



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



Diplomatic Academy



>> Ensuring we all have the knowledge and expertise we need to represent the UK and pursue the national interest. <<





Jon Davies,
Director of the Diplomatic
Academy

>> Welcome to the new Diplomatic Academy.

This brochure tells you about the Academy, who it's for, how it works, and how you can participate and get involved in Academy learning. <<

The Academy is about excellence but it is also inclusive and accessible. It is open to all staff at all grades, at home or overseas, UK based or locally engaged. It acts as a learning hub, to enable us to share knowledge, expertise and experience of working internationally for the UK so that we all have the skills to do our jobs to the best of our ability. It also builds networks with academic and other institutions, to allow us to draw on the best of external expertise and to ensure that learning opportunities are creative and challenging.

I want the Academy to help us transform our learning culture into one in which we support each other to develop and grow throughout our careers. Your active participation is crucial to achieving this. The Diplomatic Academy has something for everyone, so please get involved and make the most of the opportunities the Academy offers both you and your team.

What is the Diplomatic Academy?

The Diplomatic Academy is a hub for sharing skills, knowledge and expertise. It is not an institution at which you need to enrol at certain points in your career. It is a focal point, a centre of excellence, for learning and development.

It provides both a formal curriculum and also many informal opportunities for learning, and has both a physical and a virtual home.

The Academy also draws on the best of external expertise, to challenge our thinking and inject creativity and innovation into our learning.

Who is it for?

The Academy is for all FCO staff at all grades, at home and overseas. We are also keen to ensure the widest possible access for colleagues in other government departments who are working on international issues.



In establishing the Diplomatic Academy we have engaged with a wide range of external institutions, think-tanks and academies, in the UK and around the world, from Canada to the Caribbean.

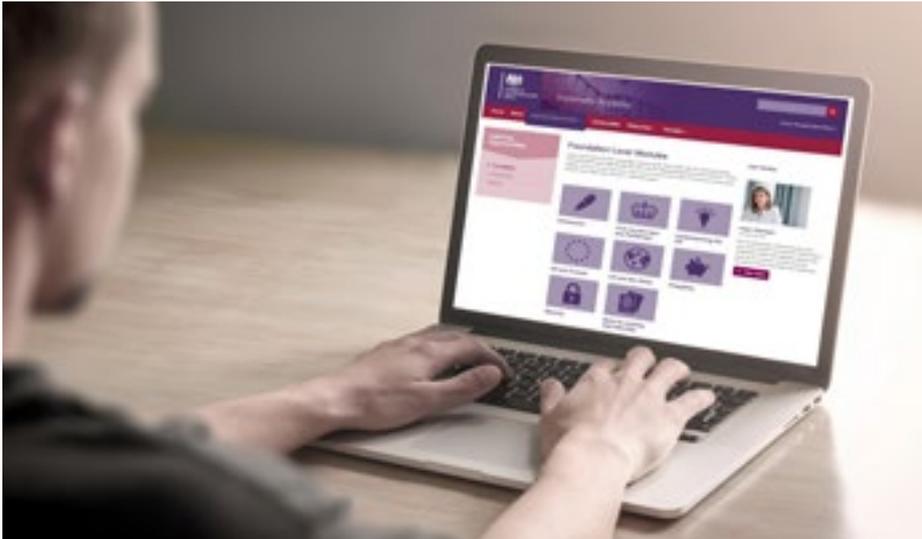


>> We have already started working with other foreign services to exchange ideas on challenges we all face when designing learning in a fast-moving and uncertain world.<<

How can I access the Diplomatic Academy?

Many of the Academy's learning materials are available on our digital platform to ensure they are readily available to all staff wherever they are working, in the UK or overseas.

The Academy also has a distinctive premises in the FCO's London headquarters in King Charles St, with bespoke space for workshops, seminars, masterclasses and individual study. Some rooms are up and running already, with many more in preparation.



At a glance:

The Academy has eleven Faculties covering the main elements of the FCO's work:

- > International Policy
- > Diplomatic Practice
- > States & Societies
- > Understanding the UK
- > Consular & Crisis Management
- > Economics and Prosperity
- > Europe
- > Multilateral
- > Security, Defence & Intelligence
- > Law
- > Languages

Levels of learning

The curriculum has been structured into three levels of learning:

Foundation Level: the fundamental skills and knowledge needed by staff working on international issues for HMG. This level is aimed at most staff in the organisation.

Practitioner Level: the in-depth knowledge and skills needed by staff working on specific topics or regions.

Expert Level: the knowledge and skills which can be gained through substantial experience and often different roles within a particular field.

