

CILG Level 1 Syllabus

CILG — Level 1 Foundation Certificate | Comprehensive Syllabus

Syllabus · Level 1 · Foundation Certificate

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Official Syllabus — 2024 Edition

Level 1 Syllabus

Foundation Certificate in Leadership and Governance

Modules

Learning Outcomes

50+

Topic Areas

40+

Reading References

Module 1.1

Fundamentals of Leadership

Module 1.2

Introduction to Corporate Governance

Module 1.3

Organisational Behavior and Culture

Module 1.4

Business Communication and Professional Ethics

Module 1.5

Introduction to Strategy and Organisations

Qualification Level

Level 1 — Foundation Certificate in Leadership and Governance

5 Modules

Written Examination — MCQ & Short Answer

90 minutes per module

Minimum pass: 50%

Study load: 80–100 hours per module

Foundation

1.1

MODULE

Fundamentals of Leadership

Exploring the evolution of leadership theory and developing foundational self-awareness as a professional leader

Module Overview

The module traces the development of leadership thought from early 20th-century trait theories through behavioural, contingency, and transactional models to the contemporary frameworks of transformational, servant, authentic, and distributed leadership that define professional leadership practice today. Candidates are encouraged from the outset to relate these frameworks to their own professional experience and to develop the habits of reflective practice that are the hallmark of the mature professional.

Professional Rationale:

Module Objectives

To introduce candidates to the principal theories and models of leadership and to trace their historical development from classical to contemporary frameworks

To develop candidates' ability to clearly distinguish between leadership and management, and to understand their complementary and interdependent roles in organisational effectiveness

To establish self-awareness and emotional intelligence — as defined and operationalised by Goleman's five-domain framework — as the foundational personal competencies of professional leadership development

To enable candidates to evaluate the appropriateness of different leadership styles across varying professional, organisational, and cultural contexts, with particular reference to situational leadership theory

To introduce motivation theory and its practical implications for how leaders engage, inspire, and sustain the performance of their teams and organisations

To introduce the ethical dimension of professional leadership — establishing integrity, honesty, and moral courage as non-negotiable foundations of credible leadership practice

To develop the habit of structured professional reflection as a core capability for ongoing personal and professional development throughout a career

Detailed Topic Content

Evolution of leadership theory: from Great Man theory and trait theory to behavioural approaches (Ohio State, Michigan studies)

Contingency and situational theories: Fiedler's contingency model, path-goal theory, Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership

Transformational and transactional leadership: Bass and Avolio's full-range leadership model; the four Is of transformational leadership

Servant leadership theory (Greenleaf): ten characteristics, listening, empathy, stewardship, and commitment to the growth of people

Authentic leadership: self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and internalised moral perspective (George; Gardner et al.)

Distributed and shared leadership: moving beyond the single leader model in contemporary organisations

Leadership versus management: Kotter's distinction; complementary functions; the dangers of over-managing and under-leading

Emotional intelligence: Goleman's five domains — self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, social skill; relevance to leadership effectiveness

Leadership styles: autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire, coaching, affiliative, pace-setting, and commanding — their application and impact on organisational climate

Motivation theories: Maslow's hierarchy of needs; Herzberg's two-factor theory; McClelland's acquired needs theory; Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory

Communication as a leadership tool: active listening, non-verbal communication, the feedback model, and crafting a compelling leadership narrative

Team dynamics and group formation: Tuckman's model (forming, storming, norming, performing, adjourning) and its leadership implications

Ethical leadership: definitions, frameworks, and the moral obligations of professional leaders; the relationship between personal values and leadership behaviour

Reflective practice in leadership: Gibbs' reflective cycle; Kolb's experiential learning model; structured approaches to professional self-development

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module, candidates will be able to: (Bloom's taxonomy level indicated for each outcome)

Ref

Learning Outcome

Bloom's Level

LO 1.1.1

Identify and describe the major theories of leadership in chronological order, tracing the shift from person-centred to context-centred to relational leadership frameworks

Knowledge

LO 1.1.2

Explain the key distinctions between leadership and management, articulating why both functions are essential and how they interact in organisational settings

Comprehension

LO 1.1.3

Apply Goleman's five-domain emotional intelligence framework to conduct a structured self-assessment of personal leadership strengths and priority development areas

Application

LO 1.1.4

Evaluate the relative appropriateness of at least three leadership styles in a given professional scenario, justifying the selection with reference to situational variables

Evaluation

LO 1.1.5

Apply Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership framework to determine the appropriate leadership style for team members at different levels of task readiness

Application

LO 1.1.6

Explain the core principles of transformational and servant leadership and compare them in terms of their underlying values and their implications for governance practice

Analysis

LO 1.1.7

Describe at least two motivation theories and demonstrate how each can be applied by a leader to enhance team engagement and performance in a professional context

Application

LO 1.1.8

Articulate the ethical foundations of professional leadership and compose a personal leadership values statement that will guide professional conduct

Synthesis

Suggested Readings

Leadership: Theory and Practice

Core Text

Northouse, P.G. — SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA (9th Ed., 2021) | ISBN: 978-1544397566

The globally adopted standard leadership textbook used across more than 1,500 institutions worldwide. Its strength lies in its comprehensive, balanced coverage of all major leadership theories with consistent application frameworks.

Chapters directly relevant to this module: Ch.1 (Introduction), Ch.2 (Trait Theory), Ch.3 (Skills Approach), Ch.4 (Behavioral Approach), Ch.5 (Situational Approach), Ch.8 (Transformational Leadership), Ch.10 (Servant Leadership), Ch.11 (Authentic Leadership).

Candidates should read Chapters 1–5 as minimum; Chapters 8, 10, and 11 are strongly recommended.

Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence

Core Text

Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R. & McKee, A. — Harvard Business Review Press, Boston (2013 ed.) | ISBN: 978-1422168035

The definitive text on emotional intelligence in leadership practice. Introduces the four-domain EI model as it applies to leadership and presents compelling research evidence on the impact of EI on organisational climate and performance.

