

The Nature of Strategy and Planning

Development of Strategy

Session 1 · Tuesday 25 August 2026

Tutor · Matthew Doyle

Qualifying Programme · August–November 2026

01

TODAY

**Nature of Strategy
and Planning**

25 Aug

02

**Strategic
Management and
Developing Strategy**

8 Sep

03

**External
Environment and
Capabilities**

15 Sep

04

**Culture and the
Governing Body**

22 Sep

05

**Purpose, Ethics and
Social Responsibility**

29 Sep

06

**Strategic Choices
and Strategy
Development**

6 Oct

07

CASE OUT

**Structure and
Strategic Control**

13 Oct

08

**Managing Strategic
Change**

20 Oct

09

Case Study Review

27 Oct

10

**Case Study
Examination
Preparation**

3 Nov

EXAMINATION Entry closes 25 Sep · case study 12 Oct · exam 16–26 Nov 2026 · no class 1 Sep

By the end of tonight, you will be able to...

01

Define strategy

Use Johnson, Lynch, Levicki or Pettigrew & Whipp — and know the difference between strategy and plan.

02

Apply Mintzberg's 5 Ps

Plan, Ploy, Pattern, Position, Perspective — diagnose strategy in practice.

03

Use the vocabulary precisely

Strategy, vision, mission, objectives, goals and actions are not interchangeable terms.

04

Apply the four perspectives

Mintzberg, Spender, Maccoby and Argyris — the thinkers the examiner expects you to name.

05

Distinguish the levels of strategy

Corporate, business and functional — and where the governance professional advises at each.

IN THE EXAM Chapter 1 frames many questions. Mintzberg: 15 questions in twelve sittings · Maccoby 9 · Spender 8.

Six blocks • one fixed break

- 1** Introduction and the examination
- 2** What is strategy? — definitions, terms and decisions
- 3** Perspectives of strategy — Mintzberg, Spender, Maccoby, Argyris
- 4** Levels of strategy
- 5** Boeing 1997–2024 — introducing the running case

Break • fixed

- 6** Examination technique and takeaways

RUNNING CASE Boeing 1997–2024 runs through every block of this module — and gives you a worked example for any CGI question stem.

Matthew Doyle

01

Strategy in practice

A career developing and executing strategy, including KPMG and Latham & Watkins.

02

Regulation

Time working for the UK Government in regulation.

03

Board roles

Non-executive chair and director roles, and consultancy in financial services.

04

Teaching

Ten years lecturing at universities in the US, UK and France, primarily at Level 7.

05

Contact

matthew.doyle@kcbglobal.net — before or after any session, or by arrangement.

MY COMMITMENT Your examination success is the measure of this course. Tell me early if you fall behind.

What you are being examined on, and when

01

Three hours, plus 15 minutes reading

Four answers at 25 marks each. 100 marks in total. The pass mark is 50%.

02

Section A — compulsory

Three questions from four, all based on the pre-released case study.

03

Section B — unseen

One question from two, on scenarios you have never seen. Worth a quarter of the paper.

04

45 minutes per question

Four complete answers will always beat three polished ones. Time is the most common cause of failure.

05

November 2025 — the latest published report

86% passed — 9 distinctions, 13 merits, 39 passes, 10 fails, from 71 candidates.

KEY DATES Entry closes 25 September · case study 12 October · exam 16–26 November 2026 · results 9 February 2027.

The KCB 40:20:40 model — how we will use your time

01

40% KNOWLEDGE

Building knowledge across all of the syllabus areas. Reading, sessions and the study text.

IN PRACTICE

Sessions, the study text and the weekly reading.

02

20% EXPLORING

Contextualising it: how the knowledge fits together and how it is applied in the examination.

IN PRACTICE

Worked examples, model answers and the case study.

03

40% PRACTICE

Examination practice. Every session opens by reviewing the question you worked on last week.

IN PRACTICE

Past questions, timed writing and mark-scheme debriefs.

04

WHAT I ASK

Attend, read ahead, attempt every practice question — even when you are not happy with the answer.

IN PRACTICE

Bring the attempt, however rough. We fix it together.

05

THE HABIT

Stay one session ahead of the reading. There is no slack in this programme after week three.

