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COURSE BROCHURE

Advanced External Environment Scanning and Strategic Options Training Course

4 – 15 January 2027
London

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Registered in the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia

Advanced External Environment Scanning and Strategic Options Training Course

Ref: 2772_106038 **Date:** 4 – 15 January 2027 **Location:** London **Fees:** 9500 GBP

External Environment Scanning and Strategic Options is a 2-week training course for strategy analysts and corporate planners who must turn signals from outside the organisation into choices a leadership team can act on. Participants build an external scan dossier that links political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental drivers to ranked strategic options. Shifting markets and faster rule changes now reward organisations that read the horizon early. Jupiter Prime Training offers this course for planners who need that discipline.

Why External Environment Scanning and Strategic Options Matters Now

Three pressures shape this subject today. Supply chains, trade terms and consumer expectations change faster than annual planning cycles. Boards and investors ask planners to show the evidence behind each assumption. Technology and legislation now shift in the same quarter, so a single blind spot can undo a strategy. Organisations that scan well spot weak signals, test assumptions and reposition before rivals; those that scan badly react late and spend heavily to catch up. The course rests on the six-factor macro scan of political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental drivers, the four-part review of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and scenario planning.

Who Gains Most from External Environment Scanning and Strategic Options

- Strategy analysts who prepare horizon briefings and driver assessments for executive offsites
- Corporate planners who own planning assumptions and refresh them between strategy cycles
- Business development leads who test new markets, partners and entry routes
- Risk and resilience specialists who track emerging external threats and their early indicators
- Policy and public affairs advisers who monitor legislative and social change for their organisation

A strategy office or planning unit gains most when several members attend together, because they leave with one shared scanning routine, one driver vocabulary and one format for presenting options to leadership.

External Environment Scanning and Strategic Options Capabilities

Participants move from collecting external signals to shaping choices, so each outcome links a scanning method to a decision that leadership must take.

- Design a scanning routine with sources, owners and review rhythm — strategy office leadership
- Assess drivers by impact and uncertainty to separate trends from critical unknowns — executive planning sessions
- Build scenarios from two critical uncertainties and trace their implications — board strategy discussions
- Weigh internal strengths and weaknesses against external opportunities and threats — portfolio and investment committees
- Specify strategic options with clear trade-offs, triggers and resource needs — chief executive and finance director
- Communicate scan findings as concise briefings that support a choice — senior leadership teams

Key External Environment Scanning and Strategic Options Terms

- Weak signal — an early, fragmented sign of change that may grow into a trend with strategic consequences if left unwatched.
- Driver of change — an external force, such as demographic shift or new legislation, that alters the conditions an organisation competes in.
- Critical uncertainty — a driver with high impact and unpredictable direction, used as an axis when building scenarios.
- Confrontation matrix — a grid that pairs internal strengths and weaknesses with external opportunities and threats to generate options.
- Signpost indicator — a measurable sign showing which scenario is unfolding, prompting a planned response.
- Strategic option — a distinct course of action with defined scope, resources, risks and conditions for success.

External Environment Scanning and Strategic Options Day by Day

Day 1: Horizon and Purpose of the Scan

- Scan Scope Statement — Which Markets, Horizons and Decisions to Cover
- Planning Assumption Register — Exposing Beliefs Behind the Current Strategy
- Source Map of Publications and Experts — Balancing Breadth Against Effort
- Time Horizon Bands — Separating Near, Medium and Long-Range Signals
- Scan Governance Roles — Who Owns, Validates and Uses Findings

Day 2: Political and Legal Drivers

- Policy Agenda Tracking — Anticipating Shifts in Public Priorities
- Legislative Pipeline Review — Timing Responses to Pending Laws
- Trade and Tariff Exposure Mapping — Sourcing and Pricing Choices
- Public Sector Stakeholder Mapping — Influence and Engagement Priorities
- Legal Change Impact Grid — Product, Contract and Licence Adjustments

Day 3: Economic and Market Drivers

- Leading Economic Indicators — Demand and Investment Timing
- Inflation and Interest Sensitivity Testing — Capital Spending Decisions
- Industry Cost Curve Shifts — Pricing and Margin Positioning
- Customer Purchasing Power Trends — Segment and Channel Focus
- Capital Market Appetite Review — Funding Route and Partnership Choices

