executive management.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school is very well known and recognised across Africa.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I'd like to enhance my career and gain a competitive edge for future career opportunities.



Mholi Majola

Nationality: South African

Industry: Mining, Engineering, and Energy

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

Primarily for career progression, not having an MBA seems to be a barrier to the opportunities I want to pursue.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The focus on leadership and business in emerging markets, as well as the diverse, yet intimate, classroom environment.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Slightly overwhelming. I was not prepared for the time management required, especially during the periods between modules.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to build a strong professional network and gain insights from my peers in other industries.



Temba Mashunye

Nationality: Zimbabwean

Industry: Financial Services

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I want to acquire transferable skills – both hard and soft skills and to improve my strategic thinking capabilities. There is always something more to learn and I'm a very inquisitive person, so learning is a constant pursuit of mine.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The opportunity to interact with a diverse group of people from different nationalities, cultures, industries, and disciplines.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been great, especially having to collaborate with others from completely different background than my own.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want more credibility in my area of influence and industry. I'd also like to improve my self-confidence through the education and skillsets I gain through the programme.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

Reading a lot more and with a scholarly imperative to increase my exposure to diverse perspectives on global, social, and business issues.

Which new ideas excite you?

Design thinking in practice.



Cibin Mathew

Nationality: South African

Industry: Automotive and Supply Chain

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I am at a crossroads in my career where I am torn between staying in the same field, fighting for promotion, or branching out and looking to broaden the scope of my knowledge and experience.

I wanted to use the MBA programme to connect with talented peers, learn from them and the talented facilitators, and obtain a better grasp of what opportunities are available out there for me should I decide to leave my current field.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The UCT GSB's reputation in consistently producing quality MBA graduates every year. The school's approach to developing a perfect mix of hard and soft skills, and the encouragement to challenge the norms is especially motivating.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

The MBA experience has really tested my adaptability skills so far. Balancing work, education, and a personal life has probably been the most intense challenge for me. However, I have begun to acclimatise to the expectations of the course and I'm beginning to find a rhythm that works well for me.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

My long-term career goal is to get into the consulting industry in South Africa. My dream is to immerse myself in consulting projects across a variety of industries to satisfy my hunger for gaining knowledge and making innovative improvements. I want the MBA to serve as a stepping stone for elevating my career to achieve the goal that I've set.



Lindsey Nhlamulo **Miyen**

Nationality: South African

Industry: Mining and Engineering

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

As an engineer, I wanted to improve my business acumen.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

I'm a UCT alumnus and I'm familiar with the university's quality standards and specifically, the GSB's prestige.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been a phenomenal journey. I have not only improved my business acumen, but I now have the added advantage of an increased desire for personal development. This makes me want to do more than I initially envisioned.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to be able to apply my newfound business acumen and be in a position to transform the business landscape as a result.

Which new ideas excite you?

As a co-founder, the new student club, Get On Board excites me. This student-run club seeks to transform the ways boards are run in South Africa.



Moleboge **Mogorosi**

Nationality: South African

Industry: Mining, Management and Environmental Consulting

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I wanted to go into business and stop working a 9-to-5.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The option of a scholarship from the Black Management Forum.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Transformational. It has gotten me out my shell, assisted in building my confidence, and given me the courage to take risks. I have also built lifelong relationships.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to build my business skills and foster an entrepreneurial approach. I would also like to be able to make a positive impact in society through influencing, if not changing, governance for the improvement of the average person's lived experience.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I have a life coach and I went back to consulting in my field. I'm also building networks with people who have experience as entrepreneurs and setting up my own business.

Which new ideas excite you?

The textile industry - how it's creating jobs and growing the economy in local areas. Creating economic hubs, AI, and the beneficiation of mineral resources are also intriguing.



