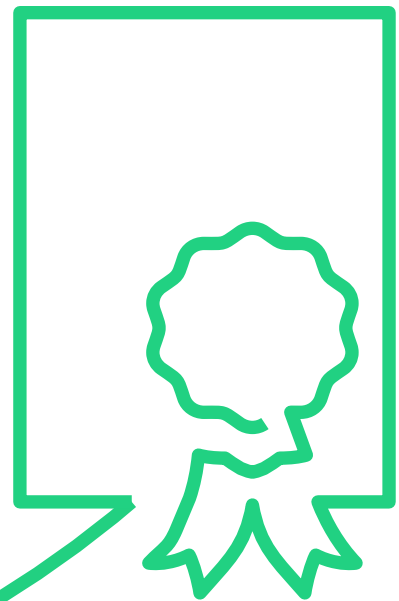


Training Provider Accreditation application



Guidance for completing your
accreditation application

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Introduction

These guidance notes are designed to help you in your application by explaining the rationale behind each question in the accreditation application form. We've also supplied indicative evidence to offer further understanding of the requirements. The information and supporting evidence supplied will allow us to assess your application and help us build a strong working relationship with you.

Please refer to the online application pack to view the terms and conditions and access the DPA questionnaire.

Your application should contain everything you consider appropriate to demonstrate how your organisation meets the APM Accredited Training Provider Standard.

APM Qualifications

We accredit training providers to deliver the following:

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

We believe professionals seeking training support for their project management qualifications will choose APM Accredited Providers. These companies have been assessed against the APM Accredited Training Provider Standard and are authorised to deliver APM project management qualification exams.

Our accreditation is designed to ensure that providers can support learners with good quality preparation by assessing:

- Organisation status and structure
- Legislation
- Organisation operations
- Planning and course delivery
- Staffing and professional development
- Learner experience

There are many ways to meet the needs and expectations of both the learners and clients. Our accreditation has the flexibility to assess across all variations.

Becoming an APM Accredited Provider

The application has been created to enable the training provider to easily showcase their ability to meet with the APM Accredited Training Provider Standard.

It's a 4-stage process, which starts with the training provider being supported to understand whether becoming accredited to deliver on the APM qualifications is the right course of action for them. Once this has been determined, the training provider will complete an application form and submit this along with supporting evidence. Once we are in receipt of your submission and payment, you will be contacted by an APM Accreditation Assessor to secure a meeting to discuss your application in further detail.

You can expect stages 3-4 to be completed within 6-8 weeks.

Once your application has been approved, you'll receive a digital badge and certificate showing your accreditation status for each of the APM qualifications you are approved to deliver. You'll also be given access to our course finder search engine, as required, and be listed on our website. Your accreditation is valid for one year and during this time you will be supported by the Professional Standards team to demonstrate your continual success in maintaining the APM Accredited Training Provider Standard.

Application process

As part of your journey to gain accreditation status with APM, you are agreeing to abide by the terms and conditions and relevant APM policies. These are included within your application pack.

- Terms and conditions
- Service level requirements
- Reasonable Adjustment and Access Arrangements Policy
- Malpractice policy
- Course finder guidance

You may find it useful to refer to the guidance presented within Annex A and B.

Application stages

Stage 1 – Initial discussion

Once you have registered your interest with us in applying to become an accredited provider you'll be assigned a Business Development Manager who will discuss your needs and provide you with the application paperwork, on confirmation that you wish to apply.

Stage 2 – Completing your application

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

Stage 3 – The assessment

Your completed application will be reviewed by an accreditation assessor. They will arrange a virtual meeting with you to discuss your application in detail and may ask for additional information.

Stage 4 – Assessment decision

Once the assessor has reviewed your completed application, they'll make a recommendation to APM that your application is either 'accepted for accreditation', 'recommended for deferral', or 'does not meet the standard'. You'll receive a copy of the assessor's report.