Essential for LO 1.1.3 and LO 1.1.4.

Part 1 (Chapters 1–3) establishes the emotional intelligence–leadership connection; Part 2 develops the six leadership styles framework that is directly assessed in this module. Accessible prose style; highly readable for professionals with limited prior study background.

The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations

Supplementary

Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. — Jossey-Bass/Wiley, San Francisco (7th Ed., 2023) | ISBN: 978-1119736127

Based on more than four decades of leadership research encompassing over five million survey respondents across 70 countries. Introduces the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership model: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. Particularly valuable for understanding leadership as behavioural practice rather than innate trait.

Chapters 1–3 provide an excellent complement to the theoretical survey in the core text.

Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness

Supplementary

Greenleaf, R.K. — Paulist Press, Mahwah, NJ (Classic Ed., 2002 — originally 1977) | ISBN: 978-0809105540

The original text articulating the philosophy of servant leadership from which the entire subsequent servant leadership research tradition is derived. Greenleaf's vision of the leader who serves — placing the growth and well-being of followers above the interests of the leader — has profoundly influenced contemporary leadership and governance thinking.

The essay "The Servant as Leader" (pp. 21–48) is the essential reading for this module; the balance of the book provides valuable philosophical depth for candidates wishing to explore the concept further.

What Makes a Leader?

Professional Reading

Goleman, D. — Harvard Business Review, Vol. 76, No. 6, November–December 1998 (reprinted in HBR's 10 Must Reads on Leadership, 2011)

One of the most widely read and cited articles in the history of the Harvard Business Review, with over one million reprints. Provides an accessible, concise summary of the emotional intelligence–leadership research with direct implications for professional development.

Available free at hbr.org.

Recommended as the first reading assigned in this module — prior to the core texts — to establish the EI framework in accessible, concrete terms. Ideal for candidates new to leadership study.

Leadership is an Art

Professional Reading

A brief, humane, and beautifully written reflection on what leadership really means, from one of the most respected practitioner voices in leadership literature. De Pree — former CEO of Herman Miller — writes from deep professional experience about the leader's obligation to serve, to include, and to enable. Particularly relevant for the servant leadership and ethical leadership content.

The opening chapters (pp. 1–40) are essential;

the book can be read in its entirety in approximately two hours and is strongly recommended for candidates at the beginning of their leadership development journey.

Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge

Supplementary

Bennis, W. & Nanus, B. — Harper Business, New York (2nd Ed., 2003) | ISBN: 978-0060559540

A landmark study of 90 exceptional leaders, published in 1985 and still widely cited. Bennis and Nanus identify four common strategies: attention through vision, meaning through communication, trust through positioning, and the deployment of self.

Chapter 1 ("Mastering the Context") and Chapter 2 ("Attention through Vision") are directly relevant to LO 1.1.2,

providing the most influential articulation of the leadership–management distinction in management literature.

Crucibles of Leadership

Professional Reading

Bennis, W. & Thomas, R.J. — Harvard Business Review, September 2002 | Available free at hbr.org

This article introduces the concept of "crucible experiences" — formative challenges and adversity that forge exceptional leaders. Based on extensive interviews with both extraordinary leaders of the World War II generation and exceptional young leaders, it offers a powerful framework for understanding leadership development through experience and reflection.

Directly relevant to the reflective practice component of this module (LO 1.1.8).

Assessment Information

Examination Details

Assessment type

Written Examination

Format

40 MCQ (60%) + 4 short-answer questions (40%)

Duration

90 minutes

Minimum pass mark

50% overall

Examination windows

March · June · September · December

Delivery

Grading Scale

Distinction

80 – 100%

Merit

70 – 79%

Pass

50 – 69%

Referred

45 – 49%

Fail

Below 45%

Re-sit waiting period

Minimum 60 days

Maximum attempts

3 (then formal re-application)

Study Guidance:

Candidates should allocate a minimum of

80–100 study hours

1.2

MODULE

Introduction to Corporate Governance

Building foundational understanding of governance structures, principles, board accountability, and the historical development of corporate governance

Module Overview

Corporate governance has emerged as one of the defining disciplines of 21st-century professional practice. The collapse of Enron, WorldCom, Parmalat, and more recently Theranos and Wirecard — and the systemic failures that contributed to the Global Financial Crisis — have made it starkly clear that the absence of robust governance is not a technical failure but a leadership and ethical failure with devastating consequences for employees, shareholders, communities, and the broader economy.

This module introduces the principles, structures, and significance of corporate governance as a professional discipline. Candidates explore the foundational theories of governance — including agency theory, stewardship theory, and stakeholder theory — alongside the historical development of governance frameworks and codes. The module addresses the structure and function of the board of directors, the principal-agent relationship, the rights and interests of shareholders, and the major international governance codes that define best practice.

A distinctive feature of this module is its commitment to treating governance as a professional practice — not merely an academic subject. Candidates are expected to engage with real governance documents (annual reports, governance codes, proxy statements) and to apply governance principles to realistic scenarios from the outset.

Professional Rationale:

Module Objectives

To define corporate governance comprehensively and explain the principal theories — agency, stewardship, and stakeholder theories — that underpin contemporary governance frameworks

To trace the historical development of corporate governance from the industrial corporation through the governance code movement, including the impact of major scandals and the resulting regulatory responses

To introduce the structure, composition, and primary responsibilities of boards of directors, including the distinction between executive and non-executive roles

To explain the principal-agent problem and demonstrate its practical implications for how governance systems are designed and how boards exercise oversight

To provide a working understanding of the major international governance codes — including the US framework, the UK Corporate Governance Code, and the OECD Principles — and the comply-or-explain approach

To examine stakeholder theory and its challenge to shareholder primacy, exploring the evolving relationship between corporations, shareholders, and the broader range of stakeholders including employees, communities, and the environment

To draw substantive governance lessons from major corporate failures, developing the analytical capability to identify governance deficiencies and their consequences