IN PRACTICE

Read Chapter 2 in the free fortnight — it is the heaviest week otherwise.

REALITY CHECK An imperfect attempt we can talk through is worth far more than a blank page.

What you have, and what each one is for

01

The CGI study text

The core resource. It contains all the knowledge required to pass the examination.

02

KCB Moodle

Session slides and recordings after class. Practice questions are set on the KCB companion.

03

MyCG study support

CGI's own guidance, past papers, examiners' reports and the examiners' webinars.

04

The Examination Question Matrix

Every question mapped to its syllabus area, twelve sittings. On the LMS.

05

The class WhatsApp group

Ask questions there — someone else usually has the same one.

USE THE MATRIX Weight your revision by it — but do not narrow your reading. A quiet area is due, not dead.

A large red square with rounded corners containing a white number "1".

1

SECTION 1

What is Strategy?

Definitions, foundations and the Board's role.

Four definitions — and what each asks the strategist to do

01

JOHNSON et al.

“The long-term direction of an organisation.”
(2017)

BOEING

Boeing’s stated direction and its actual direction parted company after 1997.

02

LYNCH

“The identification of the purpose of the organisation and the plans and actions to achieve that purpose.”
(2015)

BOEING

Purpose said safety and innovation; the plans rewarded delivery rate.

03

LEVICKI

Strategy sets objectives and goals across timeframes so people know what must be achieved, by whom, and when. (2003)

BOEING

The 787 roadmap had timeframes; the accountability for risk did not follow them.

04

PETTIGREW & WHIPP

Three elements behind any strategic decision: context, content and process. (1991)

BOEING

Context: post-merger cost pressure. Content: outsource. Process: finance-led.

05

IN THE EXAM

Use a named definition to open an answer. It costs one line and signals you know the literature.

BOEING

Boeing works as a public-domain example for almost any stem.

DEFINITIONS All four appear in Chapter 1 of the study text. Learn one properly rather than four vaguely.

Strategy versus plan — the words are not interchangeable

01

A plan is a scheme or method

One sense: a detailed scheme or method for attaining an objective.

02

A plan is an outline

A second sense: a sketch or outline, not necessarily detailed at all.

03

A plan is an intention

A third sense: simply to have something in mind as a purpose.

04

Strategy is the direction

Strategy sets where the organisation is going. The plan is one means of getting there.

05

Why the exam cares

Treating the two as synonyms loses marks on any question about planning cycles.

THE TEST If you can change it without changing where the organisation is heading, it is a plan.

Key terms — the examiner expects you to use them precisely

01

STRATEGY

The combining of knowledge and capability in the perception of a future outcome.

BOEING

Knowledge of the market was strong; capability to build safely was allowed to erode.

02

VISION

The ability of the human brain to imagine something different from a current situation.

BOEING

“Connect, protect, explore and inspire the world through aerospace innovation.”

03

MISSION

The ethos, beliefs and values that enable the forming of a vision.

BOEING

Stated ethos: safety first.
Enacted ethos: schedule first.

04

OBJECTIVES

A range of criteria that identify and clarify different aspects of the vision and mission.

BOEING

Objectives were financial.
Safety was assumed rather than measured.

05

GOALS AND ACTIONS

Goals are specific, definable outcomes; actions are the steps that achieve them.

BOEING

57 aircraft a month was a goal. The actions to reach it created the risk.

PRECISION Vision, mission and objectives are not synonyms. Using them loosely is one of the commonest ways to lose easy marks.

Strategic planning — what is the gap?

01**Where are we now?**

An honest reading of the current position, capability and resources.

02**Where do we want to be?**

The vision, expressed so that progress towards it can be recognised.

03**The gap between them**

Strategic planning is the work of closing that gap. Wearden (2019).

04**The route matters**

There is usually more than one way across. The choice of route is the strategy.

05**Boeing's gap**

After 1997 the gap was defined financially, so every route chosen was a financial one.

THE QUESTION If a Board cannot state the gap in one sentence, it does not yet have a strategy.

Boundaries, parameters and what success means

01

Strategic thinking must be real

Understand the boundaries and parameters of the starting point before setting the route.

