



Join the next wave of leaders
shaping the future of shipping and
maritime business

Executive Diploma in Shipping and Maritime Business

Start your journey in January 2026



The **Executive Diploma in Shipping and Maritime Business** is a specialized higher education program for managers designed to address today's challenges and tomorrow's opportunities in the maritime industry – with a special focus on **Finland and the Baltic Sea**.

- Gain a **holistic understanding** of shipping and maritime business.
- Join a **dynamic peer group** of industry professionals from diverse roles and backgrounds and academic subject experts.
- Build a **skillset** to meet the evolving demands of one of the world's most vital industries.
- Strengthen your **career mobility**: from off-shore to on-shore, or from adjacent professions into the maritime cluster.

This diploma is not just about learning – it's about creating a **platform for business development, innovation, and networking** in close collaboration with industry stakeholders.



Programme Structure

- Duration: 1.5 years (part-time)
- Extent: min. 25 ECTS (EQF 7 / Master's level),
1 cr = 25- 27 working hours
- Format: Modular, designed for experienced professionals
- Implementation language: English
- Compulsory attendance:
 - » 6 intensive on-site sessions (2–3 days each), morning (9-12 a.m.) and afternoon sessions (1-4 p.m.), 1 h lunch break
 - » 3 online sessions (2 days each), morning and afternoon sessions (as above), 1 hour lunch break
- Online activities, individual and group tasks between sessions
- Continuous guidance from mentors and lecturers
- Follow-up discussions to assess the impact and applicability of course learning in participants' professional careers
- Capstone project in collaboration with industry partners

Core Components

- Shipping Essentials (5 ECTS)
- Microcredentials (min. 10 ECTS, tailored selection from 12 topical areas)
- Capstone Project (5–10 ECTS, group-based)
- Elective Studies (min. 5 ECTS)

Shipping Essentials, an introductory course (SEMESTER 1)

1. **Ship management and operations in context** (actors and agents, daily operations (commercial, operational, technical), staffing, role of traditions)
2. **Shipping market** (actors, market dynamics, role in global trade, and historical development)
3. **Shipping business in supply chains** (customers, logistics companies, stevedores, ports, agents, shipping companies, ship management companies, the classification societies etc.)
4. **Maritime regulation and legislation** (law of the sea, IMO, EU, states, companies, and contracts –how do they interact?)
5. **Sustainability** (economical, environmental, technological and social perspectives)
6. **Future challenges and opportunities** (digitalization, data, business logics etc.)

Microcredentials (short courses) (SEMESTERS 1, 2 & 3)

1. Economics and financial management (2 cr)
2. Leadership and organization (1 cr)
3. Energy efficiency and new fuels (2 cr)
4. Hybridization and electrification (1 cr)
5. Corporate Social Responsibility in Shipping (1 cr)
6. Digitalization and automation opportunities (2 cr)
7. Cybersecurity (1 cr)
8. Security of supply (1 cr)
9. New business models in shipping (1 cr)
10. Shipping contracts and recent legal challenges (1 cr)
11. Strategic fleet and ship management (2 cr)
12. The human factor (1 cr)



Capstone project (SEMESTERS 2 & 3)

Turn insight into impact and tackle a real-world challenge from the shipping and maritime sector in a multidisciplinary team—applying research, development, and innovation (RDI) methods to deliver results that matter to businesses.

- Solve a relevant industry problem in close cooperation with stakeholders and their professional networks.
- Create tangible value through evidence-based analysis, clear recommendations, and action-ready outcomes aligned with diploma themes.

What you will learn

1. Master the essence of shipping

- » Understand ship management; analyze operations, markets, supply chains, regulations, and sustainability.

2. Lead business development with multidisciplinary insight

- » Navigate economics, leadership, CSR, and legal frameworks while driving new business models.

3. Exploit innovation & technology

- » Apply knowledge of energy efficiency, new fuels, hybridization, electrification, digitalization, and cybersecurity.

4. Build networks & shape the future

- » Engage in professional networks, collaborate across disciplines, and contribute to the resilience of maritime business.



Schedule

(for detailed daily programme see Appendix)

- On-site contact session (1/9), 13-15 January 2026
- Online contact session (2/9), 17-18 March 2026
- On-site contact session (3/9), 12-13 May 2026
- On-site contact session (4/9), 11-13 August 2026
- Online contact session (5/9), 13-14 October 2026
- On-site contact session (6/9), 15-16 December 2026
- Online contact session (7/9), 9-10 February 2027
- On-site contact session (8/9), 13-14 April 2027
- On-site contact session (9/9) - Final Seminar, 18-20 May 2027

Session dates and course order may be subject to change.

Costs

The tuition fee is 7 400 € + VAT 25.5 % per participant. Your participation fee covers all principal aspects of the diploma – from teaching activities, course materials, project mentoring and examinations to online resources, study guidance, validation of elective courses, the diploma certificate, and refreshments during on-site sessions and the closing dinner. Please note that travel and accommodation, any fees for elective courses, and meals during on-site sessions are not included.