Detailed Topic Content

Definitions of corporate governance: Cadbury (1992), OECD (2004/2015/2023), King IV — a comparative analysis

Agency theory: principals, agents, information asymmetry, moral hazard, and adverse selection — governance as a solution

Stewardship theory: the steward-manager model as an alternative to agency theory

Stakeholder theory (Freeman 1984): identifying, mapping, and balancing stakeholder interests

Historical development: separation of ownership and control; the Berle and Means thesis (1932)

The governance code movement: Cadbury Report (1992), Greenbury Report (1995), Hampel Report (1998), Combined Code

Sarbanes-Oxley Act 2002: key provisions, context, and governance implications

UK Corporate Governance Code (2018/2024): principles, provisions, and comply-or-explain approach

OECD Principles of Corporate Governance (2023): six principles and their international application

The board of directors: legal status, composition, size, diversity, and the roles of executive and non-executive directors

Independent directors: definition, importance, limitations, and the independence paradox

Board committees: audit, remuneration, and nomination — introduction and purpose

Shareholder rights: voting rights, AGMs, shareholder democracy, and institutional investor activism

Shareholder primacy versus stakeholder governance: the Friedman/Freeman debate; the Business Roundtable Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation (2019)

Corporate governance failures: Enron (2001), WorldCom (2002), Royal Bank of Scotland (2009), Carillion (2018), Theranos — key governance lessons from each

Learning Outcomes

Ref

Learning Outcome

Bloom's Level

LO 1.2.1

Define corporate governance using at least two internationally recognised definitions and explain the core purpose it serves in organisational life

Knowledge

LO 1.2.2

Explain agency theory, identifying the principal-agent problem and demonstrating how corporate governance structures are designed to mitigate its consequences

Comprehension

LO 1.2.3

Describe the structure and key responsibilities of a board of directors, differentiating between executive, non-executive, and independent director roles and their respective contributions to governance quality

Comprehension

LO 1.2.4

Identify at least two major governance codes, compare their principal provisions, and apply the comply-or-explain principle to a given scenario

Application

LO 1.2.5

Compare shareholder primacy and stakeholder governance theories, evaluating the implications of each for board decision-making and corporate purpose

Analysis

LO 1.2.6

Analyse at least one major corporate governance failure, identifying the specific governance deficiencies present and explaining how improved governance structures could have prevented or mitigated the failure

Analysis

LO 1.2.7

Explain the role of shareholders in corporate governance, describing the mechanisms through which shareholders exercise oversight and accountability over boards and management

Comprehension

Suggested Readings

Corporate Governance

Core Text

Tricker, R.I. — Oxford University Press, Oxford (4th Ed., 2019) | ISBN: 978-0198806974

The most comprehensive and authoritative introduction to corporate governance in print, written by the scholar who coined the term "corporate governance" in 1984. Covers the full theoretical and practical spectrum with clarity and rigour.

Chapters 1 (Introduction to Corporate Governance), 2 (The Development of the Corporation), 3 (The Board — Structure and Style), 4 (The Board — People and Process), and 5 (Corporate Governance Around the World) are directly relevant to this module.

Chapter 6 on governance codes is recommended as supplementary reading on compliance frameworks.

Boards That Lead: When to Take Charge, When to Partner, and When to Stay Out of the Way

Core Text

Charan, R., Carey, D. & Useem, M. — Harvard Business Review Press, Boston (2014)
| ISBN: 978-1422144053

A practitioner-focused treatment of how boards actually operate in high-performing organisations, drawing on the authors' collective experience advising hundreds of corporate boards. Provides the practical dimension that complements Tricker's more theoretical framework.

Chapters 1–4 are directly relevant to LO 1.2.3 and LO 1.2.5.

Written in highly accessible prose; ideal for candidates approaching governance study for the first time.

The UK Corporate Governance Code

Reference Document

Financial Reporting Council (FRC) — London (2018; revised 2024) | Free download:
[frc.org.uk/corporate-governance-code](https://www.frc.org.uk/corporate-governance-code)

The authoritative UK corporate governance code — the most widely studied and internationally influential governance code in the world.

Candidates must read the Principles sections in full (approximately 20 pages).

G20/OECD Principles of Corporate Governance

Reference Document

The Preface and Sections I–III (pages 1–60) are directly relevant to this module.

Candidates should familiarise themselves with the six principles and their sub-provisions as an international benchmark of governance best practice.

The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits

Supplementary

Friedman, M. — The New York Times Magazine, 13 September 1970 | Available free at
[nytimes.com archive](https://www.nytimes.com/archive)

The most influential statement of shareholder primacy ever published — and still the most debated article in business ethics literature. Friedman's argument that the sole social responsibility of business is to increase profits within the rules of the game provides the theoretical foundation against which all stakeholder theory is constructed.

Essential for LO 1.2.5.

Should be read in conjunction with Freeman's stakeholder theory as the competing position. Requires approximately 20 minutes to read; the clarity and provocation of Friedman's prose make it a highly effective classroom discussion catalyst.

Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach — Chapter 2: Stakeholder Theory

Supplementary

Freeman, R.E. — Cambridge University Press (Reprint Ed., 2010 — originally Pitman, 1984) | ISBN: 978-0521151740

Chapter 2 only for this module;

the full text is core reading for Module 2.5 (Organisational Strategy). Freeman's stakeholder framework — which defines stakeholders as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives" — is the standard reference for stakeholder theory and directly underpins LO 1.2.5. Chapter 2 can be read in approximately 45 minutes.

Business Roundtable Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation

Reference Document

Business Roundtable — Washington DC (August 19, 2019) | Free download:
[businessroundtable.org/purpose-of-a-corporation](https://www.businessroundtable.org/purpose-of-a-corporation)

A landmark statement signed by the CEOs of 181 major US corporations declaring that the purpose of a corporation is to benefit all stakeholders — not just shareholders. Represents a formal, high-profile institutional shift away from shareholder primacy.

Essential context for LO 1.2.5 and the shareholder primacy vs. stakeholder governance debate.

