



**APMP**  
***Proposal Practitioner Certification***

**Practitioner Design Standards**

*April 2018*

1	Introduction.....	3
2	Practitioner Examination Structure.....	3
2.1	Examination Structure .....	3
2.2	Sizing .....	4
2.3	Timings .....	4
2.4	Pass Mark.....	4
3	Examination Content.....	4
3.1	Syllabus areas addressed .....	4
3.2	Test Types Used .....	5
3.3	Formats and International Considerations .....	5
3.4	Profile of Practitioner Content .....	5
3.5	Profile of Practitioner Re-Registration Content .....	6
4	Scoring System .....	6
4.1	Scoring Model.....	6
4.2	Scoring Correction Procedure .....	6
5	Examination Administration.....	6
5.1	Administration Documentation .....	6
5.2	Feedback Format and Content.....	7
5.3	Results Timings .....	7
	Appendix A – Practitioner Format .....	8
	Appendix B: Example Practitioner Test Types .....	9
	Appendix C – Example Scenario Booklet Front Page.....	12

# 1 Introduction

The purpose of this design is to specify for the APMP Proposal Practitioner Certification exam, the structure, content and format of the examination as well as the examination timings and the requirements for test administration.

It will be used:

- To communicate the qualification's examination design with the training community;
- As an input to the configuration of the APMP examination system for a qualification;
- As an input to the development of Editorial Standards and supporting documentation for question developers.

The OTE Practitioner design is under formal change control and any changes required should be raised with the Design Architect.

For explanation of OTE examination terms see the *OTE Glossary*.

## 2 APMP Practitioner Examination Structure

### 2.1 Examination Structure

The APMP Proposal Practitioner examination is intended to assess the knowledge and skills that demonstrate proficiency in Proposal and Bid Management based on the APMP Competency Framework and Syllabus.

The knowledge and skills required for the Practitioner are documented in the APMP certification syllabus. The APMP Practitioner examinations will test all the syllabus topics. There will be 6 questions per paper and all questions are mandatory.

The examination will consist of 3 booklets:

- Scenario Booklet
- Question Booklet
- Answer Booklet

#### **Scenario Booklet**

Details are as follows:

- The examination will include one scenario which will describe:
  - The background to a company and a specific Bid/Proposal;
    - Bid/Proposal objective
    - Bid/Proposal timeline and timeboxes
    - Bid/Proposal problems and progress to date
  - Other information as necessary to support the questions
- Each scenario will be based on an easily understood business model that is not country or culture specific.
- Scenario information will be kept to a minimum. The question pre-amble or additional information will be used to provide the specific information needed for answering an individual question.
- Additional information for one or more questions will be included. Additional information for a question is only to be used for that question and is not required to answer any other question.

#### **Question Booklet**

- Consisting of 6 questions
- A question will comprise three to four parts, called part-questions.
- All information provided within a part-question will only apply to that part-question and will not be used for the answer of another part-question.
- Each part-question will contain a number of question items.
- Each question item will be worth 1 mark.

- All information provided within a question item, will only apply to that question item and will not be used for the answer of another question item.

### ***Answer Booklet.***

A pre-printed booklet with a line of ovals for each question item. Each question item option will be represented by a single oval and the candidate indicates their chosen answer by filling in the appropriate ovals. Ovals must be darker than the grey square at the top of the first page of the Answer Booklet and filled between 80% - 100%.

### **2.2 Sizing**

There will be 80 question items in every paper which will require 80 response lines in the Answer Booklet. The number of pages in the Question Booklet will depend on the length of each question. The total word count within a paper will be controlled and will be in the range (5,500-6,000 words). There will be no more than 10% variability in the word count across all APMP Practitioner papers.

A **Flesch Kincaid readability grade** of 7.0 to 8.0 (easily understandable by 13-14 year olds)

N.B Currently this is monitored for the Scenario Booklet only because the Word facility for calculating these statistics gives distorted results for questions in OTE formats.

### **2.3 Timings**

The APMP Practitioner Certification examination will be 2.5 hours duration. There is no additional reading time allowed.

### **2.4 Pass Mark**

The pass mark is 50% for candidates and 60% for trainers.

Results for examination papers are reviewed after initial use and periodically thereafter to ensure that the overall paper is producing consistent results when compared to other papers.

