



Smurfit Executive Development

UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School

PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA IN **STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION**



FT EXECUTIVE
EDUCATION
2025 RANKING

1

IN IRELAND
FOR OPEN ENROLMENT

47

GLOBALLY
FOR OPEN ENROLMENT

56

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 Strategy Development and Innovation by UCD Smurfit Executive Development (30 ECTS at NFQ Level 9). This diploma forms part of the MSc in Business (Leadership and Management Practice) Pathway (see back page for more details).

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Central to the long-term success of any organisation, strategy defines direction and creates scope to gain competitive advantage. It is what elevates truly extraordinary leaders above merely ordinary ones by enabling them to develop and implement effective business strategies while maintaining motivation, innovation and vision in their people. Knowledge gained, skills learned and relationships made on the programme will enhance career potential and directly benefit the organisations that participants work with, both now and in the future.

The programme provides participants with the insight and understanding needed to lead organisations in a complex global business environment. The focus on Strategy Development and Innovation provides the knowledge and skills required to reach the highest level, whether that is in a commercial or public sector context. It offers business managers and directors with a versatile, strategic toolkit to bring coherence and direction to the actions and decisions of the organisation.

Module 1

Strategic Leadership

- Address the role of the participant in strategy development and innovation;
- Develop a personal action plan that draws on foundational skills and cross-functional knowledge to create a strategy statement;
- Gain an understanding of organisation culture and sub-cultures;
- Develop self-awareness and critical assessment of key strengths and development needs as strategic leaders.

Module 2

Strategy in a Turbulent Environment – The New Normal

- Review ways in which global economic shifts and rapid technological changes are transforming the business landscape;
- Understand the traditional concepts of competitive advantage, value creation and strategy;
- Develop an appreciation of the “mega-trends” influencing the context for strategy over the next 5-10 years;
- Develop an ability to construct and employ scenario thinking in the development of strategy;
- Gain an informed perspective on the importance and costs of building strategic flexibility in the organisation.

Module 3

Market Position and Strategic Competitive Advantage

- Equip participants with a sound understanding of the principles of positioning and competitive advantage;
- Design and evaluate an organisation's market position;
- Review and critique an organisation's competitive strategy and evaluate the ability to provide a sustainable advantage;
- Develop competitive strategy into a well-articulated and presented business plan.

Who is it for?

- Individuals with at least 5 years managerial experience, seeking to enhance their skills in strategy;
- Senior executives seeking to enhance their skills in contributing to strategy development and innovation;
- Managers involved in strategic planning, implementation or change management;
- Individual contributors who are tasked with managing the strategy process;
- Advisors and Management Consultants.

Key Benefits

Participants develop their capabilities in making and executing effective strategic decisions and acquire deep insight into how to manage innovation and lead change.

Specifically, the programme will:

- Equip the participant with the tools to assess and address the strategic challenges that face their organisation;
- Provide learning strategies for turning resistance into co-operation and for extracting maximum benefit from new opportunities;
- Improve strategic decision-making capability in addition to the ability to re-think strategy in the light of new economic and business realities;
- Build an in-depth understanding of the strategic decisions that individuals need to make, to support and apply innovation.

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.

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

Business Model Innovation

- Examine the nature of strategic decisions and how these differentiate from other forms of decisions;
- Design and evaluate a business model;
- Utilise real option reasoning in evaluating investment alternatives, which is a key component in decisions involving the adoption of new technologies, amongst other applications.

Module 5

Leading Innovation and Change

- Develop insight and personal competence in leading an organisation through a transition to a more innovative organisation;
- Explore why innovation is so critical in an organisation's future and how to make it happen;
- Understand change management processes and approaches to enable innovation in an evolving marketplace;
- Strengthen leadership effectiveness and identify the barriers to and enablers of innovation in an organisation.

Module 6

Top Management Teams and Strategic Decision Making

- Explore the skills required to evaluate the top management team's ability and competence in making and implementing strategic decisions;
- Acquire individual contributions to top management team decisions;
- Gain insight into biases that adversely affect strategic decisions and apply techniques to overcome these biases.

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

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 or visit www.smurfitschool.ie/executivedevelopment

Pathway to the MSc in Business

(Leadership & Management Practice)

The Diploma in Strategy Development and Innovation 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

The Diploma in Strategy Development and Innovation delivered the tools to make more informed strategic decisions for my organisation. The syllabus enhanced my theoretical understanding of strategic models and empowered me to implement industry best practice in my role.

Wayne Gibbons, Chief Financial Officer
Western Europe, MetLife

I would highly recommend this diploma. From the minute I commenced the course I felt it had a really positive impact on my strategic thinking. Learning through case studies was really beneficial. I developed a real world understanding of the theoretical aspects of strategy development which enabled me to apply learnings to my own current role. The teaching style was really interactive and provides a great opportunity to expand your professional network through interaction with class peers.

Alicia O'Connor, Head of Agency Sales Transformation,
Volkswagen Group Ireland

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