United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Unitar Online Catalogue

AI Essentials for Decision Makers - Track Q4

Multilateral Diplomacy

Deadline: 14 Sep 2026

Type:	Course
Location:	Web-based
Date:	1 Sep 2026 to 27 Nov 2026
Duration:	3 Months
Thematic Area:	Technology, Artificial Intelligence and Digital Policy
Website:	https://unitar.org/sustainable-development-goals/multilateral-diplomacy/our-por…
Price:	$800.00
Event Focal Point Email:	ai.mdp@unitar.org

BACKGROUND

Participants who successfully complete this course will receive a UNITAR digital credential, providing a secure, verifiable, and portable record of their achievement.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly reshaping how institutions learn, decide, and deliver public value. From cloud-enabled services and data-driven operations to generative models that accelerate analysis and communication, AI is redefining the skills required of leaders across government, international organizations, and the diplomatic sphere. At the same time, these technologies introduce new complexities, governance gaps, opaque systems, data risks, and shifting expectations of accountability, that demand informed, ethical, and strategic oversight.

The **AI Essentials for Decision-Makers** course responds to this dual imperative. It equips participants with the core concepts, practical tools, and critical perspectives needed to steer digital transformation responsibly. The programme bridges technical and policy domains: it explains how contemporary AI systems work; shows where they add value in policy design, diplomacy, and public administration; and clarifies the limits and risks that must be managed to protect people, institutions, and mandates.

Designed as a **self-paced e-learning** experience, the course emphasizes applied learning for busy professionals. Through clear explanations, real-world use cases, and hands-on guidance, participants learn to translate strategic objectives into measurable outcomes; assess the suitability of AI tools (including generative AI and AI agents) for specific tasks; and incorporate foresight methods to anticipate impacts, safeguard ethics and trust, and make better, evidence-informed decisions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Explain the foundations of artificial intelligence and digital transformation, including key concepts, systems, and terminology;
- Identify and assess opportunities where AI can enhance institutional workflows, decision-making, and service delivery;
- Evaluate the risks, limitations, and ethical considerations of AI, including issues related to transparency, accountability, and bias;
- Interpret and apply data and analytical insights to support evidence-informed policy development and implementation;
- Integrate foresight approaches and engage confidently with technical experts and stakeholders when planning or supervising AI-enabled initiatives.

CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

The course is delivered fully online and **at your own pace**, allowing participants to balance their learning with professional commitments. The course remains accessible for **three (3) months**, enabling participants to progress gradually and revisit content as needed.

The course consists of the following modules:

Module 1 “Understanding Digital Transformation: Opportunities and Challenges”

- The Drivers of Digital Transformation
- Digital Technologies as Structural and Normative Change Agents
- Core Digital Literacies: Visual, Emotional, and Algorithmic
- The Dual Nature of Digital Tools: Empowerment and Control
- Cloud Computing and Edge AI

Module 2 “Fundamentals and Overview of Generative AI”

- Fundamentals and Evolution of Generative AI
- Overview of Tools and Applications
- Main Use Cases of Generative AI in Institutional Contexts

Module 3 “Understanding AI Systems”

- From Symbolic AI to Deep Learning: Historical and Functional Overview
- AI Typologies: Functionality vs Capability
- Key Concepts: Algorithms, Training Data, Reinforcement Learning
- Neural Networks, Few-Shot Learning, and the Data Ecosystem
- The Black Box Problem: Explainability, Transparency, Accountability
- Natural Language Processing and Applications
- AI Agents and Multi-Agent Systems in Decision Environments
- AI as a Socio-Technical System (human-in-the-loop design)

Module 4 “Intelligence for Effective Policy-Making”

- The Role of Intelligence and Evidence in Decision-Making
- From Inputs to Outcomes: Data-Driven Policy Design
- Data Analysis Fundamentals: Patterns, Biases, and Causality
- Converting Concepts into Measurable Parameters

- Interpreting Data to Inform Policy Choices

Module 5 “AI in Foresight”

- Demystifying AI in Strategic Foresight
- The AI-Augmented Foresight Toolkit
- The Human Dimension: Trust, Ethics, and Action
- Getting Started: A Practical Guide for Institutions

Module 6 "Gender, Institutional Barriers and Responsible Decision-Making"

- Why Inclusive AI Matters
- How Bias Enters AI Systems
- Gender and Overlapping Disadvantage in AI
- Risks and Governance in Policy Contexts
- From Awareness to Action

METHODOLOGY

This course is delivered entirely online and is designed to offer maximum flexibility for busy professionals. It combines essential theoretical knowledge with practical insights to support immediate application in the workplace.

Learning activities include:

- **Interactive knowledge checks** to reinforce understanding throughout the course
- **Practical examples and case-based reflections** to connect lessons with real policy and diplomatic contexts
- **Self-assessment quizzes** at the end of each module to validate learning progress

Participants may progress through the course at their own pace. Access to the learning platform is granted for **three (3) months**, allowing learners to complete the course according to their professional schedule and availability.

TARGETED AUDIENCE

This course is intended for anyone seeking to better understand artificial intelligence and its relevance to effective decision-making in institutional, professional, or policy contexts. It is particularly beneficial for:

- Diplomats and public sector officials;
- Staff of the United Nations, international and regional organisations;
- Professionals working in development, humanitarian affairs, and civil society;
- Managers, analysts, and advisors involved in digital transformation or innovation projects;
- Individuals from the private sector wishing to engage with public institutions on AI-related initiatives;
- Students and early-career professionals exploring careers in governance, technology, or international affairs

The course is suitable for both technical and non-technical learners. No prior background in AI is required.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Participants are granted full access to the learning platform for three (3) months from the date of enrolment, allowing them to complete the course at their own pace.

To earn a **UNITAR Certificate of Completion**, participants must:

- Complete all modules and associated activities;
- Successfully pass the final course evaluation;
- Achieve a minimum overall score of **75%;**
- Complete the end-of-course evaluation survey (via SurveyMonkey)

Upon certification, participants will receive a downloadable and shareable digital certificate issued by UNITAR