

ACCREDITATION

CASE STUDY



Introduction

Heathrow Airport is London's main airport, the UK's only hub airport and one of the busiest in the world. It is home to 86 airlines serving over 180 destinations in 90 countries, with more than 1,300 daily aircraft movements and between 100,000 and 200,000 passengers every day.

As one of the UK's most significant construction industry clients, Heathrow continually invests in the construction and refurbishment of its infrastructure, along with the process and operational change programmes which go along with their delivery. Among its current major projects is the future Terminal 2, adding to the existing four operating terminals and which is expected to see around 25 million passengers a year.

Heathrow promotes strong values that are reflected in everyday activity at all levels. It has established six core business behaviours – including working together, taking the lead and continuous improvement – to support the vision to 'Become the UK 's direct connection to the world and Europe's hub of choice by making every journey better'.

Meeting the challenge

Heathrow is not just Britain's gateway to the world but the world's doorway to Britain. For many travellers the terminals they see and the systems they use are their first experience of a different culture and way of life.



Heathrow Airport initiates some of the world's most exciting projects that require creativity, innovation and passion to bring them to life. These range from the construction and repair of airport runways and the development of new baggage systems to the creation of sustainable energy supply infrastructure and the design of terminal buildings.

The Development Directorate within Heathrow is responsible for the programme and project management of all construction work at the airport.

At every stage of the portfolio, programme and project lifecycle, creative solutions are generated, options developed and workable choices selected before being taken to the next stage for design or development, working closely with all of the airport's stakeholders when defining projects.

In an increasingly competitive market, the airport faces unprecedented challenge both at home and abroad. Strong competition from emerging markets, huge global economic uncertainty, constraints on further expansion and intense public and media scrutiny all contribute to make this one of the most challenging periods in its 60-year history.

Nowhere is that pressure more severe or the scrutiny more intense than in the delivery of capital development programmes. The directorate has risen to this challenge by re-engineering every aspect of its business to improve what it does and transforming the way that is done.

The intelligent client approach is fundamental to this change.

"To be an intelligent client we must know what we want and what good looks like. We need to be airport experts in the broadest sense and be recognised as a model

of excellence in safely delivering sustainable solutions which realise business benefits through a lean, strategic and programmatic approach," said Steve Livingstone, T2 development director.

"These changes require new skill sets, broader qualifications and new ways of thinking in tangible, measurable terms. This approach gives project and programme teams the training, professional development and flexibility to make those important judgements and decisions that are so crucial to the smooth development and safe delivery of capital development programmes."

Focus on transformation

Heathrow insists on the importance of the personal and continuous professional development of all employees in a controlled and sustained manner, guided through their individual Performance and Development Review. This is regularly assessed to ensure individual needs are identified, planned, delivered and sustained.

The transformation to a benefits driven, programme-focused organisation included the need to develop a number skill sets and the overall capability of the directorate. New roles were developed and different project functions realigned to one generic role in line with those defined by APM.

A portfolio, programme and project framework was created, built on industry best practice taken from the APM *Body of Knowledge* and the Office of Government Commerce Portfolio and Programme Process, strengthened with practical experience gained on some of Heathrow's most high profile infrastructure projects.

The Development Intelligent Client Handbook details portfolio, programme and project processes and defines roles, together with their corresponding responsibilities and accountability in a way that is simple enough to allow intelligent interpretation in order to meet the challenges that need to be addressed.

The handbook and all other essential policies are easily accessible to employees through the online website.

To ensure that everyone's core skills reach the same level, all involved in project or programme management receive professional training on APM courses as well as the appropriate technical training. More specific training is available based around business behaviours with programmes, including business awareness, understanding aviation, personal impact and precision influencing. Further programmes have also been developed to support those leading or building high performing teams.

The philosophy that underpins this approach is the belief that creating the right environment in which to nurture talent is just as important as having good performance conversations. To this end, the Development Directorate has adopted a three-step approach to audit and evaluate project management learning and development needs.

- 1** Annual Performance Development Planning (PDP) where all employees are required to have an up to date PDP which identifies areas for development relevant to their current role and career aspirations. The plans are then used to assess the training and development needs of the organisation
- 2** Regular reviews of compliance with processes and procedures help identify where additional training and education is required
- 3** A competency assessment process based on APM guidance, where all employees will be assessed and the output linked to their PDP

Employees are expected to manage their own drive for personal and professional excellence. Their line managers and personal development leaders – in-house senior colleagues who have been selected to help identify development opportunities and give additional support.

An online assessment tool, developed with APM accredited training provider, Project Academy, helps to identify areas for development and enables more meaningful discussions with line managers.

A successful pilot assessment, Project Potential, was launched in September 2012 with 28 project managers assessed on their knowledge and skills, aligned to APM's *Body of Knowledge* and *Competency Framework*. The aim now is to roll it out across the entire project and programme community.

Development has also drawn up a bespoke framework of core competencies, developed by an internal working

group that identified and selected key APM and other competencies that apply to the organisation.

