



## APM Accreditation for Training Providers

accreditation application guidance for the delivery of APM accredited activities leading to IPMA qualifications

IPMA»

international  
project  
management  
association

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

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## Further details

If you have any questions that these guidance notes have not addressed please contact:

**The Accreditation Team,  
Association for Project Management, Ibis House, Regent Park,  
Summerleys Road, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, HP27 9LE.**

Telephone: **0845 458 1944** or email: **accreditation@apm.org.uk**

## Overview

### APM Training Provider Accreditation leading to the delivery of IPMA qualifications

The Association for Project Management (APM) accredits training providers to deliver training and development leading to the award of the following:

- IPMA Level A: Certified Project Director
- IPMA Level A: Certified Programme Director
- IPMA Level A: Certified Portfolio Director
- IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Project Manager
- IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Programme Manager
- IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Portfolio Manager
- IPMA Level C: Certified Project Manager
- IPMA Level D: Certified Project Management Associate

Professionals seeking approved training and development support for their project management qualifications will choose APM Accredited Providers (APs). These companies have had their course materials and training provision assessed to meet APM standards.

APM Accreditation is designed to ensure that providers are capable of delivering good quality exam preparation to candidates by assessing:

- your organisation;
- your materials and;
- your delivery capability.

There are many different ways to design and deliver training and development to meet the needs and expectations of both candidates and clients. APM Accreditation has the flexibility to assess training and development programmes of all kinds.

Your APM Accreditation application should contain everything you consider appropriate in a style that makes assessment straightforward.

These guidance notes are designed to help you in your application by explaining the rationale behind each question in the accreditation application form. The information supplied will allow us to assess your application and help us build a strong working relationship with you.

### Becoming an APM Accredited Provider

Once your application has been approved, you will receive a certificate, an APM Accreditation logo and a listing on the APM website. You will also receive a copy of the APM assessor's report. As an Accredited Provider you will have the services of a dedicated business development manager who will help you get the best out of your relationship with APM.

# Application process

## Stage 1 – Initial discussion

Once you have registered your interest with APM in applying to become an Accredited Provider you will be assigned a business development manager who will discuss your needs and the nature of your application. Upon agreement that you wish to apply for accreditation you will be sent an application form.

## Stage 2 – Completing your application

In completing your application, you should answer the questions as fully as possible and submit copies of supporting documentation and all course material.

## Stage 3 – The assessment

- a. Your completed application will be reviewed by an accreditation assessor who may ask for further information.
- b. A site visit by the assessor will normally be arranged to:
  - sample evidence;
  - discuss course construction;
  - review management systems and;
  - observe course delivery and obtain student feedback (where applicable).

## Stage 4 – Assessment decision

Once the assessor has reviewed your completed application, they will make a recommendation to APM that the application is either 'accredited', 'accredited with conditions', or 'rejected'.

If the assessor considers that your application does not meet the standards of APM Training Provider Accreditation, it will be reviewed by the accreditation lead/deputy lead assessor. If the lead/deputy lead assessor agrees with the assessment, you will be provided with the assessor's report and advice on areas that require development within your course to meet the standards of the accreditation.

If your application is rejected, you may make a re-submission, which will be treated in all respects as a new submission.

## Stage 5 – Annual renewal

At the start of years two, three and four of your accreditation we will send you an annual report template to complete and an annual renewal invoice. At the start of year five, a full re-assessment will be required.

# Guidance on completing your application form

## PART I: General information

This section is intended to help us understand your organisation:

### Section 1 – Contact details

Please provide the name and contact details of the organisation applying for accreditation. If your organisation is a subsidiary of a larger organisation and this has an impact on your delivery, please supply details of the parent organisation. Please provide details of the primary point of contact for your application. This person should be able to answer any questions related to your application and will be responsible for the annual reporting process, once accredited.

### Section 2 – Your organisation

**How many years has the organisation been in existence?**

How many years has the organisation been in existence in its current form? If you have traded under a different name, structure or part of a different organisation, please include details here.

**What is the total number of staff employed by the organisation?**

Please tell us the total number of staff employed by the organisation including trainers, support staff, associates and contractors.

**Please indicate the proportion of staff dedicated to support, management, training and development for the proposed activities**

**Please supply an organisation chart for those involved in the delivery of APM accredited activities leading to IPMA qualifications**

To help us establish a clear picture of key individuals and groups involved in the delivery of APM activities and their relationship with the rest of the organisation, please supply an organisational chart with all roles and responsibilities listed. Please indicate where associates or contract staff are used, and provide details of the senior management support for your activities.

**How will you ensure that all staff understand and act accordingly with regard to your Accredited Provider status, relationship with APM and its products and services?**

Please give details of any training and documentation you provide to your staff to ensure that they are up to date with current APM requirements for Accredited Providers, and APM products and services. Please provide any information about the involvement of your staff in APM activities as a volunteer.

