




## Guide to Project Management Qualifications

**What different project management qualifications and certifications exist?  
Which is the most appropriate for your organisation or just for you as an individual?**

This document provides guidance to help you answer these questions, and to choose the most appropriate pathway. You can also contact Provek to discuss further your qualification or certification questions or to discuss your training needs for either attending one of our open public examination courses or to organise an in-house single client examination course.

**What recognised project management qualifications are available?**

The figure below summarizes the core project management qualifications available and indicates the job roles most appropriate for each qualification.

Roles relevant for each qualification or certification	APM 	 APMG on behalf of OGC	PMI 
Project team member New project manager Project office staff including project planner / coordinator (Project experience not required, but advantageous)	APM Introductory Certificate	PRINCE2® Foundation	CAPM Certification (Certified Associate in Project Management)
Project manager (junior) Work package manager Project office manager (Typically min. 2-3 years project experience)	APMP	PRINCE2® Practitioner	PMP Certification (Project Management Professional)
Project manager (min. 3 years experience of managing non-complex projects)	APM Practitioner Qualification (PQ)	None	None
Senior project manager (typically min. 5 years managing complex projects )	Certificated Project Manager (CPM)	None	None
Programme manager Programme director	None. But considering introducing a qualification	MSP™ (Managing Successful Programmes) Foundation, Practitioner & Advanced qualifications	PgMP (Programme Management Professional)

In addition to the above broad based project management qualifications and certifications, both the APM and APMG offer project risk management qualifications. Provek provide public and in-house risk management certification courses which includes the examination.



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### What are the benefits of achieving a qualification or certification?

Both an individual and the organisation they work for should benefit from an individual achieving a project management qualification or certification. Dependent upon the nature of the organisation and its business, some of the key potential benefits are as follows:

Benefits to the organisation:

- Best-practice knowledge, skills, tools and techniques acquired through the training necessary to achieve a qualification are deployed back in the work place.
- Improved capability and competence to deliver an organisation's programmes or projects, resulting in increasing customer satisfaction and reputation, saving costs, utilising resources more effectively and positively impacting morale.
- Supports individuals with their personal and career development planning. This in turn can result in increased appreciation of, and commitment to the organisation, by the individual.
- Catalyses improvements to an organisation's own project or programme management methods and processes through gaining an understanding of best-practice.
- Enhances the credibility of the organisation to own clients and customers through having project or programme staff that have achieved externally recognised certification or qualification.
- External recognition of an individual's project management knowledge and capabilities indicating a core level of embedded understanding, which is then likely to be applied back in the work place.

Benefits to the individual:

- Provides the individual with additional and portable knowledge, skills, tools and techniques in order to be more successful in managing and delivering projects or programmes.
- Enhances career development prospects through having achieved an externally recognized qualification or certification
- Demonstrates to the employer, the individual's desire, commitment and capabilities to learn and improve themselves, and thus improving an individual's reputation within the organisation.
- Provides an external industry-wide benchmark of an individual's project management knowledge and competence.

### Who are the recognised Project Management bodies?

There are three main recognised bodies for project management who provide a range of project management best-practice methodology, principles, qualifications, certifications and professional membership. Reassuringly, there is considerable overlap concerning what each of the three bodies considers as best-practice project management.

The differences between the three bodies tends to be more related to the level, focus, breadth and depth of project management principles, processes, techniques and methods rather than there being any fundamentally conflicting views about best-practice project management.

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The three main recognised project management bodies are:

- Association for Project Management (APM)** - The APM is the largest independent professional body of its kind in Europe with over 16,500 individual and 500 corporate members throughout the UK and abroad. Their aim is to develop and promote project management across all sectors of industry. At the heart of APM ethos is the *APM Body of Knowledge (APM BoK)*, comprising fifty-two knowledge areas required to manage any successful project. APM BoK provides a framework and key principles for managing projects. Training and examinations are delivered through APM Accredited Training Providers. The APM is currently seeking a Royal Charter to have project management recognised as a profession (summer 2009). APM is headquartered in the UK.
- Association for Project Management Group (APMG)** - The APMG administer qualifications, certifications and accreditations on behalf of the OGC (Office of Government Commerce). The OGC are the owners of the PRINCE2 method for managing projects and MSP for managing programmes. PRINCE2 is an acronym for PROjects In CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENTs. MSP is an acronym for MANAGING SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMMES. Training and examinations are delivered through APMG Accredited Training Organisations. PRINCE2 is a structured process-based method for effective project management. It is a de facto standard used extensively by the UK Government and is also widely recognised and increasingly used in the private sector. APMG is headquartered in the UK.
- Project Management Institute (PMI)** - The PMI is the largest global membership association for project management professionals. At the heart of the PMI philosophy is '*A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK Guide)*'. The PMBOK Guide comprises core project management processes and techniques, and also includes professional responsibility. Training is delivered through PMI Registered Education Providers (REP). Examinations are delivered through separate approved assessment centres. This does not involve the REPs. Candidates schedule an examination directly with an approved assessment centre once their eligibility has been validated by PMI. PMI is headquartered in the USA.

### Is there benefit in achieving more than one qualification?

Particularly for individuals pursuing a career in project and programme management, the qualifications can be seen as a ladder which is aligned with their increasing project or programme hands-on experience, level of role and required or expected competence.