## **3 Examination Content**

### **3.1 Syllabus areas addressed**

The APMP Practitioner syllabus contains 4 key competency syllabus areas covering:

- Information Research & Management, and Sales Orientation – Question 1 = 12 marks
- Planning and Management – Questions 2 & 3 = 28 marks combined
- Development – Question 4 & 5 = 28 marks combined
- Behaviour and Attitude – Question 6 = 12 marks

For the purpose of the Practitioner examination one syllabus area will be tested in an examination question. Each question will test a minimum of 4 syllabus topics.

### 3.2 Test Types Used

The following **test types** will be used, each question item gaining one mark for a correct answer.

- **Classic** - 'choose **one** from a list' of possible answers'. The correct response is to be selected from a list of 3 or 4 options.
- **Multiple Response** – 'choose **two** correct options from a list'. This test type follows exactly the same format as the '**Classic test type**', but more than one response is required for the answer. **It is the only test type that requires more than one response.** Both responses must be correct to gain a mark. If more or fewer than two responses are given then the answer will be void. The format 2 out of 5 options is the only format used.
- **Matching** - 'link items in one list to items in a second list'. There is **only one correct response** to each question item, but options from the second list may be used once, more than once or not at all.
- **Sequence Matching** – '*position events in a sequence*'. *The activities in Column 1 have to be placed in the sequence in which they should be performed. An option from Column 2 is selected for each activity in Column 1.*
- **Assertion Reason** – 'evaluate two statements (an assertion and an APMP reason), to determine if either, both or neither is true and, if both are true, whether the reason explains why the assertion is true'.  
If either statement is false, the answer is selected from options C, D or E.  
If both statements are true a third step is required: if the reason explains why the assertion is true, the answer is A, if it does not the answer is B.  
There is **only one correct response** to each question item, but options can be used once, more than once or not at all.

Examples of the test types to be used are at Appendix B.

### 3.3 Formats and International Considerations

The following formats are to be used and supported by the database (see also question examples in Appendix B).

- Question header text is to be shaded to distinguish the overall instruction from question stem and options. (7% is the current grey fill setting).
- Non-standard question text and scenario-specific information in question headers is in bold.
- Where additional information in the Scenario Booklet for a question continues on a following page or where a question continues on the next page this is indicated using the wording "Continued on next page".
- There will be a maximum of 2 pages additional information per question with 12 question items or 3 pages additional information for questions with 28 question items. (English papers only).
- Where blank pages are deliberately created in the scenario booklet it is stated on them "This is a blank page".
- A part-question must be no more than 2 pages in length (English papers only).
- Shading in boxes in additional information should be kept to a minimum, if used a 10% grey setting is to be used.

An example of the front page of the Scenario Booklet is at Appendix C.

### 3.4 Profile of Practitioner Content

Models have been considered for grading each question on the combination of its test type and learning level but psychometric data to date shows that whilst question difficulty is broadly aligned to the learning levels there is variation across individual questions and test types. At this time assessing individual question difficulty by such parameters cannot be supported by the available data. To ensure, as far as possible, the difficulty of each assessment is balanced the following constraints will apply in each paper:

- **Assertion Reason and Assertion Reason Classic Questions**
  - a total of 18-28 Assertion Reason question items.
  - a maximum of 6 Assertion Reason part-questions

- a maximum of 2 Assertion Reason part-question in any one question
- 3-7 question items per part-question.
- **Multiple Response Questions**
  - 16-22 Multiple Response question items
  - a maximum of 5 Multiple Response part-questions in any paper
  - a maximum of 2 (for the 28-mark question format) Multiple Response part-question(s) in any one question.
- **Classic, Matching and Sequencing Questions**
  - 40-50 Classic, Matching or Sequencing question items
  - Classic part-questions may use 3 options where the option length exceeds one line for most of the options.
- **Use of Learning Levels**
  - **Learning Level 3** (Application): 22-37 marks
  - **Learning Level 4** (Analysis): 43-58 marks.
- **Testing Document Content**
  - a maximum of 12 marks for testing document content
  - no more than 2 individual part-questions testing document content, either by creating or critiquing a product using any test type
  - a maximum of 1 part-questions testing the creation of a document
  - a maximum of 1 part-questions testing the critiquing of a document
  - up to 6 of the 12 marks can test in which document something is recorded
  - only 1 part-question testing document content to be included in a question
  - no document to be tested in more than one part-question.