Thiru Moodley

Nationality: South African

Industry: FMCG

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I would like to grow my knowledge about the relationships between business and the economic, social, and political environments. I'm also looking for a guided understanding into world trends and expanding my views on how to be successful in the everchanging economic climate.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The reputation for high-standard education among other business schools.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Fantastic. The work load is substantial but the content is so interesting, it keeps me going. I like working with my group, learning from them and watching them engage with the content also inspires me.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

To network and meet high achievers in my class. I want to further train my mind to see things differently, spot trends, and have a greater understanding of the world.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I listen to industry podcasts on my way to work, watch business channels, and read articles in business reviews. My world has completely changed. I am really enjoying this transition.

Which new ideas excite you?

I've started to hone in on the digital world. I am amazed at how it's being used everywhere and I cannot wait to implement something new into my function at work. The leadership course is also helping me understand my leadership style and helping me improve in a constructive environment.



Moshala Mphahlele

Nationality: South African

Industry: Finance

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I believe that the MBA programme at the UCT GSB will equip me with the necessary skills to not only drive a meaningful impact, but also to address some of the key societal challenges we face in emerging economies and to be a better leader.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's reputation, especially in value-based leadership, as well as the institution's well-defined values. These really resonate with me on a personal level.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

There's been lots of learning from classmates and lecturers. It's been eye-opening, helping me to see a completely different perspective on various topics.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

To equip myself with the necessary skills so I can contribute to bettering myself as a leader and society as a whole.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By being open to continuously learning new things.

Which new ideas excite you?

This is not necessarily new, but I am excited about knowing that I am capable of achieving anything if I push myself hard enough.



Imraan Narker

Nationality: South African

Industry: Retail

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I want to be an impactful leader.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The heritage and experiencing part of the school's illustrious alumni network.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It has taken me out of my comfort zone and into a new realm of possibility and opportunity.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to create a gateway for more learning experiences.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By staying open to learning and expanding my network.

Which new ideas excite you?

The ideas that challenge convention and make me start to think about all the possibilities.



Stefan Nel

Nationality: South African

Industry: Pharma; Food and Beverage

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

To shift from being a specialist to becoming a generalist. I'm using the programme as a platform for me to launch new career.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The comprehensive curriculum and the impressive faculty.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Excellent. My inspiring classmates have been the highlight of my MBA journey.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

Financial freedom.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

With the targeted electives that compliment my skillset, and by participating in the international exchange programs.

Which new ideas excite you?

Machine learning and big data analysis. Also, the advances in the digital marketplace and the regulated medical cannabis industry in South Africa.



Emily Ng'ethe

Nationality: Kenyan

Industry: Consulting

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I'm at a turning point in my life and I needed to be more intentional and conscientious with how I live the rest of my life. What will my legacy be? It was time to reflect and plan for the next phase of my life.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

It's part of the best university in Africa, UCT and is also rated the top business school on the continent. The MBA programme's focus on leadership in emerging markets was another key factor for me - we are the solution to African problems.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been an amazing, intellectually and personally fulfilling challenge.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

Self-discovery and to build a network. Getting a distinction won't hurt either.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By networking, focussing on personal branding, and remaining authentic and mindful.

Which new ideas excite you?

I will say it in a quote by Kevin Cashman, "Our ability to grow as a leader is based on our ability to grow as a person." Continuous growth and lifelong learning excite me as well.



Thobela Ngcengeni

Nationality: South African

Industry: Engineering and Mining

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I wanted to build my business acumen and not be only technically skilled.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The GSB's MBA structure, the school's reputation, and I'm a UCT alumnus.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been great, I already learned so much after the first modular block. Doing an MBA is the best decision I've made in a long time.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to learn business skills, and transform my thinking and approach to life in general.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By continuously reading and staying up to date with current affairs.

Which new ideas excite you?

Investment is the one thing that I would really like to focus on.



Funeka Ngcwabe

Nationality: South African

Industry: Petroleum

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

The trigger for me was the organisational restructure at work in 2017. People's job security was impacted and this made me realise that I needed to upskill myself and be marketable for the future.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

Apart from the institution's legacy and the internationally recognised MBA programme's reputation, it was also conveniently close to work.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

A whole new world of knowledge that I was oblivious to has been opened up to me. I've been exposed to new ways of learning and thinking.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

Self-development and empowerment are my main objectives. I want to broaden my knowledge of business acumen, critical-, systems- and integrated thinking. I would also like to positively manage and improve group dynamics.