If the assessor considers your application to be recommended for deferral, you'll receive specific guidance on what would strengthen your application further and up to 3 weeks in which to carry out the actions. If this deadline is exceeded without prior written agreement from APM, then a full re-submission may be required and will be treated in all respects as a new submission.

If the assessor considers your application does not meet the standard, your application will be reviewed by the Quality Reviewer. If the Quality Reviewer agrees with the assessment decision, you'll be provided with guidance on areas that require development to meet the accreditation standard. You will be provided with a 2 week window in which to respond and seek further information from APM.

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

Your accreditation is valid for one year from the date of award. On your annual anniversary you will be required to complete an annual submission form to demonstrate how you are maintaining the APM Accredited Training Provider Standard and have adopted a continual improvement approach. This will follow the same journey as stages 2–4 detailed above.

Guidance on completing the application form

The application form is made up of a series of questions directly linked to the APM Accredited Training Provider Standard. You'll be asked to submit specific documentation to support your application. You'll be guided on how to title these documents for ease of assessment. We appreciate this naming convention being followed. We would recommend setting up individual folders for each of the 6 standard areas and placing the requested documentation in the associated folder. Please only submit the requested evidence.

Every question posed requires a response. The responses can be to the point and do not require lengthy answers. The use of examples is encouraged and where you've detailed a particular policy or procedure in another section of the application form, this can be referenced within a different question to enable a more holistic approach to completing the application form.

Part 1 – General information

This section is intended to help us to understand your organisation and which APM qualifications you wish to be accredited to offer.

Please tick the relevant box for the qualifications that you are proposing for accreditation.

Organisation details and parent organisation details (if applicable)

Please provide the name and contact details of the organisation applying for accreditation. This will be the organisation name in which the accreditation is to be held. It should be a legal entity, if you use a trading name, the full name of the legal entity plus the trading name should be noted. 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 supply the company registration number and VAT number, confirming how many years the organisation has been in existence. If you have traded under a different name, structure or part of a different organisation, please include these details within the comments box.

Contact details (Main contact for the accreditation)

This person should be able to answer any questions related to your application and will be responsible for the annual renewal process, once accredited.

Finance contact

This person should be the main contact for invoice payment.

Administration contact

This is the person/s that will carry out the duties of registering the learner on the APM online examination system, submit reasonable adjustment requests, and update the course finder details. If you have more than one individual who would do this, please confirm all names and relevant details using a comma to separate their details.

Part 2 – Meeting the standard

This section is intended to help us to understand how your organisation meets the APM Accredited Training Provider Standard.

Definitions taken from the APM Training Provider Accreditation Standard

Organisation – training provider

Employee – organisation staff and associates

Associates – individuals conducting training (inclusive of employed and self-employed)

Learner – individual undertaking a qualification

Standard 1 Organisation status and structure

Evidence to be submitted. **(Please use the numbers in brackets to title your documents).**

Evidence of financial viability (1.2)

Please provide evidence of financial viability. This could be in the form of your self-assessment report, end-of-year financial report or equivalent confirming 'going concern' status, your audited accounts or auditors' report. Please feel free to redact information not relevant to demonstrate financial viability to APM.

Professional indemnity insurance certificate (1.3)

Please supply a copy of your professional indemnity insurance certificate and policy cover.

Evidence of governance and decision-making structure (1.4)

Your organisation must have a demonstrable governance structure in place. The governance and decision-making structure must be defined and documented, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, trustees or governing body of the organisation where applicable. This could be in the form of governance terms of reference, details of Directors, Board members or Trustees and/or records of governance meetings.

Evidence to demonstrate demand for qualification(s) (1.7)

This will help us to understand the research that you have undertaken to demonstrate demand for the proposed qualifications and could be evidenced through market research that you've undertaken to demonstrate learner demand, or letters of support from potential clients.

1a Please confirm the organisational approach to identifying and managing conflicts of interest, whether potential or realised.