02

Every organisation differs

Parameters define how a particular business can develop. Competitors do not share them.

03

Some boundaries must move

Certain parameters may need to change to make the objectives reachable at all.

04

Success is perceived

Different people judge it differently. Precise goals make the judgement clear.

05

Success shifts on the journey

How success looks at the start is rarely how it looks at the end.

STRATEGIC FIT Are we within our existing resources and comprehension — or must we develop new ones?

Types of decision — and what to ask before taking one

01

IRREVERSIBLE

No going back. Once taken, the organisation lives with the consequence.

BOEING

Outsourcing 70% of the 787 changed the supply base permanently.

02

REVERSIBLE

The organisation can return to the starting point and rethink.

BOEING

Buying Spirit back — \$4.7bn in equity, \$8.3bn with debt. Reversible, but not cheaply.

03

EXPERIMENTAL OR STAGED

Tests the water ahead of commitment. Subjective judgement, deliberately limited in scope.

BOEING

A staged MCAS rollout with simulator training would have been the experiment.

04

THE QUESTIONS

Why must I decide? What happens if I do not? Who is affected? What would change my mind?

BOEING

The Board asked when the aircraft would ship, not what would stop it shipping safely.

05

IN THE EXAM

Classify the decision before you evaluate it. Irreversibility changes the risk analysis entirely.

BOEING

Say which type, then say what follows from that.

CHARACTERISTIC Strategic decisions are long-term, organisation-wide, resource-committing and taken under uncertainty.

Why developing strategy is hard

01

The environment is uncertain

It cannot be fully known at the point the decision is taken.

02

Technology keeps changing

Rapid change moves the ground under a strategy while it is being executed.

03

Multinational trade is intricate

Tariffs, regulation and geopolitics compound one another across borders.

04

Others' decisions are opaque

Much of what competitors, suppliers and regulators do is incomprehensible from outside.

05

People are the hardest variable

Leadership styles differ — and two people together create challenges neither has alone.

THE IMPLICATION Complexity is why strategy is emergent as well as deliberate. Plans meet reality and change shape.

2

SECTION 2

Mintzberg's 5 Ps

Plan · Ploy · Pattern · Position · Perspective

The 5 Ps — a diagnostic, not a typology

01

PLAN

Intended, deliberate, formalised.

BOEING

787 Dreamliner 15-year roadmap (2004).

02

PLOY

A specific competitive manoeuvre.

BOEING

737 MAX launch to counter the A320neo.

03

PATTERN

Observed consistency in decisions over time.

BOEING

Outsourcing and financialisation from 1997.

04

POSITION

Where you sit in competitive space.

BOEING

Commercial-aviation duopoly with Airbus.

05

PERSPECTIVE

Shared beliefs — how you see yourselves.

BOEING

Stated: safety. Enacted: finance.

APPLY IT Which P best describes the 737 MAX decision?

Where stated diverges from enacted, governance fails

THE KEY INSIGHT

Every organisation has a stated Perspective — and an enacted one.

The most important question for a governance professional: is there a gap — and can the Board see it?

PATTERN — observed consistency

2000–2015: outsourcing of core manufacturing; finance metrics crowd out engineering metrics.

POSITION — competitive space

Duopoly with Airbus — defended through incremental derivatives, not clean-sheet innovation.

PERSPECTIVE — how we see ourselves

Stated: safety, innovation, connecting the world. Enacted: financial engineering, production pressure.

GOVERNANCE DIAGNOSTIC Which P dominates? Which is absent? Where does stated diverge from enacted?

Four paradigms — four ways to read an organisation

01

GOALS

A scientific approach: the strategist reads context objectively, assuming people act rationally — X happens because of Y.

BOEING

The 15-year 787 roadmap assumed rational suppliers and predictable cost curves.

02

JUDGEMENT

Recognising that environments change and people are not always rational — so gaps exist in any plan.

BOEING

The MAX timetable left no judgement margin once the A320neo landed.

03

PEOPLE

A people-centric approach: the strategist persuades others to change expectations so objectives can be pursued.

BOEING

Engineers who raised MCAS concerns were not persuaded of, or persuasive within, the strategy.

04

FLEXIBILITY

The model assumes stable goals — flexibility asks what happens when they must move.