Diane Obree

Nationality: South African

Industry: Consumer Goods

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I'm making a change on my career path. I also want to improve my confidence and focus on self-development.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's credentials and the location.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

This is a really professional environment for learning. The lectures and the course content are extremely interesting and engaging.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

As I mentioned, I'm looking to change my career path. I also want to network with inspiring people. All of this also involves in changing the perception I have of myself and my value, professionally. There's also an opportunity for me to do an international school exchange program and work abroad.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

Being open minded and eager to absorb as much information as I can.

Which new ideas excite you?

Accounting case studies and really understanding company performance and implications. Also, networking with amazing colleagues on campus.



Lucy Oduor

Nationality: Kenyan

Industry: FMCG, Manufacturing, and Packaging

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I wanted to enhance my professional skills and knowledge both at a functional and leadership level. I also needed to challenge myself further within a very diverse group of people from different cultures and backgrounds.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

It offers an international experience with an emerging market focus. The modular MBA programme and the school's location also suited my needs.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It has truly been a once-in-a lifetime experience. I'm grateful to have classmates of different cultures who are extremely brilliant, sociable and fun. The course content and the faculty challenge and grow our thinking in very innovative and world-class ways. The administration are so helpful as well. Plus, the school is in Cape Town, one of the most beautiful and liveliest cities in the world.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want my credentials to be internationally recognised and I want to grow professionally and as a leader. I hope to open the door further for thriving career opportunities, globally.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By continuously learning and ensuring that I am equipped with the right transferable skills. I also keep a positive mindset that is open to change, especially with the current pace of technological advancement.

Which new ideas excite you?

The different and new societal and technological trends that are always coming at us. And the rate of innovation that will continue to happen across all functions and industries, the emergence and evolution of data analytics and its interactions with brands.



Vivian Achieng Oyugi

Nationality: Kenyan

Industry: FMCG and Advertising

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I wanted to expand my knowledge base.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The desire for a world-class education.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

The course content is great and the lecturers are fantastic. Finding a balance between a demanding job, family, and the MBA work is a struggle, but nothing worthwhile comes easy.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want a more generalist business skillset, as well as the necessary knowledge to start my own business in the future.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By trying to say "yes" more often and trying out new things and experiences while keeping an open mind.

Which new ideas excite you?

Futuristic trends and team management.



Timo Julian Pahlke

Nationality: German

Industry: IT

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

For further career development. I had the flexibility to study for a year abroad and my employer is supporting me.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

Cape Town and the 11-month, international MBA programme.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Being exposed to many students from different countries with different backgrounds has been a highlight.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to build my international network.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By improving my IT and digital skills.

Which new ideas excite you?

Working in a different country with international clients and being exposed to different cultures.



David Paulse

Nationality: South African

Industry: Education and Local Government

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

It's something I have always wanted to do and a number of things fell into place at the end of last year, making it possible for me to undertake the two-year commitment.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The GSB MBA programme speaks to my context of working in an emerging economy. Moreover, colleagues and friends of mine who have done the GSB MBA programme speak very highly of it.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been demanding and challenging. I am grateful for my team who have been crucial in helping me achieve the necessary outputs and outcomes thus far.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to build on my understanding of business, government and society. I'm also hoping that the MBA will equip me to become an intrapreneur in my organisation and drive innovation in my directorate and the City of Cape Town.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By acquiring skills and knowledge around how businesses operate in a global context, as well as growing my understanding of financial management and economics.

Which new ideas excite you?

Anything that challenges the conventional thinking on the nature of, and the solutions to, socio-economic challenges in society.



Petra Pavlovic

Nationality: South African and Serbian, dual citizenship

Industry: Retail, Gambling, and Alcoholic Beverages

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I wanted to improve my overall business knowledge and leadership skills. In general, my curiosity, drive, and passion for knowledge led me to this point. I've wanted to do an MBA for as long as I can remember and was waiting for the right time in my life, both personally and professionally.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

I feel that the UCT GSB was the best place for me. The close-knit community, especially between past and present students, along with the strong emphasis the MBA programme places on groupwork creates a dynamic and exciting atmosphere.