All Foundation Level material will be available to all staff on our digital platform. At Practitioner and Expert level, learning opportunities will be targeted at those working or going to work on specific issues or subjects.

The Academy also brings together “packages” of learning for certain points in people’s careers, for example during UK based induction and pre-posting training. It supports the Civil Service-wide international competences of Engaging Internationally and Demonstrating Resilience.



Learning Groups

The Academy is piloting ways of supporting colleagues to access learning groups, including remote workers, those in very small posts and staff on secondment outside the organisation



HM Government

We want the Academy to become a hub of expertise not just for FCO staff but also for staff from other government departments. Colleagues from across government have worked with us to help design the Academy’s curriculum and content.



Foundation Level (available from April 2015)

Who's it for?

All staff, LE and UK-based, at home and overseas – everyone can work through this material. Some staff will experience Foundation level through a structured induction process but most will learn alongside colleagues or through self-study.

What does it cover?

The curriculum covers the “must-knows” across the eleven Faculties, i.e. the basic facts and information that all staff representing the UK on international issues should know. There are 8 modules, each containing a number of units of learning. You can work through them in any order, although we recommend starting with the Introductory Module.

How do I complete it?

All Foundation level material is available through digital resources, so it can be accessed wherever in the world you are working. You can work through the material by individual study, but we strongly encourage staff to learn together with groups of colleagues. Peer learning adds to the richness of discussion, allows us to benefit from others' experience and to contribute our own, helps with motivation and strengthens the learning culture of teams and Posts/ departments. You can use existing learning groups, committees and networks, or establish new ones from scratch.

How long does it take to complete?

It's largely up to you. But it is designed to be covered over a period of time, not in a short burst. For example, new UK based recruits at Band B will be expected to cover the ground over their first year in the organisation. Once you have worked through the material, you will take short online tests. An accredited certificate will be awarded to those passing the tests.

Full Foundation level curriculum materials are available from April 2015, with testing expected to go live in autumn 2015.



Introduction

About Foundation
About Learning



FCO, Government & Parliament

Understanding the FCO
Parliament
Consular, Crisis & Law
Ministers and Civil Service



Understand- ing the UK

The UK: Historical Roots
The UK and Devolution
Elections in the UK
Culture and Values
Overseas Territories



UK & Europe

Introduction to the EU
UK and EU
Europe and its
Neighbourhood



UK & the World

States & Societies
International System
Themes
Case Study: Iraq



Prosperity

Introduction to Prosperity
Introduction to Economics
Science and Innovation
Climate Change
Economic Diplomacy
Trade and Investment



Security

National Security
Counter-proliferation
Intelligence
Cyber-security
Counter-Terrorism
Case Study: Afghanistan



Skills for working in- ternationally

Negotiating & influencing
International Policy
Communications
Networking
Writing with Impact
Protocol

Practitioner level (available from Autumn 2015)

Who's it for?

Practitioner level learning is aimed at staff working on specific areas, e.g. desk officers, who need more in-depth knowledge of particular issues.

What does it cover?

The Practitioner level curriculum will be based around the eleven Faculties which cover the key areas of the FCO's business. But the curriculum will be larger than at Foundation level, allowing staff to focus on areas of learning relevant to their roles. A lot of Practitioner level material is already available and includes a range of ad hoc and informal learning opportunities such as job-shadowing, workshops, guest speaker events and seminars. Posts and Departments can organise their own Practitioner-level learning events by arranging masterclasses or inviting external speakers.

How do I complete it?

Some Practitioner level material will be available as digital resources, but some will require attendance at classroom-based courses. Keep an eye on the Academy's intranet pages for further information on how to access the units you are interested in.

How long does it take to complete?

Given the large amount of Practitioner level learning opportunities available, we recommend that you focus your learning on the units that will be relevant to your current, or future, role. However, we anticipate that senior staff will also want to reach Practitioner level in the core Faculties of International Policy and Diplomatic Practice and in Understanding the UK. Eventually this will become a requirement for promotion into the Senior Management Structure (SMS) for UK based staff.

Example of how the Academy will be used:

Sarah is a locally-engaged consular officer in a western European country. She is currently working her way through the Consular and Crisis Management Practitioner level learning. But she is also interested in the wider context of the FCO's work in her home country, so has joined a learning group to work through the Foundation level material on Europe and Understanding the UK.

Over her career she has developed particular expertise in helping vulnerable British residents locally, and she plans to hold a masterclass for consular colleagues in the region. She will capture the key learning points on video, which Consular and Crisis Management Faculty will incorporate into their Practitioner level learning materials.