BOEING

Goals stayed fixed on delivery rate long after the evidence said stop.

05

IN THE EXAM

Spender has appeared in 8 questions across the last twelve sittings — most often alongside Mintzberg.

BOEING

Name the paradigm, then apply it. Naming alone earns little.

APPLY IT Which paradigm was Boeing's Board using between 2015 and 2018 — and which one did it need?

Four capabilities a strategic leader has to hold at once

01

FORESIGHT

Anticipating what is likely to happen that could change our intentions.

BOEING

Concerns about MCAS were raised inside Boeing before the crashes. None reached the board.

02

VISIONING

Continually improving processes, products and services to fulfil customer aspirations.

BOEING

Vision narrowed from “connecting the world” to delivery rate and share price.

03

PARTNERING

Working with others — customers and suppliers — to strengthen strategic perspective.

BOEING

Spirit was outsourced in 2005 and bought back — announced 2024, completed December 2025.

04

MOTIVATING

Inspiring others to share the vision and help implement the strategy.

BOEING

Staff who raised safety concerns reported fear of speaking up.

05

IN THE EXAM

Maccoby has appeared in 9 questions across the last twelve sittings.

BOEING

Strong in leadership questions — pair it with Mintzberg or Spender.

APPLY IT Which of the four was most absent at Boeing between 1997 and 2019?

The ladder of inference — and where strategy goes wrong

DATA

WHAT HAPPENED

The observable facts, before anyone interprets them. Everyone in the room can see the same data.

BOEING

MCAS activated on a single sensor.

THE RISK

Data is filtered before it reaches the Board.

INFERENCE

WHAT WE CONCLUDE

The meaning we add. We select, interpret and generalise — usually without noticing we have done it.

MODE

Pilots will handle it; no new training needed.

BOARD'S ROLE

Inference is mistaken for fact.

ACTION

WHAT WE DO

The decision that follows — which then produces new data, and the loop reinforces itself.

MODE

MAX certified without simulator training.

BOARD'S ROLE

The loop closes and nobody re-tests the inference.

WHY IT MATTERS Double-loop learning breaks the ladder: challenge the inference, not just the action. This is the governance professional's job.

A large red square with rounded corners containing a large white number "3".

3

SECTION 3

Levels of Strategy

Three levels · four cycle stages · one set of directors' duties.

Three levels — three owners — three kinds of question



CORPORATE

Which industries, which portfolios, which M&A?

BOEING 1997 MDC merger · Spirit AeroSystems re-acquisition, completed 2025

BUSINESS UNIT

How do we win within a chosen market?

BOEING 737 MAX positioning against the Airbus A320neo

FUNCTIONAL

How do functions support the strategy?

BOEING Engineering outsourcing to Spirit AeroSystems

THE BOEING QUESTION At which level did the failure originate?

4

SECTION 4

Boeing 1997–2024

The running case for this module — introduced tonight, developed every week.

The timeline at a glance — five inflection points



THE REFRAME The 2018–19 crashes were not the failure — they were the consequence. The failure began in 1997.

DRIFT Each inflection point is a Board decision — or a Board that failed to decide.

The inflection point — a reverse cultural takeover

The 1997 merger of Boeing and McDonnell Douglas was meant to create a super-competitor. Instead it marked the start of strategic and cultural drift.

PRE-1997 · BOEING

Engineering-led. Safety-obsessed. Employee-focused. The strategy was the aircraft — and the aircraft was proof of the strategy.

POST-MERGER · CULTURAL SHIFT

MDC's financial culture takes hold — stock price and cost cuts become paramount. A 'reverse takeover' (Useem 2019; US House T&I Final Report 2020).

1997

Merger year

~\$13bn

Deal value

50→70%

Outsourced content by 2011

1997–2013

Drift phase 2

STRATEGY LESSON Cultural integration is a governance question — not an HR one.

5 Ps applied to Boeing

BOEING'S STATED PURPOSE · 2016

“Connect, protect, explore and inspire the world through aerospace innovation.”

Using Mintzberg's 5 Ps — was this Boeing's real strategy from 2001 to 2018?

01

Breakout · 5 min

Groups of four — each group takes one P (Plan / Ploy / Pattern / Position / Perspective).

