



**THE CHARTERED BODY FOR THE PROJECT PROFESSION**

## **GUIDANCE NOTES**

# **APM Accreditation for Training Providers**

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:

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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 commitment of organisations and professional development services to APM's definition of project management professionalism. APM Accreditation assesses your company in its commitment to the development of the APM 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

### Training Provider Accreditation for APM Qualifications

APM accredits training providers to deliver the following:

- training and development leading to the award of the APM Project Fundamentals Qualification
- training and development leading to the award of APM Project Risk Management Certificates 1 and 2
- training and development leading to the award of the APM Project Management Qualification
- training and development leading to the award of the APM Project Professional Qualification

Professionals seeking the best training and development support for their project management qualifications will choose APM Accredited Providers (APs). These companies have had their course materials and training provision assessed to meet APM standards and are permitted to deliver APM project management qualification exams.

APM Accreditation is designed to ensure that providers are capable of providing candidates with good quality preparation for APM qualifications by assessing:

- your organisation
- your materials
- your delivery capability

There are many different ways to design and deliver training and development to meet the needs and expectations of both candidates and clients. APM Accreditation has the flexibility to assess training and development programmes of all kinds.

Your APM Accreditation application should contain everything you consider appropriate in a style that makes assessment straightforward.

These guidance notes are designed to help you in your application by explaining the rationale behind each question in the accreditation application form. The information supplied will allow us to assess your application and help us build a strong working relationship with you.

### Becoming an APM Accredited Provider

Once your application has been approved, you will receive a certificate, an APM accreditation logo and a listing on the APM website. You will also receive a copy of the APM assessor's report. As an Accredited Provider you will have the services of a dedicated business development manager who will help you get the best out of your relationship with APM.

# Application process

## Stage 1 – Initial discussion

Once you have registered your interest with APM in applying to become an Accredited Provider 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 accreditation you will be sent an application form.

## Stage 2 – Completing your application

In completing your application, you should answer the questions as fully as possible and submit copies of supporting documentation and all course material.

## Stage 3 – The assessment

- a. Your completed application will be reviewed by an accreditation assessor who may ask for further information.
- b. A virtual or physical site visit by the assessor will normally be arranged to:
  - sample evidence
  - discuss course construction
  - review management systems
  - observe course delivery and obtain student feedback (where applicable)

## Stage 4 – Assessment decision

Once the assessor has reviewed your completed application, they will make a recommendation to APM that the application is either 'accredited', 'accredited with conditions', or 'does not meet the criteria'.

If the assessor considers that your application does not meet the standards of APM training provider accreditation, it will be reviewed by the accreditation lead/deputy lead assessor. If the lead/deputy lead assessor agrees with the assessment, you will be provided with the assessors' report and advice on areas that require development within your course to meet the standards of the accreditation.

If your application is unsuccessful, you may make a re-submission which will be treated in all respects as a new submission.

## Stage 5 – Annual renewal

At the start of years two, three and four of your accreditation we will send you an annual report template to complete and an annual renewal invoice. At the start of year five, a full re-assessment will be required.

# Guidance on completing your application form

## PART I: General Information

This section is intended to help us understand your organisation:

### Section 1 – Contact details

Please provide the name and contact details of the organisation applying for accreditation. If your organisation is a subsidiary of a larger organisation and this has an impact on your delivery, please supply details of the parent organisation. Please provide details of the primary point of contact for your application. This person should be able to answer any questions related to your application and will be responsible for the annual reporting process, once accredited.

### Section 2 – Your organisation

#### How many years has the organisation been in existence?

How many years has the organisation been in existence in its current form? If you have traded under a different name, structure or part of a different organisation, please include details here.

#### What is the total number of staff employed by the organisation?

Please tell us the total number of staff employed by the organisation including trainers, support staff, associates and contractors.

#### Please indicate the proportion of staff dedicated to support, management, training and development for the proposed activities

#### Please supply an organisation chart for those directly involved in the delivery of APM accredited activities

To help us establish a clear picture of key individuals and groups involved in the delivery of APM activities and their relationship with the rest of the organisation, please supply an organisational chart with all roles and responsibilities listed. Please indicate where associates or contract staff are used, and provide details of the senior management support for your activities.

#### How will you ensure that all staff understand and act accordingly with regard to your Accredited Provider status, relationship with APM and its products and services?

