

# PROJECT: YOU

APM'S STUDENT GUIDE TO  
PROJECT MANAGEMENT



THE CHARTERED BODY FOR THE  
PROJECT PROFESSION





THREE GORGES DAM  
CHINA

## WHERE IN THE WORLD?

- BURJ KHALIFA, UAE
- HS2, UK
- OLYMPIC STADIUM, JAPAN
- THREE GORGES DAM, CHINA

These are megaprojects costing billions of pounds, but the majority of projects aren't this huge and some will be local to you, like a new supermarket or hospital ward.

## WHAT ARE PROJECTS?

Projects come in different shapes and sizes and all have an impact on the world around us.

Every project needs a project team to keep a close watch on plans, budgets, teams, quality of outputs and any issues that may cause a problem to the project. Without one, projects are likely to fail. And that could mean the late opening of an airport or, even worse, no music festival.

So, what does a project professional look like?

They look like you.

Our short guide shows you more about a profession that plays a big part in making things happen and keeps on growing as more companies in more sectors become project-based.

# PROJECT SKILLS

So, you've decided that a career in projects looks interesting. Now have a think about the skills you have, and compare them with those of a successful project professional:

## Organisation

The chances are that you're the one who arranges the holidays or evenings out with your friends. You probably don't like uncertainty and you prefer to get things done today – after all, why wait until tomorrow?

## Leadership

You're happy to get the job done yourself, but it's no problem to get other people involved too, as they'll have different skills to you. Your talent is being able to bring the right people together at the right time for the right result. Project professionals are experts in making teams work effectively.

## Resilience

Mañana is not in your dictionary, and nor is failure. Your determination will get others working as a team and solving problems along the way so that together you'll succeed.

## Communication

Making sure that everyone knows what's happening, and what needs to be done, is a critical part of being a good project professional.

You're not expected to be an expert in projects on day one – you'll learn the technical parts on the job, but your attitude and soft skills are what will get you the role.

# WHERE ARE PROJECTS?

Just about every sector has a project function, which means great opportunities for you to combine your job with your interests. Here's a flavour of some of the sectors that engage with projects, with an example of how for each one.



## Media

You could be involved in creating new studios for TV programmes, to make them more flexible for new filming technologies.



## Financial Services

Project professionals in this sector are busy helping large organisations change the way they engage with their customers, to make it more digital and 'always on'.



## IT

Nearly every company has an IT function; and with the speed of change in IT, project-based teams are there to implement system updates smoothly across a business.



## Public Sector

The NHS is one of the world's largest employers; with a huge workforce and estate of buildings which needs renovation, construction, efficiency and innovation – project professionals are ideally placed to do this.



## Construction

Building a house is a classic project; but innovation exists here as more construction is done 'off-site' and good project planning brings materials to the right place at the right time, with the right experts on-site.



## Engineering

Another classic sector for project management; building a train line or a tunnel requires intense planning, careful budgeting and a lot of stakeholder management (getting everyone on side).



## Government

The government is responsible for making important decisions about national infrastructure.



## Retail

How do a retailer's fast fashion products get from the manufacturer to the store? Through good project management.



## Charities

These organisations have to make every penny count; what better way to do that than by project-based working?

...and, as you'd expect, many more.

## ABOUT US

We're Association for Project Management (APM), the professional membership organisation for the project profession. We're chartered, so we can build the profile and respect of the profession and set the highest standards. We're the only chartered organisation for the project profession in the world. We're a registered charity whose activities include everything from education, qualifications, resources and research, to events, networking and sharing best practice.

### APM qualifications

We design professional qualifications which you can find on our website [apm.org.uk/qualifications](http://apm.org.uk/qualifications) – the two you are most likely to see early in your career are the APM Project Fundamentals Qualification and the APM Project Management Qualification.

The Fundamentals Qualification gives you essential knowledge about the world of projects. It's ideal for those about to start a career in projects, and for those looking to be more efficient in other roles where project-based working is becoming more common.

The Management Qualification is the qualification that sits within both project management apprenticeships and graduate schemes – employers value its holistic view of projects including the importance of soft skills.

### APM membership

If you're older than 16 you can join us as a Student member, for free. You can sign up online via [apm.org.uk/membership](http://apm.org.uk/membership) – and it's open to project management apprentices too.

Having APM Student membership on your CV and our digital badge on your LinkedIn profile shows prospective employers that you are serious about your project career. More importantly, membership gives you access to networking events with other Student members and young project professionals, to increase your knowledge and raise your profile.

As you develop your career you can become an Associate member, then a Full APM member (MAPM) and eventually become a Chartered Project Professional (ChPP), our most valuable title.

