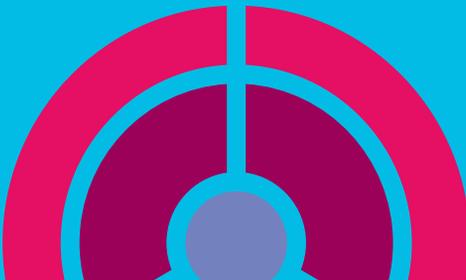




How to use the **APM** Competence Framework

THE **CHARTERED BODY** FOR
THE **PROJECT PROFESSION**



1. Introduction

This guide aims to introduce you to the *APM Competence Framework, 2nd edition*, and help you use it to assess and improve performance in the workplace. This guide is for you if you are:

- a project professional who wants to review and enhance your performance; or
- a manager or team leader who wants to measure and improve the performance of project professionals for whom you are responsible; or
- a training provider who wants to identify and address the training and development needs of project professionals.

2. What is the APM Competence Framework?

The *APM Competence Framework* sets out the competences required for effective project, programme, portfolio management and project management office (PMO). It aims to reflect both current good practice and the future needs of the profession, and provides a common benchmark for all individuals and organisations engaged in project activities.

The framework has been developed by practitioners for practitioners, and aims to describe competent performance in an explicit and measurable way. As such, it is an invaluable reference for all project professionals that has many practical applications.

The framework consists of 27 competences, each based around outcomes that project professionals need to achieve. Each competence comprises a title, a brief introduction to the competence, a series of criteria covering *knowledge* and the *application*. The framework also includes a Ratings Scale, a simple 5-point scoring system for assessing level of performance against the application, and knowledge criteria (aware, practiced, competent, proficient and expert).

The *APM Competence Framework* is comprehensive and can seem a little daunting at first. However, not all competences are relevant to all roles, and it is important to focus on those that are most relevant to you and your needs. This guide will help you to navigate and use the framework to support both personal and organisational development.

3. Why use the APM Competence Framework?

The *APM Competence Framework* provides a useful tool for individuals, teams and managers alike when faced with questions such as:

- What should I be able to do in my new role?
- How can I further my career and get to the next stage?
- How can we be sure that we select the right person for the job?
- What can I do to make sure that quality standards are maintained within my team?
- What learning and development do I need to provide for my staff?

The framework can help with these and many other issues, and is flexible enough to work in harmony with existing workplace policies, standards and frameworks.

4. Who will benefit from the APM Competence Framework?

The *APM Competence Framework* will benefit individuals, organisations and training providers within the project, programme, portfolio management and PMO profession. It is relevant across all sectors, projects and organisations regardless of their size, complexity and geographical location.

5. How do I use the APM Competence Framework?

The key purpose of the *APM Competence Framework* is as a tool to assess and improve performance. Whether you would like to use the framework to review your own performance or to assess the performance of others, the main steps involved are broadly the same. These steps are outlined on the following pages:

Step 1 – Create a role profile

Review the 27 competences contained in the *APM Competence Framework* and list those that are relevant to the role in question. The titles and introductions to the competences should be sufficient to help you select or dismiss them.



Refer to your current job description/specification.

Refer to the example Role Profiles produced by APM.

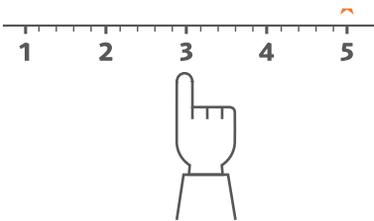


Step 2 – Rate performance against each relevant competence

Use the Ratings Scale that comes with the *APM Competence Framework* to score current knowledge and application against the 5-point scale (from 1 'aware' through to 5 'expert').



Download the APM self-assessment form and use this to record the results.



Step 3 – Identify evidence to justify the scores

You must be able to support the results of the rating process with evidence that is valid, reliable and up-to-date. Evidence can take many forms and could include, for example, project documentation, written and verbal reports, observation of performance, testimony from others, CPD activities etc.



Start with the evidence and see how it relates back to the criteria within the competences (if you start with the criteria and look for evidence against each, you will get bogged down in a lengthy and repetitive process).



Step 4 – Interpret the results

The assessment process will help identify an individual's strengths, weaknesses and potential learning and development needs. Prioritise those aspects of performance that need to be developed or improved, and explore ways of achieving that (e.g. mentoring, coaching, shadowing, formal training, qualifications).



If you are self-assessing, ask your manager or a trusted colleague to review and comment on your results.

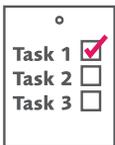


Step 5 – Apply lessons to improve performance

Agree a development plan and the support (e.g. time, resources) required to achieve the plan. The competences can help to specify development objectives, and provide a benchmark against which improvements in performance can be measured.



Remember that improving performance in an on-going activity – repeat these steps periodically to monitor progress and stay on track.



6. Where can I find out more?

You can register online to download the full *APM Competence Framework* and Ratings Scale and 14 example Role Profiles.

The Role Profiles set out typical competences expected at different levels, and applies the Ratings Scale to indicate the level of knowledge and application expected in each role.

You can also download a self-assessment form that allows you to assess your level of achievement against each of the competences, and help you understand your current performance and identify your future development needs.

Visit **apm.org.uk/competence-framework** for more information.

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