



APMP CERTIFICATION FAQ

Month Year

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1 Benefits

1.1 What are the benefits of APMP Certification?

For the individual

- ✓ Demonstrates you are serious about your career and profession
- ✓ Improves your own business development capabilities
- ✓ Provides an independent validation of your knowledge, skills, and leadership abilities
- ✓ Enhances how others in the organization see you and how you see yourself
- ✓ Defines and validates your role as a professional contributor

For the organization

- ✓ Establishes an internationally recognized framework for skills development and career advancement
- ✓ Improves business development capabilities
- ✓ Creates a focus on best practices for business acquisition teams

For the profession

- ✓ Demonstrates that bid and proposal management has an important role with worldwide professional recognition and is not an ad hoc function that just anyone can do
- ✓ Establishes recognized standards for our profession

1.2 Why should my company fund APMP Certification?

APMP offers the world's first, best, and only industry-recognized certification program for professionals working in a bid and proposal environment.

Your company's support of your APMP Certification activities communicates their commitment to the use of industry best practices and doing things the right way. Employees recognize a compelling promise that clearly communicates the company's commitment to develop and retain them as the best in their profession.

1.2.1.1.1 APMP Certification confirms competency

APMP Certified managers must take the extra step to validate their business development knowledge and skills. Here are the benefits given by APMP certified companies who tell us why APMP Certification is important to their companies:

APMP Foundation Certified Managers:

- ✓ Foundation Certification confirms that bid teams have a knowledge and understanding of the correct bid and proposal best practices
- ✓ Certification immediately puts the company's bid team on par with their competitors who have become certified
- ✓ As an independent validation of knowledge, Certification provides a hiring baseline

APMP Practitioner Certified Managers:

- ✓ APMP Certified Practitioners are experts and team leaders
- ✓ An APMP Practitioner Certified team has immediate credibility with other professional disciplines employed by your company
- ✓ APMP Practitioner Certification can be relied upon as important factor in promotions to senior proposal positions
- ✓ Your management senior team will have more confidence with an APMP Practitioner Certified person leading the proposal team

APMP Professional Certified Managers:

- ✓ APMP Professional Certified staff are coaches, educators, mentors, and visionaries
- ✓ APMP Professional Certified staff are agents for change and process improvement
- ✓ APMP Professional Certification gives your clients and partners instant confidence and credibility in your teams
- ✓ APMP Professional Certification demonstrates to clients your continual improvement in your capability help them win business

1.2.1.1.2 APMP Certification means confidence

APMP Certification means confidence that:

- ✓ Proposals and bids will focus on solving customers' real needs, not just push your organization's capabilities.
- ✓ Your management team will have the information to make informed decisions about investing time and money in potential bids.
- ✓ Lessons from past pursuits will be learned and used to improve the quality of future pursuits.
- ✓ The core competencies to build effective individual and organizational capabilities are understood and applied.
- ✓ Bid processes will be well defined and repeatable with appropriate visibility and feedback for management.
- ✓ The key infrastructure tools for proposal development support such as reusable content, team collaboration, proposal planning, production support, and communications will be online and appropriate.

1.2.1.2 Certification shows commitment

APMP Certified Bid and Proposal Managers are high achievers and thought leaders. They demonstrate their own commitment to continued self-improvement and tend to stay with a company longer out of loyalty and commitment.

APMP Certification brands your bid organization as a tough competitor. APMP Certification is committed to creating value for your customers by being absolutely certain their needs are well understood and articulated in your proposed solutions.

When you request candidates with APMP Certification, you signal to the job market that you are interested in talent that meets rigorous qualification and performance standards.

Your staff members who go through the APMP Certification Program are educated, tested, and measured in current best practices that will keep your customers coming back to you for more business. APMP Certification is a differentiator to your customers.

2 General

2.1 Why has the program name changed from Certification to Certification?

APMP is simply aligning the program with terminology currently in use worldwide to recognize individual achievement. *Certification* usually applies to organizations and signifies official recognition that an organization or institution meets the quality standards established for a given profession. *Certification* applies to individuals and signifies that individuals are able to competently complete a job or task as defined by a well-documented set of standards.

