

Strategic Development Programme for Senior Administrators



The programme

The Strategic Development Programme (SDP) is a leadership development programme aimed at generalist senior administrators from across the University. The aim of the programme is to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence of participants to enable them to lead on and contribute to the development of world-class administrative and academic operations within the University of Cambridge.

Programme duration and content

The programme comprises four full day and one half day sessions that run between February and September each year. Each session addresses different aspects of strategic leadership with the opportunity to hear from senior figures in the University, whilst enabling participants to learn from the experiences of their colleagues and build professional relationships and networks.

Participants are required to undertake an individual, strategically focused project that comprises a new piece of strategic work in an area that they have the ability to take the lead on, giving them the opportunity to apply the learning from the programme to their role. Participants are also mentored by a senior member of University administrative staff throughout the programme.

Programme Outline

Session 1: Introduction and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) provides the opportunity for participants to have an in-depth introduction to the programme and understand the criteria for their strategic project. MBTI is a personality profiling tool that presents a framework for participants to learn about personality type and understand themselves and how they work with others.

Session 2: Managing self and others considers the culture of the University as a context for leadership, the forces that shape distinctiveness, identity, ethos and custom and practice. The session also explores leadership and management styles and preferences, with further applications of MBTI in leadership and management, and allows participants to discuss the roles and expectations of a professional administrator and how to navigate networks of relationships.

Session 3: Strategic planning identifies the characteristics of strategic planning across the University, including strategic position and strategic and operational plans. The session explores strategic planning tools and their application within the working environment, including application to individual projects.

Session 4: Strategic engagement and managing change enables participants to consider the engagement, alignment and motivation of people at work, including leading others through change. Participants identify, develop and share practical advice for successfully navigating the organisational context of the University.

Session 5: Project presentation

offers an opportunity for participants to present a summary of their projects to a presentation panel and peers from the programme, including reflections on what they have learned and gained from the programme

A key component to the SDP is a series of seminars that run concurrently with the programme. Drawing on the diverse and broad ranging experiences of our internal and external speakers, each seminar aims to offer some key insights into a current area of interest and relevance to those in administrative roles within the HE sector.

Selection for the Programme

Participation in the programme is by nomination only with **18 places available each year**. The nomination process is coordinated in the **Easter Term** by PPD in consultation with the **School Secretaries, Heads of Division, Non School Institutions and the Registry's Office**. Nominees should occupy a senior administrative role, working at grades 8 to 10, and administer a wide portfolio with strategic influence. **Please contact your line manager in the first instance if you are interested in being nominated for this programme.**

“ I found it very helpful to meet administrators from around the University and share experiences. I now feel that I have a good network of contacts and I feel better informed about University-wide developments. ”

For more information about the Programme, please contact PPD: ppd@admin.cam.ac.uk