I feel very comfortable in learning and exchanging ideas in this environment. In addition, I've had active contact with the alumni community and I've been lucky enough to have been exposed to some of the GSB's MBA curriculum before I started on the programme. I wanted the best and the UCT GSB is the best business school in Africa.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

My experience so far has been incredible. I didn't realise how much I missed academic life and the continuous exposure to new ideas and different ways of thinking. From the first day, the conversations in and out of class have been life changing.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to gain the knowledge and confidence to become a business consultant. Up until now, I've relied on my professional experience to guide me but I plan to strengthen my skills by learning, understanding, and applying formal methodologies. I believe that that knowledge will help me better my professional proficiency and achieve my long-term goals.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

With knowledge and experience, and building a solid professional network. My fellow students have made my MBA experience incredible and I've learnt as much from them as I have from the GSB faculty. The business contacts and friendships I've made on the programme are priceless.

Which new ideas excite you?

Economics. I never studied it before and I am now exposed to a completely different way of viewing and thinking about the world.

Thabang Phoku

Nationality: South African

Industry: Energy, Insurance, and Management Consulting

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

The MBA programme provides general training for management discussions and decision making. In addition, the MBA experience helps students develop their leadership and other skills required along the leadership journey.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's emerging market focus and the blend of social innovation into the MBA curriculum. The numerous centres of excellence, such as the Hasso Plattner School of Design Thinking (d-school), were also a determining factor for me.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

The MBA experience has been incredible, I have learnt so many new things, including a lot about myself. I've also met some incredible people.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I would like to have a well-rounded understanding of business and, as a result, to effectively influence strategic development in organisations.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By keeping up to date with the latest trends and ideas in the world of business and finding platforms to challenge those ideas.

Which new ideas excite you?

The influence of technology on business models, the shifting nature of work and consumer expectations overall. This has significantly influenced the future of business and strategy.



Garth Pienaar

Nationality: South African

Industry: eCommerce

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I applied, I was accepted and I felt that the time was right. I didn't want to hesitate, this opportunity may never have come along again.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's focus on business skills and social responsibility.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been Interesting working with different personality types and there's also a lot of work to juggle. I've also met amazing people.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to improve my business and personal skills to become more rounded and self-aware.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By constantly trying to learn at home and at work. I'm always trying out new technologies.

Which new ideas excite you?

Blockchain technologies, the combination of voice and image Search, and ecommerce solving rural logistics issues.



Thirushen Pillay

Nationality: South African

Industry: Financial Services

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

There are two main factors that supported my decision to pursue an MBA. Firstly, I am looking to gain the necessary skills and professional qualification to supplement my working experience and that would potentially provide diverse career opportunities. Secondly, I want to develop my leadership abilities and position those to support my medium- to long-term goals.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

I chose the UCT GSB over other business schools because of its reputation - being the top business school in Africa - and the well-rounded curriculum it offers.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

The MBA journey has been a fulfilling one thus far, especially as the learning experience, from both the faculty as well as my peers, has been an intense and rewarding one. The networks and relationships I've built have aided in my development, both professionally and personally.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want the MBA qualification to open doors to strategic roles that would support my success as a professional.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

The best I can do is to ensure that I am continuously learning and reinventing myself so that I am not redundant in a rapidly changing environment. I believe that an MBA from the UCT GSB certainly supports this objective.



Jean Potgieter

Nationality: South African

Industry: Engineering, Project Management, and Academia

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

It's been a long-term dream of mine. I'm also looking to make a career transition.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's prestigious reputation and the diversity.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Excellent. The diversity of people and ways of thinking has been truly enriching. The course material is also challenging and engaging.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

The broader exposure it offers as the gateway into business, leadership and innovation.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By actively improving my teamwork skills and by applying cross-sector thinking.

