

**CMI Leadership  
Academy  
Senior Executive  
Leadership Programme**

The Accelerated Pathway to Chartered Fellow Status

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## Programme Overview

The CMI Senior Executive Leadership Programme is designed as an accelerated pathway for senior leaders to achieve Chartered Fellow Status while delivering real-world impact and Return on Investment (ROI) for their organisations. It focuses on bridging the gap between technical expertise and strategic leadership through high-impact masterclasses, whilst maintaining flexibility and adaptability to allow Partners to tailor delivery to the needs of their learners.

Aligned to aspects of the Senior Leader Occupational Standard, this programme focuses on providing learners with the core knowledge to thrive in a strategic leadership role and reflect on their own impact through the Chartered Pathway.

### Programme Structure

The programme consists of three core aspects, provided as a guide for delivery. This includes:

- **Masterclasses** - covering key topics which will support learners to develop their capability to become a senior leader, which can be applied flexibly to suit learner and employer needs. They provide an overview of capabilities learners will be able to achieve on completion of the Masterclass, alongside optional suggested content which may support delivery and learning.
- **Strategic Impact Project** - facilitating learners to undertake a real-world project to deliver impact and ROI for their organisation, whilst demonstrating the ability to apply learning in the workplace
- **Chartered Fellow** - a self-reflective process whereby learners demonstrate their professional competence, and commitment to being conscious, inclusive leaders

### Registration Codes

The title given below is the title as it will appear on the qualification when awarded to the learner. When registering learners, Partners should consider which of the following versions to register learners on. By default, it is expected that most learners will be eligible for the Chartered Fellow route (SELP-F). However, where learners do not meet the minimum criteria as set out in the Chartered Manager section below, they should be registered on the Chartered Member version (SELP-M).

This qualification is available for registration from 1st April 2026

<b>CMI Code</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Embedded Chartered Grade</b>
SELP-F	Senior Executive Leadership Programme	Chartered Fellow
SELP-M	Senior Executive Leadership Programme	Chartered Member

**Masterclass Outlines and Suggested Content**

The Masterclass content consists of outcomes (what learners will be able to do on completion) and suggested content, which may help underpin delivery and learning. The suggested content provides a guide; however, **examples listed are not mandatory or exhaustive**: Partners and learners are free to **select examples most relevant to their role or organisation**.

To support this specification, there are template documents such as Worksheets, Checklists and Scripts to support partners and learners in the completion of this programme. These are provided as a guiding resource and are not mandatory: they can also be contextualised to suit delivery goals, if preferred. The documents can be located [HERE](#).

**Learning Journeys**

As part of our membership benefits, all learners will have up to 12 months' access to CMI Thrive, launching from April 2026. As part of their enrollment in this programme, learners will be able to access learning journeys, curated specifically to complement completion of the Masterclasses. Partners are also able to access these learning journeys to support programme delivery.

These Learning Journeys will be available from April 2026.

**Diagnostic Tool**

To support learners in measuring their learning progress, an exclusive Diagnostic Tool aligned to the content of this programme has been developed. It is recommended that learners undertake this self-assessment diagnostic at the beginning, middle and end of their programme to validate knowledge and skill development.

This diagnostic tool will be available from April 2026.

## Alignment to the Senior Leader Occupational Standard

The table below signposts how this programme aligns to the Senior Leader Apprenticeship Standard. Where a Partner may be currently, or have previously, delivered this Standard, they may choose to repurpose content to support the delivery of this CMI Senior Executive Leadership Programme. The signposting guides where that content may support each Masterclass.

Masterclass	Masterclass Overview	Alignment to KSBs from Senior Leader Occupational Standard
Strategic Vision & Direction	Master the art of horizon scanning and strategy development to position your brand effectively within complex global and digital market environments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Personal Leadership &amp; Accountability (B2, B3, B4)</li> <li>● Organisational Strategy &amp; Governance (K2, K3, K7, K8, K14, K15)</li> <li>● Future Focus &amp; Innovation (K4, K5, S1, S9)</li> <li>● Risk &amp; Crisis Management (K17)</li> <li>● Strategic Thinking &amp; Communication (S3, S7, S13, S14)</li> </ul>
High-Performance Leadership	Transform from a technical expert into a value-driven leader by aligning organisational culture, mindset, and change-management theories to optimise team performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Leading Self &amp; Others (B1, B2, B5, K6, K10, K18, S15, S16)</li> <li>● Strategy &amp; Change (B3, K4, K11, S4)</li> <li>● Collaboration &amp; Influence (K12, S20)</li> <li>● Decision Making &amp; Organisational Health (K7, S14, S18)</li> </ul>
The Strategic Impact Project	Deliver measurable ROI through a real-world Strategic Impact Project, utilising rigorous project management and risk frameworks to solve a high-stakes strategic challenge that delivers ROI for your organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Strategy &amp; Organisational Performance (K1, S1, S3)</li> <li>● Financial &amp; Resource Management (K7, S14, S18)</li> <li>● Risk &amp; Crisis Management (K17, S5, S13)</li> <li>● Change &amp; Project Management (K11, S4, S20)</li> <li>● Accountability &amp; Innovation (B2, B3)</li> </ul>