Please give details of any training and documentation you provide to your staff to ensure that they are up to date with current APM requirements for Accredited Providers, and APM products and services. Please provide any information about the involvement of your staff in APM activities as a volunteer.

#### What percentage of your organisation's business is concerned with project management training and development?

This helps us to assess the level of commitment your organisation is able to dedicate to the subject and therefore ensure that candidates are suitably supported.

#### Other accreditations

If your organisation is accredited by other bodies to deliver courses or qualifications, please provide details in this section.

### Section 3 – Quality assurance

All procedures and activities should be clearly documented and consistent with national quality assurance requirements and guidelines.

If you are applying for re-accreditation please provide examples of how your procedures have been amended or updated since the last accreditation or annual report.

**What external certifications do you have or are you applying for?**

Please indicate any awards or affiliations you currently have or are applying for (e.g. ISO 9001, Investors in People and affiliation to professional institutions, trade associations).

**How will you ensure the quality of APM accredited activities?**

The procedures and activities should ensure the quality and consistency of administration, teaching and/or training where appropriate. The information provided should also explain how monitoring and review processes are applied to ensure that the clients' learning objectives and outcomes are met.

Please include the way in which feedback from candidates is evaluated and monitored and how necessary amendments are made. Please attach any relevant extracts from the most recent reports.

**How will you recruit, induct, train and maintain staff involved in the delivery of APM Accredited work?**

This is to ensure that you recruit and induct staff of a suitable level for the management, administration and delivery of all APM activities and have robust quality checking processes in place. Please indicate how you maintain the quality of delivery personnel.

**Section 4 – Resources, health & safety**

Please show how you are resourced and comply with all current legislation around health and safety and disability regulations and requirements to enable learners to access and safely complete training. Copies of your internal policies should be provided.

## Accredited Provider accreditation cycle

The assessment process runs to a 4-year cycle as shown below:

<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Accreditation</b>	The initial fee covers up to two courses if assessed at the same time. Additional course fees will apply for applications where more than two courses are to be assessed at the same time.
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Annual Report and Charge</b>	Covering all course accreditations held
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Annual Report and Charge</b>	Covering all course accreditations held
<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Annual Report and Charge</b>	Covering all course accreditations held
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Re-accreditation</b>	One fee applicable for all courses if assessed at the same time.

Organisations based outside the UK seeking accreditation will be required to pay additional Assessor costs for any site visits as follows:

- All subsistence from departure airport
- Return flight costs
- Transport to and from airports
- Hotel (of reasonable standard)
- Assessor fees incurred for time required over and above that allowed for in a standard UK application assessment

Travel and hotel may be booked by the Assessor if necessary, but will normally be arranged by the applicant organisation. Internationally accredited training organisations will normally be required to source locally based invigilators for exams, but APM reserves the right to conduct ad hoc inspection visits, for which all costs will be charged to the accredited training provider.

Full re-accreditation is conducted after year 4 and the 4-year cycle begins again.

Further courses may be added at any time for which a further fee will be charged.

## **PART II: For courses leading to:**

APM Project Fundamentals Qualification

APM Project Management Qualification

APM Project Professional Qualification 2nd edition

APM Project Risk Management Certificate levels 1 and 2

### **Section 1 – Your courses**

Along with your application form, you should provide details of the course materials and supporting documentation you will use in the activity you wish to be accredited. For courses leading to APM qualifications, this should provide evidence that you are covering the whole syllabus for the qualification in question.

#### **Suggested guided learning/development time for the APM Project Fundamentals Qualification and APM Risk Certificate level 1**

34 hours notional learning time, including:

- Guided learning (learning that is under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training) (20 hours)
- Directed development (development that is not under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training, but will help the candidate prepare for the examinations, this could include 'on the job' development) (13 hours)
- Dedicated assessment (1 hour)

#### **Suggested guided learning/development time for the APM Project Management Qualification and APM Risk Certificate level 2**

75 hours notional learning time, including:

- Guided learning (learning that is under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer or other appropriate provider of education or training) (32 hours)
- Directed development (development that is not under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training, but will help the candidate prepare for the examinations, this could include 'on the job' development) (40 hours)
- Dedicated assessment (3 hours)

#### **Suggested guided learning/development time for the APM Project Professional Qualification 2nd edition**

70 hours notional learning time, including:

- Guided learning (learning that is under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training) 40 hours
- Directed development (development that is not under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training, but will help the candidate prepare for the assessment – this could include 'on the job' development) (28 hours)
- Dedicated assessment (2 hours 35 minutes)

#### **What courses are to be assessed in this application?**

Please indicate which courses are to be accredited or re-accredited.

