
Long-Range Financial Planning Course for CFOs: Scenarios, Funding and Capital Priorities

21 – 25 December 2026
Paris





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Programme Summary

Long-range financial planning for CFOs is a one-week training course for senior finance, strategy and public finance leaders at advanced level, culminating in a three-to-five-year financial plan that funds an organisation's strategic priorities. Strategies often fail not for lack of ambition but because the money, the timing and the trade-offs were never set out beyond the next budget year. The approach moves from linking strategy to financial drivers, through scenario modelling and funding choices, to capital priorities and delivery tracking. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme in long-range financial planning.

The Business Case

Annual budgets allocate money one year at a time, so multi-year initiatives are starved, duplicated or abandoned midway. A long-range plan makes the financial consequences of strategy visible early: what can be afforded, when funding must be raised and which initiatives give way when conditions change. Boards and ministries then debate choices with evidence rather than reacting to shortfalls.

- Strategic Initiative Funding Coverage: Improves as each priority is costed and funded across its full life rather than year by year.
- Liquidity and Funding Risk: Falls as financing needs and reserve levels are forecast years ahead under several scenarios.
- Capital Productivity: Rises as investment is ranked by value and strategic fit before commitments are made.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Time Value of Money: Net present value and internal rate of return are used in Session 4 to compare competing strategic investments.
- Weighted Average Cost of Capital WACC: The hurdle rate for ranking initiatives and testing funding mixes is set in Session 3.
- GFOA Long-Term Financial Planning Practice: Its phases of mobilisation, analysis, decision and monitoring shape the planning cycle introduced in Session 1.
- Balanced Scorecard: Financial and non-financial measures are linked in Session 5 so plan delivery can be tracked at board level.



Intended Participants

- Leaders accountable for the financial direction of an organisation over several years.
- Executives who translate corporate or government strategy into funded programmes.
- Senior officials responsible for medium-term fiscal frameworks, reserves and financial policies.
- Directors who chair investment committees or approve major capital commitments.
- Heads of planning who prepare long-range forecasts for boards and ministers.

The programme serves corporate finance, strategy offices, government finance departments and state-owned enterprises.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to translate strategic objectives into the financial drivers and assumptions of a multi-year plan.
2. Participants will be able to construct a driver-based long-range financial model with base, upside and downside scenarios.
3. Participants will be able to evaluate funding options, reserve levels and financing mixes against the plan's cash needs.
4. Participants will be able to prioritise strategic initiatives and capital projects using value, risk and strategic fit.
5. Participants will be able to design an implementation roadmap with milestones, owners and funding gates.
6. Participants will be able to justify a long-range financial plan to a board or ministerial committee.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Linking Strategy to Long-Range Financial Planning

How does a strategy become a set of financial commitments over several years?

- Planning Horizons: Annual Budget, Medium-Term Plan and Long-Range Plan
- Strategy Maps and Objective-to-Driver Translation
- Financial Policies, Targets and Planning Guardrails
- Trend Analysis of Revenue, Cost and Capital Baselines
- Long-Range Planning Calendar and Governance Roles

Day 2: Driver-Based Modelling and Scenarios

What will the financial position look like in five years under different futures?

- Driver Trees for Revenue, Cost and Headcount
- Three-Statement Long-Range Model Architecture
- Base, Upside and Downside Scenario Construction
- Sensitivity Analysis and Tornado Charts
- Model Assumption Registers and Version Control



Day 3: Funding Strategy and Reserves

How will the plan be paid for, and how much buffer is prudent?

- Multi-Year Cash Flow and Funding Gap Forecasting
- Debt, Equity, Grants and Asset Recycling Options
- WACC as the Hurdle Rate for Strategic Choices
- Reserve Policies and Liquidity Headroom
- Credit Metrics and Covenant Testing Across Scenarios

Day 4: Capital Priorities and Resource Allocation

Which initiatives should be funded first, and which deferred?

- Net Present Value and Internal Rate of Return Comparison
- Multi-Criteria Scoring of Strategic Initiatives
- Portfolio Balancing Across Growth, Maintenance and Compliance Spend
- Stage-Gate Funding and Real Options Thinking
- Reallocation Rules When Conditions Change

Day 5: Applying Long-Range Financial Planning to Delivery

Is the long-range financial plan funded, prioritised and ready to track?

- Implementation Roadmap Using Day 4 Priorities and Day 3 Funding Gates
- Balanced Scorecard Measures for Plan Delivery
- Annual Budget Alignment With the Day 2 Model
- Board and Committee Presentation of the Plan
- Long-Range Financial Plan Completion and Review

Methodology

The programme relies on structured modelling exercises and case analysis drawn from listed companies, state-owned enterprises and government departments. Each session combines a short briefing with group work on a plan for an organisation chosen by participants, using their own planning templates where possible.

- Suggested activity: Building downside and upside scenarios for a five-year model and comparing funding gaps.
- Suggested activity: Scoring and ranking ten competing strategic initiatives against a fixed capital envelope.
- Suggested activity: Defending a long-range plan before a mock investment committee.



Capstone Output

Each participant completes a three-to-five-year financial plan for an organisation they lead or a case entity. It contains the driver model and scenarios, a funding and reserves strategy, a ranked portfolio of initiatives, an implementation roadmap and scorecard measures, ready for discussion with a board or finance committee.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is long-range financial planning training suitable for public sector finance leaders?

Yes. It is set at advanced level for corporate and government leaders who already manage budgets and now need to plan across several years. It assumes familiarity with financial statements and basic investment appraisal.

Which models does the long-range financial planning course rest on?

It rests on the time value of money, the weighted average cost of capital, the GFOA long-term financial planning practice and the Balanced Scorecard for tracking delivery.

How is the plan from long-range financial planning training used at work?

You can use it to frame the next strategy review, guide funding decisions and set the envelope within which annual budgets are prepared.

How does long-range financial planning differ from a budgeting and forecasting course?

Budgeting courses focus on the coming year and rolling forecasts. Long-range financial planning looks three to five years ahead and decides which strategic initiatives are funded, how and in what order.