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# Approval and Quality Assurance

## Approval Process

The addition of the qualification to a Centre's approved remit requires the submission of an additional product approval request via CMI Partner Connect. Centres must complete the relevant application form within the platform, ensuring that all requested information and supporting evidence are provided in full. Details of how to submit an application are available [here](#).

## Assessment and Quality Assurance

This programme is intended to be flexible and agile to suit the needs of learners and employers: this means that partners can adapt their content and assessment as necessary. CMI does not mandate formal assessments as part of the CMI Senior Executive Leadership Programme, but requires partners to verify learner eligibility for Chartered Fellow (CMgr). CMI reserves the right to sample evidence of programme completion and CMgr eligibility as required. The programme is quality assured by CMI and is not on the Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF).

# Progression Opportunities

## Chartered Manager

Learners completing this programme will automatically be awarded Chartered Fellow status on completion of their learning.

To qualify for CMgr with Fellow status, Learners must evidence at least 10 years of management experience by the end of the course. Partners are required to verify the following:

- Timeline Check: Can learners evidence 10 years' experience in a management/leadership role?
- Level Check: Are at least 3 of these years at a strategic level?
- Evidence: Is an up-to-date CV or experience log ready?

If the above criteria are not met, learners may be eligible for Chartered Manager (3+ years' experience in a management role) or Foundation Chartered Manager (fCMgr) (<3 years' experience). Partners must ensure learners are registered on the correct version of this qualification, using the CMI Codes outlined above.

For more information on Chartered Manager and its benefits, please [click here](#).

# Masterclass 1: Strategic Vision & Direction

By completing this Masterclass, learners will be able to:

1. Critically appraise the impact of organisational **context**, **governance**, and **maturity** on strategic leadership

## Internal and external contextual pressures

- Legislation (for example: Data Protection Act (2018), General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Equality Act (2010), Modern Slavery Act (2015), Artificial Intelligence Act (2024), Environment Act (2021), regulatory (for example: Industry-specific regulators such as FCA, FDA, Ofcom)
- Organisational frameworks (for example: Corporate governance frameworks, delegation of authority, strategic and operational policies, Codes of Ethics, financial and resource policies). Emerging technologies (for example: Generative AI, agentic workflows, and decentralised finance).
- Stakeholder expectations and perceptions.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
- Strategic direction vs market reality.

## Governance and structural constraints

- Obligations
- founding principles
- Accountability
- Autonomy
- Organisational ethics, purpose, mission, vision
- Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability.

## Organisational maturity and capability

- Ability to change and innovate with technological and market demands (for example: LLM integration, autonomous agent deployment, cybersecurity and algorithmic/data governance, hyper-personalisation, product lifecycles).
- Organisational culture (for example: Power, Role, Task, People (Handy, 1995)). Organisational Structure (for example: functional, matrix, divisional).
- Organisational hierarchy (for example: vertical or horizontal, centralised vs decentralised).

2. Formulate an **organisational strategy** to achieve **business goals**

## Organisational Strategy

- Growth strategy. Stability strategy. Retrenchment/rationalisation strategy. Differentiation strategy. Value-based strategy.

## Business Goals

- Market growth and expansion (for example: market penetration, geographic expansion, diversification).
- Operational excellence and efficiency (for example: digital transformation, AI automation, supply chain resilience, cost leadership).
- Financial performance (for example: revenue growth vs profitability, capital restructuring, shareholder value).
- Innovation and brand positioning (for example: sustainability & ESG, product leadership, talent acquisition and retention).

3. Evaluate digital marketing **developments** and changing **market environments** to position the organisation and its brand effectively

#### **Developments**

- AI search and answer engines (traditional SEO replaced by Generative Engine Optimisation (GEO)).
- Synthetic media & content generation
- Predictive customer intent agents
- Agentic commerce.
- Hyper-personalisation.
- Social commerce integration.