Which new ideas excite you?

The key learnings from people in leadership.



Lyle Prim

Nationality: South African

Industry: Finance and Consulting

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I'm making a career change to adapt to economic and organisational changes geared towards analytics and data.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's focus on innovation, both within the private and public sectors.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

I am thoroughly enjoying the experience. More importantly, I'm enjoying the ideas that emerge from people and their various disciplines. They say in order to formulate new ideas, you require people from various disciplines. This concept is evident in the ideas I've seen thus far.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

Network and work on new ideas with the hope of starting something of my own. People who start businesses do not need MBAs to do so. However, I would like to meet new and different people while moving forward.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I am learning to think differently and look at things from every angle.

Which new ideas excite you?

The initiation of digital solutions and developments in developed as well as emerging economies.



Tanya Prins

Nationality: South African

Industry: Business, Finance, Design, and Construction

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I have a very technical background in accounting and I needed to add other business skills to my training.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's passion for meaningful change within an international context.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

This is the best thing I could have chosen to do - ever. I don't want to miss anything that goes on around me on this programme.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to equip myself with the necessary skills and tools to make the difference I feel I need to. I want to become and remain as relevant as possible, both academically and on a personal level. I'm considering approaching investments and private equity in a completely new way. And to satisfy my creative side, I'm also opening a manufacturing plant for designer furniture. Here, I'm also looking at new and innovative ways of applying labour.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I realised early on that the MBA programme is what one makes of it. Merely passing the degree is not my goal, I want to make sure that I get as much out of every aspect of the programme as I possibly can. In this, I am thoroughly enjoying myself. I believe that if you want to change the world, you will need to know exactly where and what the world is at a given point in time.

Which new ideas excite you?

The multidisciplinary opportunities and the diversity of thinking that's coming to the forefront. Also the notions of the Competence Revolution and the emphasis on transferable and agile skillsets across sectors.



Danielle Reimers

Nationality: South African

Industry: Construction

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I wanted to develop new skills and grow my knowledge base to further my career opportunities.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The GSB is internationally accredited and globally recognized, because of its rankings. I am a UCT alumna, so it made sense to return to Africa's top university.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been incredible. There are no other words to describe it.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

Coming from a technical background, I hope to gain insight into business and administrative principles to create my new framework for personal and professional growth.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I hope to become more agile and adaptable for the future workplace.

Which new ideas excite you?

I'm currently researching augmented and virtual reality for an assignment, and I am really excited by the possibilities for its future use.



Zed Retief

Nationality: South African

Industry: Hospitality, Agriculture

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

The course content, the GSB MBA's reputation, and the modular structure of the programme.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

My experience has been very positive so far. Although the intensity of the course can be challenging, I've found learning from my peers hugely energising.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

To develop a deeper knowledge and versatile set of problem-solving and management skills.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By trying to be perceptive to what this 'new world' entails and, in turn, being adaptive and open to change.

Which new ideas excite you?

I don't know that there are new ideas, only new configurations of old ideas.



Dean Rimmer

Nationality: South African

Industry: Sports and Product Design, and Manufacturing

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

As a psychology graduate, I wanted to broaden my understanding of business as a whole and to fill in theoretical gaps in my business knowledge.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

I enjoyed my previous degree at UCT and the UCT GSB is highly recommended by many.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Excellent. I've enjoyed the experience and I'm already finding the material applicable and relevant to my work.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to add value to my current organization in a much broader and deeper sense, and gain a better understanding of the opportunities out there.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I'm an open-minded individual and I want to adapt to the everchanging world around me. I want to see and act on opportunities that will change the world for the better.

Which new ideas excite you?

There is always a way to improve. There are no problems that are insurmountable, if your engineering is good enough. The ideas that excite me most haven't even hit me yet.



Doug Rix

Nationality: South African & United Kingdom

Industry: Financial Services

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I want to consider life more broadly and become exposed to other ideas and people from other industries. For continuous personal and professional development...never stop learning!