The statement itself is two pages; it should be read as a contemporary primary source alongside the Friedman article and the Freeman framework.

The Smartest Guys in the Room: The Amazing Rise and Scandalous Fall of Enron

Supplementary

McLean, B. & Elkind, P. — Portfolio/Penguin, New York (2004) | ISBN: 978-1591840534

The definitive narrative account of the Enron collapse — the most consequential corporate governance failure of the 20th century. Provides essential case study background for LO 1.2.6.

Chapters 1–3 and 18–22 provide the most relevant governance failure analysis for this module;

the full book is recommended for candidates who wish to develop a deep understanding of how governance breakdown occurs in practice. Highly readable journalistic prose; accessible to all candidates regardless of prior business knowledge.

Assessment Information

Examination Details

Assessment type

Written Examination

Format

40 MCQ (60%) + 4 short-answer questions (40%)

Duration

90 minutes

Minimum pass mark

50% overall

Key examination focus

Governance theories, board structure, code provisions, governance failures

Grading Scale

Distinction

80 – 100%

Merit

70 – 79%

Pass

50 – 69%

Referred

45 – 49%

Fail

Below 45%

Study Guidance:

1.3

MODULE

Organisational Behavior and Culture

Understanding how individuals and groups behave within organisations and how culture shapes performance, decision-making, and change

Module Overview

Organisations are, fundamentally, human systems. They are shaped — for better and worse — by the perceptions, motivations, relationships, and shared assumptions of the people who inhabit them. Effective leadership and governance require a deep and evidence-based understanding of how individuals and groups behave in organisational settings, and of the profound influence that culture exercises over every dimension of organisational life.

This module draws on decades of organisational behaviour research to equip candidates with the conceptual tools to understand, analyse, and influence individual behaviour, group dynamics, and organisational culture. It addresses personality and perception, motivation and job attitudes, team formation and effectiveness, the nature and formation of organisational culture, culture change, conflict and negotiation, and the critical contemporary topics of diversity, inclusion, and psychological safety.

A key theme throughout the module is the relationship between organisational behaviour and governance. Culture — as the Cadbury Report recognised as early as 1992 and as every major governance code now emphasises — is a governance issue. Board oversight of culture is a legal and professional expectation. This module provides the foundational understanding of culture that makes that oversight meaningful.

Professional Rationale:

The majority of organisational failures — and many governance failures specifically — have their roots in cultural dysfunction: the normalisation of misconduct, the suppression

of dissent, the reward of results over values, and the tolerance of abusive leadership. Understanding organisational behaviour and culture is therefore not merely academically interesting — it is a professional imperative for anyone who leads or governs organisations.

Module Objectives

To explain how individual-level factors — including perception, personality, attitude, and motivation — influence workplace behaviour and performance, and to identify the leadership implications of each

To analyse group dynamics, the stages of team formation, team roles, and the conditions for team effectiveness, with direct application to board and executive team functioning

To define organisational culture using Schein's three-level model and to explain its formation, maintenance, and impact on organisational performance and governance

To apply Hofstede's cultural dimensions framework to understand cross-cultural differences in organisational behaviour and their implications for governance in international contexts

To examine conflict in organisational settings — its sources, its forms, and the evidence-based approaches to its constructive management and resolution

To address diversity, equity, and inclusion as both an ethical obligation and a performance-enhancing strategic priority for organisations

To introduce psychological safety as a critical governance-relevant concept, explaining its dimensions and its significance for board effectiveness, speaking up, and ethical culture

Detailed Topic Content

Perception in organisations: perceptual process, selective attention, attribution theory (fundamental attribution error, self-serving bias)

Personality frameworks: Big Five personality traits (OCEAN) and their workplace implications; limitations of personality testing in HR contexts

Attitudes and values: job satisfaction, organisational commitment, employee engagement — their measurement and management implications

Motivation in organisations: Maslow's hierarchy (and its limitations); Herzberg's two-factor theory; Expectancy Theory (Vroom); Goal-Setting Theory (Locke and Latham); Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan)

Group formation and development: Tuckman's five-stage model; the role of the leader at each stage

Team roles: Belbin's nine team role framework; team composition and balance

Conditions for team effectiveness: the Hackman model (compelling direction, enabling structure, supportive context, shared mental models)

Groupthink (Janis): symptoms, antecedents, and consequences — its relevance to board decision-making

Schein's model of organisational culture: three levels (artefacts, espoused values, underlying assumptions)

Cultural typologies: Deal and Kennedy (1982); Handy's four culture types; Quinn and Rohrbaugh's Competing Values Framework

Culture formation and maintenance: the role of founders, leadership, symbols, stories, and rituals

Cultural change: when culture change is needed; approaches to culture change; the role of leadership

Hofstede's six cultural dimensions: power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, indulgence/restraint

Conflict in organisations: sources, types (task, relationship, process conflict), and outcomes; the dual concern model of conflict management styles

Diversity, equity, and inclusion: dimensions of diversity; the business and ethical case; inclusive culture design; unconscious bias

Psychological safety (Edmondson): definition, dimensions, measurement, and leadership behaviours that build or undermine it

Learning Outcomes

Ref

Learning Outcome

Bloom's Level

LO 1.3.1

Explain how attribution theory and perceptual biases shape workplace behaviour and identify their implications for leadership and governance decision-making

Comprehension

LO 1.3.2

Apply Tuckman's model to describe the stages of team development and identify appropriate leadership responses at each stage

Application

LO 1.3.3

Apply Belbin's team role framework to analyse team composition and identify gaps in team role coverage for a given team

Application

LO 1.3.4

Define and describe Schein's three-level model of organisational culture, providing examples of each level from a professional context

Knowledge

LO 1.3.5

Analyse cultural differences using Hofstede's dimensions and assess their implications for governance and leadership in cross-cultural organisational contexts

Analysis

LO 1.3.6

Evaluate the consequences of groupthink in organisational decision-making, with specific reference to its role in governance failures

Evaluation

LO 1.3.7

Explain the concept of psychological safety, describe its four stages, and identify specific leadership behaviours that build psychological safety in teams and governance bodies

Comprehension

Suggested Readings

Organisational Behaviour

Core Text

Robbins, S.P. & Judge, T.A. — Pearson, Harlow (19th Ed., 2022) | ISBN: 978-0135642795

The global market-leading organisational behaviour textbook, used by over three million students and professionals annually. Combines comprehensive theoretical coverage with an evidence-based approach and extensive use of contemporary case studies.

