

**The London Institute
of Banking & Finance**

Strategic Management in Financial Services



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MODULE SPECIFICATION

1. Title	Strategic Management in Financial Services	
2. Start date	2016	
3. Level of module	Level 6 FHEQ	
4. Number of credits	30 Credits	ECTS Value
		15
5. Status	A core module within: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSc (Hons) in Banking Practice and Management (full- and part-time) 	
6. Recommended prior modules	N / A	
7. Programmes of study to which module contributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSc (Hons) in Banking Practice and Management (full- and part-time) 	
8. Campus / Partner	N / A	
9. Syllabus overview	<p>Strategic Management in Financial Services is the core Level 6 module. It is designed to build upon the Level 5 modules, <i>Financial Services: The Commercial Environment</i> and <i>Organisational Management in Financial Services</i>, from the Professional Diploma in Banking Practice and Management programme.</p> <p>The module's main focus is the strategic management of financial service organisations and the module will cover both strategic management concepts and skills with reference to case studies and empirical evidence. The module aims to give students an understanding of the nature of strategic management, by providing a comprehensive analysis of pertinent issues, both theoretical and practical, on the topic.</p> <p>Specifically it aims to build an appreciation of the relationship between the external and internal context of a financial service organisation and their combined impact on strategy development, choice, appraisal and evaluation.</p> <p>The module will not only broaden students' knowledge and understanding of the financial services industry but also further develop their intellectual and practical skills via the analysis and evaluation of the strategic management process.</p>	

10. Intended subject specific learning outcomes and, as appropriate, their relationship to programme learning outcomes

On completion of this module, students will be able to:

- a) analyse different strategic management concepts and explain their specific application to organisations within financial services;
- b) evaluate the main internal and external drivers for change;
- c) assess the corporate and business level strategies of different financial service organisations;
- d) evaluate strategic options and justify selection;
- e) implement, monitor and evaluate strategy;
- f) analyse the issues of control within diversified financial organisations; and
- g) evaluate contemporary issues that impact upon the strategic management process within financial services.

These intended module learning outcomes contribute to the following programme learning outcomes: A1, A2, A3 and A4.

11. Intended generic learning outcomes and, as appropriate, their relationship to programme learning outcomes

On completion of this module, students will be able to demonstrate achievement of the following generic learning outcomes:

1. Ability to apply cognitive skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation to the management of organisations and their external environment (B1 and C2).
2. Ability to apply qualitative skills in order to analyse problems, identify appropriate solutions and make decisions (B2).
3. Ability to develop and defend arguments / concepts through multiple perspectives (B4).
4. Ability to work with material across a range of subject areas and to recognise the links and interrelationships between them (B5).
5. Ability to conduct research into relevant issues (C1).
6. Ability to understand the process and causes of change within organisations (C3).
7. Ability to abstract meaning from information and communicate effectively in a manner appropriate to the context and audience using a range of media (D1 and D4).
8. Ability to plan and study independently and utilise resources effectively (D2 and D3).

These intended generic learning outcomes contribute to the generic programme learning outcomes set out in sections B–D of the programme specification.

12. Learning and teaching

A. Learning hours

For a module of study worth 30 credits, the total expected study hours are 300 (ie ten hours per credit). The contact hours will depend upon the student's mode of study.

B. Tuition support

Distance learning

Distance learning allows students to study independently within a clear framework, but at a pace that suits their personal circumstances and study needs. Over their course of study (24 weeks), students will be provided with comprehensive learning materials, study guides and will be assigned to a subject specialist academic tutor to support their studies. Distance learners will have regular contact with their The London Institute of Banking & Finance Academic Tutor and further practical support is available from The London Institute of Banking & Finance Student Services.

Flexible learning

Flexible learning allows distance learners to opt for three face-to-face workshops of approximately six hours each, evenly spread at appointed dates in each session (24 weeks).

Dispersed campuses

Dispersed campus students will have regular face-to-face sessions over each session of study. The timing will depend upon local timetabling arrangements (eg via evening classes).

Full-time students

Full-time students will study on a semester basis supported by their module lecturer. The weekly timetable will be advised at the start of the programme.

C. Learning materials and learning outcomes

The learning and teaching strategy is designed to ensure that the students achieve the learning outcomes by the end of the module. The learning and teaching methods include formal lecture and tutorial (full-time), online learning support from an appointed lecturer (distance / flexible learning), private study of text and other supporting materials, a formal assignment, informal exercises, (both individual and group-based), and pooling of experience and knowledge through class / forum and individual discussion. The assessment strategy is designed to achieve a balance between testing the student's skills of knowledge recall and understanding and those of research and application.

D. Reading

Students will be provided with one core text, as detailed below, but will also be expected to read and research the recommended reading on the course website. Lecturers may also recommend additional reading throughout the module.

Essential reading

- Angwin, D., Johnson, G., Regnér, P., Scholes, K. and Whittington, R. (2014) *Exploring strategy: Text and cases*. 10th edn. Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd.

Further reading

- Magretta, J. (2012) *Understanding Michael Porter: The Essential Guide to Competition and Strategy*. Boston: Harvard Review Press.
- O'Connor, A. (2005) *Trade, Investment and Competition in International Banking*, Palgrave Macmillan.

- Walker Report. *A review of corporate governance in UK banks and other financial industry entities: Final recommendations*, 26 November 2009.

Journals

- Business Strategy Review.
- Journal of Change Management.
- Strategic Management Journal.
- Journal of Business Strategy.
- Harvard Business Strategy.