#### **Market environments**

- Macro: Political (for example: trade policy, political stability), Economic (for example: cost of living and disposable income, inflation), Social & Cultural (for example: shifting demographics, social values), Technological (for example: infrastructure, AI, automation, manufacturing innovation), Environmental/Ecological (for example: climate resistance and change, circular economy) and Legal Environments (for example: consumer protection, employment rights, data protection, intellectual property) (PESTLE).
- Micro: Competitors (for example: disruptors), direct customers (for example: changing attitudes), suppliers (for example: resource scarcity), general public (for example: “citizen journalists” and activists).

### Useful Resources

The following resources are optional but are provided as they may support this Masterclass:

- Handy's Four Types of Culture (Handy, 1995)
- Cultural Web (Johnson & Scholes)
- Schein's Three Levels of Culture (Schein)
- Competing Values Framework (CVF) (Quinn & Cameron)
- Ansoff Matrix (Ansoff, 1957)
- Porter's Generic Strategies (Porter, 1980)

# Masterclass 2: High-Performance Leadership

By completing this Masterclass, learners will be able to:

1. Propose a leadership and development **strategy** that **optimises performance** while valuing people and building high-performance cultures

## Strategy

- Leadership Evolution (for example: transitioning from technical expertise to AI-augmented leadership and value-driven, transformational leadership).
- Cultural Design (for example: aligning organisational values with high-performance team dynamics).
- Strategic Planning and Execution (for example: developing clear, measurable objectives that directly support the overall business strategy and embedding a rhythm of accountability for delivery).
- Talent and Workforce Planning (for example: implementing skills gap analysis and a targeted development framework to ensure the right capabilities are available for future growth).
- Operational Excellence and Efficiency (for example: optimising core business processes through lean methodologies or digital automation to reduce waste and improve speed).

## Optimises performance

- Increased strategic capacity, improved employee retention, and decentralised decision-making.
- Enhanced psychological safety, greater discretionary effort, and reduced "silo" friction, leading to less inter-departmental conflict and increased collaboration.
- Improved "say-do" ratio (for example: better achievement of KPIs), transparency of impact (for example: Golden Thread), and agile pivoting (for example: rapid reallocation of resources).
- Effective talent pipeline management (for example: a rise in internally-filled roles), future-proofing skills (for example: active succession planning), and reduced skill obsolescence (for example: successful transitions into new digital or automated roles).
- Attainment of operational excellence and efficiency (for example: through methodologies like Six Sigma (Smith, 1986) and Lean Thinking (Womack & Jones, 2003)).
- Optimising core business processes through intelligent automation (IA), lean methodologies, or low-code/no-code digital ecosystems.

2. Critically reflect on the interrelationship between mindset and skillset required to lead strategically

## Mindset

- Cognitive and Intellectual: Cognitive readiness, Systems thinking, Curiosity, Intellectual humility, Reflective practice (for example: Gibbs (1988), Kolb (1984), Commitment to Self-Leadership).
- Mindset and Approach: Ethical considerations, Valuing difference, Tolerance for ambiguity, Agility, Innovation, Growth
- Personal and Interpersonal: Personal accountability, Resilience, Emotional intelligence, Empathy, Empowerment
- Societal and Environmental: Eco-stewardship, Social intelligence

## Skillset

- Strategy development, horizon scanning, data-driven conceptualisation, and strategic and augmented storytelling.
- Change leadership, digital fluency, crisis management, and conflict mediation. Relationship management, influencing, and negotiating.
- Financial and resource management, procurement and supply chain management.
- Self-auditing for personal impact, managing the "Technical-to-Leader" transition, and diagnosing cultural toxicity.

3. Critically evaluate **theories** for leading and managing change to develop a proposal for leading strategic change

#### Theories

- Change leadership: Change Curve (Kübler-Ross, 1969), Kotter's 8-Step Process (Kotter, 2012), Lewin's Three-Step Model (Lewin, 1951), ADKAR (Hiatt, 2006), McKinsey 7-S Framework (Peters & Waterman, 1982), Bridge's Transition Model (Bridges & Bridges, 2017).
- Leadership: Transformational Leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006), Situational Leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977), Authentic Leadership (Avolio et al., 2008), Adaptive Leadership (Grashow & Linsky, 2009), Complexity Leadership Theory (CLT) (Uhl, Bien, et al., 2007).