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's reputation. I'm also an alumnus.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been great – particularly the networking and exposure to other industries.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

Broaden my involvement in businesses both within my existing industry and possibly within others as well.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I'm engaging with topics that aren't in my comfort zone and getting as involved in the discussion as possible. I'm ensuring that I don't only work to my strengths. Spending more time organising teams to solve problems I can't solve myself or by myself.

Which new ideas excite you?

The way technology and social dynamics are changing - the famous "Fourth Industrial Revolution" – it's affecting so many aspects of life in exciting ways.



Evan Schiff

Nationality: South African

Industry: Public Relations and Communications,
Events Management (B2B and B2C), and Sponsorship Sales

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I have been wanting to do it for years. Finally, the time came and I just had to do something to move myself and my career forward.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The UCT GSB's reputation. I have always wanted a UCT degree.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Some aspects of the programme are enlightening and others question all your assumptions. It also teaches you to grind through the less interesting bits, but it's a truly interesting and engaging experience overall.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I'd like to open up new career opportunities.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By connecting my new learnings with a whole new career path.

Which new ideas excite you?

The behavioural science approach to consumer behaviour.



Nhlakanipho Shange

Nationality: South African

Industry: Marketing and Outdoor Advertising

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

The potential to grow through learning and expanding my professional network. Also, the need to grow my business.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's international reputation in excellence.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been challenging and exciting - a great learning experience.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to be able to grow my business sustainably, and expand my professional network and prospects, both in business and academia.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I am committed to lifelong learning.

Which new ideas excite you?

Technological innovations, specifically AI and big data.



William Simpson

Nationality: South African

Industry: Construction and Manufacturing

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I want to become a well-rounded business manager. I would like to apply what I learn to our family business going forward.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The university's prestige and world-class facilities.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Great, I'm really enjoying the material and the courses so far.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to become a smarter and more rounded businessman.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By understanding that the world is constantly changing and that I cannot become complacent in any aspects of learning.

Which new ideas excite you?

The programme so far has already made me look at business in a completely different way.



Reyna Singh

Nationality: South African

Industry: Cement, Fuel, and the Environment

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I want to compliment my technical and project knowledge with business acumen.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's prestigious triple-crown accreditation.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

I've certainly grown my professional network and improved my knowledge in finance and marketing. I also now have a better understanding of my own strengths and weaknesses.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to be able to drive impact on a larger scale.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By growing my professional network and learning to think with a very open mind.

Which new ideas excite you?

The positive impact of mindful, mature leadership and strategic thinking.



Ash Sookun

Nationality: South African

Industry: Engineering, and Management Consulting (Strategy and the Power Sector)

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

An MBA will compliment my engineering degree and technical background. This will further assist in my career progression, as well as assist me in building a strong professional network.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The students and the curriculum are very diverse and the GSB is the best business school in Africa. The school's focus on doing business within an emerging market and African context was another key factor in my decision.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been an amazing experience in a truly diverse classroom, with a group of remarkable minds with backgrounds in many different sectors.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I would like to compliment my technical background with key business skills that will help me make a bigger difference in my career and in society as a whole. I would also like to progress my career and use this experience and skillset to grow businesses in Africa - by bringing global thinking and business solutions to Africa.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I am building a strong professional network and understanding how to help solve or meet challenges in South Africa and the rest of Africa.

Which new ideas excite you?

Operations management and Lean thinking are amazing. Both methodologies offer a refreshing way to look at processes that one would have thought had already been tried, tested, and optimised to their fullest extent.



Dinko Svetic

Nationality: Croatian

Industry: Telecommunications and Fintech

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I have been wanting to do an MBA since 2011, but I'm doing it now to gain a competitive edge and cement my position as a foreigner in Africa. Having an MBA and the networks that develop through an MBA would help me stay in Africa.

This would also allow me to position myself as a professional that is worth keeping in Africa. With 5 years of experience across 4 markets in East and Southern Africa, having an MBA from an African university can only strengthen my experience and skills.