Directly relevant chapters for this module: Ch.2 (Diversity in Organizations), Ch.3 (Attitudes and Job Satisfaction), Ch.5 (Personality and Values), Ch.6 (Perception and Individual Decision Making), Ch.7 (Motivation Concepts), Ch.9 (Foundations of Group Behavior), Ch.10 (The Team), Ch.16 (Organizational Culture), Ch.17 (Organizational Change).

Candidates should read at minimum Chapters 5, 6, 9, 10, and 16.

Organizational Culture and Leadership

Core Text

Schein, E.H. & Schein, P.A. — Jossey-Bass/Wiley, San Francisco (5th Ed., 2017) | ISBN: 978-1119212041

The definitive work on organisational culture by the scholar who has done more to advance its scientific understanding than any other. Schein's three-level culture model — artefacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions — is the framework most widely applied by governance and leadership professionals.

Chapters 1 (The Concept of Organizational Culture), 2 (The Levels of Culture), 3 (How Leaders Create and Embed Culture), and 8 (Culture Assessment) are essential for LO 1.3.4 and LO 1.3.7.

Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind

Supplementary

Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G.J. & Minkov, M. — McGraw-Hill, New York (3rd Ed., 2010) | ISBN: 978-0071664189

The source text for Hofstede's six cultural dimensions framework, based on the most extensive cross-cultural research programme in management history.

Chapters 1–7 provide the foundational content for LO 1.3.5.

Each dimension is explained with empirical data and practical organisational implications. The geert-hofstede.com website provides an interactive country comparison tool that candidates are encouraged to explore as a practical complement to the text.

The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth

Supplementary

Edmondson, A.C. — Wiley, Hoboken, NJ (2018) | ISBN: 978-1119477242

The most comprehensive and accessible treatment of psychological safety by the Harvard Business School professor who conducted the foundational research. Edmondson demonstrates through extensive field research that psychological safety is the single most important factor distinguishing high-performing teams from their peers.

Chapters 1, 2, and 6 are most directly relevant to LO 1.3.7.

Groupthink: Psychological Studies of Policy Decisions and Fiascos

Supplementary

Janis, I.L. — Houghton Mifflin, Boston (2nd Ed., 1982) | ISBN: 978-0395317044

The classic text introducing the groupthink concept, illustrated through case studies of major US foreign policy failures including the Bay of Pigs invasion, the escalation of the Vietnam War, and Pearl Harbor. The governance implications of groupthink for board decision-making are profound — it is one of the most frequently cited explanations for collective board failures.

Chapter 1 (Introduction) and Chapter 2 (Causes and Consequences) are essential for LO 1.3.6.

Should be read alongside Edmondson's work on psychological safety for a complete picture.

Psychological Safety and the High-Performance Organization

Professional Reading

Edmondson, A.C. — Harvard Business Review, November 2023 | Available at hbr.org

An accessible, contemporary update from the leading psychological safety researcher that connects the concept to current organisational performance challenges.

Directly relevant to LO 1.3.7.

Free access at hbr.org for registered users; recommended as introductory reading before the full Edmondson text.

Team Genius: The New Science of High-Performing Organizations

Supplementary

Karlgard, R. & Malone, M. — HarperBusiness, New York (2015) | ISBN: 978-0062302748

A highly accessible and research-grounded treatment of team effectiveness drawing on the latest neuroscience and organisational psychology. Provides a contemporary complement to Tuckman's model and the Belbin framework, addressing team composition, optimal team size, and the neurological basis of team cohesion.

Chapters 1–4 are most relevant to LO 1.3.2 and LO 1.3.3.

Assessment Information

Examination Details

Assessment type

Written Examination

Format

40 MCQ (60%) + 4 short-answer questions (40%)

Duration

90 minutes

Minimum pass mark

50% overall

Key examination focus

Models application, scenario-based cultural analysis, team effectiveness

Grading Scale

Distinction

80 – 100%

Merit

70 – 79%

Pass

50 – 69%

Referred

45 – 49%

Fail

Below 45%

1.4

MODULE

Business Communication and Professional Ethics

Developing professional written and oral communication skills alongside the ethical foundations required for credible and trustworthy professional practice

Module Overview

This module develops two foundational professional capabilities that underpin all effective leadership and governance practice: professional communication and professional ethics. These are not peripheral skills — they are core professional competencies that determine whether a leader or governance professional can translate knowledge into influence, and whether their conduct merits the trust that clients, colleagues, organisations, and the public place in them.

The communication component of this module is rigorously practical. It addresses the principles of structured professional writing — including the Pyramid Principle and executive communication methodology — alongside oral communication, presentation, meeting facilitation, and the increasingly important domain of digital and social media communication. Candidates produce written communication outputs as part of their study and receive structured feedback.

The ethics component moves beyond rule-following compliance to develop genuine ethical reasoning capability. Candidates engage with the three principal ethical frameworks — utilitarianism, Kantian deontology, and virtue ethics — and apply them to professional dilemmas that are directly relevant to governance and leadership practice. The module addresses professional codes of conduct, conflicts of interest,

whistleblowing, and the governance of integrity — developing the moral courage and ethical literacy that distinguish truly professional conduct.

Professional Rationale:

Research consistently identifies communication ability and ethical integrity as the two most important professional attributes cited by senior leaders and employers. They are also the two most frequently cited sources of career derailment when absent. This module directly develops both — establishing them as foundations of professional identity, not merely technical skills.