#### Proposal

- Technological transformation (for example: orchestrating AI agents, legacy system modernisation via automation, or migrating to AI-native cloud platforms).
- Shifting organisational focus (for example: from product to customer-centric, diversification, market entry into new geographies, integrating a merger or acquisition).
- Implementing a workforce strategy (for example: a hybrid-first approach, restructuring, managing generational diversity, developing new skills/competencies).
- Implementing an ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) mandate (for example: achieving net-zero targets, improving supply chain ethics, enhancing board diversity). Addressing significant regulatory changes (for example: new industry compliance requirements, data privacy legislation).
- Cultural Transformation (for example: shifting from a toxic or siloed culture to one of psychological safety).

#### Useful Resources

The following resources are optional but are provided as they may support this Masterclass:

- Gibb's Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1988)
- Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984)
- Change Curve (Kübler-Ross, 1969)
- Kotter's 8-Step Process (Kotter, 2012)
- Lewin's Three-Step Model (Lewin, 1951)
- ADKAR (Hiatt, 2006)
- McKinsey 7-S Framework (Peters & Waterman, 1982)
- Bridge's Transition Model (Bridges & Bridges, 2017).
- Transformational Leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006)
- Situational Leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977)
- Authentic Leadership (Avolio et al., 2008)
- Adaptive Leadership (Grashow & Linsky, 2009)
- Complexity Leadership Theory (CLT) (Uhl, Bien, et al., 2007).

# Masterclass 3: Strategic Impact Project

By completing this Masterclass, learners will be able to:

1. Develop a **business case** for a project that delivers **strategic impact** and Return on Investment (ROI)

## Business case

- Executive summary, strategic context (“why”), options appraisal, expected benefits and Return on Investment (ROI), financial analysis (“affordability”), risk assessment and mitigation, implementation plan (“how”), conclusions and recommendations.

## Strategic Impact Project

- Digital and operational transformation (for example: autonomous supply chain resilience, AI-driven predictive maintenance, or robotic process automation (RPA)).
- Market expansion and revenue growth (for example: blue ocean entry, pricing model pivot).
- Human capital and cultural alignment (for example: leadership pipeline development).
- Brand and Sustainability (ESG) (for example: net zero transition, customer centricity re-design).

2. Critically assess how **strategic decisions** are informed by the analysis of **resources** and **cost** data.

## Strategic decisions

- “Make vs Buy” (outsourcing or insourcing project builds). project termination or pivot (sunk cost management). Scaling and resource levelling (seconding project team members full-time). Financial (for example: investing in custom AI model training (CapEx) vs. API-based 'as-a-service' models (OpEx)).

## Resources

- Human capital: internal staff, contractors, consultants
- Physical and infrastructure assets: technology, facilities, materials
- Intellectual and intangible resources: data, brand, Intellectual Property (IP)

## Cost

- Direct costs, Indirect costs/overheads, Fixed vs Variable costs, Opportunity costs, sunk costs.

3. Critically analyse **risk management frameworks** to mitigate **strategic threats** to the delivery of the project objectives

## Risk management frameworks

- ISO 13001:2018 Risk Management, COSO Enterprise Risk Management (ERM), PESTLE Analysis, 5 Ts of Risk Response.

## Strategic threats

- Strategic shift, misalignment to technological obsolescence, AI-related data breaches, 'Black Box' decision risks, misalignment to organisational culture, resource tensions and reallocation, financial and budgetary constraints, stakeholder divergence, and legal and/or regulatory governance.

4. Justify appropriate project management **methodologies** and **tools** to successfully deliver the project

## Methodologies

- Agile, Waterfall, Scrum, Kanban, Lean, Six Sigma, PRINCE2, Critical Path Method (CPM).

## Tools

- RAID (Risks, Assumptions, Issues, Dependencies) logs, Gantt charts, Milestones, and Work Breakdown Structures (WBS).

## Annex 1 - Revisions To Document

The below table summarises any revisions made to this document since publication.

<b>Revisions Summary</b>	<b>Rationale for Revision</b>	<b>Document Version</b>	<b>Revision Date</b>
Update to duration on Pg 4	Duration extended	Version 3	Apr 2026
First publication	Addition of process information (e.g. registration codes, quality assurance and approval information)  Reference to Chartered Fellow  Removal of an external link to supporting templates	Version 2	April 2026
First Draft	Initial Consultation Draft	Version 1	March 2026