

Project Management Qualifications: Are You on the Right Track?



Somewhere out there is the right project management qualification and career path for you and your team. Whether you're an individual or a skills assurance coordinator for a company, this guide will help steer you right.

1. PRINCE2®

Seen by many as a prince among project management methodologies this is the UK's de facto standard for organising, managing and controlling projects. There are two qualification levels.

- [Foundation](#). If you're a project management newbie or an old hand without the formal qualifications looking for an introduction to PRINCE2, then you can't go wrong with this. Foundation level will give you a perspective on the methodology and operation of the methodology along with the roles and responsibilities of a project team so that you can play an informed part. To pass and become a Registered Practitioner you must get 50% or more in the 60 minute multiple-choice exam.
- [PRINCE2 Practitioner](#). When you're actually managing projects you'll want more and this process-based, flexible and scalable approach gives it in bucketfuls. By expanding on theory learnt in Foundation class it arms you with the ability to implement the methodology in any project anywhere in the world. Lasting 2 ½ hours, the objective-testing, open-book exam demands a score of 44 marks out of 80. If you're in a hurry to get qualified then the combined [Foundation and Practitioner](#) course will speed things up.
- Take the [APMP for PRINCE2 Practitioners](#) from the Association of Project Management and you get the what-to-do and how-to-do of project management.

2. Managing Successful Programmes (MSP®)

What PRINCE2 is to projects, MSP is to programmes. Its qualification package aims to furnish you with everything you need to manage a set of projects within a programme to deliver transformational change in a company.

- [Foundation](#). The fundamentals taught here will ready you to work in a programme environment. You'll learn about how it is used, about the best practice framework and about the theory, terminology and structure of MSP. Passing the Foundation is a pre-requisite to all further MSP training so you have 60 minutes to answer 35 of the 70 multiple-choice questions correctly to pass.
- [Practitioner](#). Once those little grey cells have mastered the basics and you're either coming into, or taking on, more responsibility in programme management, the Practitioner becomes a necessity. By the time you've finished, you can count on having the understanding and the application to organise, direct and implement projects to achieve strategic objectives. To succeed in the objective-testing exam you must get 40 out of 80 questions right in 2 ½ hours. Combining the [Foundation and Practitioner](#) course is now simple with e-learning.
- [MSP Advanced Practitioner](#) When you've notched up a few successful programmes and have a senior position in project management or have one in your sights, this is the prize to aim for. You will come out of the course with the knowledge, ability and the credibility to show top managers that you can go beyond the principles and theory and can apply MSP effectively in any environment. To pass, you have to answer 3 essay-type questions in 3 hours and get 38 out of 75. If you've got the get-up-and-go you could always take a combined [Foundation, Practitioner and Advanced Practitioner](#) course.

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3. Management of Risk (M_o_R®)

Designed with a view to controlling the ups and downs that affect all parts of an organisation and its activities, this qualification complements other OGC project management solutions such as PRINCE2 and MSP.

- [Foundation](#). Risk is always tricky to cope with so anyone needing a sure grasp of all that its management entails, will find it here. Foundation level walks you through the elements of the framework: principles, approach, processes and embedding and reviewing. Business change managers, programme and project managers and of course risk managers will find it indispensable. This is a closed-book, multiple-choice exam, with 75 questions to answer in 60 minutes and passing is a pre-requisite to proceeding to the next level.
- [Practitioner](#). If you're in corporate governance and are, or will be expected to, identify, assess, plan or manage risks, or report on risk management activities, you'll find you can't get this qualification fast enough. It will give you an insight into how M_o_R can be applied and tailored in different scenarios so that under direction, you will eventually be able to apply M_o_R yourself in some situations. With a pass mark of 50%, the Practitioner exam comprises 4 questions to be answered in 3 hours. A [blended learning combination](#) course of the two levels has recently been launched by ILX.

4. Portfolio, Programme and Project Offices (P30®)

When you're in the midst of trying to bring efficient and consistent change in an organisation, installing a decision enabling/delivery structure becomes a necessity not a luxury. That's where P30 comes in. Aligned with other OGC products it can help those who have a supporting role and those who are the main players in the change process.

- [Foundation](#). When you're plunged into a P30 environment, everything can seem overwhelming. The Foundation is an effective way of staying afloat. As you learn the principles and terminology of P30 you will feel able to act as an informed member of the team. To pass you need to get 50% in 60 minutes by answering 70 multiple-choice questions.
- [Practitioner](#). Once you've got past the basics of P30, the Practitioner will beckon. It will teach you how to justify, build and manage a P30. Specifically, you'll be able to define a business case to get senior management approval, build the right model for the organisation, plan the implementation of a P30, and finally use tools and techniques in running a P30 and shaping the portfolio of programmes and projects. There are 4 questions and 80 marks of which you must get 40 in this 150 minute exam. A combined [P30 Foundation and Practitioner](#) course is available.

5. IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL®)

Whilst pen and paper may not disappear entirely, IT is advancing inexorably into its former domains. Organisations need it to meet corporate and business objectives so IT services must deliver reliability and quality. ITIL explains how IT resources should be organised to deliver business value documenting the process, functions and roles of IT Service Management (ITSM).

- [Foundation](#). Whether you're an IT novice or an IT professional, this gives you a general idea about everything to do with ITIL from service management to key principles and models. To pass in the 60 minutes allowed, you will have to get 26 out of 40 in this multiple-choice exam.
- Intermediate [Service Lifecycle](#) and [Service Capability](#). Is your role linked to strategic planning or execution and control in a service-based business model? Are you looking for a deeper understanding of ITIL? Are you on your way to gaining further qualifications? If this is you, then this is the qualification to get. The Intermediate level is a two-stream modular certification (Service Lifecycle and Service Capability) where each has its own set of certifications and a normalisation certification. The Service Lifecycle Stream includes strategy and continual service improvement whilst the Service Capability Stream covers anything from planning, protection and optimisation to operational support and analysis. Both streams are ways of gaining the ITIL Expert in IT Service Management.

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- [Managing Across the Lifecycle](#). This has two lives you could say: in one it is a free-standing qualification; in another it is the final module of the Service Lifecycle and/or Service Capability modules. It will suit a range of professionals, from individuals who need a business and management level appreciation of ITIL V3 to those who want to get their ITIL Master in IT Service Management.

6. The Association of Project Management (APM)

This is the leading professional body in project management and has developed its own structured qualifications. These are based on the APM Body of Knowledge and aim to provide you with everything you need to demonstrate your project management abilities and achievements. Successful completion of any of its examinations entitles you to apply for APM membership.

- [Introductory Certificate](#). When you're not a project professional but you're working in that environment, it's good to get a handle on it to help your work and maybe your career. Requiring no prior knowledge, the Introductory Certificate will give you a basic understanding of the tools and techniques needed by project managers. For the exam, you must answer 60 multiple-choice questions in 60 minutes and get 60% correct.
- [APMP](#). Falling in the IPMA (International Project Management Association) Level D category this is the next step up. It will equip you with a broad level of knowledge and an understanding of the project within a strategic and commercial environment so you can work on individual as well as large capital projects. At the end, there's a 3-hour paper in which you must answer 10 out of 16 questions covering 37 topics.
- [APMP for PRINCE2 Practitioners](#). This is a marriage of qualifications made in project management heaven. Aimed at those with PRINCE2 Practitioner, it unites the methodology of PRINCE2 and the skills of APMP, so whilst PRINCE2 explains what needs to be done, the APMP explains how you do it. To get the certificate you'll need to ace the 6 out of 10 questions from 25 topics in this 2-hour, essay-based exam.
- [Practitioner](#). Can you apply project management planning? Can you work in a team? Can you plan and conduct a post project evaluation review? These are just some of the marks you'll have to hit if you want to get this qualification. The two-day assessment comprises a written exam, group work and interview. It will come as no surprise that this qualification is aimed at relatively experienced professionals who can manage non-complex projects. Full details of all the assessments can be found in the [qualifications area](#) of the APM website.

7. APMG-International PPS™

If you're panicking because you are, or are about to become, the sponsor or accountable person of a programme or project – then don't. PPS provides all the necessary guidance and much more besides so you can fulfil your brief.

- By the time you have completed the PPS you will have a thorough understanding of what sponsorship entails. This will include a concept of your role, of how to get the best out of people and of how to identify and establish a programme or a project. Most importantly it will give you an insight into what's needed to ensure that you deliver results. Naturally, it is assumed that delegates on the course are familiar with Programme and Project Management and related frameworks. The 90-minute closed-book exam has 100 questions and you need to get 65 right to pass. Full details about the exam can be found in the [PPS qualification section](#).

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Useful Links

- For an understanding of [APM qualifications](#) its own website provides in-depth details and a full list of [training providers](#).
- Full details of [AXELOS Ltd](#) qualification schemes can be found on individual pages for each product: [PRINCE2](#), [MSP](#), [M_o_R](#), [P30](#) and [ITIL](#).
- At ILX we want to ensure that you have all the information you need to make an informed choice about your career path and qualifications. As a result we have created dedicated sites for each training option that give detailed insights into qualifications, training options, subject matter and a whole lot more for: [PRINCE2](#) , [MSP](#), [M_o_R](#), [APM](#), [P30](#), [PPS](#), [ITIL](#). For a summary of the information try our Course Guide, Training with a difference.
- We also aim to support you through the whole training process, so we've created [Connect](#) to help companies to implement e-learning and [Support](#) to help individuals to train.
- To glimpse the rich learning environment we've created around the courses click: [Forum](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Downloads](#), [Games](#), [M-learning](#), [e-learning](#), [Live Virtual Classroom](#).