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Note: The modules offered and their timing are conditional upon the availability of faculty and may be subject to change.

Strategic Management pathway (Stream B): Course outline

Strategic Management Stream B runs over a period of 4 to 5 years. It includes a foundation year when you will be registered as a masters student – either on the **MPhil in Innovation, Strategy and Organisation** (ISO) or on the **Master of Research** (MRes) – followed by 4 years as a PhD student.

The programme is designed to prepare you for an academic career in the department of a top business school. The PhD programme consists of 2 components:

- a coursework component comprising a suite of foundational and methodological courses, complemented by research seminars, which introduce you to exciting past and current streams of research in the field
- a research component which builds on the coursework and normally consists of 2 or 3 supervised research projects, connected by a common theme, which constitute the core of your PhD dissertation

Coursework

The coursework component comprises of a suite of foundational and methodological courses, complemented by research seminars, which introduce you to key debates and research streams in the field. The coursework component (normally 9 assessed required modules) will be completed during the masters degree and the PhD first year.

Typical coursework for a PhD pathway in Strategic Management is chosen from amongst the following modules:

CORE MODULES

- Organisations and Strategic Innovation
- IS, Innovation & Organisational Change
- Organisation Theory
- Qualitative Research Methods
- Statistical Concepts for Management Researchers OR Econometrics I
- Advanced qualitative research training (during the PhD)

ELECTIVE MODULES

- Seminar in Strategy Content (biennial)
- Seminar in Strategy Process (biennial)
- Organisational Research Methods Part 1 (biennial)
- Organisational Research Methods Part 2 (biennial)
- Econometrics I
- Sociology / Anthropology / Political Science / Economics courses (during the PhD)

Your individual coursework requirement may deviate from this list as we consider your prior training and research interests. We will determine a final list of coursework modules towards the end of your masters year.

A trademark of an academic career is continuous, lifelong learning. During your PhD, we will therefore expect you to further expand your field knowledge and methodological skillset by attending appropriate courses offered by the school or cognate departments at Cambridge such as Sociology, History and Philosophy of Science, Political Science, Social Anthropology, and by attending appropriate courses or workshops in other business schools.

Foundation year: research masters degree

During the Foundation Year, you are registered for a research masters degree, either the MPhil in Innovation, Strategy and Organisation (ISO) or the Master of Research (MRes).

During the MPhil year, you will take 6 modules of the required 9 PhD coursework modules and write a masters dissertation.

During the MRes year, you would take 5 modules of the required nine PhD coursework modules and write a masters dissertation.

The MPhil in Innovation, Strategy and Organisation is the standard route to a Strategic Management (Stream B) PhD. A small number of students may be admitted via the Master of Research.

Students who are registered for another MPhil at Cambridge, such as Sociology, can enter the Strategic Management PhD pathway Stream B by taking the MRes degree.

You will take the remaining PhD coursework modules during the subsequent first PhD year.

Pre-course reading

Students complete a pre-course review of statistics concepts. A reading list given 6 weeks before term starts. A one-hour test takes place in the first week of term, with the results determining which Econometrics module you take.

Masters dissertation

During your masters year, you will write a dissertation under the supervision of a faculty member. For the MPhil, the dissertation accounts for one third of the overall mark, and for the MRes the dissertation accounts for 50% of the overall mark.

PhD continuation requirements

We strongly encourage MPhil students to apply for continuation to our PhD programme. Availability of specific PhD Principal Supervisors will vary from year to year because each typically works with a maximum of 2 PhD students at any given time. The PhD programme aims to admit between 6 and 10 students (PhD and MRes) per year, depending on the strength of applications, among other factors.

If you wish to apply for continuation to the PhD at Cambridge Judge Business School, you will need to develop an initial research proposal during the first term of your MPhil year, talk to faculty about the fit of your research interests and then apply for admission to the PhD in January. Faculty will assist with the development of this proposal. Applications are assessed by the PhD Admissions committee in January on the basis of:

- quality of the research proposal and strength of references
- module performance during the first term
- performance in the admissions interview
- fit between the proposed research and the research expertise in the subject group, resulting in a recommended supervision arrangement from PhD pathway faculty
- ranking compared to other applicants, which includes prior academic performance

An admissions offer would be conditional on your overall performance in the MPhil or parts thereof. The usual condition is a mark of 70% overall (and 70% in any dissertation or project).

