



APM Registered Project Professional (**RPP**)
2nd edition
Application Guidance Notes

RPP – the project
professional standard

APM Registered Project Professional (**RPP**)

For employers, developing and recruiting APM Registered Project Professionals is an investment in their desire to deliver competitive advantage through improved project delivery.

For individuals, it is a demonstration of their competence, ethical behaviour and commitment to continuing development that sets them apart from others.

There is a growing recognition of the value that competent and capable project professionals can offer to all areas of society.

RPP is a robust assessment of the APM FIVE Dimensions of Professionalism with successful candidates being entered onto the APM Register of Project Professionals.

The standard was initially launched in 2011 and has been refreshed and launched in 2017.

Introduction

APM Registered Project Professional (RPP) is a pan-sector standard that demonstrates responsible leadership and the competences necessary for project, programme or portfolio management. It is available to anyone, from any professional background, with relevant experience of managing others in a project environment.

The refreshed standard has two new key features:

- alignment to the *APM Competence Framework 2nd edition*;
- an additional route recognising achievement of the APM Project Professional Qualification (PPQ) or APM Practitioner Qualification (PQ).

You may apply to become an APM Registered Project Professional, whether you are a member of APM or not. If you are successful, as well as being awarded the designation, you will become a Full member of APM.

Overview

The RPP application process is designed to build a comprehensive picture of you as a competent project professional.

It assumes that a competent project professional requires a sufficient breadth of technical knowledge, the practical competence to apply that knowledge, and a commitment to continuing professional development and ethical practice.

The assessment process addresses all three of these aspects.

Stage one of the assessment consists of a written submission including:

- A record of employment history
- A brief overview of two or more projects/programmes/portfolios that will be used as evidence. The majority of these need to be within the last seven years. The applicant will be required to describe their accountabilities, including their role in managing others and responsible leadership, and how the projects/programmes/portfolios demonstrate the following characteristics:
 - Uncertainty or conflicting objectives.
 - High severity risks or high levels of unpredictability.
 - Multiple work packages/projects/programmes.
 - Multiple, interdependent stakeholders, possibly with competing interests.
- Answers to five sets of questions relating to the projects/programmes/portfolios. The breadth of knowledge questions only need to be answered by applicants who do not hold either the APM Project Professional Qualification (PPQ) or the APM Practitioner Qualification (PQ). Holders of PPQ or PQ only need to answer the practical competence questions.
- A record of 35 hours Continuing Professional Development (CPD) from the previous 12 months.
- Details of two referees.

Overview cont.

The written applications are reviewed by APM assessors who award provisional marks. If these provisional marks are sufficiently high, the applicants are progressed to the second stage of the application process. Otherwise, assessors will provide feedback to inform re-applications.

The second stage of the application process is an interview. Applicants are interviewed for between 45 minutes and an hour by two assessors, whose purpose is to validate and to explore the applicants' answers in their written applications. The assessors will also ask questions about ethical scenarios to confirm that applicants know how to respond in accordance with the APM Code of Professional Conduct. The assessors will confirm or amend the provisional marks awarded for the written applications, to arrive at the applicants' final marks. If these final marks are sufficiently high, then the applicants will be awarded the RPP designation and membership of APM if they are not already members. Otherwise, assessors will provide feedback to inform re-applications.





Applying for APM Registered Project Professional

Section 1: Personal details

The first section of the application form gathers your personal details for administrative purposes only.

Section 2: Route

This section identifies which route you are applying for. If you are applying for the experiential route, you will need to confirm you have a minimum of seven years' experience. If you are applying for the developmental route, you will need to confirm that you hold either the APM Project Professional Qualification (PPQ) or the APM Practitioner Qualification (PQ).

Section 3: Continuing professional development

When applying for RPP you must have completed at least 35 hours of CPD in the previous 12 months, this is an obligation you must maintain annually to retain RPP status. You will need to include a CPD log demonstrating this with your application form. This section asks you to confirm that your CPD log is attached to your application.

