



Smurfit Executive Development

UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School

# PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS FINANCE



EXECUTIVE  
EDUCATION  
2025 RANKING



IN IRELAND  
FOR OPEN ENROLMENT



GLOBALLY  
FOR OPEN ENROLMENT



GLOBALLY  
FOR CUSTOM PROGRAMMES

## PROGRAMME DETAILS

### Structure

This programme is delivered over a series of 6 two-day workshops within a 10-month period. The structure has been designed to minimise interference with busy work schedules. 100% attendance is required.

### Assessments and Workload

Participants are assessed on a module by module basis through a variety of practical assignments. The emphasis throughout the programme is on the practical application of knowledge to benefit the participant, their team and their organisation.

### Accreditation

On successful completion of the programme, participants will be awarded the Professional Diploma in Business Finance by UCD Smurfit Executive Development (30 credits at NFQ Level 9). This diploma forms part of the MSc in Business (Leadership and Management Practice) Pathway (see back page for more details).

### Module 1

#### Understanding Financial Statements

- Understand the essential components and relationships among the key financial statements;
- Examine the income statement, balance sheet and statement of cash flows;
- Analyse accounting policies; distinguishing operating and non-operating items;
- Evaluate basic financial statements; basic profitability analysis and ROIC trees.

### Module 2

#### The Financing Landscape

- Develop a more sophisticated understanding of financial markets; the time value of money;
- Understand sources of finance including equity, debt, leasing, private equity; CAPM and the cost of capital.

### Module 3

#### Performance Management

- Investigate cost drivers; cost allocation methods; make-or-buy decisions;
- Understand flexible budgeting and profitability analysis.

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The economic uncertainties of today's world make it imperative for non-financial managers to have a firm grasp of the financial consequences of business decisions. With volatility in financial markets and margins narrowing from highly competitive trading conditions, mid to senior level executives need to be aware of how investment and funding decisions can affect the value of an organisation.

Designed to equip participants with the necessary tools and knowledge to understand the financial consequences of business decisions, this diploma will enable non-financial managers to communicate effectively with those in senior accounting and finance positions ensuring that all of the organisation's functions are better integrated, significantly boosting the firm's overall value.

This diploma will provide participants with a new ability to integrate a financial approach into their business decision-making. In doing so, they will contribute to ensuring a sound financial basis for implementing all of their organisation's strategic plans and decisions.

## Who is it for?

- Mid-to-senior level executives outside the finance function looking to enhance their contribution to senior management decisions;
- Mid-to-senior level executives who need to know how to interpret financial information to get to the reality behind the numbers;
- Owner-managers who want to enhance their financial acumen;
- High-potential executives who want to accelerate their understanding of the critical role that financial information and issues play in the development of the firm.

## Key Benefits

Upon completion of this programme, participants will have a deeper understanding of how to interpret and use financial reports to make better business decisions and obtain a broader understanding of corporate finance to better assess the value of strategic decisions, including investment projects and acquisitions.

Specifically, the programme will help participants:

- Understand how economic outcomes of business decisions are reflected in an organisation's financial reports;
- Communicate more effectively with their CFO and financial executives in their organisation;
- Understand business valuation techniques;
- Sharpen skills in assessing the strengths and weaknesses of competitors by analysing their financial statements;
- Improve ability to use financial information in managerial decision making;

## FACULTY

Our dedicated team of faculty are widely recognised as skilled educators, ground-breaking researchers and accomplished authors. Through publishing, consulting and teaching they leverage their business expertise and field-based research to deliver programmes, encourage participants to develop new ways of thinking, widen their perspectives and to understand their own challenges and capabilities. The faculty present topics in a range of engaging methods such as 'action learning' projects, case studies, role plays, individual assessment and one on-one coaching, so as to deliver a unique and lasting learning experience.

- Assess the desirability and value of investment projects, corporate assets, and whole companies (acquisitions);
- Understand the impact of operating decisions on financial performance.

## Smurfit Executive Development

As part of Ireland's leading business school, Smurfit Executive Development programmes are designed to provide the business leaders of today and tomorrow with a transformational experience. We are one of an elite group of schools worldwide to hold triple accreditation from AACSB (US), EQUIS (Europe) and AMBA (UK) and are the only Irish member of the leading international business school alliances CEMS, GNAM and PIM. UCD Smurfit Executive Development is a member of UNICON, an invitation-only alliance of the world's leading university[1]based executive education providers. UCD Smurfit Executive Development has been ranked 1st in Ireland, top 25 in the EU and 46th in the world for its Open Enrolment programmes according to the prestigious 2024 Financial Times Executive Education Rankings. By offering a world-class range of customised, diploma and open enrolment programmes, Smurfit Executive Development helps executives and their organisations create new opportunities to drive growth and create value.