This will help us to understand your ethical approach in identifying and managing conflict. This could be detailing your conflict of interest policy and supporting procedures and/or how a conflict register is managed and maintained.

1b How does the proposed qualification(s) delivery fit with the organisation's overall strategy?

This will help us to understand the strategic approach being adopted by your organisation to deliver on the proposed qualification(s). This could be evidenced through a letter from your CEO or equivalent, demonstrating the rationale for application and the link between the accreditation and the organisation's strategic goals. This could also be evidenced through your business plan to illustrate organisation strategy and qualification targets.

1c Does the organisation hold other external accreditations? If yes, please state which.

If your organisation is accredited by other bodies to deliver courses or qualifications, please provide the details. This helps us to understand the wider accreditations that the organisation may hold, to provide context to your application.

1d Has the organisation ever had an external accreditation revoked? If yes, please provide the pertinent details.

This helps us to understand the historical journey of your organisation with regards to accreditations, to provide context to your application.

1e What external certifications does the organisation hold? (e.g. ISO 9001)

Please indicate any awards or affiliations you currently have or are applying for. This helps us to understand the wider certifications that the organisation may hold to provide context to your application.

Standard 2 Legislation

Evidence to be submitted. **(Please use the numbers in brackets to title your documents).**

Equal opportunities and Disability policy for employees (2.1)

Please submit your equal opportunities and disability policy for employers.

Equal opportunities and Disability policy for learners (2.1a)

Please submit your equal opportunities and disability policy for learners.

Completion of supplier Data Protection Supplier Risk assessment questionnaire (2.3)

Please complete the relevant Data Protection Supplier Risk assessment questionnaire, provided in the application pack.

Evidence of adherence to health and safety (2.4)

Please submit appropriate evidence to demonstrate your health and safety obligations are effective and meet current legislation. This could be in the form of your health and safety policies and procedures including your reporting mechanisms.

2a Please confirm how employees are trained in equality and diversity to ensure learners and employees are not treated unfairly.

Please provide details on how and when equality and diversity training is carried out and the frequency of training to ensure knowledge is current. Include information on how updates are provided, should there be a change in legislation. How does this training ensure that both the learner and employee are treated fairly? For example, this could be in the form of an accessibility policy.

2b Please confirm how delivery plans are adapted to ensure an equitable learning experience for all learners.

Please confirm how adjustments are identified with the learner and how any required adjustments are fed into the delivery plans to ensure an equitable learning experience. This will help us to see how the delivery of the proposed qualification(s) is based on principles of equality and diversity. You can present examples of when this has occurred in the past or the procedures to be followed for future occurrences.

Standard 3 Organisation operations

Evidence to be submitted. **(Please use the numbers in brackets to title your documents).**

The policies detailed in question 3a (3.3)

Examples of policies may be, but not limited to, your conflict of interest policy, equality and diversity policy, complaints policy, quality assurance policy, managing unacceptable behaviour policy, malpractice and maladministration policy, safeguarding policy.

Facilities used must be of an appropriate standard. Evidence of current facilities contracts and/or licences to deliver APM qualification(s) (3.8)

This directly relates to the use of any facilities or services used to deliver the APM qualification/s. Currency of contracts and licences will help us to determine the stability of the arrangements in place to support learners towards achieving their APM qualification(s). This could be, but not limited to, venue contracts, course materials or IT software contracts.

3a Please detail the relevant policies and demonstrate the link with organisational procedures that are in place to deliver APM qualification(s).

Making direct reference to the policy documentation that you are submitting, please confirm their relevance to the delivery of APM qualification(s) and how these are kept under regular review.

3b Please confirm your predicted learner volumes per qualification you are applying for. Share your organisational plan to achieve these volumes and the supporting capacity planning for delivery.