Module Objectives

To develop candidates' ability to produce clear, structured, audience-appropriate written professional communications across the principal formats required in leadership and governance practice

To develop oral communication skills including professional presentations, executive briefings, meeting facilitation, and active listening

To address the professional standards and ethical obligations governing digital and social media communication by professionals and governance practitioners

To introduce the three principal ethical frameworks — utilitarianism, Kantian deontology, and virtue ethics — and develop candidates' ability to apply them to professional ethical dilemmas

To address whistleblowing, protected disclosure, and the governance of speak-up culture as dimensions of professional integrity in organisations and governance bodies

Detailed Topic Content

Principles of effective professional communication: clarity, precision, concision, structure, and audience-consciousness

The Pyramid Principle (Minto): structured writing methodology — situation, complication, question, answer; top-down writing; deductive and inductive grouping

Professional report writing: executive reports, board papers, briefing notes — structure, style, length, and format conventions

Business correspondence: professional email standards, formal letters, written proposals

Executive communication: writing for senior audiences; the executive summary; communicating upwards

Oral communication: structure, preparation, and delivery of professional presentations; the communication triangle (ethos, logos, pathos)

Meeting facilitation: chairing meetings effectively; agenda design; constructive discussion management; minute-taking governance

Active listening: types of listening; the SOLER model; reflective listening in professional contexts

Non-verbal communication: body language, proxemics, and their significance in professional settings

Digital and social media communication: professional standards; reputational risk; confidentiality obligations; the permanence of digital communication

Business ethics frameworks: Bentham and Mill's utilitarianism (greatest good for the greatest number); Kant's categorical imperative; Aristotle's virtue ethics and character-based ethics

Applying ethical frameworks to professional dilemmas: the ethical decision-making model; multi-framework analysis

Conflicts of interest: definition, types, management, and disclosure obligations

Gifts and hospitality governance: principles, thresholds, and registers

Whistleblowing and protected disclosure: legal frameworks (Dodd-Frank, UK PIDA); governance of speak-up culture; barriers to speaking up and their mitigation

Learning Outcomes

Ref

Learning Outcome

Bloom's Level

LO 1.4.1

Apply the Pyramid Principle to structure a professional written report or briefing note, demonstrating top-down argument construction and logical grouping

Application

LO 1.4.2

Produce a professionally written executive summary and supporting report for a given business scenario, demonstrating appropriate format, style, and audience orientation

Application

LO 1.4.3

Demonstrate effective oral communication by structuring and delivering a coherent professional presentation to a defined audience with a specific purpose

Application

LO 1.4.4

Identify and describe the three principal ethical frameworks and demonstrate, through the analysis of a professional dilemma, how each framework leads to different — and potentially conflicting — conclusions

Analysis

LO 1.4.5

Apply a structured ethical decision-making model to analyse and advise on a professional ethics dilemma involving a conflict between competing values or interests

Application

LO 1.4.6

Application

LO 1.4.7

Explain the governance of speak-up culture — identifying barriers to whistleblowing, describing the legal protections available, and evaluating the design features of effective whistleblowing programmes

Evaluation

Suggested Readings

The Pyramid Principle: Logic in Writing and Thinking

Core Text

Minto, B. — FT Prentice Hall/Pearson, Harlow (2009 reissue — originally 1987) | ISBN: 978-0273710516

Chapters 1–4 are essential for LO 1.4.1 and LO 1.4.2;

the entire book is recommended for candidates who wish to develop genuine professional writing mastery. One of the most practically valuable books a professional will ever read.

Business Ethics: Ethical Decision Making and Cases

Core Text

Ferrell, O.C., Fraedrich, J. & Ferrell, L. — Cengage Learning, Mason, OH (13th Ed., 2021) | ISBN: 978-0357513910

Chapters 1 (The Importance of Business Ethics), 2 (Stakeholder Relationships, Social Responsibility, and Corporate Governance), 3 (Emerging Business Ethics Issues), 4 (The Institutionalization of Business Ethics), and 5 (Individual Factors: Moral Philosophies and Values) are directly relevant to this module.

Ethics for the Real World: Creating a Personal Code to Guide Decisions in Work and Life

Supplementary

Howard, R. & Korver, C. — Harvard Business Review Press, Boston (2008) | ISBN: 978-1422119129

A uniquely practical approach to professional ethics — not how to follow corporate rules but how to develop the personal ethical judgment to make good decisions in complex, ambiguous real-world situations.

Directly relevant to LO 1.4.4 and LO 1.4.5.

Particularly valuable for candidates who find the more theoretical ethics texts abstract — this book translates ethics into practical daily professional decision-making with clarity and honesty about the difficulty of ethical choices.

Talk Like TED: The 9 Public-Speaking Secrets of the World's Top Minds

Professional Reading

Gallo, C. — St. Martin's Press, New York (2014) | ISBN: 978-1250061539

A research-based, accessible guide to professional oral communication drawing on analysis of over 500 TED talks and interviews with neuroscientists, psychologists, and communication experts. Gallo identifies nine evidence-based principles of compelling communication that are directly applicable to professional presentations, board presentations, and leadership communication.

Chapters 1–3 and 7–9 are most directly relevant to LO 1.4.3.

Highly readable and immediately actionable.

How to Design a Whistleblower Program That Actually Works

Professional Reading

Tenbrunsel, A.E. & Gunia, B.C. — Harvard Business Review, February 2021 | Available at hbr.org

Research-based article identifying the specific design features that make whistleblowing programmes effective — and why so many fail.

Directly relevant to LO 1.4.7.

Free access at hbr.org for registered users. Provides a practical complement to the more theoretical treatment of whistleblowing governance in the core text.

Moral Mazes: The World of Corporate Managers

Supplementary

Jackall, R. — Oxford University Press, New York (20th Anniversary Ed., 2010 — originally 1988) | ISBN: 978-0199729883

A sociological classic based on extensive ethnographic research in US corporations, revealing how organisational pressures shape moral behaviour in ways that often lead ethical individuals to make unethical decisions. Provides important context for understanding why individual ethical frameworks are insufficient without institutional ethics architecture.