02

List · in group

Evidence for and against your P being operative at Boeing 2001–2018. Appoint a named reporter.

03

Plenary and synthesis · 10 min

45 seconds per group. Facilitator synthesis to follow — hold the ‘stated vs enacted’ gap.

15 MINUTES One P per group · evidence both ways · a named reporter for each group.

How to use Mintzberg's 5 Ps as a diagnostic, in three moves

READ

STEP ONE

Identify which P the organisation says it is using — usually Plan, from the strategy document.

SOURCE

Annual report, strategy statement, board minutes.

TIME

Three minutes.

OBSERVE

STEP TWO

Identify which P is actually operating, from the pattern of decisions over several years.

THE TEST

Pattern is observed, not announced. Look at what was repeatedly chosen.

TRAP

Taking the stated strategy as evidence of the enacted one.

NAME

STEP THREE

State the gap between stated and enacted, and say what governance failure it reveals.

THE MARKS

The gap is the analysis. Naming five Ps without it is description.

OUTPUT

One named gap, evidenced, with a governance implication.

THE POINT The 5 Ps are a diagnostic, not a typology. The diagnosis is what earns marks.

Five ways candidates lose marks on Chapter 1

01**Defining without applying**

A definition of strategy is one line of an answer, not the answer.

02**Listing the 5 Ps**

Five Ps named earns little. Which one dominates, and where stated diverges from enacted, earns marks.

03**Blurring the vocabulary**

Strategy, vision, mission, objectives and goals do five different jobs. Precision is cheap and visible.

04**Forgetting the thinkers**

Mintzberg, Spender, Maccoby and Argyris are the names the examiner expects on this material.

05**Ignoring the levels**

Corporate, business and functional decisions are different questions with different owners.

THE PATTERN Chapter 1 is rarely a whole question. It is the opening frame of many, and it is where precision shows.

What makes a decision strategic rather than operational

01

SCOPE

Affects the whole organisation, or a substantial part of it, rather than one function.

BOEING

Outsourcing 70% of the 787 reshaped manufacturing, procurement, quality and risk together.

02

HORIZON

Long-term consequences that outlast the people who took the decision.

BOEING

A 1997 merger decision was still determining outcomes in 2019.

03

RESOURCE

Commits significant resource, and commits it in a way that is hard to reverse.

BOEING

Reacquiring Spirit cost \$4.7bn in equity to undo a decision taken two decades earlier.

04

UNCERTAIN

Taken with incomplete information, under conditions that cannot be fully analysed.

BOEING

The A320neo response had to be decided before the consequences could be known.

05

IN THE EXAM

Classify the decision before you evaluate it. Irreversibility changes the whole risk analysis.

BOEING

Say which characteristics apply, then say what follows for the board.

THE GOVERNANCE POINT If a decision meets these four tests, it belongs to the board — not to the executive alone.

The 5 Ps on a different organisation — Rolls-Royce, 2015–18

01

PLAN

A published transformation programme: simplify the business, cut cost, restore margin.

ROLLS-ROYCE

The stated strategy, set out to investors and repeated annually.

02

PLOY

Restructuring announcements timed to reassure a market losing patience.

ROLLS-ROYCE

Ploys are aimed at an audience. Here the audience was the capital market.

03

PATTERN

Two decades of long-term service contracts underwriting low-margin engine sales.

ROLLS-ROYCE

The pattern in the stream of decisions — never announced as strategy, but decisive.

04

POSITION

The smaller of two engine makers on new widebodies, and absent from narrowbody.

ROLLS-ROYCE

Position explains why the pattern was viable for so long.

05

PERSPECTIVE

An engineering institution that saw itself as a national asset first.

ROLLS-ROYCE

Perspective explains why cost discipline arrived later than the numbers required.

WHY THIS MATTERS Section B is unseen. A second worked case means you always have an example that is not aviation manufacture.

Which frameworks combine well in a 25-mark answer

01

5 Ps plus Argyris

The Ps find the gap; the ladder of inference explains how nobody noticed it.

02

Spender plus Maccoby

Paradigm plus leadership capability — how the strategist reads, and what they must hold.