This helps us to establish the sufficiency of organisational capacity to achieve predicted learner volumes and ensure capacity planning has taken place to meet the forecasted numbers. Please be specific as to the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for employees involved. This could be demonstrated through the business planning process or financial planning to meet with the forecasted numbers, along with an organisational chart highlighting those involved in the proposed qualification(s).

3c What are the organisation's learner : associate ratios? What is the rationale for this number? How does the organisation ensure these ratios are maintained?

This helps us to understand the suitability of the ratios for delivery for the proposed qualification(s). Please include details on how cohort numbers are monitored, and actions taken should ratios be exceeded, in your response.

3d What is the organisational IT infrastructure to support predicted learner volumes?

Please detail what IT functions exist for the delivery of the proposed qualification(s). This could include your CRM, learner portals, networks used etc. Confirm any limits to licences held and what procedures are in place to monitor these limits to ensure predicted learner volumes are fully supported. This helps us to establish sufficiency of your IT infrastructure.

3e Please confirm the organisation's approach to identifying risks and contingency planning in relation to:

Staffing, IT failure, Venue cancellation (if applicable)

This will help us to understand your approach to risk awareness and contingency planning across the range of situations that may occur. This could be evidenced by a risk log, the IT back-up system with details surrounding how the contingency planning has been tested.

3f Please confirm how the equipment and facilities to be used to deliver APM qualification(s) are fit for purpose, available to all learners and offer a quality learning experience.

This will help us to understand what equipment and facilities you use when working with APM qualification(s) learners, how they remain fit for purpose and offered in an equitable way.

Standard 4 Planning and course delivery

For each qualification you wish to deliver, please provide the following information, noting any differences between qualifications.

Evidence to be submitted. **(Please use the numbers in brackets to title your documents).**

You are required to submit your course materials for each qualification you are applying to APM for.

A delivery plan provides an overview of the objectives for the training course, the how and when each stage of training will be undertaken, confirming the resources to be used. See Annex B for further guidance. It is not a requirement to use this exact format. **(Please use 4.1a 4.1b etc to title your delivery plan documents)**

Please ensure your attached delivery plans for each qualification clearly demonstrate:

- Full coverage of the learning objectives and learning outcomes
- Notional learning hours to meet with the qualification(s) specification.
- Assessment practice and examination preparation.
- Names of associates the organisation has trained to deliver on the relevant parts of the delivery plan.

Evidence of associate observations and connected improvement plans (4.8)

This could be in the form of observational reports by the individual responsible for quality assurance and linked to an improvement plan for the observed associate/s.

4a How are the learning materials made available to learners? At what point does this occur?

Please include details connected to provide details for all course materials and supporting documentation along with what adjustments may be made for those requiring reasonable adjustments. This is to help us to determine the accessibility of your materials.

4b What directed development takes place?

As part of the notional learning hours required (see annex A), directed development is specified as development that is not under the immediate guidance or supervision of a member of the accredited provider but will help the learner to prepare for the examination – this could include ‘on the job’ development. Please confirm what directed development takes place and how this is captured for all qualifications to fulfil the notional learning hours requirement. This will help us to assess the coverage of this requirement within the notional learning hours.

4c What are the effective strategies used to involve all learners towards the APM qualification(s)?

Please include details of your organisational approach to ensure learners are fully involved in the learning experience. This is especially important during your live interactions with your learners. Include information such as how you have tested these strategies to know that they are effective.

4d What is the process for updating course content?

This is to help us to understand how your organisation adopts a continual improvement approach to your course content, maintaining trends, responding to learner feedback and the APM Train the Trainer sessions to ensure an excellent learner experience.

4e Please detail the organisation’s quality assurance practices for the APM qualification(s) delivery, confirming who has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality assurance in the organisation.

Please state who has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality assurance within the organisation. Please also confirm if each qualification/s proposed has a different assigned individual for the purpose of maintaining quality assurance. When detailing your quality assurance practices, be clear on how continual improvement is embedded, to support associates. This may be evidenced in the form of a quality assurance policy.