Section 4: Project overviews

Regardless of whether you are applying by the experiential route or by the developmental route, you will need to provide an overview of projects, programmes or portfolios that can be used as a context for your application. A minimum entry of two projects, programmes and portfolios and a maximum entry of five projects, programmes or portfolios is required and the information needs to cover the following:

- Project/programme/portfolio number (please number entries 1, 2, 3...).
- Title of project/programme/portfolio.
- Period of project/programme/portfolio.
- Company name.
- Job role.
- Period of job role.
- Project/programme/portfolio description which includes the following (max. 400 words):
 - Personal accountabilities in the change initiative.
 - Uncertainty or conflicting objectives for the change initiative.
 - High-severity risks or high levels of unpredictability affecting the change initiative.
 - Multiple work packages and/or projects and/or programmes in the change initiative.
 - Multiple, independent stakeholders in the change initiative, possibly with competing interests.

If you are applying by the experiential route, you will need to demonstrate a minimum of seven years' experience working in project, programme or portfolio management, or a key control function. For example, a Full Member of APM (MAPM) will have demonstrated five years' experience, if you have been a MAPM for two years then you will be eligible to apply for RPP. If you are applying by the qualified route, you still need to provide the required information, but there is no set minimum experience requirement.

Applying for APM Registered Project cont.

In addition, you will need to supply names and contact details of two referees. Referees need to be able to verify your project management roles. At least one should be either a line manager or sponsor for one of the projects, programmes or portfolios to which you refer. APM will contact a sample of referees to confirm the information submitted.

APM anticipates that you should be able to provide this information at a level of detail that does not breach any necessary confidentiality. However, please note that all assessors have signed confidentiality agreements and that, if necessary, APM will try to identify assessors with a relevant level of security clearance.

The assessor reviewing your written application will review the information that you provide in this section to judge whether your roles were sufficiently responsible, and whether the projects, programmes or portfolios themselves were sufficiently demanding to provide evidence of competence at the RPP level. If the outcomes of the review are all positive, then the assessor will go on to review your answers to the competence questions. However, if the outcomes of the review are not all positive, then your application will be returned with feedback about additional role or project requirements, but without any review of your answers to the competence questions.

Section 5: Competence questions

There are five question sets, which address respectively five main areas of responsibility that are based on groupings of APM competences.

You will need to answer the questions comprising each question set by reference to one of the projects, programmes or portfolios that you described in section 4 of the application form. All your answers to the questions in the same question set need to refer to the same project, programme or portfolio, but your answers to the questions in different question sets can refer to different project, programmes or portfolios.

Each question set includes two types of question.

- **Practical competence questions** ask for evidence from the relevant project, programme or portfolio to confirm your practical competence. The questions are not limited to asking about what you did. In some cases, they also ask you to reflect on and evaluate your actions.
- **Breadth of knowledge questions** ask for evidence of a greater breadth of knowledge than would have been required for the relevant project, programme or portfolio. The purpose of these questions is to confirm that you will be able to generalise your practical competence to other projects, programmes or portfolios.

If you are applying by the experiential route, you need to answer all the practical competence questions and all the breadth of knowledge questions.

If you are applying by the developmental route, you only need to answer all the practical competence questions. You do not need to answer the breadth of knowledge questions as your breadth of knowledge has been confirmed by your possession of the APM Project Professional Qualification (PPQ) or the APM Practitioner Qualification (PQ).

Make sure when answering each question set you indicate the relevant project, programme or portfolio from section four of your application to which your answers refer. You may find *APM Competence Framework 2nd edition* and the *APM Body of Knowledge 6th edition* helpful when answering the questions, although use of the same terms as in these documents is not mandatory.

You should try to ensure that you provide relevant evidence enabling the assessor reviewing your written application to judge that your answers to each of the question sets merit provisional overall marks of three, according to the mark schemes shown further in this document. The requirement to proceed to interview is a provisional overall mark of three for four out of the five question sets, and a provisional overall mark of at least two for the other question set. For applicants on the experiential route, this same requirement holds for both the practical competence and breadth of knowledge question sets.

If your provisional marks are less than the minimum requirement for interview your application will be returned with feedback explaining where you need to provide additional information. Regardless of provisional marks, any responses that conflict with the APM Code of Professional Conduct will result in your application being rejected.