Chapters 1–3 are most relevant for this module;

the book as a whole provides invaluable preparation for the ethics governance content at Levels 3 and 4.

Assessment Information

Examination Details

Assessment type

Written Examination

Format

40 MCQ (60%) + 4 short-answer questions (40%)

Duration

90 minutes

Minimum pass mark

50% overall

Key examination focus

Ethical framework application, professional writing structure, code of conduct scenarios

Grading Scale

Distinction

80 – 100%

Merit

70 – 79%

Pass

50 – 69%

Referred

45 – 49%

Fail

Below 45%

1.5

MODULE

Introduction to Strategy and Organisations

Understanding how organisations operate strategically — analysis tools, structural design, performance measurement, and the board's strategic role

Module Overview

Strategy is the art and science of making choices — about where to compete, how to differentiate, how to deploy scarce resources, and what to leave undone. For leaders and governance professionals, strategic literacy is not optional: it is a foundational

professional competency. A board that does not understand strategy cannot oversee it. A senior manager who does not understand organisational strategy cannot align their team's activities to it.

This module provides an accessible but rigorous introduction to strategic management and organisational theory. Candidates develop familiarity with the strategic management process — from environmental analysis through strategy formulation to implementation and evaluation — and with the principal analytical tools that inform strategic decision-making. These tools include PESTLE analysis, Porter's Five Forces, SWOT analysis, and the relationship between competitive positioning and sustainable competitive advantage.

A distinctive feature of this module is its early and explicit treatment of the board's role in strategy. Governance codes consistently identify strategy as a core board responsibility — the board "sets strategic direction" — yet many governance professionals find strategic discussion the least comfortable part of their board work. This module addresses that gap directly from the outset.

Professional Rationale:

Module Objectives

To define strategy comprehensively and explain the strategic management process — from environmental analysis through strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation

To apply PESTLE analysis as a systematic framework for assessing the macro-environment of a given organisation

To apply Porter's Five Forces as a framework for analysing the competitive environment and the structural attractiveness of an industry

To explain the relationship between mission, vision, values, and strategic goals, and the role of governance in establishing and safeguarding this strategic hierarchy

To introduce the principal forms of organisational structure — functional, divisional, matrix, and network — and to evaluate their strategic and governance implications

To introduce performance measurement frameworks — including KPIs and the Balanced Scorecard — as tools for governing strategic execution

To explain the board's role in strategy governance, distinguishing between the board's responsibility to set strategic direction and management's responsibility to execute strategy

Detailed Topic Content

Definitions and dimensions of strategy: corporate, business, and functional levels; deliberate versus emergent strategy (Mintzberg)

The strategic management process: strategic analysis, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, strategy evaluation and control

Mission, vision, and values: definitions, characteristics of effective mission and vision statements, the role of values in strategic governance

Strategic goals and objectives: SMART objectives; the cascade from vision to operational targets

PESTLE analysis: Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental factors; applying PESTLE to a specific organisation

Porter's Five Forces framework: threat of new entrants, bargaining power of suppliers, bargaining power of buyers, threat of substitutes, competitive rivalry; applying Five Forces to industry analysis

SWOT analysis: identifying internal strengths and weaknesses; external opportunities and threats; TOWS matrix for strategy generation

Competitive advantage: Porter's generic strategies (cost leadership, differentiation, focus); the sustainability of competitive advantage

Organisational structures: functional, divisional (product, geographic, customer), matrix, and network structures — characteristics, advantages, disadvantages, and governance implications of each

Organisational life cycle models: Greiner's growth model; implications for governance and leadership style

Resource management basics: people, financial, physical, and intangible resources as strategic assets

Performance measurement: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) — selection, design, and governance; introduction to the Balanced Scorecard (four perspectives)

The board's strategic role: the strategy continuum (approve, shape, determine — Tricker); how boards engage in strategy; the strategy governance challenge

Introduction to strategic risk: identifying risks to strategy at board level; the link between strategic planning and risk management

Learning Outcomes

Ref

Learning Outcome

Bloom's Level

LO 1.5.1

Define strategy at corporate, business, and functional levels, and explain the key stages of the strategic management process

Knowledge

LO 1.5.2

Apply PESTLE analysis to systematically assess the macro-environment of a given organisation, identifying the most significant forces and their strategic implications

Application

LO 1.5.3

Apply Porter's Five Forces to analyse the competitive environment of a specified industry and assess the structural attractiveness of that industry

Application

LO 1.5.4

Explain the relationship between an organisation's mission, vision, values, and strategic goals, and demonstrate how governance bodies use this hierarchy to set direction and evaluate performance

Comprehension

LO 1.5.5

Compare the principal forms of organisational structure and evaluate the governance and strategic implications of each for a given organisational context

Analysis

LO 1.5.6

Explain Porter's three generic competitive strategies and assess their applicability to a given organisation's strategic context

Application

LO 1.5.7

Describe the board's role in strategy governance — explaining the distinction between the board's strategic direction-setting function and management's strategy execution responsibility, and identifying the key governance tools boards use to exercise strategic oversight

Comprehension

Suggested Readings

Exploring Strategy: Text and Cases

Core Text

Johnson, G., Whittington, R., Regnér, P., Scholes, K. & Angwin, D. — Pearson, Harlow (12th Ed., 2022) | ISBN: 978-1292409740

The market-leading strategy textbook in Europe and one of the most widely used globally — adopted by over 600 institutions across 35 countries. Exceptionally well-written with outstanding case studies drawn from organisations in the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

Chapters 1 (Introducing Strategy), 2 (The Strategic Position), 3 (Environment), 4 (Strategic Capabilities), 5 (Strategic Purpose), and 13 (Evaluating Strategies) are directly relevant to this module.

Chapters 3 and 5 provide the PESTLE and strategic goals content; Chapter 4 introduces the resource-based view that will be developed at Level 2.

Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors

Core Text

Porter, M.E. — Free Press, New York (1998 — originally 1980) | ISBN: 978-0684841489

One of the most influential business books ever written and the source text for Porter's Five Forces and Generic Strategies frameworks. Porter's analytical rigour and conceptual clarity remain unmatched.

Chapter 1 (The Structural Analysis of Industries — Five Forces) and Chapter 2 (Generic Competitive Strategies) are essential for LO 1.5.3 and LO 1.5.6;

candidates should read the original Porter rather than relying solely on textbook summaries. The introduction provides a clear overview of the book's structure and key concepts.

Good Strategy / Bad Strategy: The Difference and Why It Matters

Supplementary

Rumelt, R. — Profile Books, London (2011) | ISBN: 978-1846684807

An exceptional treatment of what strategy actually is — and what it is not — by one of the leading strategic thinkers of his generation. Rumelt's central argument is that most "strategies" are not strategies at all but rather lists of goals, aspirations, and buzzwords dressed up as strategy. His "kernel of good strategy" framework (diagnosis, guiding policy, coherent actions) provides a practical test for genuine strategic thinking.

Chapters 1–5 are essential;

the entire book is strongly recommended for candidates who wish to develop genuine strategic literacy beyond the tools and frameworks of the core texts. One of the most important strategy books of the past two decades.

The Balanced Scorecard: Translating Strategy into Action

Supplementary

Kaplan, R.S. & Norton, D.P. — Harvard Business School Press, Boston (1996) | ISBN: 978-0875846514

The foundational text introducing the Balanced Scorecard — the most widely adopted strategic performance management framework in organisational history. Used by more than half of Fortune 500 companies and extensively adopted in the public sector and non-profit world.

Chapters 1–3 (introducing the BSC concept and four perspectives) provide the foundational content for LO 1.5 performance measurement topics.

The fuller BSC and strategy maps content is addressed at Level 2 (Module 2.5).

The Board's Role in Strategy: A Framework for Governance Practice

Reference Document

ICSA — The Governance Institute / McKinsey Board Center — Joint Guidance Note (2022) | Free at [icsa.org.uk](https://www.icsa.org.uk) and [mckinsey.com/capabilities/strategy-and-corporate-finance](https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/strategy-and-corporate-finance)

A practical governance framework addressing how boards should engage with strategy — when to approve, when to shape, and when to determine strategy; what good strategy oversight looks like; and the governance tools that support effective board-level strategic engagement.

Directly relevant to LO 1.5.7.

Free download; approximately 20 pages. Provides the practical governance dimension that complements the theoretical strategy content of the core texts.

What Is Strategy?

Professional Reading

Porter, M.E. — Harvard Business Review, November–December 1996 | Available at hbr.org

Porter's most widely read article — the accessible complement to the more technical Five Forces and generic strategies work. Distinguishes strategy from operational effectiveness (doing the same things better) and argues that true strategy involves choosing a distinctive activity system that creates a unique competitive position.

Essential reading for LO 1.5.3 and LO 1.5.6;

provides the philosophical foundation for the strategic analysis tools. Free access at hbr.org for registered users. Requires approximately 45 minutes to read.

The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning

Supplementary

Mintzberg, H. — Free Press, New York (1994) | ISBN: 978-0029216052

A landmark critique of formal strategic planning that introduced the distinction between deliberate and emergent strategy — one of the most important conceptual contributions to strategic management thinking.

The Introduction and Chapters 1–2 are relevant for the strategy definitions and strategic management process content of this module;

the full book provides excellent preparation for the more advanced strategic management content at Level 2 (Module 2.5).

Assessment Information

Examination Details

Assessment type

Written Examination

Format

40 MCQ (60%) + 4 short-answer questions (40%)

Duration

90 minutes

Minimum pass mark

50% overall

Key examination focus

Framework application (PESTLE, Five Forces, SWOT), structural analysis, board strategy governance

Grading Scale

Distinction

80 – 100%

Merit

70 – 79%

Pass

50 – 69%

Referred

45 – 49%

Fail

Below 45%

Study Guidance:

Level 1 — General Academic and Professional Standards

Framework information applicable to all five modules of the Foundation Certificate

Study Hours and Workload

Each module requires a minimum investment of 80–100 study hours for candidates with appropriate prior knowledge, or up to 120 hours for those with limited prior background in the subject area.

Theory study (reading and note-taking): approximately 40%

Practice questions and quizzes: approximately 30%

Revision and consolidation: approximately 20%

Mock examination practice: approximately 10%

Examination Windows

Written examinations are offered in four annual windows. Candidates may sit a maximum of three module examinations in any single window.

Window 1: March (registration closes mid-January)

Window 2: June (registration closes mid-April)

Window 3: September (registration closes mid-July)

Window 4: December (registration closes mid-October)

Results: within 15 working days of window close

Re-sit Policy

Candidates who do not pass an examination have the following re-sit provisions:

Referred (45–49%): component re-sit after minimum 60 days

Fail (below 45%): full module re-sit after minimum 60 days

Maximum 3 attempts per module before formal re-application required

Re-sit results are not shown on the external transcript

Final achieved grade is the grade recorded on the official transcript

Learning Resources

Video lecture library (15–20 min segments per topic)

Practice question banks (200+ questions per module)

Two full mock examination papers per module with mark schemes

Professional scenario library with tutor commentary

Asynchronous tutor support (48-hour response SLA)

Reasonable Adjustments

Standard extension: 25% additional examination time

Exceptional extension: up to 50% additional time

Applications via: accessibility@cilg.org

Deadline: minimum 8 weeks before the examination date

Supporting documentation (medical/specialist) required

Progression Requirements

To progress from Level 1 to Level 2, candidates must satisfy the following requirements:

Pass all 5 Level 1 modules (minimum 50% per module)

No minimum work experience required for Level 2 entry from Level 1

Level 2 registration fee payable upon enrolment

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Level 1 Modules

1.1 — Fundamentals of Leadership

1.2 — Corporate Governance

1.3 — Organisational Behavior

1.4 — Communication and Ethics

1.5 — Strategy and Organisations

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2024