### **3.5 Profile of Practitioner Re-Registration Content**

The examination will not be time limited so re-registration does not apply.

## **4 Scoring System**

### **4.1 Scoring Model**

All question items gain one mark for a correct answer. There is no negative marking.

For all question items, if more or less than the required number of responses are given, the answer scores zero. No partial marks are awarded for any question item. This includes Multiple Response question items, where a mark is gained only if the two required responses are identified.

### **4.2 Scoring Correction Procedure**

Where exceptionally there is a need for a score correction, the question, part-question or question item(s) involved will be removed from the test and the total marks and required pass mark adjusted. Details of any score corrections made will be communicated to ATOs.

## **5 Examination Administration**

### **5.1 Administration Documentation**

Any candidate sitting the APMP Practitioner examination will receive the following documentation at the time of their examination either in a paper based or electronic format: -

- Candidate Number – will be allocated on the candidate list summary sent to the invigilator, who will inform the candidate or the candidate will be allocated a number at the point of logging into an online examination;
- Candidate Details Form –records the relevant contact information, contact preferences and identification information for all candidates;

- Feedback Form –allow candidates the opportunity to feedback to APMG any comments they may wish to make about the examination;
- Question Booklet – will be the examination for the candidate to use;
- Scenario Booklet – will provide information to be used in the examination by the candidate in conjunction with the question booklet;
- Candidate Answer Sheet – to be used by the candidate to indicate their answers to the examination questions.

In addition, on booking an exam, Candidate Guidance explaining the format of the question papers, and the different test types used is issued to the candidate.

In addition to the information provided to the candidate, a booklet named 'Notes to Invigilators' will be issued to the nominated invigilator for the examination to help them run the session. This booklet will contain information which the invigilator will read to candidates before the examination on the rules and regulations which will be in place whilst they sit their paper. It also provides the invigilator with guidance on how to provide feedback on questions which the invigilator believes to be unfair, confusing, poorly worded or misleading and how to deal with major issues arising that may subsequently require a change to the marking scheme.

## **5.2 Feedback Format and Content**

The results provided to candidates will provide details of total marks awarded per question, the total of marks available per question and the syllabus area that the particular question focussed on.

ATOs will be provided with the syllabus area question mark breakdown for all their candidates (both for their own information and to pass onto the candidates)

ATOs can request further statistics and breakdowns should they feel they require extra information about their results or the results of a test. APMG will consider all additional requests on a case by case basis and wherever possible will make the requested information available to the ATO.

## **5.3 Results Timings**

Results for tests within pilot and first use periods may be held for up to 6 weeks from the date of the examination to allow for any moderation and marking adjustment required. ATOs will be notified of which examinations are within their moderation period in advance of booking examinations so they can manage the expectations of the customer.

For examinations taken using live papers, ATOs will be issued with their results within 5 working days of the receipt of examination packs, assuming their account is not on hold. If an ATO has their account on hold they will be informed of this and all results held until the cause of the stoppage has been addressed.

## **Appendix A – Practitioner Format**

- a. 6 questions
- b. 12-25 question items each worth one mark, total of 80 marks
- c. 2 and a half hour examination (150 minutes) no additional reading time
- d. Pass Mark of 40+/80 to pass (50%)
- e. Open book, manual only
- f. Trainers must get an elevated mark of 48+/80 (60%)

**One examination should cover 80-100% of Practitioner syllabus areas.**

The duration for the examination format is based on an average standard time allowance per question item.



**Appendix B: Example Practitioner Test Types.**

**Classic**– ‘choose one from a list’ of possible answers’.

**Using the information provided below, answer the following questions about the development of the Bid Plan.**

**Key program events and procurement process:**

- **The RFP is due in 4 weeks**
- **Electronic response is due 7 weeks from RFP receipt**
- **Paper copy response is due week 8**
- **3 weeks to evaluate**
- **Presentations and negotiations, will take place in weeks 10, 11 and 12 - one bidder per week**
- **Award week 14 from RFP receipt**

1	<p>Which is an appropriate assertion about the schedule?</p> <p>A Proposal development should commence in 4 weeks, upon receipt of the RFP.</p> <p>B 4.9 days (10%) of the 7 weeks available should be kept in reserve.</p> <p>C Time for status reporting to senior management should be included in the Proposal Resource Schedule.</p> <p>D 2 hours should be scheduled for each of the Content Plan Review and the Document Readiness Review.</p>
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**Multiple Response** – ‘choose the correct options from a list’.