What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

My fiancé made me aware of UCT and its influence in Africa. After researching the Graduate School of Business and making sure the institution aligns with my personal and professional goals, it seemed like a perfect match.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

The most valuable experience I had from the MBA thus far was learning how to understand financial reports and identify possible organisational challenges by just looking at their numbers.

Also, if I didn't have the Corporate Finance course, I would not be able to perform at my current job. The people in my class made me realize that I am far from the smartest person in the room and being part of such a group of people is humbling and exciting.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to upskill myself to a level where being a foreigner will no longer pose a challenge in finding and being hired in mid and senior positions in any market or corporate in Africa. I want my experience, knowledge, and qualifications to overshadow any of my other attributes.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

I want to know a little bit about everything, have a wide skillset, but specialise in telecommunications and modern financial services.

Which new ideas excite you?

Alternative credit scoring and behavioural data, and using that data to understand people and how technology fits in people's lives. I am excited about a world where students' efforts and results are used for credit-scoring and micro-student loan disbursements.

Merike Swanepoel

Nationality: South African

Industry: Architecture, Branding and Advertising, and Hospitality.

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

We are at a tipping point in the South African architectural industry: the current business model is no longer sustainable. The industry has fallen behind in terms of large-scale technological advancement and progressive business models. I feel like now, more than ever, we need leaders in this sector that can embrace business, innovation and leadership with a fresh outlook.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's expertise in leadership development, especially female leadership development. The other factor was the UCT GSB's focus on African economies and creating sustainable solutions for our local society, while having the international accreditation to match that approach.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

Fantastic! I'm learning so much about myself, the world around me and the wonderful people in the class with me.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to expand my skillset in business development and focus on innovation and female leadership in the property, retail and construction sectors. These industries are playing catch-up to the rest of the world with slow transformation in terms of technological adaptation and gender equality. I see opportunities in transforming not only the industry, but its ability to uplift society as a whole.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

All we hear about is the speed of change. For me, it's important to keep on learning, investigating and researching. This also involves equipping myself with technological and personal skills to be able to lead in our ever-demanding world.

Which new ideas excite you?

There are so many things! Particularly AI and Machine learning and how we can continue to use data in new and innovative ways to create value for new and existing consumers. Leadership development and sustainability across industries also intrigue me.



Anwar Vahed

Nationality: South African

Industry: Defence and Transportation

-

Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I felt that it would help me in promotional considerations and in my career going forward.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The school's prestigious pedigree and its location.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to formal my business skills, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

With the skills I'm learning on the MBA programme, of course.



Rudi Van Wyk

Nationality: South African

Industry: Government, Civil Engineering, and Water Resource Management

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I'm excited for what is still to happen in South Africa as an emerging economy, and I want to equip myself to be ready for the next big opportunity.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The diversity on campus, the course content and the school's international rankings.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been really stimulating and enriching.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

I want to equip myself to make a successful career change.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By continuously improving myself and adapting to an everchanging world.

Which new ideas excite you?

Impact investing. Also, technology that improves the lives of the less fortunate and new ways of farming more efficiently.



Euston Witbooi

Nationality: South African

Industry: Mining

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Why are you doing your MBA now and what lead to this decision?

I needed a new challenge and to get out of my comfort zone completely. I believe that this is an integral step towards self-actualisation and on my personal development journey.

What attracted you to the UCT Graduate School of Business?

The high academic standard which is complemented by the social and networking opportunities.

What has your experience of the GSB MBA been like thus far?

It's been amazing. I've learnt quite a bit about myself and I already have better time management skills. I'm continuously learning how to thrive within a team environment.

The values-based leadership course specifically has been a highlight for me. The course provided a platform for reflection and learning about the type of individual I would like to become.

What do you want to achieve with an MBA?

By the end of the MBA, I would like to be a well-rounded individual with a sound management ability and inspiring leadership traits.

How are you equipping yourself for a new world?

By gaining an in-depth understanding of the importance and nuances of leadership styles, specifically those that manage to build trust and allows people to be creative.

Which new ideas excite you?

The notion that values-based leadership could be integral to survival throughout the Fourth Industrial Revolution.



[MBA]

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