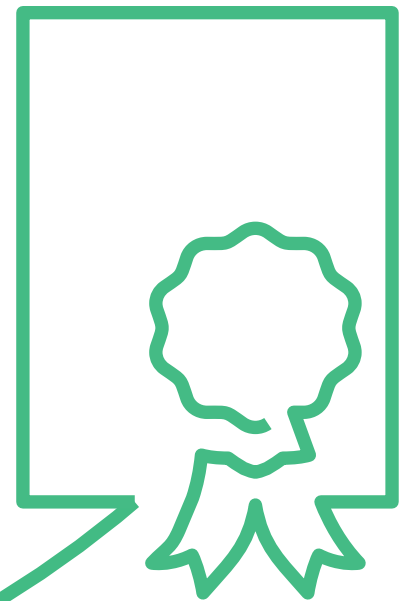


A helpful guide to the APM Major Project Leadership Specialist Certificate



Candidate guidance

Introduction

The APM Major Project Leadership Specialist Certificate is designed to assess your experience and knowledge against the competences developed by APM in partnership with the Major Project Association and key industry leaders.

The specialist certificate assessment is focused on determining that you meet these competences to provide reassurance and point of difference to peers and other project professionals.

For the purpose of this certificate, a major project is defined as a project that has:

- Significant benefits and risks.
- Macro impact – the candidate has led/is leading a significant political, social, economic, technological, organisational transformation, legal, or environmental change.

Although the term 'project' has been used, candidates can also use evidence of programmes and/or portfolios they have led.

Examples of types of major projects include those that affect an industry sector, nation(s) or region(s) and the population within.

The assessment consists of the following:

- An application outlining the context of a minimum of one and maximum of three major projects, including the benefits, main risks, macro impact, applicant role, and accountabilities (800 words per project context). The project context(s) need to demonstrate experience across at least two phases of delivery of a major project. Each project context needs to cover the minimum of one phase, including managing transition activities, where there is a clear handover of major pieces of work, either between phases or into operations.
- Written statements against each of the eight competence areas, demonstrating achievement of three of the assessment criteria in each competence (500 words per competence area).
- The full details of what you will be assessed against can be found in the Competence Coverage and Assessment Criteria on the APM website.
- A signed supporting statement from an individual who can verify the evidence presented in the application, for example, senior stakeholder or sponsor. A signed supporting statement would be needed for each project context.
- An interview with two assessors.

Applying for the assessment

Please refer to our website for the application form and signed statement of support template. These documents should be completed and returned to us by emailing mplsc@apm.org.uk.

Once the application has been initially reviewed and accepted, you will be contacted to provide credit card payment via phone.

Your written submission will be reviewed by one assessor to ensure the evidence is provided in the context of a major project.

If successful at this stage, you will be contacted to arrange your interview with two different assessors.

If you have any special requirements (further information of these can be found below), please notify us on mplsc@apm.org.uk at least 10 working days if in the UK, or 15 working days if outside of the UK prior to the assessment date.

Fees apply for cancellation or non-attendance. If you withdraw from the assessment up to 10 working days before the assessment, the full fee will apply. If you cancel 10 working days or more before the assessment, a cancellation fee will apply. Details of the cancellation fee are available from the APM qualifications department. If you are unable to attend your assessment due to illness, you must inform the APM qualifications department immediately. A medical certificate signed by a doctor must be provided within five working days of the assessment date.

Access arrangements

Medical and mobility

We are committed to promoting a positive assessment environment for people with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries. We have a great deal of experience in helping individual requirements and tailoring adjustments with the aim of removing any unfair disadvantage that the individual may encounter without changing the demands of the assessment.

Access to the facilities or arrangements described here can be granted to candidates with either short term or long-term conditions, specific learning difficulties, or regarded as disabled in terms of the Equality Act 2010. A dispensation may be allowed for a medical or physical condition that prevents you from completing the assessment within the normal regulations.