Due to the competitive nature of our programme, an offer of admission to the PhD is not guaranteed and we also encourage and support MPhil students in making applications to other leading PhD programmes.

If you are an MRes student, you will proceed to PhD registration without a further application process, if you achieve a mark of 70% in your dissertation and 70% overall average.

Summer (July–September)

As a continuing PhD students you will be strongly advised to discuss with your faculty supervisor how to continue your research during the summer prior to the start of the first year of the PhD, so that you don't lose valuable time towards completion of the PhD. Students may continue their work started on the masters dissertation or individual research project. We would like students to be in Cambridge during this period. If for some reason, this is not possible (eg for visa reasons etc.) they can be supervised remotely via Skype and email.

First year of the PhD

The first year of the PhD is probationary and consists of 2 assessed components:

Coursework

You will complete your coursework requirements for Stream B of Strategic Management, as communicated to you in the acceptance letter for PhD continuation. This will typically be 3 modules for continuing MPhil students (and 4 modules for continuing MRes students). These courses will mostly consist of electives in your base discipline of sociology, political science, anthropology, history and philosophy of science or organisations/strategy/information systems.

First year report

You will work with a faculty supervisor to produce a research report. The first year report can take one of 3 forms:

- a draft scientific paper addressing a specific research question, which can form the basis for a

first PhD paper

- an extended research proposal on the broader theme that you wish to address with your PhD research, including a thorough literature review, and a clear plan for the execution of a first research paper during the second PhD year
- a case study on a phenomenon that you wish to address with your PhD research, based on placement in a company during the summer between the masters and the first PhD years

The first year report must demonstrate your ability to formulate sharp research questions, summarise relevant academic debates, critically assess the extant literature, and choose appropriate research methods. You may (but do not have to) incorporate parts of your masters work into the first year report, such as module essays, individual research project, dissertation or a summer project (where applicable).

Second year continuation requirements

To proceed to the second year of the PhD, you must gain a mark of 70% for your first year report and must pass all required courses (60% pass mark).

While we will continue to monitor your progress closely after the first year of your PhD, there will not be any more formal continuation assessment until the final PhD assessment.

Second year of the PhD

During the second year, you will focus on the production of your first research paper. Many students do this by "learning on the job": they join a project proposed by a faculty member, or work in close collaboration with a faculty member who will normally be a co-author on the paper. You will present progress frequently through your PhD pathway and PhD lunchtime seminars. You are expected to submit this paper to a top conference in your field early on in this academic year for presentation by the end of this academic year.

Third year of the PhD

During the third year you will focus on completing your first paper for journal submission and begin working on your second paper. You may continue to work with your co-author, choose another co-author, or work on a paper individually. While your advisors will still play a significant role in shaping the idea for this paper, you are expected to take the lead in the execution of this second paper and be clearly the primary author on this paper. You are expected to submit this paper for presentation at a top conference during this year. In parallel with the development of this second paper, you will revise your first paper and will continue to present this paper at seminars and conferences.

We will encourage you to spend part of your third or fourth year as a visitor in another university to build closer ties with potential collaborators and the global management community.

Fourth year of the PhD

The fourth year is your job market year. You will present your paper or papers at the top US and European job market conferences and continue to revise and polish them. You will submit your PhD dissertation during your fourth year.

Optional further year of study (postdoc)

Good research requires you to take risks, to explore avenues and tackle issues that are new and original. Research may therefore not unfold as planned and your work may require substantial revision and adaptation along the way. In fact, many of the most influential research projects ended up taking considerably longer than anticipated. We encourage students to be aspirational, ambitious and take risks – and we work with them to manage these risks.

To accommodate early "wrong turns" and unforeseen delays, we sometimes recommend that a student considers delaying entering the job market by a year and spend an additional year at Cambridge Judge Business School (and possibly another university where an opportunity is available) to work on paper revisions with faculty and strengthen their portfolio of research paper before applying for a junior faculty position.

An optional further year at Cambridge Judge Business School would be typically funded by:

- a Cambridge Judge Business School post-doctoral grant (2 grants available by competition each year)
- paid teaching opportunities, which further strengthen a student's job market prospects