Practical competence mark scheme			
N/A	1	2	3
Insufficient evidence to allocate a mark	Performed the function with significant guidance and support; performed basic routine and predictable tasks; exercises little or no individual responsibility	Performed the function with support required only in specially demanding circumstances; exercised individual responsibility and autonomy	Performed the function without support; exercised significant responsibility and autonomy; led the work of others

Breadth of knowledge mark scheme			
N/A	1	2	3
Insufficient evidence to allocate a mark	Aware of the purposes of the function and of associated difficulties	Aware of basic principles and the main methods that are applied in the area of work	Possessing in-depth knowledge of principles and methods sufficient to assume responsibility in widely differing circumstances

Question set 1: Planning the project, programme or portfolio

	Competence Framework 2nd edition topic area	Practical competence: to be completed by applicants on both the developmental route and the experiential route Max. 1,000 words for question set 1	Breadth of knowledge: to be completed by applicants on the experiential route only Max. 1,000 words for question set 1
1.1	Governance arrangements	How did the governance structure help or hinder you in the management of the project/programme/portfolio?	What alternative governance structures could have been used? Why might these have been more or less appropriate?
1.2	Consolidated planning	Give an example of conflicting requirements regarding one or more of the following and explain how you addressed this conflict during planning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependencies • Quality requirements • Time constraints • Resource limits • Return on investment 	What methodologies could have been used to prepare a consolidated plan? What are the advantages and/or limitations of the alternative methodologies?
1.3	Resource management	How did you secure the necessary human, physical and/or financial resources required for delivery?	In what ways might priorities differ when securing resources from internal or external providers? How do you adapt your behaviour to take these differences into account?
1.4	Risk and issue management	What arrangements did you put in place for risk management, and why did you judge the arrangements sufficient?	What alternative methods could have been used to identify and assess the probabilities and impacts of the risks? What would have been the likely costs and benefits of adopting the alternative methods?

Question set 2: Managing stakeholders and communications

Competence Framework 2nd edition topic area	Practical competence: to be completed by applicants on both the developmental route and the experiential route Max. 500 words for question set 2	Breadth of knowledge: to be completed by applicants on the experiential route only Max. 500 words for question set 2	
2.1	Stakeholder and communications management	How did you try to reconcile conflicting stakeholder interests, and how successful were you in doing so?	<p>What options are available to you when stakeholder interests are irreconcilable?</p> <p>How can the use of these options impact on the project, programme and/or portfolio?</p>
2.2	Stakeholder and communications management	<p>What schedules and methods of communication did you choose to use with different stakeholder groups?</p> <p>Would you choose these same methods again?</p>	<p>What do you consider to be the main methods generally available to communicate with stakeholders?</p> <p>What do you consider the main advantages and limitations of each method?</p>

Question set 3: Managing the project, programme, portfolio or key control function

Competence Framework 2nd edition topic area		Practical competence: to be completed by applicants on both the developmental route and the experiential route Max. 1,000 words for question set 3	Breadth of knowledge: to be completed by applicants on the experiential route only Max. 1,000 words for question set 3
3.1	Reviews	<p>What factors did you monitor to assess progress against time, resource use and budget?</p> <p>Which of these factors were most and least informative?</p>	<p>What other factors might you have chosen to monitor?</p> <p>What would have been the advantages and disadvantages of these alternatives?</p>
3.2	Quality management; Benefits management	<p>What arrangements did you put in place to manage the quality of outputs, outcomes and/or benefits?</p> <p>Were these arrangements effective?</p>	<p>What alternative arrangements might you have made to manage the quality of outputs, outcomes and/or benefits?</p> <p>What would have been the advantages and disadvantages of these alternatives?</p>
3.3	Change control	<p>What action did you take when a variation was identified that <u>would not</u> affect the scope?</p>	<p>When you act to address variations, what measures can you take to ensure that the project, programme or portfolio's implementation and documentation reflect its new configuration?</p>
3.4	Change control	<p>What action did you take when a variation was identified that <u>would</u> affect the scope?</p>	

Question set 4: Inspiring and motivating others through effective leadership

Competence Framework 2nd edition topic area	Practical competence: to be completed by applicants on both the developmental route and the experiential route Max. 500 words for question set 4	Breadth of knowledge: to be completed by applicants on the experiential route only Max. 500 words for question set 4	
4.1	Leadership	How did you go about gaining and maintaining the trust and commitment of stakeholders and team members?	<p>What other leadership styles could you have adopted?</p> <p>What would have been the possible advantages and limitations of the different leadership styles?</p>
4.2	Leadership	<p>What did you do to create a working environment that would empower team members and encourage high performance?</p> <p>Did it work?</p>	<p>What alternative arrangements might you have made to empower the team members?</p> <p>What would have been the advantages and disadvantages of these alternatives?</p>