4f How does the organisation gather learner feedback? How is this analysed and documented? How are actions reviewed for effectiveness?

This helps us to establish how you monitor and review your delivery and teaching to ensure a consistent approach is adopted for continual improvement. It's important for us to see the full cycle of how feedback is gathered, analysed and actions taken reviewed for effectiveness.

Standard 5 Staffing and professional development

5a Please describe the organisation's recruitment, retention and development policies for associates. Include details of experience and qualification verification.

Detailing the procedures you have in place to recruit, retain and develop your associates, will assist us in identifying whether a consistent approach is being adopted. It's essential that associates delivering on the APM qualification(s) have the appropriate level of understanding including pedagogical and communication skills. Include how the organisation checks the validity of experience and qualifications of an individual. This could be evidenced through your recruitment policies, CVs and relevant qualification certificates.

5b How does the organisation ensure their employees have a realistic workload and have appropriate support and supervision?

This helps us to understand how experienced associates are supported and observed to encourage continual improvement. This could be evidenced through an annual capacity analysis, minutes of meetings or observational reports. This could also feature within the risk log.

5c How does the organisation support employees to professionally develop?

Detailing the approach adopted by the organisation to show how those delivering training are actively encouraged to develop professionally, helps us to understand how continual improvement is being applied. This applies to those who are employed and self-employed. This could be evidenced through CPD records or details of the development policy.

Standard 6 Learner experience

6a Please describe how the APM accreditation and APM qualification(s) will be publicised. Include any links and/or publicity material.

Once accredited, the training provider will be supplied with a digital logo for each APM qualification in question, to promote their accredited status.

Describing how you will promote your status through your website and marketing material will help us to understand the initial experience a potential learner will have when exploring the APM qualifications. Please include how this information will be kept up to date and accurate.

6b How is learner suitability assessed against subject and qualification level?

This will help us to understand the process gone through to ensure the learner is being placed on the correct APM qualification and level prior to enrolment, encouraging a fulfilling experience and successful outcome for the learner.

6c What initial learner assessments take place? How does this information inform the individual learning plan?

This will help us to understand the journey for the learner and how their experience becomes personalised. This could be evidenced through an initial assessment form/questionnaire, with confirmation of the way in which the document is applied.

6d Describe the induction process for the APM qualification(s) and what learning materials are referred to.

This is to help us understand how the learner is inducted onto their training programme. Please detail how the induction process takes place, by whom and what learning materials are made available at this stage in the learner journey. This could be evidenced by an induction plan, checklist or other associated resources.

6e Please confirm how learner needs and, where required, reasonable adjustments to learning and examinations are implemented. State the process to be followed to request reasonable adjustments to APM for consideration towards an individual learner exam.

This will enable us to understand how individual learner needs are identified and adjustments are made, where required, for their learning journey. In addition to this, please detail the process in place to notify APM of any adjustment requests for the examination, including who has responsibility for this process and how they have been suitably trained on the APM Reasonable Adjustments and Access Arrangements Policy. This could be evidenced by describing an example that has occurred with the use of your organisation's reasonable adjustment policy.

6f What safeguarding measures are in place for the learners?

This will help us to understand the methods used to ensure learners are being protected whilst studying with your organisation. This is to cover all methods of delivery used by your organisation and support outside of the immediate learning environment, for example, online learning communities. This could be evidenced by a safeguarding policy and how this is made known to learners.

6g How do you inform learners of further APM qualifications and/or membership opportunities?

This will help us to understand how you share the APM qualification pathway and membership opportunities. This could be evidenced through slides that form part of the training programme or email communications.

Part 3

Additional documentation being submitted not already stated within the application form.

Please list any additional documentation being submitted not already stated within the application form.

List any additional documentation you are submitting along with the title of those documents.

Please supply any additional information you feel may be relevant to the application.