2.2 Why should I pursue Certification?

APMP offers the world’s first Professional Certification Program for those working in a bid and proposal environment. When you pursue Certification, you:

- ✓ Demonstrate a personal commitment to your career and profession
- ✓ Gain the respect and credibility of your peers, clients, and organization’s leaders
- ✓ Improve both your own and your organization’s business development capabilities
- ✓ Bring a focus on best practices to your team

2.3 What is the right Certification level for me?

The following table provides an overview of each of the three levels of Certification. The levels must be earned sequentially.

Level	Industry Position	Career Position
Foundation	Foundation is the beginning point for a member’s professional growth.	Junior-level proposal professionals with 1 to 3 years experience or more experienced professional just beginning their Certification journey
Practitioner	Practitioners not only have extensive knowledge of best practices but have also demonstrated through a rigorous and detailed assessment of their experience that they have a mastery of how to apply an expanded set of competencies.	Experienced proposal professionals with 3 or more years in profession
Professional	Professionals are advocates and thought leaders in their organizations	Senior proposal professionals and business development professionals with 7 or more years of experience

2.4 What are the differences between the three Certification levels?

Certification tracks your growth in competencies and skills. The Program uses a process of examination and competency-based assessment that is consistent and measured against worldwide best practice standards. Each level is tested in a different way and each requires a minimum level of experience.

Requirements	Foundation	Practitioner	Professional
Required experience	1 year	3 years	7 years
Assessment tests	Basic knowledge of best practice	Application of best practice	Advocacy for best practice
Type of assessment	Multiple-choice examination	Assessment of documented experience record	Assessment of impact, presentation, and competency-based interview
Verification with self-selected reference	Yes	Yes	Yes

2.5 I have more than 3 years of experience. Can I start at Practitioner?

No. Each level builds on the one before. Each candidate must start at Foundation and advance to Practitioner, then Professional.

2.6 What do the various designations mean?

The following table shows what the APMP Certification designations mean and how you should write them.

Designations	Member Designations	Fellow Designations
Foundation	AM.APM (Accredited Member)	AF.APM (Accredited Fellow)
Practitioner	APM.APMP (Accredited Practitioner Member)	APF.APMP (Accredited Practitioner Fellow)
Professional	PPM.APMP (Proposal Professional Member)	PPF.APMP (Proposal Professional Fellow)

2.7 How do I let others know about my achievement?

- ✓ Put your Certification designation in your email signature line and on your business cards (for Foundation-level Certification, add *AM.APMP* right after your name)

- ✓ Add your designation on your LinkedIn, Facebook, and other social media accounts

3 Administration

3.1 Where do I register online for the Foundation online exam and Practitioner and Professional assessments?

The APM Group in the UK administers the program. Register for the online exam and assessments at <http://www.apmg-exams.com>.

3.2 Why doesn't My Profile on the APMP website show my Certification status?

You may need to post your Certification Status on the APMP website. Please check this information and update your profile as required. To update your APMP profile and display your Certification achievement:

- ✓ Go to www.APMP.org > "Manage Profile" on right hand side > "Edit My Bio"
- ✓ Check/add your designation as a suffix to your name (it is on the My Bio tab—Certification Suffix)
- ✓ Check/add your Certification Type (it is on the My Bio tab—Professional Information Section)
- ✓ Add your Certification Number (it is on the My Bio tab—Additional Information Section)

Note: You may need to add your Certification Number to your record. Your number is on your certificate. If you don't know your number, email the APM Group and request it (apmgportfolio@apmg-uk.com).

3.3 I never received my Certification Certificate. How can I get a replacement?

Candidates should receive their Certification Certificates within a maximum of 4 to 6 weeks (often sooner) after the Foundation examination or notification of passing the Practitioner or Professional assessment.

If you have not received your certificate, email APM Group Operations at apmgportfolio@apmg-uk.com; call +44 (0) 1494 452 450; or fax +44 (0) 1494 459 559. They hold our international standard and administer the program for APMP.

State that you have not received your certificate for Foundation, Practitioner, or Professional. Provide your name, current address (not a PO Box), and provide approximate date of the test or assessment. APM Group will order a replacement certificate for you. The same process applies if your name is misspelled or the date is incorrect.

3.4 I am having trouble with online registration for Certification. Who should I contact for help?

Contact the APM Group in the UK: email apmgportfolio@apmg-uk.com; call +44 (0) 1494 452 450; or fax +44 (0) 1494 459 559.