All requests must be supported by a medical certificate or other relevant medical documentation from your GP or other appropriate medical professional. This must be stated at the time of application. All medical evidence must be received by midday, at least, 10 working days in the UK, or 15 working days outside of the UK before the assessment, failure to do so will result in the dispensation not being granted.

Please refer to our reasonable adjustment policy where additional time will be dependent on the individual requirements.

Other aids/equipment available

You may use cushions, special seats and any other resting aids by prior arrangement with us. For assistance with any of the above, or for any other requirements, please contact us.

Preparing your submission

Terminology and writing

Should you be unsure about a given subject area or term, we have a glossary available to support your submission.

Please note you will not be marked down for using alternate language outside of this; however, organisation specific terms and jargon should be avoided. Remember the assessors won't know your organisation so explain things as clearly as you can using plain English.

While you will not be marked down for spelling, grammar and writing style, a more concise tone will allow for greater detail to feature in your statements and clarity will support your assessors in understanding the points you are trying to raise.

Write your submission in the first person – 'I did....' as the certificate will be assessing you as an individual and your personal contributions.

Submitting and creating your written application and statements

We recommend you create your written application and statements in Microsoft Word and once complete, copy and paste them into the application form provided. This will help with proofing and formatting.

Checking your work against the competences

You will be marked each time you meet an assessment criterion within each of your chosen competences. Keep these at the forefront of your mind as you outline how you meet the competences. Avoid theoretical answers or repeating the competence statements and assessment criteria.

Peer review

We encourage you to work with your peers to review your submission before submitting it. This will be best done by those who know you and your work.

Signed supporting statement

When choosing someone to support your application, you should consider an individual who you feel comfortable asking and who will have good knowledge of your experience in the competences you are asking them to sign against for that specific project context.

It is beneficial to ask them in good time to ensure you have the statement(s) ready for your submission deadline. The supporting statement your signatory will be required to complete can be found on our website.

The interview

The interview will be conducted by two assessors appointed by us and will last up to one hour. The assessors will have read your application form and your signed supporting statement(s).

It is beneficial to review your material before the interview, so it is fresh in your mind. Also take some time to think of key points and achievements that you feel may underpin your submission, especially if for any reason they did not appear in the submission itself.

The purpose of the interview is to seek clarity and provide you with the opportunity to demonstrate further how you meet the criteria.

If required, the assessor will also look to obtain further evidence to satisfy any criteria flagged following the written application assessment and to confirm and verify the provisional marks from the written assessment.

It is important to remember that the assessors are seeking to get the best from your submission and will be working with you to get the most from your experience.

Preparing for the interview

- The assessment will be conducted virtually. You will need to have the relevant link to the video conference platform (GoTo Meeting) and join the interview at your allocated time slot.
- You will be required to provide photo evidence of your identity.
- You are required to comply in all respects with any instructions issued by the assessors during the interview.
- There is no set dress code for the interview, and you will not be marked down for appearance.
- You may bring in a drink for the interview.

Software requirements

For the interview, you will be required to run GoTo Meeting and have an operational webcam and microphone.

Commercial confidentiality

While your submission and interview will be kept private, we highly recommend only choosing projects that you can talk about openly and that do not breach your employers' requirement for secrecy. You may wish to discuss your chosen projects with your employer first.

Scoring

- Each Major Project Leadership Competence area is marked out of two with:
 - 0 = less than two assessment criteria achieved across the competence.
 - 1 = two assessment criteria achieved, but not sufficient to meet three assessment criteria across the competence.
 - 2 = at least three of the assessment criteria achieved across the competence.
- To pass the written application stage, you must score a provisional score of 11/16, with at least a 1 in every competence.
- You will not be made aware of your score unless you are unsuccessful in this stage of the assessment when you will be provided with your score and written feedback.
- To pass the interview, you'll need to achieve a confirmed score of at least 14/16, with a minimum score of 1 in each competence.

Results

You will be advised of your results within a maximum of 10 weeks of completing the assessment. You will be sent an email confirming your result, with notification of your final mark and the score achieved for each competence.

If you are successful, you will be sent a PDF certificate and digital badge.



**We are the only chartered membership
organisation for the project profession**

