

APM Academic

ACCREDITATION

CASE STUDY



Introduction

The University of Warwick's MSc in Programme and Project Management (PPM) received APM accreditation in May 2016. Delivered by one of the largest departments at Warwick, WMG, the degree course content aligns closely with the APM Body of Knowledge (BoK). The course offers its participants flexibility in terms of both content and delivery, ensuring it stays in step with real-world professional practice.



Industry focus

WMG is part of an institution that is well respected both in the UK and internationally. **The Guardian survey currently ranks the University of Warwick as the fifth best university in the UK and 48th in the world. Established in 1965, it has approximately 23,000 students and 5,000 staff.**

From its inception WMG's mission has been to improve the competitiveness of organisations through the application of innovation, new technologies and skills deployment, bringing academic rigour to industrial and organisational practice. WMG has grown into an international role model for how universities and business can successfully work together. It has extensive links with industry partners, including Jaguar Land Rover, BAE Systems, Network Rail and a large number of leading and innovative SMEs (Small and Medium sized Enterprises).

WMG's MSc in Programme and Project Management is designed in relation to the APM Body of Knowledge (BoK). It is delivered in a one-year, full time format and also as a three-year, flexible part time option.

Delivery of the programme is by full time WMG tutors, all of whom hold Masters' or doctorates, with some content also delivered by visiting teaching fellows.

All of the course tutors have had previous careers in industry, and most are members of professional bodies, such as IMechE, IMMM and APM itself. Delivery is also administered by a range of support staff operating well developed processes and procedures.

Students normally complete nine one-week modules, gaining 90 University credits, and then create a dissertation for a further 90 credits.

The four core modules are particularly closely aligned with the APM BoK 6th edition, and are accredited by the APM:

- Project Planning, Management and Control
- Managing the Multi-Project Environment
- Management of Change
- Programme and Project Strategy.

In addition to these core modules, students have the option to take five further modules relating to other aspects of P3M (Project, Programme and Portfolio Management) practice, such as Strategic Marketing, Logistics, Financial Management, Leadership, Business, Operations, Manufacturing, Service Design, Supply Chain Management, and Technology Management.

This wide range of elective modules enables students to focus on the elements of P3M that are most relevant to them, whether this is for their current role or to further their ambitions within a particular sector.

The course is completed via individual dissertations based on subjects selected by the participants, and supported by suitably qualified tutors, who are selected for their particular knowledge of the chosen topic. For those studying on a part-time professional pathway, there are industrial supervisors, with the relevant industrial knowledge.

The flexibility offered by this degree is a key benefit for the students' individual career paths as well as the wider profession.

For part-time students, the opportunity to study while continuing to work, together with the option to submit a work-based project as part of their degree, offers obvious economic benefits, as well as enhancing competences.





Furthering the profession

The existence of a Master's degree in Programme and Project Management within a respected university such as Warwick benefits the profession as a whole, both in terms of reputational enhancement and knowledge creation. The University's extensive links with industry ensure that this degree course is continuously refreshed and relevant to current professional practice.

With its academic content firmly rooted in APM's own BoK, WMG's Programme and Project Management degree course reflects 'real-world' project management practices. It also benefits from strong links to WMG's leading-edge research and tutoring by some of the leading voices in the profession, including Professor Rodney Turner, Geoff Reiss and Robert Buttrick.

In addition, the flexibility offered by this course – through part time or full time study, and a wide choice of modules – means that current project professionals can continue with their careers while studying, and select the course content that is most relevant to them, enhancing their value to the wider profession.

WMG also offers the option of short courses and completely customised content to meet particular organisational requirements. The department works with a number of global companies to develop tailored programmes that meet specific strategic goals within their businesses. Some of its custom modules also prepare participants to sit APM professional examinations. Programmes include a combination of interactive classroom sessions, case discussions, small group exercises and study groups to encourage participants to think strategically and to perform effectively in their organisations.





Value to individuals

One alumnus who had a very positive experience of WMG's Programme and Project Management education is Michael Enness, at Jaguar Land Rover (JLR). Michael studied on WMG's Project Planning Management and Control module as part of a tailored learning programme created for Jaguar Land Rover by WMG. He said: "This was a fantastic module – one of the best I've done. It made project management very accessible, giving me a good grasp of the principles, which I'll now be able to apply, whatever direction my career takes.

"Having a clear set of principles to follow is especially useful in my own field of engineering, where there tends to be a lot of different standards and we don't always all adhere to the same rules.

"I'd also like to say that the tutor was excellent and I really enjoyed the course."