Capturing learning events

The Academy can provide advice and support on how to capture learning events or materials on video, so that they can be shared more widely around the network.

Expert Level

Who's it for?

Expert level is aimed at staff who have gained substantial experience and knowledge of a topic over a career in the same field.

What does it cover?

Learning will be based around the eleven Faculties, but will be tailored to the needs of the individual. It may include attachments to academic institutions for advanced study, or secondments outside of Government.

How do I complete it?

Expert level learning opportunities will vary according to the needs of the learner. At this level, we expect "experts" to share knowledge with others in the organisation as well as enhancing their own learning.

How long does it take to complete?

The amount of learning you undertake at this level will vary for each individual, depending on need and circumstances.



Example:

Joe, newly recruited Band B officer in London

Joe has just started his first FCO role as a desk officer in the South America Department.

During his first year in the FCO Joe is working through Foundation Level with his fellow new recruits, and has found that the prior knowledge and experiences that they have all brought from outside the FCO has enriched their learning.

Joe also attends a Practitioner level lunchtime series of talks on Latin American culture and politics run by States and Societies Faculty, to help him develop his in-depth knowledge of the region



Masterclasses

In the margins of the Senior Leadership Forum in October 2014, some senior staff shared expertise in the form of masterclasses. HMA Brasilia, Alex Ellis (pictured), spoke about Brazil and shared his top tips on how to prepare for a posting in a new country.

Karen Pierce, UK Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva shared her expertise on addressing crises, including Ebola, through the UN. And Keith Bristow, Director General of the National Crime Agency spoke about taking sometimes difficult decisions on behalf of the British public: “Doing the Hard Right Thing”.

Videos of the key learning points from these masterclasses are available to view on the Diplomatic Academy’s intranet pages.

Other learning opportunities in the Diplomatic Academy

Short Term Attachment scheme:

provides developmental opportunities for staff in the UK in bands A and B, including those with previous overseas experience, to gain experience on specific competences for short periods of up to three weeks. The aim of the scheme is to allow A&B band staff to gain exposure to types of work, environments and issues that they may not otherwise encounter in their current roles.

Overseas Work Experience scheme:

provides a short practical introduction to working in an overseas Post through a one day visit programme. A typical programme includes visiting the different sections in an overseas Post to learn about their work and a chance to see how the FCO works with other government departments to deliver HMG's agenda overseas. The scheme is open to all Band A and B staff in the UK, and is particularly aimed at staff who have not spent substantial time overseas or who may have difficulty undertaking a Short Term Attachment (STA) due to personal or caring commitments.

Expertise Fund:

aims to help staff increase their thematic and geographical knowledge in support of Diplomatic Excellence. Geographical expertise is about understanding countries, regions, cultures and religions. Thematic expertise could be better understanding of FCO priority policy areas such as security policy, consular protection or the prosperity agenda; or perhaps improving knowledge of a specific area such as forced marriage, counter-terrorism or climate change; or about multilateral processes in the EU, UN or G20.

The Expertise Fund is intended to bolster what Directorates are already doing to develop the expertise of their staff. It could be used to:

- > Create or fund participation at conferences where this will demonstrably add to an improvement in geographical or thematic policy expertise;
- > Undertake mini-cultural immersion stints;

- > Take up short secondments and/or attachments to industry, think-tanks, NGOs, allied Foreign Services or international institutions (UN, NATO) etc;
- > Organise subject/issue-specific workshops for a group of staff but where there is a demonstrable added value beyond networking.

Year on year funding for suitable projects is possible if it can be demonstrated that the particular learning offered can be usefully incorporated into the Academy's curriculum.

Leadership Learning:

The Academy also offers a range of leadership learning opportunities including the Overseas Leadership Development Programme, Leading under Pressure and Engagement and Communication for Leadership – aimed at newly-appointed Heads and Deputy Heads of Mission and other senior leaders. You will find further information on these courses on the Academy's intranet pages.



When can I start?

Now! Some Foundation level material is already available on the Academy's intranet pages, and more will be released before the full Foundation level launch in April 2015. Many Practitioner-level formal and informal learning opportunities are also available, for example guest speaker events, lunchtime seminars and workshops and job-shadowing opportunities.



How can I find out more?

Take a look at our intranet pages and join our Global Community.

Email us direct at:

Diplomatic.Academy@fco.gov.uk

Follow us on Twitter: **[@UKDipAcad](https://twitter.com/UKDipAcad)**



What's next?

The full range of Practitioner and Expert level materials will become available from late 2015. We will also launch our enhanced digital platform during 2015.



How to contact us:

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