Each student will have access to the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and to KnowledgeBank learning resources (an electronic library service). A list of further readings relating to the syllabus and summative assignment can be found on the VLE.

It should be noted that due to the rapidly changing environment that encapsulates the financial services sector, the reading list above is indicative only. It is subject to review and update at the discretion of the module team. An up-to-date reading list is published in the Student Study Guide issued at the commencement of the module.

13. Assessment

Component	Duration / Length	Weighting
Component 1 Summative assignment	4,000 words including quotations and in-text citations	30%
Component 2 Examination	3 hours (plus 15 minutes' preparation time)	70%

Component 1: Summative assignment

This component will contribute 30% of the overall assessment and will be based upon the submission of one assignment at the end of the course but prior to the examination. The focus of the assignment will be on exploring the relationships between issues and topics within the module syllabus (maximum 4,000 words including quotations and in-text citations). The pass mark for this component is 40%.

Component 2: Examination

This component will contribute 70% of the overall assessment. A variety of question styles and approaches may be included in the examination. Questions might require responses that involve both discursive and quantitative elements. Students will typically be required to explore and compare specific aspects of an issue or to apply their technical abilities and understanding to, for example, solve a problem or provide a recommendation.

The question paper will be structured as follows:

- **Section A** consists of one compulsory question worth 40 marks.
- **Section B** consists of four 30-mark questions, any two of which must be answered.

The pass mark for this component is 40%.

Time allowed: 3 hours (plus 15 minutes' preparation time).

A scientific calculator may be used but it must not be programmable, nor have a wireless-communications capability, nor be capable of storing textual information. It must also not require a mains electricity supply. Calculators with any further functions are not allowed in the examination room.

At regular intervals during the course of study, students will be expected to submit short formative assignments. These assignments will take the form of developmental learning activities towards the assessed assignment and unseen examination components and will be integrated within the study plan. They will provide students both with opportunities to reinforce their learning as they progress through the course of study and the opportunity to prepare for both the summative assignment and unseen examination.

Whilst these formative assignments will not contribute to the overall assessment, students are strongly advised to take the opportunity to complete them, as feedback will be provided from their lecturer on their progress through the course of study.

Students should be aware of the regulations governing the award of credit and the arrangements for compensation, condonement and the capping of marks. Students should also be aware of the regulations relating to the resitting of assessment components and / or the retaking of modules. This information is contained The London Institute of Banking & Finance's [General and Academic Regulations](#) for Students sections 7, 8 and 9.

Module Grading

A student's module performance grade is determined by their overall weighted average percentage score in accordance with the following:

3 rd	40% - 49%
2.2	50% - 59%
2.1	60% - 69%
1 st	70% - 100%

14. Syllabus

1. An Introduction to the Concept of Strategy

This course starts with an introduction of the strategic management process within a financial services context, including:

- An explanation of strategy.
- The role of strategy in an organisation.
- The strategic planning framework.
- The different levels of strategy within an organisation.

2. The External Environment

This section of the syllabus analyses the *external* drivers for strategic change and focuses specifically on those drivers that particularly relate to the financial services industry. Emphasis is placed on:

- Managing and planning strategically within the dynamic PESTEL environment.
- Analysing the inter-linkages between the drivers for change and the complexity that such inter-relationships produce for the strategy manager.
- Assessing the specific forces that shape competitiveness in a given industry by applying Porter's Five Forces model and the framework for Strategic Group Analysis.

3. The Internal Environment

This section of the syllabus examines the various ways of analysing the organisation's strategic capabilities. This section focuses specifically on:

- The competencies that relate to the financial services industry by virtue of its important role in the economy and its financial intermediation role.
- The specific capabilities for achieving and sustaining competitive advantage, the criteria for their evaluation and tools for diagnosing strategic capabilities (the value-chain and value network, activity maps and SWOT).

4. Corporate and Business Strategy

This section focuses on:

- Understanding corporate and international strategy.
- Explaining the concepts of 'corporate parenting' and 'portfolio management'.
- Evaluating generic strategies that financial service organisations can adopt in light of external and internal analyses.
- Analysing competitive strategies.
- Examining the bases of sustainable competitive advantage in the financial services industry.

5. Evaluating Strategic Options

This section of the syllabus evaluates the strategic options available to a financial service organisation. Particularly, it:

- Evaluates the directions in which strategy can develop.
- Examines the different methods of strategy development (organic development mergers and acquisitions and strategic alliances).
- Considers the evaluation criteria, eg the SFA framework (suitability, feasibility and acceptability).
- Considers the importance of strategic innovation in financial services organisations.

6. Implementation of Strategy

This section of the syllabus focuses on the implementation of strategy within a financial service organisation. It examines:

- The role and related issues of strategic leadership, strategic planning systems and patterns of strategy development (emergent, intended and realised strategies).
- The issues of organisational culture and politics.
- The impact of organisational structure.
- The linkage between strategic and operational management.
- The challenges of managing change and diversification.

7. Contemporary Strategic Management and Corporate Governance

This final section of the syllabus identifies and evaluates key areas that impact upon the discipline of strategic management, with particular reference to contemporary issues, corporate governance and ethics. It examines:

- Global issues to understand their relevance and possible impacts upon strategic decision-making within financial services organisations.
- Contemporary issues and evaluates their influence / importance on the evolving strategies of financial services organisations sector.

- The appropriate strategic management framework in which to analyse key issues and / or events.
- Corporate governance and business ethics to understand their relevance and possible impacts upon strategic decision-making within financial services organisations.
- The appropriate governance and ethical frameworks in which to analyse key issues and / or events.