Value to organisations

Katy Angliss is Course Leader for the part-time MSc in PPM. She said: "This course leads to a recognised qualification – an MSc – and gives participants a broad and well-rounded understanding of PPM, whether they are already industry professionals or considering starting a career in project management.

"One thing that differentiates this course is our extensive contact with project organisations and the practical application of its modules. Students benefit from opportunities to network with their peers and with organisations in a variety of industrial arenas.

"Another point of difference is the emphasis on independent learning. Students carry out post-module assignments, designed to develop their thinking and broaden their understanding of the subject matter."

“ The APM accreditation for the Warwick PPM course is fantastic news. The learning and knowledge from this course helps me tremendously with my current project management role and the recognition from the leading project management industry body will inevitably give me a leading edge in the future.”

Helen Rose, European IT Lead, Global HR and Payroll Project at UTC Corporate

Benefits of APM accreditation

The award of this Academic Accreditation further cements the profile of WMG's PPM Master's degree and actively demonstrates its commitment to the profession and the professional body's standards.

Closely aligned since its inception with the syllabus suggested by the APM BoK, the degree course offers firm evidence of that alignment to prospective students and their employers. **WMG works with the APM on an ongoing basis and has plans for further updates and enhancements to its course content in the future.**

Prospective students and other groups now have further reassurance from an APM assessor that the University has the necessary resources, systems and processes in place to deliver an effective and sustainable course, considering aspects including governance, continuous improvement and the appraisal of participants' course work. The assessment also offers guidance that the same University processes are applied to overseas provision of the course.

Jayne Redfern is a Principal Teaching Fellow at WMG. She led the work towards APM accreditation for the MSc programme and also delivers much of the custom content for a range of bespoke educational programmes. She said: "Client companies often look for the assurance that our curriculum is comprehensive and, in the case of our MSc degree in PPM, APM accreditation helps to provide that assurance.

A basic tenet of our approach is to ensure that our teaching is based on known best practice, and that our P3M programmes are at the forefront of teaching in the profession. We will continue to work closely with the APM in the development of new educational programmes."

“ I had no hesitation in recommending this course for accreditation. The course team is to be complimented on the quality of the provision.”

Mike Bates, APM assessor



Personal story

Malcolm Russell is a Senior Project Manager at Network Rail with 15 years' experience. He began studying with WMG in 2013, taking three modules as part of a management education programme especially tailored for his organisation.

Malcolm started his 30-year railway career as an apprentice in Electrical and Electronic Engineering, and has built his skills mainly by learning 'on the job'. He liked the idea of working towards a full Master's degree, both for its widely recognised academic merit and as a way of deepening his professional knowledge. He therefore opted to take a further six modules, plus a dissertation, which is now in progress, in order to obtain the full Master's qualification.

Malcolm says: "One of the great things about this degree is that there is a lot of choice. As well as the core requirements, I could select the modules that interested me and that would also help me at work, such as Marketing, Leading Performance and Operations Management."

Malcolm says the learning from each module, and especially from the research for his dissertation, definitely enhances his work as a PPM professional. "When you've been with one organisation for a long time, you become very effective at using the in-house systems and processes.

"But working on this qualification has led me to find out about different methodologies, and to consider how they could benefit our own ways of working."

Malcolm adds that the support from the WMG tutors has been fantastic throughout. "Returning to formal education after such a long time was quite daunting. But WMG were very supportive – I only have good things to say about them."



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FIVEDimensions of Professionalism

APM Corporate Accreditation

APM Corporate Accreditation will help you stand out as an exemplar in the development of project management professionals. It provides assurances to your customers and suppliers and allows you to attract and retain the best project management talent in the country.

APM Corporate Accreditation recognises the commitment of organisations and professional development services to the defined APM FIVE Dimensions of Professionalism, each of which is supported by an APM standard:

Breadth

The *APM Body of Knowledge* defines the knowledge needed to manage any kind of project. It underpins many project management standards and methods including the National Occupational Standard in Project Management.

Depth

The *APM Competence Framework* provides a guide to project management competences. It is part of your professional toolkit; mapping levels of knowledge and experience to help you progress your skills and abilities.

Achievement

APM qualifications take your career in new and exciting directions. They are recognised across the profession and aligned with IPMA's 4 level Certification Program.

Commitment

Continuing Professional Development helps develop your project management practice. A targeted development plan will enhance your project management career.

Accountability

The APM Code of Professional Conduct outlines the ethical practice expected of a professional. Becoming an APM member shows your commitment to the Code and sets you apart from others.