



THE CHARTERED BODY FOR THE PROJECT PROFESSION

## **GUIDANCE NOTES**

# **APM Professional Course Accreditation**

guidance for completing your  
accreditation application



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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,**

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

## Overview

APM Accreditation recognises the alignment of organisations and professional development services to APM's definition of project management professionalism. This is defined in terms of the association's FIVE Dimensions of Professionalism, each of which is supported by an APM standard.

### The APM FIVE Dimensions of Professionalism:

- **breadth** of understanding as defined by the *APM Body of Knowledge*
- **depth** of ability in line with the *APM Competence Framework*
- **achievement** through professional qualifications and a portfolio of evidence
- **commitment** through Continuing Professional Development
- **accountability** through APM membership and the APM Code of Professional Conduct

For Professional Course Accreditation, only those courses that have a significant element of project management which can be mapped to the *APM Body of Knowledge* will receive accreditation. Courses and course delivery will also be evaluated to identify how they support the other four dimensions of professionalism. Professional Course Accreditation is only open to existing APM Accredited Providers.

### Benefits of APM 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*.

To help promote your successful accreditation, you will receive a certificate, an APM Accreditation logo, a listing and a link on the APM website. You will also receive a copy of the APM assessor report which will enable you to see and act upon any related recommendations.

## Application process

### Stage 1 – Initial discussion

Once you have registered your interest in applying for Professional Course Accreditation with APM 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 Professional Course Accreditation you will be sent an application form.

### Stage 2 – Completing your application

The application form contains a series of questions relating to your organisation, your course and its alignment to the *APM Body of Knowledge*. You should answer all these questions as fully as possible. Please also attach any supporting documentation as an Annex to the application if you feel it will help in making your case.

An assessor will be assigned to review your submission. The assessor will look for alignment with the *APM Body of Knowledge*. Your application should therefore be supported by a complete evidence map together with copies of the relevant course materials.

### Stage 3 – The assessment

Your completed application form will be sent to the accreditation assessor who will assess your application by reviewing the extent to which the *APM Body of Knowledge* is covered in the objectives and supporting materials for your course and the extent to which they support the remaining four dimensions of professionalism. The assessment may involve the assessor contacting you to discuss details.

### Stage 4 – Assessment decision

Once your assessor has reviewed your application they will be in a position to recommend accreditation to APM or to ask for further information. APM will then review the nature and substance of the recommendation and inform you of the result.

Should your application be deemed by the assessor not to meet the standards of APM Professional Course Accreditation, it will be automatically reviewed by the lead/deputy lead assessor. If the lead / deputy lead assessor agrees with the adjudication you will be provided with the assessor report together with advice and guidance on areas that require development within your course if it is to meet the accreditation standard. APM will liaise with you and facilitate any related discussion with the assessor.

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

On the first, second and third anniversary of your accreditation you will be sent a renewal notice and invoice and be asked to confirm that the standards recognised through your initial assessment have been maintained. On the fourth anniversary of your assessment you will be invited to go through a full re-assessment.

## Assessment criteria

Assessors are looking to see the extent to which courses offered by APM Accredited Providers have a significant project, programme or portfolio management component which can be mapped to the *APM Body of Knowledge*. The nature of the evidence provided in support of an application and the way in which it is presented are likely to be different in each case. However, in all cases the assessor will be looking to determine the alignment to the *APM Body of Knowledge*, as well as how the remaining four dimensions of professionalism are supported by the course and, as a minimum, the supporting evidence should include course syllabus and timetable, course learning objectives and outcomes, and course materials (including supporting slides where appropriate).

#### **The evidence you supply should be sufficient to enable the APM assessor to evaluate how effectively the following APM criteria are met for the course in question:**

- An effective system of evaluation and review for continuous improvement
- Sufficient relevant expertise in staff and associates to deliver the course
- Design, development and delivery is appropriate and relevant to the *APM Body of Knowledge*, and supportive of the other four dimensions of professionalism
- Systems are in place to ensure proper award of credit and/or certificates is made

A summary of the latest version of the *APM Body of Knowledge* is provided in Appendix A to this Guidance

# Guidance on completing your application form

## Section 1 – Your details

Please complete all parts of this section, including the details of the main contact during the assessment and the name of the organisation and professional course title to be accredited. The professional course title will be the name which appears on the certificate of APM Accreditation. Please note, in order to apply for Professional Course Accreditation, you must already be accredited by APM to deliver a course leading to one of their qualifications.

## Section 2 – Your course

In this section you should provide background and context to your application which will help the assessor understand the course you wish to have accredited. This should include an explanation of where the course sits in relation to the accredited APM programmes you offer.

You must explain how the course operates including identifying supporting staff, external suppliers, auditing and evaluation and quality control. Please also indicate any external accreditations relevant to the course. You must also provide information identifying the project management expertise of staff involved in the delivery of the course which is to be accredited. This will normally be in the form of CVs. The trainers and support staff associated with the management and delivery of the course should be appropriate to the learning outcomes to be achieved.

The assessor will expect an indication of your organisation's commitment to the work of APM, how your programme supports learners across the five dimensions of breadth, depth, achievement, commitment and accountability, and how your organisation's alignment with the *APM Body of Knowledge* is helping to educate existing and future potential project managers.

Please provide details of any systems you have in place for ensuring award of credit and/or certificates in respect of your course.

## Section 3 – Evidence map

Indicate where you believe your course/module maps to the *APM Body of Knowledge*. Please identify where within the course materials the evidence of this can be found. Assessors will look for a significant project management component which can be mapped to the *APM Body of Knowledge*, but comprehensive coverage of every area is not expected.

## Pricing

APM Accreditation will last for four years. An initial assessment fee is paid when your assessment begins. Three further payments are paid annually on the anniversary of your initial accreditation. The renewal is subject to signed confirmation that you have maintained the standards of your initial accreditation. If, for any reason during the four year cycle, APM has reason to believe these standards have not been maintained, it reserves the right to re-assess your course. In any event, at the end of the four year cycle you will be required to undergo another full assessment.

Should your initial assessment not meet the criteria, each subsequent application will be treated as a new submission.

## 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. 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 the best 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*, 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**

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*.

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