This framework helps to ensure that all those involved in programme and project delivery are developing the right skills to ensure success. As well as a personal development tool, an individual's competency can be linked to the complexity rating for a project, so that the right project managers are working on the right projects.

Training is a combination of internal and external courses, learning workshops and sessions, working for professional qualifications and through coaching and 'buddy' mentoring. Care is taken to allocate employees to different programmes so that they can broaden their experience in line with their career aspirations, as well as making the most efficient use of resources.

The approach is showing impressive results. By the end of 2012, 203 people from the Development directorate had undertaken programme and project management training. Of these, 72 attended the APM Introduction Certificate course, 101 attended the APMP course and 30 had completed the OGC programme management training. The average pass rate for the APMP was 87 per cent, well above the national average.

Steve Livingstone has publicly stated that APM Registered Project Professional (RPP) will not only be adopted by Heathrow, but also be included in future tender process for potential suppliers.

Julian Foster, T2B programme director explained, "Our aim is to understand overall strengths and areas for development of all our employees and to create targeted training needs analysis programmes for all programme and project managers and specialist support function.



"By understanding individual career aspiration and providing the development necessary to achieve them, Development can retain its talent, build capabilities and reap the benefit of stable succession planning.

"From now on, we are programme management professionals capable of doing and achieving far more than we previously imagined. The broader our experience and skill set, the more valuable we become to the business.

"And one more big change will be occurring over time – we will be moving more and more toward multi-disciplinary, self-directed programme teams where leaders support, encourage, and coach their teams and teams do the managing and the work."

Client testimonial

"Mott MacDonald (Motts) works as the Managed Service Supplier (MSP) for minor projects, as part of their scope of services to Heathrow. This entails working as an integrated part of Tim Houghton's team of project managers. I lead the Motts minors team in providing the project control and reporting functions. This includes commercial/contract management, planning, risk, cost and change management.

"A portfolio of projects that forms a programme of works with a very diverse group of stakeholders has a far greater need for a well formulated and structured approach that is based on sound principles than a single, well defined project with a single stakeholder.

"I have found Tim Houghton's approach to be consistent and based on standard terminology and methodologies. This puts him in the 'intelligent client' box, which makes discussing issues and reviewing earned value management outputs meaningful.

"A sound background and understanding of project and portfolio management means it is easier to set up the reporting and data management processes to achieve the delivery of the portfolio. This avoids knee jerk reporting and makes it easier to plan the workload of the team."

Andre Koch, Project Controller,
Capital Investment MSP



Personal story

Senior project manager Tim Houghton was one of the first to take part in the training and development process, helping to pilot Development's transformational approach to project management.

He joined the organisation nine years ago as a lead engineer, coming from cradle-to-grave electrical project work in high speed manufacturing and the steel industry. He progressed to project management through operational planning and business processes before moving to Development in 2008. He now leads a £60 million portfolio of some 200 minor construction schemes from terminals to airfield.

"I'd had limited formal project management training but was lucky enough to be selected for the first tranche of candidates for the APMP," he said. "As part of the course preparation I assessed myself against the Intelligent Client criteria. It was an intensive process, but it did find my gaps as well as my strengths."

Tim was top of that pilot group for the APMP exam and was able to put what he was learning into immediate effect.

"We were in the transition phase to operational readiness of the T5C project, the third satellite for T5. It helped me to concentrate on the outcomes more clearly."

He has since completed the OGC Managing Successful Programmes course and was part of the Project Potential pilot assessment of knowledge and skills.

"Project Potential enabled me to see how I had moved on against my first assessment and for the opportunity to sit down with a trainer from Project Academy who could give an independent view of my competencies."

Because he was involved in the process in the early stages he is now part of the panel on how it is reviewed and deployed and is aiming to be managing larger, more complex programmes in the future.

"I now know which competencies I really need to enhance to make me a fully rounded project manager, to understand what is important and what skills I need to deploy to benefit a particular project."



Association for Project Management and Heathrow Airport

As a corporate member of APM, Heathrow Airport is one of its strongest supporters, embracing the association's approach and resources and fully committed to the APM 5 Dimensions of Professionalism.

It has aligned its project and programme management processes to the APM Body of Knowledge and drawn from the APM Competency Framework to develop its own bespoke framework.

Heathrow advocates the APMP qualification as the minimum standard for its project management community and stresses the importance of the association to its supply chain. It has strong links to APM Specific Interest Groups and APM events are regularly hosted at Heathrow. Julian Foster sits on APM's Client Advisory Body and both he and Steve Livingstone have presented at major APM events. A Heathrow employee chairs the APM Heathrow Chapter.



APM accreditation is important to Heathrow Airport as it provides confirmation that our approach to the development of our project managers and the processes they use are aligned with industry best practice. It gives our staff recognition via the APM qualifications and supports our goal of attracting the best project management talent to our organisation. It also helps identify areas to steer future development."

Lindsay Pilling, Programme Leader

Association for Project Management

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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.