### Module 4

#### Key Financial Decisions

- Understand how firms create value through better working capital management;
- Evaluate investment projects, marketing, and R&D expenditures;
- Estimate project cash flows;
- Determine the value created by investment decisions.

### Module 5

#### International Financing

- Understand the meaning of international financial markets for corporate decision-making in a globalised world;
- Understand the economic intuition behind changes in exchange rates through the interplay of interest rates, inflation levels and exchange rates;
- Ability to discuss the conceptual and managerial analysis of economic exchange exposure.

### Module 6

#### Mergers & Acquisitions

- Evaluate mergers and acquisitions ('M&A'), including the valuation of target companies and synergies, and the structuring of consideration
- Understand 'agency problems' and their management through effective corporate governance, performance related pay and other arrangements
- Appreciate the typical responsibilities and challenges facing finance functions

# APPLICATION INFORMATION

## Entry Requirements

Participants should hold a primary degree or equivalent professional qualification. Consideration will be given to applicants who do not hold a primary degree but their depth of industry and organisational experience qualifies them as suitable participants.

## Fees

The fee of €8,890 or €8,445 (UCD Business Alumni Discount) is a comprehensive cost that includes tuition, all course related materials, lunches and refreshments while on campus. There are no additional overheads. We offer staged payments and there is no interest charged for choosing this option. Tax relief is also available on fees. For details visit [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie)

## Application Procedure

A completed application form, digital photograph and copy of transcripts for all university-level degrees (if applicable and excluding those taken at UCD) are required. A telephone or personal interview with the Programme Director may form part of the admission process to help determine whether the programme is the most appropriate solution for the applicant.

## How to Apply

To apply for this programme, please contact a member of our team on +353 1 716 8889, email [exec.dev@ucd.ie](mailto:exec.dev@ucd.ie) or visit [www.smurfitschool.ie/executivedevelopment](http://www.smurfitschool.ie/executivedevelopment)

*"This diploma is the perfect programme for senior managers who do not come from a financial background but make key financial decisions every day. The programme enables participants to develop a good understanding of key financial metrics which in turn leads to assured decision making. Overall the diploma significantly increased my financial awareness and confidence in leading new business opportunities."*

Deborah Meghen, Director of Stewardship, Risk & Advocacy at Coillte

## Pathway to the MSc in Business

### (Leadership & Management Practice)

The Diploma in Business Finance forms part of the MSc in Business (Leadership & Management Practice) Pathway. The Pathway framework is comprised of twelve diploma programmes. If participants successfully complete three of these eleven diplomas within a 5-year timeframe, they are awarded with the MSc in Business (Leadership and Management Practice).

The eleven diploma options available in the Masters pathway are as follows:

1. Professional Diploma in Business and Executive Coaching
2. Professional Diploma in Strategy Development and Innovation
3. Professional Diploma in Corporate Governance
4. Professional Diploma in High Performance Sales and Business Development
5. Professional Diploma in Leadership Development
6. Professional Diploma in Organisational Change and Transformation
7. Professional Diploma in Management Excellence
8. Professional Diploma in Digital Innovation and Transformation
9. Professional Diploma in Artificial Intelligence and Business Analytics
10. Professional Diploma in Business Finance
11. Professional Diploma in Aviation Finance

*"I found the Diploma in Business Finance delivered the tools which enabled me to make more informed financial decisions and to more positively engage in the financial success of my organisation. It was a very enjoyable learning experience, delivered with enthusiasm by a range of industry experts, allowing for very rich exchanges of ideas and experiences with fellow executives. The environment was both a positive and stimulating one."*

Owen Moore, Director Formulation & Supply Chain at Astellas Ireland Kerry Plant

FT

EXECUTIVE  
EDUCATION  
2025 RANKING

### Smurfit Executive Development

UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School  
Carysfort Avenue, Blackrock, Co. Dublin.

[www.smurfitschool.ie/executivedevelopment](http://www.smurfitschool.ie/executivedevelopment)

Tel: +353 1 716 8889

Email: [exec.dev@ucd.ie](mailto:exec.dev@ucd.ie)

Please note that University College Dublin's terms and conditions apply to all offers of places of study at Smurfit Executive Development. Copies are available on request. Every effort has been made to ensure the information in this publication is correct. However, details may be subject to change by the University without notice.