03

Definitions plus levels

Open with a named definition, then separate corporate from business decisions. Fast and precise.

04

Chapter 1 plus anything

These thinkers frame answers on culture, choice, control and change. They are not confined to week one.

05

Two is the number

Two models applied well beat five named. Depth is what the reports reward.

FROM THE REPORTS “Answers need to apply the theory to the case study, not just demonstrate knowledge of the theory.” Nov 2022.

Ten minutes on your own organisation

THE TASK · 10 MINUTES

“Find your organisation’s published strategy. One page is enough.”

Name the P it claims, then the P its decisions actually show — and say what the gap reveals.

01

Individual · 4 min

Two Ps: stated and enacted. One line of evidence for each.

02

Pairs · 3 min

Swap. Your partner should be able to name your gap from your two lines.

03

Plenary · 3 min

Volunteers. One gap, and whether the board can see it.

10 MINUTES Stated P · enacted P · what the gap reveals.

Five ways candidates lose marks they had already earned

01

Relaying knowledge, not applying it

The model is the tool, not the answer. Describing PESTEL earns little; using it on the case earns marks.

02

Leaving part of the question unanswered

One ignored requirement weakens an otherwise strong answer. Read the stem twice and count the tasks.

03

Not planning time across four questions

Marks are lost in the last answer, not the first. Watch the clock from question one.

04

Avoiding a firm view

A supported recommendation earns marks. An absent one cannot. None of them are wrong if you argue them.

05

Ignoring the signposted issues

The case study flags its own issues. The questions come from them — so predict them before you sit down.

SOURCE Drawn from CGI examiners' reports, June 2022 to November 2025. These five recur in almost every report.

What a 25-mark answer contains, in the order you build it

01

Headings before prose

Take the requirements from the question and turn them into your report headings. Introduction and conclusion first.

02

Identify the learning outcome

Ask what the question is really testing, then pull the chapter summaries that cover it.

03

Two models, three at most

Name the thinkers. Apply the models to the scenario. Do not list every framework you know.

04

Link to the case, and to the world

Reference the case study wherever it is relevant, and add one current example from the public domain.

05

Commit by 38 minutes

Reach a clear recommendation with seven minutes left, then fill out the body with whatever time remains.

RUNNING CASE Boeing gives you a public-domain example for almost any stem — strategy, culture, ethics, structure, control or change.

Two Section A, one Section B — from the past CGI exams

DIRECTED PRACTICE · PAST CGI EXAMS ON THE KCB COMPANION

On the KCB companion you have the previous CGI papers. Complete these three before Session 2; we debrief them at the start.

This is the Practice 40 of the KCB method. Attempt every one — a page we can talk through beats a blank page.

01

Section A · Jun 2024 Q1

EcoZen Harmony — revive the strategy, with two targets each at 12, 24 and 36 months (Ch 1).

02

Section A · Nov 2021 Q1

Castle Engineering — adapt strategy and planning processes for new markets (Ch 1).

03

Section B · Nov 2022 Q5

YS — a family business with no strategy at succession: the issues, and a growth strategy (Ch 1).

ALSO Read Chapter 1 of the study text, and Chapter 2 sections 1–3 during the free fortnight. There is no class on 1 September.

What you carry into Session 2

01

Strategy is contested — Johnson, Lynch, Levicki and Pettigrew & Whipp each define it differently.

02

Mintzberg's 5 Ps are a diagnostic: which P dominates — and where does stated diverge from enacted?

03

Three levels — corporate, business, functional — and the governance professional advises at each.

04

Strategic drift (Johnson, 1987): incremental, drift, flux, transform or demise. The Board is the circuit breaker.

05

Boeing 1997–2024: governance failure and strategic drift are the same story in two languages.

EXIT TICKET · ONE SENTENCE IN CHAT

“What governance lesson from Boeing will you carry into your own professional practice?”

HOMEWORK · BEFORE SESSION 2

Complete all three on the previous slide — Jun 2024 Q1, Nov 2021 Q1 and Nov 2022 Q5 — timed, from the KCB companion.

Full details, including the reading, are on the homework slide.

RETRIEVAL Name the 5 Ps · define strategic drift in one sentence · name the four perspectives of strategy.