3.5 How do I find my Certification Number to register for the next level?

Your Certification Number is on your certificate. If you can't locate your certificate,

contact the APM Group in the UK: email apmgportfolio@apmg-uk.com; call +44 (0) 1494 452 450; or fax +44 (0) 1494 459 559. They will provide you with your number.

3.6 I have heard the Certification Program is being refreshed. Should I wait until the refresh is completed to start Foundation or advance to Practitioner or Professional?

The Certification Program is updated every 5 years. Slight changes are made to the Foundation Level with a few new competencies and updates to terminology. The bottom line is there is no reason to wait if you are ready now.

4 Foundation

4.1 Why should I pursue Foundation Certification?

- ✓ To demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of best practices for proposal and bid management
- ✓ To demonstrate your commitment to your own professional development in the industry
- ✓ To prepare yourself for additional responsibility and more complex assignments
- ✓ To advance to the sweet spot of APMP's Certification Program – Practitioner

4.2 What are the requirements for Foundation Certification?

Candidates for Foundation must:

1. Have at least 1 year of experience in a bid and proposals environment; this experience does not have to be continuous (that is, it does not need to be 1 straight year without interruption for other job tasks)
2. Submit a reference that can verify 1 year of experience in a bid and proposals environment
3. Pass a 1-hour open-book multiple-choice exam that demonstrates knowledge and understanding of best practices
4. Candidates do not have to be a member of APMP to take the exam, but the cost for non-member candidates is increased by the cost of membership.

4.3 How do I take the Foundation Level exam?

There are two options for taking the Foundation Level exam:

- ✓ **Option 1: Face to Face.** APMP's Approved Training Organizations (ATOs) worldwide periodically offer face-to-face Foundation Level training and exam sessions. Go to the [APMP Community Calendar](#) at www.apmp.org for a list of upcoming public sessions. All of [APMP's ATOs](#) are listed on our website.
- ✓ **Option 2: Online.** You may study on your own and take the exam online (see <http://www.apmg-exams.com/index.aspx?subid=64&masterid=15>) via the APM Group website. The APM Group is the organization that administers the Certification exam and assessment processes for APMP.

4.4 How can I prepare for the Foundation Level Certification exam?

You may study for APMP's Foundation Level exam by following as many of these recommended study aids as you choose.

- ✓ **Book study.** Purchase *APMP's Certification Proposal Guide* that is the primary Certification study guide for Foundation Level Certification. The guide provides the information needed to answer all the questions in the Foundation exam. It is available through the APMP Store at www.apmp.org and costs \$59 for APMP members and \$119 for non-members. Additional shipping charges are based on where you are in the world. This printed guide is an APMP branded version of the *Shipley Proposal Guide*, Third Edition. Delivery can take up to 3 weeks, so please order early.
- ✓ **Online.** Participate in self-paced **e-learning** (available 24X7) or **periodic webinar** options offered by these APMP ATOs.

ATO Name	Self Paced e-Learning	Periodic Webinars	Registration Link
Bid to Win	-	Yes	www.bid-to-win.eu
CSK Management	-	Yes	www.cskmanagement.com
Lohfeld Consulting		Yes	http://www.lohfeldconsulting.com
Shipley Associates	Yes	-	www.shipleywins.com/training-elearn.php

- ✓ **Study APMP's online Certification Syllabus.** This online document focuses you on the Foundation Level competencies that you should study in the *Proposal Guide*. APMP does not provide a cross-reference between the competencies and where they are addressed in the *APMP's Certification Proposal Guide*.
- ✓ **Study APMP's online Certification Glossary.** You'll find a glossary of terms used in the Foundation Level exam.
- ✓ **Take a Practice Exam.** [This seven-question online test exam](#) shows you the format and context of the questions. However, since it is only seven questions it may not be a true test of one's ability to pass the real exam.

4.5 What are the costs associated with studying for and taking the exam?

The cost for the Foundation Level exam is \$400 USD.

This does not include payment for Certification training offered by APMP-Approved Training Organizations (ATOs). Training to prepare for the Foundation Level exam from an ATO can cost anywhere from \$195 USD (for self-paced learning) to \$500 USD (for face-to-face training) per person depending on the ATO and the media used in training. The APMP Proposal Guide is available in the

APMP Store for \$59 USD plus shipping.