**Using the Scenario, answer the following questions about managing the CSS proposal team.**

**Team members will be drawn from the CSS global network of offices, and WTC.**

Remember to select **2** answers to each question.

1	<p>Which <b>2</b> actions are appropriate for the Proposal Manager to take to ensure clear communication within the CSS proposal team?</p> <p>A Communicate with all team members via a standard email template.</p> <p>B Schedule team meetings at times that work across multiple time zones.</p> <p>C Use the latest version of software available.</p> <p>D Determine team member’s technology competency and resources.</p> <p>E Prepare the proposal schedule based on the Universal Coordinated Time (UTC) zone.</p>
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**Matching** – link items in one list to items in a second list.

**Answer the following questions about the interface between the sales process and the business development life cycle.**

Column 1 contains information about the APMP Event Management opportunity. For each entry in Column 1, select from Column 2 the phase in the Business Development Lifecycle when this information should **FIRST** be documented. Each selection from Column 2 can be used once, more than once or not at all.

	<b>Column 1</b>	<b>Column 2</b>
1	Competitive information on the ACS event management solution.	A Market Identification B Account Planning
2	Professional Organizations that hold events.	C Opportunity Assessment
3	Strategy to deal with the possibility that WTC may put in a disruptive bid.	D Opportunity Planning E Proposal Planning
4	Market and competitor price analysis.	F Proposal Development

**Sequencing: Matching** – events to be positioned in a sequence.

Column 1 is a list of activities performed by the Solution Development Team within a Timebox. For each activity in Column 1, indicate in which order it should be performed. Note that all the activities undertaken by the Solution Development Team within a Timebox may NOT be given in Column 1. Each selection from Column 2 can **only** be used once.

	<b>Column 1</b>	<b>Column 2</b>
1	Develop and test the Timebox products in line with agreed priorities.	A First B Second
2	Work together to understand the full detail of all the work intended for completion in the Timebox.	C Third
3	Agree high-level acceptance criteria for each product to be delivered in the Timebox.	

**Assertion/Reason** – ‘evaluate two statements (an assertion and an APMP reason), to determine if either, both or neither is true and, if both are true, whether the reason explains why the assertion is true’

**Using the Scenario, answer the following question about the Executive Summary created by CSS for the APMP Event Management Services opportunity.**

Lines 1 to 3 in the table below consist of an assertion statement and a reason statement. For each line identify the appropriate option, from options A to E, that applies. Each option can be used once, more than once or not at all.

Option	Assertion	Reason	
A	True	True	AND the reason explains the assertion
B	True	True	BUT the reason does not explain the assertion
C	True	False	
D	False	True	
E	False	False	

	Assertion		Reason
1	It is appropriate that the executive summary was drafted by the CSS Account Manager.	BECAUSE	An executive summary should demonstrate understanding of a customer’s motivation and vision for a bid.
2	It is appropriate that the executive summary details how the CSS conference management solution and services will satisfy APMP’s requirements.	BECAUSE	An executive summary should focus on the proposed solution.
3	It is appropriate that the theme statement used in the executive summary is used elsewhere in the proposal.	BECAUSE	An executive summary is a summary of the sections in a proposal.

## Appendix C – Example Scenario Booklet Front Page

### ***Scenario Booklet***

This is a *2.5-hour* objective test examination. This booklet contains the Project Scenario upon which this examination paper is based. All questions are contained within the *Question Booklet*.

Additional information is provided within this *Scenario Booklet* for a number of questions. Where reference should be made to additional information, this is clearly stated within the question to which it is relevant. All information provided within a question must only be applied to that question.

Questions one and six are worth 12 examination points each, questions two and three are worth 28 examination points combined, and questions four and five are worth 28 examination points combined, giving a maximum of 80 marks in the paper. The pass mark is 50% (40 marks). Within each question the syllabus area to which the question refers is clearly stated. The examination is to be taken with the support of the APMP Body of Knowledge, i.e. no material other than the *Question Booklet*, the *Scenario Booklet*, the *Answer Booklet* and the APMP Body of Knowledge is to be used.