



UK

SYLLABUS 2025-2026

Strategy

MODULE SPECIFICATION

Module Code	2526_STG_1_EN_018
Campus	Oxford
Department(s)	Strategy and Entrepreneurship
Level / Semester	Undergraduate Year 3 (U3); Equivalent to FHEQ level 6 Semester 06
Language of Instruction	English
Teaching Method	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person (face-to-face) <input type="checkbox"/> Distance learning (live online) <input type="checkbox"/> e-Learning (asynchronous) <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid: _____
Pre-requisite(s)?	None
ECTS <i>Reminder: 1 ECTS = between 20 and 30hr- student workload</i>	4
Equivalent FHEQ credits	8
Study Hours	80 hours which comprise of 30 directed learning and 50 independent learning/assessment hours

MODULE DESCRIPTION

Module Aims	This module develops students' ability to apply strategic management frameworks to complex business challenges. Students evaluate environments at corporate, business, and functional levels to assess risks and opportunities. Tools for strategic analysis are used to guide decision-making and formulate sustainable competitive strategies.
Teaching Arrangement	The module materials are sent by the faculty member to the students

	in advance. Students take note of these materials before arriving in class. The sessions are punctuated by 30 min presenting theoretical concepts, explanations and clarifications of theoretical elements; 1hr10 of group work; and 50 min of group restitutions and teacher debriefs. Group work can relate to a real or fictitious case, an article, a video, reports, etc.
Learning Outcomes	By the end of this module, students should be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate strategic management concepts and frameworks, applying them to complex organisational challenges. 2. Analyse strategic situations at different levels (corporate, business, and functional) to assess opportunities and risks. 3. Select and apply appropriate strategic analysis tools to conduct a comprehensive strategic diagnosis. 4. Develop strategic decision-making skills, demonstrating the ability to navigate complex and uncertain business environments.
Competency Goals <i>(Knowledge, expertise and interpersonal skills)</i>	PGE_U_CG03 - Develop and implement the marketing and sales strategy
	PGE_U_CG05 - Innovate to adapt to its environment
Alignment with Programme Learning Goals	PGE_U_CG03_LO02 - Develop a business strategy and implement marketing plan
	PGE_U_CG05_LO02 - Create and maintain a culture of innovation

SESSION TOPICS / MODULE SCHEDULE

(Please note, a session/sequence may be more than one scheduled class)

<p><u>Session 1: Introduction</u></p> <p>Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is strategy? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategy definitions ○ The three levels of strategy ○ Vocabulary of strategy ○ Context of strategy in the 21st century (digitalisation and sustainability issues) • The Strategic Management framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategic analysis ○ Strategic choices ○ Strategic deployment ○ Strategy in different contexts <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whittington, R., Angwin, D., Regnér, P., Johnson, G. and Scholes, K. (2024) <i>Exploring strategy: Texts and cases</i>. 13th edn. Pearson. (Chapters 1-3)

Last reviewed: 25/07/2025

Assignments:

- Case study

Session 2: External Component of the Strategic Diagnosis

Content:

- The macro-environment – the PESTEL model:
 - Highlight key external forces (e.g. social and cultural shifts, ecological changes – global warming & Anthropocene era, increasing scarcity of natural resources)
 - Discuss current state of the world (focus on global trends and environmental/social/economic challenges)
 - Limits of the productivist and consumerist model?
- Industry – the 5+1 competitive forces model:
 - Levels of analysis of the 5(+1) forces model
 - Customers and distributors
 - The suppliers
 - Substitute products
 - Potential entrants
 - The competitors
 - The State
- Need to broaden spectrum of forces affecting an industry
 - Suggest new bargaining power of the Civil Society that may impact the social norms of conducting business
- Stakeholders and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy:
 - Between external diagnosis and internal diagnosis, can add section on stakeholders and organisation's CSR policy
 - In particular, two interesting methods would be: 1. ecosystem mapping (mapping of stakeholders, both internal and external to the organisation, within and outside the economic sector), 2. materiality matrix (co-construction of the organisation's CSR policy with stakeholders)
 - To go even further: what are the methods for integrating stakeholders into the organisation's governance?
 - (During session) Students can be made to think about the creation of/critique the organisation's "raison d'être" – notably by using the UN's SDGs
- The competitors and the steps:
 - Strategic groups
 - The life cycle model
 - Competition cycles

References:

- Whittington, R., Angwin, D., Regnér, P., Johnson, G. and Scholes, K. (2024) *Exploring strategy: Texts and cases*. 13th edn. Pearson.

Assignments:

- Case study

Session 3: Internal Diagnosis

Content:

- The foundations of strategic capability – analysis of resources, competences, and skills:
 - Threshold and distinctive capabilities

- Dynamic capabilities
- The VRIN(O) of strategic capabilities
- Value chain analysis
- Construction of SWOT analysis
- Outsourcing/internalisation strategies

References:

- Whittington, R., Angwin, D., Regnér, P., Johnson, G. and Scholes, K. (2024) *Exploring strategy: Texts and cases*. 13th edn. Pearson.

Assignments:

- Case study

Session 4: Generic Strategies

Content:

- Strategic segmentation
- Generic strategies:
 - Volume strategy/operational excellence
 - Differentiation strategies/product leadership
 - Focusing strategies/customer intimacy
 - “Stuck in the middle”?
- The strategic clock

References:

- Whittington, R., Angwin, D., Regnér, P., Johnson, G. and Scholes, K. (2024) *Exploring strategy: Texts and cases*. 13th edn. Pearson.