### Chartered Project Professional

As well as being a chartered body, we issue the Chartered Project Professional (ChPP) designation to project professionals around the world who have the right mix of knowledge and experience. The chartered brand is valuable in many countries, in many different professions. Having the letters ChPP after your name makes it clear to companies that you are highly qualified, and an asset to any organisation.

If you are looking to study at university you will see that there are Project Management degrees that link to our ChPP status. This linkage means that you don't have to take any further project qualifications after you graduate to be eligible to apply for ChPP – all you need to do is get the right kind of project experience.

To find out what it takes to become a Chartered Project Professional, and to see what others have to say about the value it brings, visit [apm.org.uk/chartered](http://apm.org.uk/chartered)



CHARTERED BODY  
PROJECT PROFESSION

IDE IN PROJECTS  
LEBRATING SUCCESS



## MONEY MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND

You'll spend a long time working, so doing something you enjoy will make your world a happy place. Mix work with your interests and values and you'll hit the jackpot.

If your motivation is travelling around the world, you could aim to get involved in megaprojects. So, rather than the Elizabeth Line in the UK, what about a megaproject like the Hong Kong to Macau bridge? Or the Etihad Rail project which plans to link UAE with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain and Kuwait?

If you're more interested in socially-valuable projects in the developing world, take a look at a project like the Fael Khair Project, which saw schools in Bangladesh double up as cyclone shelters.

Once you've done your research on these astonishing projects, you can find out more about salaries – check out our annual Salary and Market Trends Survey which shows that some APM members earn more than more than £100,000 a year.\*

By the time you embark on your career, the Chartered Project Professional standard (ChPP) will have given a competitive advantage to project professionals and companies' project teams bidding for new contracts.

\*APM Salary and Market Trends Survey 2021

## INFORMED CHOICES

The next step you make has to be the right one - **for you**.

If uni isn't for you, consider an apprenticeship. You get an APM qualification, a full-time job and a very positive bank balance. Or a degree apprenticeship, which also includes a BSc Project Management paid for by your employer.

More than 10,000 people have been on a project management apprenticeship, in a huge range of sectors and companies across the country.

If you're off to uni, you could take a degree in Project Management. There are more than 20 universities that offer undergraduate PM degrees, and more than 70 that run postgraduate ones. Remember that companies will recruit you based on you and your soft skills, not just the degree you hold.

**You could mix the two** – some have graduated from university before starting an apprenticeship.

**Keep your options open** – unless you're 100% certain about a specific path, apply for universities and apprenticeships.

...and if you can't see yourself as a project professional just yet, that's ok. People come in to the project profession after doing other roles as varied as TV production, engineering, being in the armed forces and event management.

## CASE STUDIES



BECKY  
INGHAM

BAE  
SYSTEMS

I have just completed the project management higher apprenticeship at BAE Systems, which includes a BSc Project Management degree. I am already a Full member of Association for Project Management (MAPM).

Prior to starting at BAE Systems, I studied Mathematics, Chemistry and Biology A Levels. I have been in a variety of roles while on the scheme. Within the first three years I worked with the F-35 Tooling Control Account department, within the training fusion cell (project office) providing training across multiple platforms and within the Kuwait contract delivery team. The next two years included a role at RAF Valley where I worked on the Hawk availability contract followed by my final role in F-35 US sustainment as a bid lead.

My BSc Project Management dissertation explored the impact role congruity theory plays in women in project management reaching senior leadership roles at BAE Systems.

I would recommend the Project Management Degree Apprenticeship, given the scheme offers worldwide placements, you can earn while you learn and you get a BSc PM degree accredited by Lancaster University with no debts!



GEORGIE  
HOWROYD

TURNER &  
TOWNSEND

After graduating in Physical Geography, I joined the Graduate Development Programme at Turner & Townsend. As an assistant project manager within the Infrastructure division, the scheme has allowed me to work with different client organisations and develop my skills across sectors. As a non-cognate graduate, I was apprehensive that my limited technical knowledge would leave me falling behind my peers. Rather, the excellent support, opportunities and exposure through on-the-job training has enabled me to develop my skills quickly and pass my APM Project Management Qualification.

I've had the opportunity to work for two incredible clients so far, Heathrow Airport and the Environment Agency, giving me experience across major and minor programmes. At Heathrow Airport, I worked within the regulation team supporting the business case for the Expansion programme. This major programme gave me insight into the inner workings of a hub airport and its operational complexities. With the Environment Agency, I have had direct project experience of protecting communities from coastal and fluvial flooding through natural and engineered solutions. Working with communities to improve their standard of living and protect their livelihoods has been extremely rewarding. My next ambition is to become a Chartered Project Professional (ChPP) through APM.



