

MANAGEMENT

APM Project
Management
Qualification

Exam Techniques

APM Project Management Qualification exam techniques

This document is designed to support you when preparing to undertake the APM Project Management Qualification by providing insight into what to look for and techniques you can apply, when undertaking the examination.

The examination is made up of 16 short answer questions. We also provide the APM Project Management Qualification for PRINCE2® practitioners. This version of the Management Qualification recognises the prior learning of those who have the PRINCE2® Practitioner qualification. As a result, the assessment for the Management Qualification for PRINCE2® practitioners is made up of 10 short answer questions.

Short answer questions test your level of knowledge and understanding of a topic and will contain command verbs such as 'explain' and 'describe'.

Each question is worth 50 marks and will have two parts, part a) is worth 20 marks and part b) is worth 30 marks. Both part a) and part b) must be completed for maximum possible marks. A question will target one learning outcome from the syllabus and each part of the question will target different assessment criteria from the same learning outcome.

Each question paper will consist of short answer questions to which you must produce your own response.

Identifying and responding to a question's components

It's important for you to understand the components of a question.

You must recognise the command verb and its requirements (see the command verbs section of the syllabus as well as the indicative content document).

You must also recognise the broad topic area or context and the specific aspect of a question.

Consider the question "Describe how motivation is used to improve the performance of a project team." In this question the command verb is 'describe', the broad topic area or context is 'improve the performance of a project team', with the specific aspect being 'motivation'.

A response that focuses on motivation as a general concept would receive very few marks, but a response that places the use of motivation in the context of improving the performance of a project team has a greater chance of being awarded high marks.

Using command verbs within short answer questions

All short answer questions will be formed using the relevant command verbs. Please note that some differentiate questions may be formed as 'explain the difference between...'

Each command verb has a definition (as shown within the syllabus) to support you in understanding the level of depth required when answering the questions.

The command verb definitions are expanded upon in the publicly available "APM Project Management Qualification Indicative Content" document, to give you further indication as to the level of depth and understanding you should be covering within your answers for the questions.

For example, within the indicative content section for assessment criteria 1.1 "differentiate between types of permanent and temporary organisation structures (including functional, matrix, and project)" the indicative content document states:

"...need to provide relevant information demonstrating the differences between permanent and temporary organisation structures and the reasons for these differences."

So, when you're answering a question targeting AC 1.1, you should differentiate between the subject, in the context of the question, and go further by providing detail on the reasons for these differences.

Clarity within an answer

The way in which you respond to a question will influence the number of marks that are awarded. If the response is not clear and/or the content of a response is disjointed, it will be difficult for a marker to be confident that you have demonstrated secure knowledge and understanding.

You must present a response in a logical and easy to understand structure that focuses on the exact requirements of the question. A marker must be able to understand what it is you're saying so that the marker can determine if you have provided a relevant response.

Exam technique suggestions

We don't recommend one particular exam technique. Time management within the examination is very important if you're to provide responses to all the questions.

The APM Project Management Qualification examination:

- Is three hours long.
- Has been designed for you to answer 10 question within 3 hours, which works out as 18 minutes per question, including reading time. This can be further broken down as 7 minutes for the part a) 20-mark questions and 11 minutes for the part b) 30-mark questions.
- Contains 16 equally weighted questions, from which you must select 10 questions.

The APM Project Management Qualification for PRINCE2®:

- Is two hours long.
- Has been designed for you to answer 6 questions within two hours, which works out as 20 minutes per question, including reading time. This can be further broken down as 8 minutes for the part (a) 20-mark questions and 12 minutes for the part (b) 30-mark questions.
- Contains 10 equally weighted questions, from which you must select 6 questions.

One possible technique for you is to read through all the questions and make a note of those that you're more confident of answering effectively and those where you're less confidence. The RAG approach could be used here where:

R for Red indicates low confidence.

A for Amber indicates medium confidence.

G for Green indicates high confidence.

After the initial review, you could begin with G, followed by A and then R. This would give you the greatest chance of achieving the highest marks possible.

Further reading

We advise you to read the APM Project Management Qualification syllabus on our website, so you're aware of what areas of knowledge you're expected to demonstrate in the exam. Within the syllabus document is a list of the command verbs used in the syllabus and question paper, with a definition of what they mean.

We have published indicative content for each assessment criteria. The indicative content is not a selection of sample or model answers but a guide to the type of responses you could make for each assessment criteria. Exact responses should be tailored to fit the question asked. In addition to the syllabus and indicative content, we also provide a number of other supporting resources for our Management Qualification, all of which are available on the Management Qualification [web page](#).

Association for Project Management

Ibis House, Regent Park
Summerleys Road
Princes Risborough
Buckinghamshire HP27 9LE

Tel (UK) 0845 458 1944
Tel (Int) +44 1844 271 640
Email info@apm.org.uk
Web apm.org.uk