Assignments:

- Case study

Session 5: The Blue Ocean Approach

Content:

- Red Ocean vs. Blue Ocean strategy
- Characteristics of a “good strategy” (according to Blue Ocean approach)
- Value innovation (cost/value)
- Combining the benefits (cost/value) for the client – the 4 actions grid
- Building the value proposition – the 4 actions grid
- Strategic framework
- Methodology for developing an outline
- An approach by the Business Model (BM):
 - Definition and components of the GBO
 - Articulation of the value proposition
 - The business model canvas
 - Resources and skills
 - Supply system/value network
 - Financial structure (cost structure and revenue model)

References:

- Kim, W.C. and Maubourgne, R.A. (2014) *Blue Ocean Strategy: How to create uncontested market space and make the competition irrelevant*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press.
- Laïfi, A. and Josserand, E. (2016) ‘Legitimation in practice: A new digital publishing business

model', *Journal of Business Research*, 69(7), pp. 2343–2352.
doi:10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.10.003.

Assignments:

- Case study

Session 6: Innovation Strategies

Content:

- The dilemmas of innovation:
 - Technology-driven or market-driven innovation?
 - Product innovation, process innovation, or innovation of use?
 - Business model innovations
 - Secret innovation or open innovation?
 - Technological innovation or business model innovation?
 - Innovators and followers
 - First mover advantages
 - First entrant or second winner?

References:

- Whittington, R., Angwin, D., Regnér, P., Johnson, G. and Scholes, K. (2024) *Exploring strategy: Texts and cases*. 13th edn. Pearson.

Assignments:

- Case study

Session 7: International Strategies

Content:

- Internationalisation factors:
 - Market factors
 - Cost factors
 - Regulatory factors
 - Competitive factors
- Internationalisation and sources of geographic advantage:
 - Location advantage
 - International channels
- Relocation/development of local ecosystems/deployment of relocations nationally and internationally
- Choice of steps and entry procedures:
 - Exporting
 - Licensing and franchising
 - Joint venture
 - Subsidiary

References:

- Whittington, R., Angwin, D., Regnér, P., Johnson, G. and Scholes, K. (2024) *Exploring strategy: Texts and cases*. 13th edn. Pearson.

Assignments:

- Case study

Session 8: Strategic Development Paths – Diversification and Refocusing

Content:

- Diversification:
 - Different levels of segmentation
 - Integrated firm and diversified product
 - The two diversification orientations:
 - 1. Linked diversification (principles and objectives, pivots, limits)
 - 2. Conglomerate diversification (principles and objectives, limits)
 - Diversification strategies through vertical/horizontal/circular integration
 - Think not in terms of upstream/downstream strategies of linear economy sector, but in terms of circular ecosystems and diversification strategies toward the circular
- Refocusing:
 - Motivations for refocusing
 - The conditions
 - Types and forms of refocusing

References:

- Whittington, R., Angwin, D., Regnér, P., Johnson, G. and Scholes, K. (2024) *Exploring strategy: Texts and cases*. 13th edn. Pearson.

Assignments:

- Case study

Session 9: Mergers and Acquisitions, Alliances and Partnerships

Content:

- Internal vs. external growth
- Mergers and acquisitions:
 - Motivations for mergers and acquisitions:
 - Strategic motivations
 - Financial incentives
 - Managerial motivations
 - The merger and acquisition process:
 - Target selection
 - Evaluation of the target
 - Integration of the target
 - Due diligence process
- Alliances and partnerships:
 - Nature of collaboration (alliances vs. partnerships)
 - Forms of collaboration:
 - Joint ventures
 - Consortia
 - Franchise
 - Licensing agreements
 - Subcontracting
 - Choice of development modality – buy, cooperate, or do it yourself?:
 - Emergency
 - Uncertainty
 - Type of capabilities
 - Autonomy of capacities

References:

- Whittington, R., Angwin, D., Regnér, P., Johnson, G. and Scholes, K. (2024) *Exploring strategy: Texts and cases*. 13th edn. Pearson.

Assignments:

- Work on collaboration between companies and organisations/associations for recycling, reduction of waste volumes, etc.

Session 10: Review/Preparatory Session for the Exam

Content:

- Review and prepare for the exam

KEY TEXTS

1. Whittington, R., Angwin, D., Regnér, P., Johnson, G. and Scholes, K. (2024) *Exploring strategy: Texts and cases*. 13th edn. Pearson.

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS

1. Kim, W.C. and Maubourgne, R.A. (2014) *Blue Ocean Strategy: How to create uncontested market space and make the competition irrelevant*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press.
2. Ahworegba, A.H., Omoloba, J.O. and Estay, C. (2020) 'How firms risk through entrepreneurial innovations: Behavioural patterns and implications', *The International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 21(4), pp. 223–236. doi:10.1177/1465750320903621.

MODES OF ASSESSMENT

Continuous Assessment (40%)	Case study	20%
	Written exam	20%
Final Exam (60%)	Case study	

MODULE DESIGN TEAM

- Author: *Amira Laifi*
- Reviewer: *Syed Muhammad*
- External Reviewer: *John Mariampillai*