AKIL  
ELLIS

PA  
CONSULTING

My journey at PA began with an internship and I joined permanently after graduating in Sociology with Criminology. I'm part-way through PA's 12-month development programme and working towards attaining my APM Project Fundamentals Qualification. What attracted me to a career in consulting, and PA specifically, is the variety of projects, the opportunity to learn from leading experts, and the fast-paced nature of the work.

One of my earliest projects at PA saw me supporting the programme lead to take an industry-wide programme in the water sector from business case through planning to launch, and then provide support. It was great being involved in something so impactful. Since then, I've been involved in several exciting projects, such as taking a leading role in a fast-moving programme across multiple healthcare trusts – I didn't think I'd get the opportunity to lead work so early in my career.

A good project professional needs to be able to seamlessly integrate into a team, quickly building relationships and identifying opportunities to add value. They also need to provide confidence in delivery – in deadlines, budgets and quality. That takes great organisation and time management, and the ability to work well with others under pressure.



NAZ

GCHQ

My career in project management began when I joined my role in security and risk management. I managed security accounts and worked with a wide array of stakeholders. In parallel, and as part of my personal development, I studied and completed a degree in Law. Having committed to both studies and a full-time position I was determined to manage my time better at every step. The demanding nature of my studies helped me to think of ways to streamline tasks allowing me to plan and programme ahead of key milestones and to get the best out of my academic and professional roles. The variety of my projects meant that days were always interesting.

Working at GCHQ is not only a pleasure but also educational. As an APM member in the early stages of my PM career, I benefit from the rich learning content of APM in addition to the GCHQ Project Community. This partnership creates additional education opportunities, from which I benefit, to accelerate my PM skills development as a member of GCHQ's Project Management Development programme. Self-development is highly encouraged in my role, and GCHQ prizes project management skills more widely so that staff can apply them to their work.

## CASE STUDIES



AMELIA  
TLUSTY

**NETWORK  
RAIL**

I joined Network Rail's Project Management Graduate Scheme after graduating from The University of Liverpool with a BSc in Psychology. During our scheme we complete the APM Project Management Qualification as part of an apprenticeship while rotating on four six-month placements around the business. Our rotations give us a fantastic opportunity to experience a variety of areas within the company, and has helped guide what direction I would like my Project Management career to go in.

My first two placements were in Operations and then the Buildings and Civils team. My current project is looking at how Network Rail can reduce work-related violence towards frontline colleagues. This is a really rewarding project, and a great opportunity to engage with our customers to deliver a toolkit that will help protect them while they interact with the public.

I really enjoy the variety of work that project management presents. I get to speak to all kinds of talented and interesting people while managing my projects. Completing the apprenticeship alongside my responsibilities allows me to learn valuable skills while working, and I can apply my new knowledge to my projects immediately. From initiating a project to delivery and close out, APM has given me the skills I need to successfully deliver projects.



KATHARINA  
HEIN

**WATERSTONS**

After graduating in International Business Management, I moved to England to join Waterstons as a business and IT consultant. During my initial assignments, I became more involved in project management and realised that I really enjoyed it.

When I was asked to lead a large project rolling out Office 365 to 2500 users at a university, I jumped at the opportunity. It was big and challenging for my first PM job, but the consulting experience that I'd had to date, our in-house PM training and the support of my colleagues, made it a big success.

Working in a smaller consultancy has enabled me to experience a wide range of projects in a short period. I've worked in a number of sectors, from charities to pharmaceuticals, and across different countries. I've even been able to use my language skills. I love the variety of people and businesses I get to work with.

I'm now working towards my APM qualifications so that I can deepen my knowledge. I want to ensure that I am doing the best job I can now, as well as getting ready for whatever is around the corner for me as our business continues to expand.



HENRY  
DARCH

**ARCHUS**

After studying Sports Business Management, I started teaching at a local school. During the COVID-19 pandemic I was furloughed and researched new careers. I learnt about APM and what project managers do, and knew I wanted to become one. Therefore, during lockdown, I completed my APM Project Fundamentals Qualification to improve my employability. While completing the course I began to understand project management in more detail and became excited at the possibility of each working day being different and interesting. I knew I had found what I was looking for.

