

PROFESSIONAL

APM Project
Professional
Qualification 2nd edition

Assessment Specification

This document outlines the specifications for the case study and assessment materials for:

- The APM Project Professional Qualification 2nd edition

These specifications are provided for:

- APM staff: to construct fit for purpose case studies and assessment material
- APM's Professional Standards and Knowledge Committee: for quality assurance purposes
- APM's Senior Examiner Team (SET): for quality assurance purposes, to ensure all assessment material meet the agreed specifications
- Case study writers: to ensure all case study materials are written in accordance with the specifications
- Assessment writers: to ensure all assessment materials are written in accordance with the specifications
- Accredited Providers: for information purposes
- Assessors and Markers: for information purposes

1. Context

PPQ 2nd edition is a skills-based assessment that allows candidates to demonstrate their project management skills and capabilities on difficult projects

2. Assessment overview for PPQ 2nd edition

- The assessment is based upon the learning outcomes and assessment criteria specified in the APM Project Professional Qualification 2nd edition Syllabus
- The Professional Qualification 2nd edition assessment is of two hours 35 minutes duration and consists of three assessment elements:
 - Scenario assessment
 - Oral exam
 - Written report
- It is based on a pre-seen case study, the context of the case study is sent to candidates four weeks prior to their assessment date
- Requires that candidate to take on the role of the project manager in the pre-seen case study

3. Examination instructions to candidates

Instructions given to the candidates are available on the APM website: www.apm.org.uk.

4a. Specification for a Professional Qualification case study

Each case study will:

- Be approximately 25 pages in length
- Will be in sufficient detail to enable the assessment to take place
- Will consist of a

Document section	Access
Company synopsis	Publicly available
Programme synopsis	Publicly available
Profiles of key staff	Publicly available
Project details	Assessment material available to candidates four weeks prior to their assessment

4b. Specification for a Professional Qualification scenario assessment

Each scenario assessment will:

- Assess:
 - Unit 1, learning outcome 6 (Communicate effectively with stakeholders to achieve a project's outcome **and one** of the following:
 - Unit 1, learning outcome 4 (Resolve problems taking a logical approach to the problem-solving process) **or**
 - Unit 1, learning outcome 5 (Make decisions which support the objectives of the project) **or**
 - Unit 1, learning outcome 7 (Negotiate effectively with stakeholders to achieve a project's objectives)
- be 20 minutes long, with 10 additional minutes preparation time (a total of 30 minutes)
- be carried out by two assessors, approved by APM

4c. Specification for a Professional Qualification oral exam

Each oral exam will:

- Assess four learning outcomes, drawn from a range across all three units
- Be 50 minutes long
- Be carried out by two assessors, approved by APM

4d. Specification for a Professional Qualification written report assessment

Each written report will:

- Assess one learning outcome drawn from a range across all three units
- Be 60 minutes long, with 15 additional minutes preparation/reading time (a total of 75 minutes)
- Be marked by one marker, approved by APM

5. Pass mark

- There are 90 marks available across the assessment
- The pass mark is 60% (54/90) of the available marks across all three elements of the assessment*
- To ensure performance in each assessment element, candidates must score a minimum mark in each as follows*:
 - Scenario assessment – 10 marks
 - Oral exam – 20 marks
 - Written report - 15 marks
- There is no requirement to achieve a pass mark on every question attempted to attain an overall pass

**This may be changed on the recommendation of the Chair of Examiners during the lifetime of the qualification.*

6a. Specification for a Professional Qualification scenario task

Each scenario task:

- Will allow candidates 20 minutes to demonstrate evidence against the criteria being assessed
- Will address effective communication and either problem solving, decision making or negotiation
- Is worth 20 marks. 10 marks for the assessment of effective communication and 10 marks for the assessment of either problem solving, decision making or negotiation

- Will provide candidates with a scenario that is based on the pre-seen case study
- Will require the candidate to take on the role of the project manager for the pre-seen case study
- Will include:
 - Candidate information
 - Assessor role play notes, not to be seen by candidates
 - Assessor notes, not to be seen by candidates

These documents provide the candidate and the assessors with all relevant information for them to play the required part in the scenario assessment.

6b. Specification for Professional Qualification oral exam questions

Each learning outcome assessed:

- Is allocated 12 minutes
- Will be assessed via four questions, that assess across the assessment criteria in the learning outcome
 - Each question will be split into three parts
 - Each question must contain the relevant command verb for the assessment criteria being assessed
- Is allocated 10 marks, which are awarded on the basis of the answers to the four questions posed
- Will be based on the pre-seen case study
- Will require the candidate to take on the role of the project manager for the pre-seen case study

6c. Specification for a Professional Qualification written report question

Each question:

- Is allocated 60 minutes to answer plus 15 minutes reading time
- Will address one learning outcome
- Will be divided into three parts; each part will address a different assessment criterion from the same learning outcome
- Will contain the relevant command verb for the assessment criteria being assessed
- Is allocated 30 marks
- Will be based on the pre-seen case study
- Will require the candidate to take on the role of the project manager for the pre-seen case study

7. Command verbs

The following command verbs are used in the syllabus.

Verb	Definition
Critically evaluate	To form a judgement backed by a range of reliable and valid sources of information and supporting analysis. A critical evaluation must use this backing to reach an informed suggestion, recommendation or finding.
Critically analyse	To examine in methodical detail a range of reliable and valid sources of information to interpret or analyse a given subject. A critical analysis does not require any form of judgement (e.g. a recommendation or proposal).
Demonstrate	Exhibit by practical means. (Please note that all demonstrate assessment criteria will be assessed via means of the scenario assessment)

Notes

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