Day 4: Social and Technological Drivers

- Demographic Shift Profiles — Workforce and Customer Base Planning
- Consumer Values and Behaviour Signals — Brand and Offer Redesign
- Technology Maturity Curves — Timing Adoption of New Capabilities
- Substitute Technology Watch — Defending or Cannibalising Core Lines
- Digital Talent Availability — Build, Buy or Partner Decisions

Day 5: Environmental Drivers and Signal Quality

- Climate and Resource Stress Mapping — Asset Location and Supply Resilience
- Emissions and Disclosure Expectations — Reporting and Investment Priorities
- Source Reliability Grading — Weighting Evidence Before Escalation
- Weak Signal Logging — Deciding What Merits Closer Watch
- Cross-Driver Interaction Map — Spotting Compounding External Pressures

Day 6: Prioritising Drivers

- Impact and Uncertainty Grid — Separating Trends From Critical Unknowns
- Driver Clustering Technique — Reducing Signals to Strategic Themes
- Expert Elicitation Rounds — Testing Judgement Against Peer Views
- Industry Forces Review — Rivalry, Entrants and Bargaining Power
- Driver Briefing Note — Escalating Priorities to Leadership

Day 7: Building Scenarios

- Two-Axis Scenario Matrix — Framing Plausible Alternative Futures
- Scenario Narrative Writing — Making Futures Concrete for Leaders
- Implication Tables per Scenario — Testing Current Strategy Robustness
- Signpost Indicator Set — Recognising Which Future Is Unfolding
- Wind Tunnelling Session — Stress-Testing Existing Commitments

Day 8: Internal Position Against External Reality

- Resource and Capability Audit — Grounding Strengths in Evidence
- Value Chain Weakness Diagnosis — Locating Gaps Rivals Could Exploit
- Benchmarking Against Peers — Calibrating Claimed Advantages
- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Grid — Evidence-Based Positioning
- Confrontation Matrix Pairing — Generating Offensive and Defensive Moves

Day 9: Shaping and Ranking Strategic Options

- Option Generation From Paired Factors — Widening the Choice Set
- Option Screening Criteria — Fit, Feasibility and Acceptability Tests
- Weighted Option Scoring — Ranking Choices Transparently
- Trigger Points and Contingent Moves — Preparing Responses by Scenario
- Option Resource Profile — Funding, Capability and Timing Needs

Day 10: Practising the External Scan Dossier

- Applying the Driver Grid to a Live Case — Sector Selection
- Running Scenarios on the Case — Robustness of Shortlisted Options
- Applying the Confrontation Matrix — Sharpening the Final Option Set
- Peer Challenge Panel — Defending Assumptions Before Leadership
- Completing the External Scan Dossier — Ranked Options and Signposts

Applying External Environment Scanning and Strategic Options After the Course

- Run a first quarterly scan with the source map and impact and uncertainty grid, then circulate a driver briefing note to the leadership team.
- Facilitate a scenario session using the two-axis matrix to test one current strategic commitment and agree its signpost indicators.

External Environment Scanning and Strategic Options Questions FAQ

What is external environment scanning and strategic options work, and why does it matter now?

It is the discipline of tracking outside drivers and turning them into ranked choices. It matters now because political, technological and market shifts arrive together, and you need evidence-backed options before rivals move, as utilities and retailers have both found in recent cycles.

Which roles gain most from external environment scanning and strategic options skills?

Strategy analysts and corporate planners gain most. Business development leads, risk specialists and policy advisers also benefit, because each must explain to leadership how outside forces change the choices on the table and when to act on them.

How does an external environment scanning and strategic options course differ from a general strategic planning course?

It focuses on the evidence stage before a plan is written. A general planning course covers goals, measures and execution; this one concentrates on reading drivers, building scenarios and generating options that a later plan can adopt.

What do you bring back from external environment scanning and strategic options training?

You bring back an external scan dossier for your own organisation, a repeatable scanning routine, scenario sets with signpost indicators, and a ranked list of options with trade-offs ready for a leadership discussion.

External Environment Scanning and Strategic Options: The Way Forward

The external scan dossier first informs which strategic options leadership should shortlist for the next planning cycle. Strategy offices and planning units use it to brief executives, test commitments and set signposts. After its first use, revisit the weighting of critical uncertainties, because the drivers that seemed remote at the start often move fastest once the dossier is in circulation.