**What percentage of your organisation's business is concerned with project management training and development?**

This helps us to assess the level of commitment your organisation is able to dedicate to the subject and therefore ensure that candidates are suitably supported.

**Other accreditations**

If your organisation is accredited by other bodies to deliver courses or qualifications, please provide details in this section.

### Section 3 – Quality assurance

All procedures and activities should be clearly documented and consistent with national quality assurance requirements and guidelines.

If you are applying for re-accreditation please provide examples of how your procedures have been amended or updated since the last accreditation or annual report.

**What external certifications do you have or are you applying for?**

Please indicate any awards or affiliations you currently have or are applying for (e.g. ISO 9001, Investors in People and affiliation to professional institutions, trade associations).

### How will you ensure the quality of APM accredited activities leading to IPMA qualifications?

The procedures and activities should ensure the quality and consistency of administration, teaching and/or training where appropriate. The information provided should also explain how monitoring and review processes are applied to ensure that the clients' learning objectives and outcomes are met.

Please include the way in which feedback from candidates is evaluated and monitored and how necessary amendments are made. Please attach any relevant extracts from the most recent reports.

### How will you recruit, induct, train and maintain staff involved in the delivery of APM Accredited activities leading to IPMA qualifications?

This is to ensure that you recruit and induct staff of a suitable level for the management, administration and delivery of all APM activities and have robust quality checking processes in place. Please indicate how you maintain the quality of delivery personnel.

## Section 4 – Resources, health and safety

Please show how you are resourced and comply with all current legislation around health and safety, and disability regulations and requirements. Copies of your internal policies should be provided.

## Section 5 – Please supply any other information you feel may be relevant to your accreditation application

Please provide any additional information you believe is relevant to your application for accreditation and would assist the assessor either at the desk review stage or during the site visit (where applicable).

## Section 6 – Data protection and preferences

Please tell us whether you would like to receive information about APM, project management and our products and services.

## Section 7 – Declaration

This should be signed by the individual in the organisation who can ensure that the organisation's quality standards are maintained and that the organisation continues to meet the criteria for accreditation.

Please ensure that any changes to the information supplied are advised to APM either at the time of the annual report or prior to that if the changes are substantial.

### Accredited Provider accreditation cycle

The assessment process runs to a four-year cycle as shown below:

Year 1	Accreditation	The initial fee covers up to two courses if assessed at the same time. Additional course fees will apply for applications where more than two courses are to be assessed at the same time.
Year 2	Annual report and charge	Covering all accreditations held.
Year 3	Annual report and charge	Covering all accreditations held.
Year 4	Annual report and charge	Covering all accreditations held.
Year 1	Re-accreditation	One fee applicable for all courses if assessed at the same time.

Full re-accreditation is conducted after year four and the four-year cycle begins again.

Further courses may be added at any time for which an additional fee will be charged.

## **PART II: For courses leading to:**

IPMA Level A: Certified Project Director

IPMA Level A: Certified Programme Director

IPMA Level A: Certified Portfolio Director

IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Project Manager

IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Programme Manager

IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Portfolio Manager

IPMA Level C: Certified Project Manager

IPMA Level D: Certified Project Management Associate

### **Section 1 – Your courses/activities**

Along with your application form, you should provide details of the materials and supporting documentation you will use in the activity you wish to be accredited. For delivery of APM accredited activities leading to IPMA qualifications this should provide evidence that you are covering the whole syllabus for the qualification in question.

#### **What courses/activities are to be assessed in this application?**

Please indicate which courses/activities are to be accredited or re-accredited.

#### **Describe how the proposed courses/activities will be delivered**

Please describe all formats in which your activities will be delivered, e.g. classroom/workshop/onsite, distance/e-learning, blended etc.

There is a variety of training and development approaches, from detailed instructional styles to experiential learning. To help us understand the intended approach to your activities, please outline the learning philosophy on which they are based. APM accepts that different styles of learning are valid in the training and development of candidates where appropriate to the method of assessment.

#### **Approximately how many courses/activities leading to IPMA qualifications do you intend to run throughout the year and how many participants do you expect for each?**

Please indicate the number of activities and candidates likely to be attending. This will help us understand whether candidates will be suitably supported by your organisation.

#### **Please indicate the proportion of these courses/activities to be delivered 'in-house' and to be offered to the general public**

Please indicate the percentage of your business that is delivered within a client environment and the percentage that is delivered to the general public. This will help us understand whether the intended mode of delivery will be suitably supported by your organisation.

#### **Please indicate how you will publicise these courses/activities and provide a copy of any publicity material or relevant internet links**

This will help us understand how the courses/activities to be accredited will fit into your overall service and product portfolio.