Question set 5: Managing teams and developing staff

Competence Framework 2nd edition topic area		Practical competence: to be completed by applicants on both the developmental route and the experiential route Max. 750 words for question set 5	Breadth of knowledge: to be completed by applicants on the experiential route only Max. 750 words for question set 5
5.1	Team management	How did you allocate work and monitor the performance of team members? What actions did you take in the light of performance data?	How do you determine the reasons for team members under performing or over performing?
5.2	Team management	How did you exploit opportunities to develop the competence of individuals and the team?	What are the alternative methods that you might have drawn on to develop the competence of individuals and teams? What are the strengths and limitations of these methods?
5.3	Conflict management	How did you avoid conflicts within the team? How successful were you in dealing with any conflicts that arose?	What options are available to deal with conflicts when different team members prove irreconcilable? How can the use of these options impact on other members of the team?

Section 6: Application for interview

The final stage of assessment to become an APM Registered Project Professional is an interview that will validate and explore the responses in your written submission that were awarded provisional marks, and will confirm or amend those provisional marks to determine your final marks.

There will be two assessors appointed by APM of which both hold RPP. They will be told your name in advance and you will be told theirs, so that APM can arrange to use alternates if either of you identify conflicts of interest. You can choose whether the interview will be conducted face-to-face or by video link. It will normally take between 45 minutes and an hour. For quality assurance purposes, you will be asked for permission for the interview to be audio-recorded, and in some cases a fourth person will attend to observe the assessors.

Before the interview starts you will need to provide photo ID such as a passport, photo driver's licence or company ID. The interview will be non-confrontational. The assessors will want to be confident that they are giving you a fair chance to demonstrate your professional competence, and that they have sufficient evidence on which to base reliable final marks. For applicants on the experiential route they may address the question sets on both practical competence and breadth of knowledge, for applicants on the qualified route, they will address the question sets on practical competence only. In either case, they are unlikely to spend equal time on all of the five main areas of responsibility, but are likely to focus on one or more areas where they wish to explore the answers in your written application. In addition, they will ask you to identify an occasion from your project management career that required you to consider professional or ethical principles and how you addressed it. Your answer will need to be in line with the APM Code of Professional Conduct or, regardless of other marks; your application will be rejected.

To be awarded the RPP designation, you will need to achieve final marks of three for four out of the five main areas of responsibility and a final mark of at least two in the other area. For applicants on the experiential route, this requirement applies for both practical competence and breadth of knowledge. For applicants on the qualified route, it applies for practical competence only.

Unsuccessful applicants will be sent feedback to inform any future re-applications.

Maintaining APM Registered Project Professional

To maintain the APM Registered Project Professional standard you are required to complete 35 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) every year and to continue to comply with the APM Code of Professional Conduct. You will need to confirm annually at the point of renewal that you meet these requirements. APM conduct a sample audit of CPD records and you may be asked to present these. For more information on the APM CPD scheme and the CPD log please visit apm.org.uk/cpd

Enquiries, complaints and appeals

By attending the interview, you will be confirming that you are fit to do so. Therefore, no appeals can be heard concerning your wellbeing during the interview. If there are extenuating circumstances you feel have impaired your performance, please contact APM.

Enquiries can be made regarding interview conditions. The interview enquiry will only be accepted if the issue has been declared at the time of the interview or via the post-interview survey.

Complaints can be made regarding dissatisfaction with the standard of service from APM.

Appeals will only be heard on the grounds that procedures and processes have not been applied consistently or fairly. There is a charge for re-assessments or appeals, which is refunded if the appeal is upheld. No appeal can be heard on ground of technical judgement. All appeals will be heard by the Appeals Panel whose decision is final.

An enquiry, complaint or appeal must be made in writing to the APM Qualifications Department and must be received no later than 30 days after the dispatch of your results.

For further information regarding the appeals process please email apmrpp@apm.org.uk



Supporting Literature

To help prepare your application to become an APM Registered Project Professional, the following documentation is available from the APM website:

- Frequently Asked Questions
- APM Code of Professional Conduct
- CPD guidance
- *APM Competence Framework 2nd edition*

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