4.6 Where can I find out about upcoming Foundation training classes?

The Upcoming **Foundation** offerings are on the APMP Event calendar on our website (<http://www.apmp.org>). The Event Calendar is on the right-hand side of the page, down a bit. Click on “More,” then filter by Foundation Certification. You can follow links there to the various websites.

5 APMP Foundation Study Guide

5.1 What is the official Study Guide for APMP’s Foundation exam?

The official APMP Foundation study guide is the *APMP Proposal Guide*. It is available in the APMP store (www.apmp.org).

5.2 Do I need to study all the chapters in the *APMP Proposal Guide*?

The following sections contain useful information are not relevant to the Foundation exam.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| ✓ Business Development Capability Model | ✓ Risk Management |
| ✓ Letter Proposals | ✓ Sales Letters |
| ✓ Oral Proposals | ✓ Service Proposals |
| ✓ Performance-Based Acquisition | ✓ Style and Tone |
| ✓ Presenting Cost and Price Data | ✓ Task Order Proposals |
| ✓ Proposal Management Plan | ✓ Virtual Team Management |
| ✓ Proposal Preparation Tools | ✓ All Model Documents |

5.3 I have a copy of the *Shiplely Proposal Guide, Third Edition*. Is that the same as the *APMP Proposal Guide*?

Yes, the third edition of the *Shiplely Proposal Guide* is the same as the *APMP Proposal Guide*. However, the fourth edition of the *Shiplely Proposal Guide* is not the same as the *APMP Proposal Guide*.

6 Practitioner

6.1 Why should I pursue Practitioner Certification?

- ✓ To commit to improving your professional skills through a rigorous review of your experience record against the global standard of performance of best practices
- ✓ To demonstrate that you have a mastery of best practices and can effectively lead or coach teams in their use
- ✓ To demonstrate that you can manage a cohesive team that communicates a consistent winning strategy and positively impacts the customer’s decision
- ✓ To aspire to be among the top in your profession and achieve Professional Certification

6.2 What are the requirements for Practitioner Certification?

Candidates for Practitioner must:

1. Be a current APMP member who has achieved APMP Foundation Level status
2. Have at least 3 years of experience in a bid and proposals environment
3. Provide a reference who can verify their experience and support a random check of the evidence you supply in the Proposal Professional Assessment Questionnaire (PPAQ)
4. Prepare and submit online the PPAQ providing evidence to substantiate your application at this level

6.3 I took the exam for Foundation. Is Practitioner another exam?

Unlike Foundation Level, there is no exam for APMP's Practitioner Level Certification. Instead you complete a 35-question Proposal Practitioner Assessment Questionnaire (PPAQ). Completing the PPAQ provides objective evidence from your professional experience record to substantiate your Practitioner Level application. You must provide evidence that satisfies the requirements for all Mandatory competencies and the specified number of Desired competencies. A certified assessor evaluates your PPAQ against the Practitioner Standards and Guidelines, then performs a random check of evidence with your reference.

Think of the PPAQ as an RFP response regarding your own experience. But, unlike an RFP, you may take as long as you like to complete it.

6.4 What is the best way to approach achieving Practitioner Certification?

APMP offers an easy-to-follow online tutorial specifically designed to help you complete the PPAQ. Participants can work through the PPAQ at their own pace.

The tutorial has 10 detailed chapters that guide you through the entire process—from getting ready to prepare your PPAQ to submitting your PPAQ online. Start with your most comfortable competencies identified in a self-assessment. Then tackle more challenging competencies as you master the approach. See example competency responses and hear how to handle the challenging areas. You will receive ongoing support from the Director of Certification and from Mentors.

The cost for the APMP Practitioner Tutorial is \$129.

If you prefer, you may also work through the PPAQ without the tutorial.

6.5 What have members said about APMP's Practitioner Certification tutorial?

Members who have used the Practitioner Certification tutorial are sold on its value, as indicated by the following comments:

- ✓ *Among the best training of its type I've ever attended. The presenter took all the fear out of the PPAQ in the first 5 minutes.*

- ✓ *Extremely well written and delivered online training, with very pertinent examples and a complete explanation of the Practitioner requirements!*
- ✓ *I very much appreciated the “I've been there” tone—never condescending but sharing experience and tips on how to approach things.*
- ✓ *Very good tips—especially the eight challenging competency areas.*
- ✓ *Very good presentation, especially for non-native speakers.*
- ✓ *Very useful instruction got me started on my PPAQ that I had waited too long on.*

7 Professional

7.1 I have my Practitioner Certification and feel it has been an important step in my professional development. What does Professional Certification add?