## **APM Project Management Qualification for registered PRINCE2® Practitioners**

You undertake to assure APM that a candidate's eligibility to access this prior learning route to the APM Project Management Qualification will be checked by your organisation prior to entering candidates for the examination, and that you will keep auditable records for a period of 6 months after the date of the examination. Candidates applying for the examination APM Project Management Qualification recognising the prior learning of the PRINCE2® Practitioner qualification will need to provide documentary evidence of their eligibility to access this prior learning route, i.e. on the day they are due to take the examination, they need to show they hold the PRINCE2® Practitioner qualification. APM reserves the right to carry out spot checks on the eligibility of any candidate entered for the APM Project Management Qualification with prior learning. Any candidate who has been entered for this examination when not eligible will have their certification withdrawn, and the Accredited Provider will have its APM accreditation suspended, pending review.

You will also need to show that your course adequately provides a bridge between the prior learning of PRINCE2® and the broader requirements of the APM Project Management Qualification. For example, how you will address the differences in terminology. Do you provide an overview of the APM Project Management Qualification and how PRINCE2® fits within it (either in pre-coursework materials or as part of the course itself)?

### **Describe how the proposed course(s) will be delivered**

Please describe all formats in which your course(s) will be delivered, e.g. classroom/workshop/onsite, distance/e-learning, blended etc.

There is a variety of training and development approaches, from detailed instructional styles to experiential learning. To help us understand the intended approach to your course, please outline the learning philosophy on which the course is based. APM accepts that all styles of learning are valid in the training and development of candidates, however all candidates are required to understand how the syllabuses and criteria for the APM Project Fundamentals Qualification and the APM Project Management Qualification align to the *APM Body of Knowledge*, the APM Project Professional Qualification 2nd edition aligns to the *APM Body of Knowledge* and the APM Chartered Project Professional standard, and Project Risk Management Levels 1 and 2 are based on the *APM Project Risk Analysis and Management (PRAM) Guide 2nd edition*.

### **Approximately how many APM Accredited events do you run throughout the year and how many participants do you expect for each type of event?**

Please indicate the number of events and candidates likely to be attending. This will help us understand whether candidates will be suitably supported by your organisation.

### **Please indicate the proportion of these events to be delivered 'in-house' and to be offered to the general public**

Please indicate the percentage of your business that is delivered within a client environment and that deliver courses. This will help us understand whether the intended mode of delivery will be suitably supported by your organisation.

### **Please indicate how you will publicise these events and provide a copy of any publicity material or relevant internet links**

This will help us understand how the activities to be accredited will fit into your overall service and product portfolio.

### **What advice and support will you provide to participants before, during and after the course for which you are seeking accreditation?**

Please provide details of all pre-sales advice given to potential applicants regarding the courses offered, as well as support and guidance provided during and after the course in question. This will help us to ascertain whether applicants have accurate information about the events on which they wish to enrol and are provided with appropriate guidance and support at each stage of the engagement to ensure their objectives are met. Please also provide details of how you respond to and deal with any complaints.

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### How do you ensure candidates are suitably prepared for their assessment?

Please provide evidence that candidates are suitably prepared for the assessment they are taking, covering, for example, examination technique, practice questions, case study preparation sessions etc.

### How do you ensure candidates are fully prepared for the online examination process, including equipment set up?

Please provide evidence of how you ensure candidates are prepared for sitting their assessments online, including any necessary set up of equipment and access to the relevant software.

### How do you ensure candidates are aware of and understand the APM rules and regulations for examinations and assessments?

Please provide evidence of how you ensure candidates are aware of, and understand, the APM rules and regulations for examinations and assessments, prior to their assessment.

## Section 2 – Delivery Personnel

### How many training staff do you have dedicated to the delivery of the APM qualifications in question?

You should indicate the number of training staff you will employ to deliver your projected courses. APM does not approve or accredit individual trainers.