While researching roles I came across Archus, a consultancy working in healthcare. This was perfect as it combined an exciting job with actively helping people and my community. I got the job and started as an assistant consultant. Since then I have worked on many projects. I have attended the Nightingale hospitals while the senior project managers planned the Nightingale in Manchester. I have assisted the planning of the new Women's and Children's hospitals in Birmingham from the beginning, which are still at the start of their journey like myself. I instantly fell in love with the job and am now studying the APM Project Management Qualification to further my career.



OGO  
OJUKWU

**NHS**

I graduated with a BA in Law with Business Studies before starting my career in project management. My first role, as a project officer with Serco, enabled me to develop a wide range of skills, working on a large regional development agency project.

I then chose to become a project officer with Macmillan Cancer Support. At that time, my knowledge of project management opportunities was limited and I was pleased to realise how many roles exist within charities.

I first joined the NHS as a Macmillan project manager in Barts Health, working on a service improvement project, before moving on to PMO roles, involving CIPS and transformation projects in Essex hospitals.

I now work with NHS England as the PMO Lead for Proton Beam Therapy (a type of radiotherapy used to treat specific types of cancer) on a programme to build the UK's first two NHS high energy PBT centres. I find the scale and complexity fascinating. I am constantly learning. I work with skilled workstream leads, managing risks, monitoring milestones and supporting delivery. I'm proud to be involved, and it's made me realise there are virtually no limits to the type of project management roles available.



## THE ROLES

Project managers play a key role in the project profession, but they're not the only ones.

There are project co-ordinators, change managers, programme managers and directors, portfolio managers and directors, risk analysts, heads of transformation and many more versions of these job titles.

If you're new to the sector, the chances are you'll be a project co-ordinator. You could be involved in maintaining the project schedule, allocating tasks to different members of the project team and looking for ways to make the project as efficient as it can be. You will also update other people in the organisation on project progress.

As you gain experience and expertise you could become an assistant project manager or project manager. This type of role will still see you doing some scheduling and managing stakeholders; you could also use your negotiation skills to iron out any issues between different interest groups; you might do some scoping of the project requirements; you could be involved in the handover of projects – when they become 'business as usual' (BAU); you could also be responsible for securing resources from inside and outside the business; scrutinising budgets and controlling costs; looking at risks and opportunities, and designing responses to them.

## NEXT STEPS

With more experience you will know what you enjoy most, which could be building and leading teams; working on contracts; scoping project requirements; managing stakeholders; or getting approval for business cases.

For some, the next step could be programme manager, someone who oversees larger-scale projects undertaken in a sophisticated way; it could be portfolio manager – someone with oversight of many large projects at once. Others prefer to work as a business analyst, gathering and scrutinising data from across the business, before making recommendations for improvement. Some become a change manager, moving a company from how it functions now to where it would like to be.

The beauty of the project profession is that there is no prescribed path. You can shape the career journey that is right for you and your skillset.

For more information on the many different roles in the world of projects, visit [apm.org.uk](http://apm.org.uk)

# OUR PARTNERS

We have over 500 organisations working with us as part of our Corporate Partnership Programme. Here are just a few, it's a great way of seeing the diversity of projects.

**AIRBUS**

love every drop  
**anglianwater**

**anturas**

**ARCADIS**

**Archus**  
The healthcare infrastructure specialist

**arqiva**

**ARTELIA**  
Passion & Solutions

**ARUP**

**ATKINS**  
Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

**babcock**

**BAE SYSTEMS**

**BMT**

**cavendish nuclear**

**Computacenter**

**CLS** | UNLOCKING LAND POTENTIAL

**G&M**  
COURTESY MICHAEL PARTNERSHIP PBC LTD  
Construction Project Managers  
www.courtesygandm.co.uk

**ops**

**Deloitte.**

**DRAKEN**

**Elbit Systems UK**

**FIRSTCo.**

**GCHQ**

**gleeds**

**NHS**  
Health Education England

**highways england**

**HS2**

**Infrastructure and Projects Authority**

**invennt**

**JB**  
PROJECTS YORKSHIRE

**Magnox**

**McAdam**  
ENHANCING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

**MURPHY**  
WORLD-CLASS INFRASTRUCTURE

**nationalgrid**

**nccgroup**

**PA**

**PM4NGOs**

**PM GROUP**

**PRIMETALS**  
TECHNOLOGIES

**Royal HaskoningDHV**  
Enhancing Society Together

**rpcuk**

**telent**  
talent with technology

**Transport for Greater Manchester**

**Turner & Townsend**

**UK Research and Innovation**

**w@terstons**  
Business & IT Consultancy

**WMG**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

## 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

-  /apmprojectmgmt
-  /APMProjectMgmt
-  /AssociationforProjectManagement
-  Association for Project Management