For example, for an individual following an APM route, when new to project management they may take the APM Introductory Certificate examination to demonstrate a broad awareness of best-practice project management. As the individual gains some project experience and becomes a work package manager of a large project or a project manager then APMP certification will provide formal recognition that an appropriate level of breadth and depth of best-practice knowledge has been acquired. After the individual has been project managing for several years, taking the APM Practitioner Qualification can then be worthwhile to demonstrate an appropriate level of competence externally recognized. Also it is the only qualification involving project management assessment of its kind available in the UK.

### Is there any benefit in achieving both APM and PRINCE2 qualifications?

Yes there can often be for many people. Some organisations deploy both APM and PRINCE2 training and qualifications. APM and PRINCE2 are not mutually exclusive, and are not competing methods of project management. For an individual project manager it can be advantageous to have an understanding of both APM and PRINCE2, for example in engaging with clients and suppliers who may use one or both approaches.

APM training and qualifications are designed to ensure that individuals and teams have the appropriate generic knowledge and understanding in the key areas and principles of project management. APM training

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is appropriate for anyone involved in project management. It provides the foundation for using project management methods such as PRINCE2. APM also includes consideration of softer skills aspects such as conflict management, negotiation, teamwork and leadership in a project environment.

PRINCE2 provides users with a structured process driven methodology suitable for any organisation undertaking projects. PRINCE2 related training is most suitable to those either using (or about to use) the PRINCE2 method or one that is based on PRINCE2. It will also benefit those who do not work in a PRINCE2 environment as its general principles and emphasis on structure and deliverables will facilitate best practice.

### How do I choose between APM or PRINCE or PMI qualifications?

The figure below is to assist in considering which qualification or certification awarding body to follow:

Factors to consider	APM 	PRINCE  MSP  APMG on behalf of OGC	PMI 
Syllabus based upon	APM Body of Knowledge – 5th Edition 2006	OGC's PRINCE2 manual 2005 Edition OGC's MSP manual 2007 Edition	PMBOK 4th Edition 2008
Geography	Mainly UK. Increasing within Europe.	Mainly across Europe. Founded in public sector	US based. Most globally recognised
Professional membership available	Yes (but not linked to qualifications)	No	Yes (and requires PMP qualification)
Best-practice sharing / forums amongst members	Yes (through Specific Interest Groups and annual conference)	No	Yes (regional chapters)
Other factors to consider	Qualifications fully aligned with IPMA (International Project Management Association) Levels A to D  APM progressing towards Chartered Status and register of Chartered Project Professionals (ChPP)	New PRINCE2: 2009 edition due for formal issue mid-2009.  Re-registration exam to maintain Practitioner status required after 3 to 5 years	Eligibility requirements to satisfy prior to sitting any exams based on education attainment, relevant training hours and project experience.  To retain certification status requires evidence of continuous professional development – CAPM every 5 years; PMP every 3 years.

In addition to the above factors, also consider the relevance to your own organisation or industry sector:

- Consider if any of APM, PRINCE, MSP or PMI are already being deployed in own organisation.
- Consider project management approach or method most common for own clients and to lesser degree own suppliers.
- APM's BoK provides broadest range of project management topics including both soft and hard skills. Provides framework, principles and rationale for each critical area of project management, but not a prescribed method.
- PMI's PMBOK provides core processes for project management and also incorporates professional responsibility of practitioners.
- OGC's PRINCE2 provides a process-driven structured method for project management.

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- OGC's MSP manual provides a framework for managing programmes.

Should you require a more detailed comparison between APM and PRINCE2 specifically, please see Provek's "PRINCE2 or APM BoK based training – how do I choose" document.

### Do training courses include the examinations or are they separate?

Most Provek qualification based training courses incorporate the examination at the end of a training course. The training course will also provide examination question advice, tips and practice to help prepare the candidate. There are also self-study options for some courses, which require minimum or no classroom time. Should the candidate prefer this latter option, they simply attend the classroom to sit the examination.

### If an individual does not pass the examination, can they re-sit?

Yes. There is also a significantly reduced charge for re-sitting an examination. Also normally there is no minimum timescale before a candidate can re-sit. The re-sit exam should be scheduled to a timescale that suits the other time commitments of the individual and allowing sufficient revision and study time.

### APM are planning to achieve chartered status. What does this mean?

If the APM achieve chartered status then it will become the body responsible for setting standards and creating a code of conduct for the profession of project management in the UK. Once the APM has chartered status, it can then set up a register of chartered project professionals by assessing and admitting people who meet the standard for chartered status.

The process of chartered project professional (ChPP) application will involve a self assessment against the APM Competence Framework, evidence of at least 35 hours per year continuing professional development (CPD), a CV, a personal statement, and an interview. The register of chartered project professionals will be maintained by the APM on behalf of the public. It is expected that chartered body status will be achieved by the summer of 2009 and the register will be set up by April 2010.

### What is the cost for attending training and taking the examination?

For Provek public course and examination prices, please see our website: [www.provek.co.uk](http://www.provek.co.uk) or for in-house single client courses please contact Erica Gassor at Provek on 01635 524610 to discuss your needs.

Please contact Provek should you require further assistance.