Application and admission

The intake for the Executive Diploma in Shipping and Maritime Business begins in January 2026, with the application deadline on 15th December 2025.

Admission is limited to max. 25 participants; hence we encourage you to submit your application as soon as possible to secure your place.

[Please register here](#)

Questions?

Contact the Programme Lead, Prof. **Magnus Hellström**, or the Programme Coordinator, **Irina Wahlström**. We're happy to help!

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Contact

The Executive Diploma in Shipping and Maritime Business is organised and coordinated by **Åbo Akademi University** in cooperation with **NOVIA University of Applied Sciences**, in Turku, Finland.



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APPENDIX

Daily program & schedule

On-site contact session (1/9), 13-15 January 2026

Tue 13.1.2026

- Programme introduction
- Shipping Essentials - Ship management and operations
- Group reflection

Wed 14.1.2026

- Economics and Financial Management
- Shipping Essentials – Shipping business in supply chain

Thu 15.1.2026

- Shipping Essentials – Shipping market
- Economics and financial management

Online contact session (2/9), 17-18 March 2026

Tue 17.3.2026

- Economics and Financial Management
- Shipping Essentials – Sustainability

Wed 18.3.2026

- Shipping Essentials – Maritime regulation and legislation
- Economics and financial management

On-site contact session (3/9), 12-13 May 2026

Tue 12.5.2026

- Leadership & Organization
- Shipping Essentials – Future challenges and opportunities

Wed 13.5.2026

- Leadership and organisation
- Group reflection on Shipping Essentials

On-site contact session (4/9), 11-13 August 2026

Tue 11.8.2026

Morning session

- Alt. 1 Strategic fleet and ship management
- Alt. 2 Energy efficiency and new fuels

Afternoon session

- Capstone introduction

Wed 12.8.2026

Morning session

- Alt. 1 Strategic fleet and ship management
- Alt. 2 Energy efficiency and new fuels

Afternoon session

- Corporate Social Responsibility in Shipping

Thu 13.8.2026

- Capstone group work
- Energy efficiency and new fuels

Online contact session (5/9), 13-14 October 2026

Tue 13.10.2026

- Capstone – group instruction
- Energy efficiency and new fuels

Wed 14.10.2026

Morning session – alternative microcredentials

- Alt. 1 Digitalisation and automation opportunities (continues in the afternoon session)
- Alt. 2a. Security of supply (combines with 2 b. of the afternoon session)

Afternoon session – alternative microcredentials

- Alt. 1 Digitalisation and automation opportunities (contd. from morning session)
- Alt. 2b. New business models in shipping

On-site contact session (6/9), 15-16 December 2026

Tue 15.12.2026

- Corporate Social Responsibility in Shipping
- Capstone group instruction

Wed 16.12.2026

Morning session – alternative microcredentials

- Alt. 1 Digitalisation and automation opportunities (continues in the afternoon session)
- Alt. 2a. Security of supply (combines with 2 b. of the afternoon session)

Afternoon session – alternative microcredentials

- Alt.1 Digitalisation and automation opportunities (contd. from morning session)
- Alt. 2 b. New business models in shipping (contd.)

Online contact session (7/9), 9-10 February 2027

Tue 9.2.2027

Morning session – alternative microcredentials

- Alt. 1a. Strategic fleet and ship management (combines with 1b. of the afternoon session)
- Alt. 2a. Hybridisation and electrification (combines with 2b. of the afternoon session)

Afternoon session – alternative microcredentials

- Alt. 1b. Shipping contracts and recent legal challenges
- Alt. 2b. Cybersecurity

Wed 10.2.2027

- Capstone instruction
- The human factor

On-site contact session (8/9), 13-14 April 2027

Tue 13.4.2027

- The human factor (contd.)
- Final capstone instruction

Wed 14.4.2027

Morning session – alternative microcredentials

- Alt. 1a. Strategic fleet and ship management (combines with 1b. of the afternoon session)
- Alt. 2a. Hybridisation and electrification (combines with 2b. of the afternoon session)

Afternoon session – alternative microcredentials

- Alt. 1b. Shipping contracts and recent legal challenges (contd.)
- Alt. 2b. Cybersecurity (contd.)

**On-site contact session (9/9)
- final Seminar, 18-20 May
2027**

Tue 18.5.2027

Morning session

- Discussions and reflections on how the acquired knowledge can be implemented in daily work

Afternoon session

- Discussions and reflections on how the acquired knowledge can be implemented in daily work

Wed 19.5.2027

Morning session

- Capstone presentations

Afternoon session

- Capstone presentations

Thu 20.5.2027

- Evaluation and handout of course Diplomas (9 a.m.- 1 p.m.)