APM recommends the following qualifications/experience for those involved in the delivery of APM accredited courses leading to the qualifications covered in this section:

- APM project management qualifications at or above the level they will be teaching or equivalent
- 5 years' experience in project management

Trainers delivering training courses for the APM Project Management Qualification with recognition of PRINCE2® Practitioner prior learning will ideally hold the relevant PRINCE2® certification as well as the APM qualification.

It is highly recommended that those involved in development and delivery of accredited courses and activities are also APM members at associate or higher level.

### Please indicate if you would like to self invigilate examinations

Accredited Providers may opt to self-invigilate their examinations (i.e APM Project Fundamentals Qualification, APM Project Management Qualification, Project Professional Qualification (written report only) and Project Risk Management), rather than use remote invigilation services for classroom based examinations. You are required to comply with the 'Service Level Requirements for Examinations and Assessments'.

Invigilators can be added at any time post accreditation, on completion of the relevant forms.

Accredited Providers can opt to self-invigilate at any time. The fees for self-invigilation will be invoiced at the same time as annual renewal, although if applying before annual renewal is due, a pro-rata amount will be invoiced. If applying to self-invigilate at initial application stage, fees would not normally be invoiced until accreditation is confirmed.

Opting to self-invigilate does not preclude a provider from requesting the online invigilator at the time of booking the online examination, if preferred. An online invigilator fee will apply for each examination.

### Self-Invigilators

All proposed invigilators are required to sign the self-invigilator agreement form. All invigilators agree to comply with the APM self-invigilation standards and to conduct assessment events in accordance with 'APM's [Essential Information for Invigilators](#)'.

### **Section 3 – Materials**

**How do you develop and update materials in the provision of your services?**

Please provide us with details on your approach to developing, testing and updating your courseware materials.

**Who owns copyright of the materials being accredited?**

Please state who owns the copyright to the materials being considered for accreditation.

**Please detail the materials you will be submitting with this application for each course to be accredited**

Please supply a full set of the materials to be used in the delivery of the proposed activity in soft copy format. Soft copies should be supplied in Microsoft Office compatible formats, Word, PDF or PowerPoint. For web based learning materials please supply a relevant URL including passwords etc.

**How do you ensure comprehensive coverage of the syllabus during the course?**

For your chosen method of delivery, please provide evidence to demonstrate how the syllabus is covered during the course, using the evidence matrix provided at Appendix A. For 'traditional' class-room based delivery, such evidence might take the form of one (or several) PowerPoint slides against each Assessment Criterion. In the case of a more 'experiential' based approach to covering the syllabus, a combination of 'course level' evidence (e.g. schemes of work / delivery or sessions plans) and sample 'session level' evidence (e.g. PowerPoint slides, overviews of action learning set approaches/facilitated discussions, reflective practice) is required. In the case of the latter, a minimum of the first two course sessions must be included.

If you are applying to deliver a training course for the APM Project Management Qualification that recognises prior learning and achievement evidenced by current registered holders of the PRINCE2® Practitioner qualification, you need to show the detail of the specific training you will offer. You will also be expected to show that you know and understand the entire syllabus and can provide an effective "bridge" for candidates.

**An evidence matrix must be completed for each course you wish to have accredited**

A matrix is supplied with this paperwork which you must use to demonstrate coverage of the syllabus (please see Appendix A). A completed evidence matrix must be provided for each course leading to an APM qualification to be accredited.

### **Section 4 – APM Competence Framework Licence**

Please tick the box if you intend accessing the *APM Competence Framework*. Downloading and use of the *APM Competence Framework* is subject to Terms and Conditions, which are available on the APM Website.

[www.apm.org.uk/terms-and-conditions/](http://www.apm.org.uk/terms-and-conditions/)

### **Section 5 – Please supply any other information you feel may be relevant to your accreditation application**

Please provide any additional information you believe is relevant to your application for accreditation and would assist the assessor either at the desk review stage or during the site visit (where applicable).

### **Section 6 – Data protection and preferences**

Please tell us whether you would like to receive information about APM, project management and our products and services. You are also required to complete and return the Data Protection Risk Assessment Questionnaire provided in the application pack.

### **Section 7 – Declaration**

This should be signed by the individual in the organisation who can ensure that the organisation's quality standards are maintained and that the organisation continues to meet the criteria for accreditation.

Please ensure that any changes to the information supplied are advised to APM either at the time of the annual report or prior to that if the changes are substantial.

## 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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