**What advice and support will you provide to participants before, during and after the courses/activities for which you are seeking accreditation?**

Please provide details of all pre-sales advice given to potential applicants regarding the activities offered, as well as support and guidance provided during and after the activity in question. This will help us to ascertain whether applicants have accurate information about the events on which they wish to enrol and are provided with appropriate guidance and support at each stage of the engagement to ensure their objectives are met. Please also provide details of how you respond to and deal with any complaints.

**How do you ensure candidates are suitably prepared for the assessment process?**

Please provide evidence that candidates are suitably prepared for the assessment they are taking for example, examination technique, practice questions etc.

**Section 2 – Delivery personnel**

**How many training staff do you have dedicated to the delivery of the APM accredited activities leading to IPMA qualifications?**

You should indicate the number of training staff you will employ to deliver your projected courses/activities. APM does not approve or accredit individual trainers.

APM recommends the following qualifications/experience for those involved in the delivery of accredited courses leading to the qualifications covered in this section:

- APM project management qualifications at or above the level they will be teaching or equivalent, and;
- five years' experience in project management.

It is highly recommended that those involved in development and delivery of accredited courses and activities are also APM members at Associate or higher level.

**Please indicate which examinations you would like to self-invigilate**

Accredited Providers may opt to self-invigilate their examinations (i.e. IPMA Level C: Certified Project Manager and IPMA Level D: Certified Project Management Associate) rather than use APM invigilator services. You are required to comply with the '[Service Level Requirements for Examinations](#)'.

Invigilators can be added at any time post accreditation, on completion of the relevant forms.

Accredited Providers can opt to self-invigilate at any time. Fees for self-invigilation will be invoiced at the same time as annual renewal, although if applying before annual renewal is due, a pro-rata amount will be invoiced. If applying to self-invigilate at initial application stage, fees would not normally be invoiced until accreditation is confirmed.

Opting to self-invigilate does not preclude a provider from requesting an invigilator from APM, should the need arise, at the standard fee.



## Self-Invigilators

All proposed invigilators are required to sign the self-invigilator agreement form, see the attachment to the '[Service Level Requirements for Examinations](#)'. All invigilators agree to comply with the APM self-invigilation standards and to conduct assessment events in accordance with APM's 'Essential information for examination invigilators'.

## Section 3 – Materials

**How do you develop and update materials in the provision of your services?**

Please provide us with details on your approach to developing, testing and updating your courseware.

**Who owns copyright of the materials being accredited?**

Please state who owns the copyright to the materials being considered for accreditation.

**Please detail the materials you will be submitting with this application for each course/activity to be accredited**

Please supply a full set of the materials to be used in the delivery of the proposed activity in soft copy format. Soft copies should be supplied in Microsoft Office compatible formats, Word, PDF or PowerPoint. For web based learning materials please supply a relevant URL including passwords etc.

**How will you conduct the appropriate eligibility checks on candidates prior to confirming bookings?**

As an Accredited Provider it will be your responsibility to conduct the relevant eligibility checks before submitting any applicant for their assessment. Each Accredited Provider shall evaluate each applicant's eligibility so that a decision on suitability can be taken.

For applicants applying for certificates at Levels A, B or C, this specifically requires the assessment of:

- application form;
- CV;
- executive summary report;
- complexity form;
- full self-assessment;
- referees (included into the application form).

For applicants applying for certificate at Level D, this requires the assessment of:

- application form;
- knowledge self-assessment.

Based on the evidence provided, and drawing on the experience of the Accredited Provider as necessary, the Accredited Provider shall document and inform the applicant of its decision to accept or reject an application for certification.

There are three domains in the IPMA system. In the three domains, projects have four levels (A, B, C and D); programme and portfolio each have two levels (A and B). This creates eight profiles in the IPMA system as shown in the table below:

		Domain		
		Project	Programme	Portfolio
Level	A	Certified Project Director	Certified Programme Director	Certified Portfolio Director
	B	Certified Senior Project Manager	Certified Senior Programme Manager	Certified Senior Portfolio Manager
	C	Certified Project Manager		
	D	Certified Project Management Associate		

Each profile has associated role descriptions and eligibility criteria as shown below:

<b>IPMA Level A</b> All experience for Level A must have been obtained within the last 12 years.		
Domain	Role description	Eligibility
<b>Project Management</b>	<b>Certified Project Director</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Acting on a strategic level within a very complex project environment.</li> <li>■ Responsible for a very complex project which has a strategic impact on the organisation.</li> </ul>	A minimum of five years' experience as a project manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex projects of which at least three years were at a strategic level.
<b>Programme Management</b>	<b>Certified Programme Director</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Acting on a strategic level within a very complex programme environment.</li> <li>■ Responsible for a very complex programme which has a strategic impact on the organisation.</li> </ul>	A minimum of five years' experience as a programme manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex programmes at a strategic level. OR A minimum of four years' experience as a programme manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex programmes. AND A minimum of three years' experience as a project manager in a responsible leadership function managing very complex projects at a strategic level.
<b>Portfolio Management</b>	<b>Certified Portfolio Director</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Acting on a strategic level within a very complex portfolio environment.</li> <li>■ Responsible for a very complex portfolio which has a strategic impact on the organisation.</li> </ul>	A minimum of five years' experience as a portfolio manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex programmes at a strategic level. OR A minimum of four years' experience as a portfolio manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex programmes. AND A minimum of three years' experience as a project or programme manager in a responsible leadership function managing very complex projects or programmes at a strategic level.

## IPMA Level B

All experience for Level B must have been obtained within the last eight years.  
The evidence timescale can be extended by four years with justification.

Domain	Role description	Eligibility
<b>Project Management</b>	<b>Certified Senior Project Manager</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Acting on a strategic level within a very complex project environment.</li> <li>■ Responsible for a very complex project which has a strategic impact on the organisation.</li> </ul>	A minimum of five years' experience as a project manager of which at least three years were in a responsible leadership function managing complex projects.
<b>Programme Management</b>	<b>Certified Senior Programme Manager</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Acting in a complex programme environment.</li> <li>■ Responsible for a complex programme within an organisation.</li> </ul>	A minimum of five years' experience as a programme manager of which at least three years were in a responsible leadership function managing complex programmes.
<b>Portfolio Management</b>	<b>Certified Senior Portfolio Manager</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Acting in a complex portfolio environment.</li> <li>■ Responsible for a complex portfolio within an organisation.</li> </ul>	A minimum of five years' experience as a portfolio manager of which at least three years were in a responsible leadership function managing complex portfolios.

## IPMA Level C

All experience for Level C must have been obtained within the last six years.  
The evidence timescale can be extended by four years with justification.

Domain	Role description	Eligibility
<b>Project Management</b>	<b>Certified Senior Project Manager</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Acting in a moderate complex environment.</li> <li>■ Responsible in a project management role with moderate complexity within an organisation.</li> </ul>	A minimum of three years' experience as a project manager within projects of moderate complexity. OR Minimum of three years' experience in a responsible project management role assisting the project manager in complex projects.

## IPMA Level D

Domain	Role description	Eligibility
<b>Project Management</b>	<b>Certified Project Management Associate</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Knowledge in competence elements related to project management.</li> <li>■ Has broad project management knowledge and may work in a project team.</li> </ul>	No experience required.

Project, programme and portfolio complexity shall be evaluated based on the requirements of eligibility for each certification level. The Accredited Provider is responsible for evaluating the eligibility of an applicant to become a candidate and shall ensure that the applicant meets the required complexity indicators.

#### **How do you ensure comprehensive coverage of the syllabus during the courses/activities?**

Please provide evidence for your chosen method of delivery that the examination syllabus is covered suitably during the activities. For example, this might include a detailed PowerPoint slide against each syllabus element for traditional delivery or activity objectives and processing points for experiential delivery.

#### **An evidence matrix must be completed for each qualification identified in section 1 of Part II**

A matrix is supplied with this paperwork which you must use to demonstrate coverage of the syllabus (please see Appendix A). A completed evidence matrix must be provided for each IPMA qualification.

## **Types of accreditation available**

The APM Accreditation scheme offers four streams of accreditation:

### **Corporate Accreditation**

Many organisations wish to demonstrate to their customers, suppliers and employees that they are committed to the highest standards of project management professional development. APM Corporate Accreditation assesses an organisation's professional development scheme, providing confidence to all stakeholders of its dedication to developing project professionals.

### **Training Provider Accreditation**

Professionals seeking approved training support for their project management qualifications will choose APM Accredited Providers. These companies have had their course materials assessed to meet APM standards and are permitted to deliver APM project management qualification exams.

### **Professional Course Accreditation**

APM Professional Course Accreditation is designed to help learners choose the best course in support of their professional project management career. Professional Course Accreditation identifies those courses which are aligned to the *APM Body of Knowledge, 6th edition*, but do not lead to, and are not in competition with, formal APM qualifications.

Providers who already offer APM accredited courses that deliver APM qualifications are eligible to have other courses, relevant to project, programme and portfolio management, accredited by APM.

### **Academic Accreditation**

APM Academic Accreditation is designed to help students and professionals choose the best academic education in support of their professional project management career. Academic Accreditation identifies courses and modules which are aligned to the *APM Body of Knowledge, 6th edition*.

## Association for Project Management

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