Please provide any additional information you believe is relevant to your application for accreditation and would assist the assessor during their desk review.

Accredited training providers are listed on the APM website unless they request otherwise.

Mode of delivery definitions

We appreciate each training provider may use slightly different terminology to describe the various course types they provide. Please use the following definitions to determine your mode of delivery.

Classroom – a traditional course delivery either through an online platform or within a physical classroom. Learners are required to log on to sessions at a specific start time and in the case of classroom a specific geographical location is set.

Distance – A traditional course delivery through an online platform with direct interaction with the trainer. Learners are required to log on to sessions at a specific start time. These courses may also be referred to as 'virtual' training.

Blended – learners will learn utilising a variety of different educational tools including specified classroom times delivered online or face to face.

Annex A

Notional learning hours reflect the time taken for an average learner to meet the learning outcomes defined. These are defined by the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework.

Guided learning is learning that is under the immediate guidance or supervision of a member of the accredited provider.

Directed development is development that is not under the immediate guidance or supervision of a member of the accredited provider but will help the learner to prepare for the examination, this could include 'on the job' development.

APM Project Fundamentals Qualification (SCQF level 6) and Risk Management Certificate 1

25 notional learning hours

- 15 hours of guided learning
- 9 hours of directed development
- 1 hour dedicated assessment

APM Project Management Qualification (SCQF level 7) and Risk Management Certificate 2

75 notional learning hours

- 32 hours of guided learning
- 40 hours of directed development
- 3 hours of dedicated assessment (inclusive of 30 minute optional break)

APM Project Professional Qualification (SCQF level 9)

70 notional learning hours

- 40 hours of guided learning
- 28 hours of directed development
- 2 hours 35 minutes of dedicated assessment

Annex B

Delivery plans

A delivery plan provides an overview of the objectives for the training course, and the how and when each stage of training will be undertaken, confirming the resources to be used.

The plan details the training design, resources, development, and delivery of the course, along with any assessment required and evaluation procedures.

The plan will include timescales for delivery of the training and demonstrate sufficiency to cover the qualification syllabus in question, which may include individual training lesson plans.

The headings that follow are examples that could be used when developing your delivery plans.

Purpose and scope – overview of what the delivery plan aims to deliver.

Course objectives – The primary objective of the overall course.

Audience – Who will be attending the course.

Training methods – How the training is delivered, e.g., face to face, and the rationale for this approach. How the approach considers or adapts to ensure an equitable learning experience for all learners. If multiple training methods are used, how are activities to engage learners adapted.

Roles and responsibilities – Describe the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the delivery of the course. This includes the enrolment and induction of the learner, administration requirements, delivery of the training content and the evaluation stages.

Training design and delivery – This includes the mapping to the qualification syllabus to demonstrate how all the learning objectives and learning outcomes will be covered. Specifically what materials will be used and when. Who is trained and approved to deliver for each training session. What pre-work, homework may be required, the running order of the training programme and the duration of sessions to confirm suitable coverage of the notional learning hours. The strategies to be adopted to involve all learners.

Course materials – What course material will be used; how and when will this be presented to the learner. Adjustments that may be required for learners with different learning styles. Emphasis on APM resources that are being used to support the learner towards their exam preparation, where and when examination practice takes place and the formative feedback that is offered and by whom.

Training administration – This includes how learners are notified of their course training dates, how learner: associate ratios are maintained, how logging of attendance, directed development takes place and how reasonable adjustments are recorded and requests submitted to APM.

Timescales – Overall course delivery, as well as individual training session durations. Sufficiency of exam preparation and when the learner is booked onto their exam.

Evaluation – how you plan to gather feedback and evaluate the effectiveness of the course delivery in meeting its objectives.

Quality Assurance – How associates are monitored in delivering training, how associates' CPD is checked for currency, how to avoid conflict of interest in training and assessments. Lessons learned log.



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