At the Professional Level you demonstrated that you have the skills and confidence to deliver winners. You have proven that you “walk the talk.” It truly is the sweet spot for APMP Certification.

Professional Certification offers another opportunity to have your leadership and communications skills recognized.

Professionals qualify by making a significant impact in their own organizations or in one of our business development communities. They must document and present the impact to a panel of assessors. Candidates must demonstrate superior communications skills in presenting their impact. Following the presentation, the panel asks leadership-oriented questions and the candidate must respond effectively.

7.2 What are the requirements for Professional Certification?

Candidates for Professional must:

1. Be a current APMP member who has achieved APMP Practitioner Level status
2. Have at least 7 years of experience in a bid and proposal environment
3. Provide a reference who will rate you on nine behavioral and attitude based competencies in the areas of managing and motivating others to carry out required actions
4. Develop a Proposal Professional Impact Paper (PPIP) providing evidence of a significant impact in the area of business development in their organization and/or the profession at large
5. Participate in a 45-minute panel interview where you present your impact and answer questions that demonstrate superior communications and behavioral competencies

7.3 How do I select my impact for my Professional assessment?

The impact you choose must represent a significant achievement. It must demonstrate personal commitment and initiative. The impact must demonstrate a sustainable improvement in areas such as customer interaction, proposal and bid management, individual or organizational development, proposal processes, or infrastructure improvement.

The impact must be something where you were personally responsible. In addition, you must be able to demonstrate that your organization, a client's organization, or the proposal profession had a quantifiable gain.

Activities associated with your day-to-day job are not considered for professional impact. Your Impact must be clearly above and beyond your normal activities and assignments.

If you have any questions about the appropriateness of your chosen impact, check with Cathy Day at accreditation@apmp.org or Charlie Divine at Certificationdirector@apmp.org before you start.

7.4 What is the format of the APMP Professional assessment?

7.4.1 Select a reference who knows you professionally

Your reference will be asked to rate you on predefined statements related to leadership and behavioral competencies.

7.4.2 Prepare your PPIP

Prepare your Proposal Professional Impact Paper (PPIP) using the PPIP Standards and Guidelines which are located on the APMP website on the Practitioner Level tab. Your presentation is limited to 11 slides. You are expected to use graphics to contribute to the understanding of your impact. Once you complete your PPIP, submit it directly to the Chief Examiner at accreditation@apmp.org for assessment.

7.4.3 PPIP presentation and interview

After your PPIP is assessed to confirm your professional impact, you will be invited to present the impact to a panel of assessors. The presentation and interview are often done by conference call.

The assessors will evaluate communications skills against prescribed standards during the presentation.

After your presentation, you will be asked four behavioral and leadership questions. These questions, along with the standards for answering them, will be provided to you in advance.

At the completion of the interview phase, the panel immediately convenes privately to compare evaluation scores and usually is able to confirm your result right afterward.

The PPIP presentation and interview are often done by conference call.

7.5 I have completed my PPIP and registered for assessment on the APM Group website, but I was not asked to submit my PPIP online. What do I do?

Send your completed PPIP directly to the Chief Examiner at Certification.apmp.org.

8 Mentors

8.1 How can I find a mentor for Practitioner or Professional?

Mentors are listed on the Mentor Program drop-down menu in the Certification tab on the APMP website. Mentors welcome contacts from potential protégés. Choose someone you know or from your local chapter. For help finding a mentor, contact the Director of Certification, Charlie Divine, at charlie.divine@apmp.org.

9 Continuing Education

9.1 What are the Continuing Educational development requirements associated with the Certification Program?

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a vital part of the APMP Certification Program. CPD is the means by which members maintain, improve, and broaden their knowledge and skills and develop the personal qualities required in their professional lives. Earning Continuing Education Units (CEUs) also prepares you for more challenging assignments by demonstrating to your employer and clients that you are a committed professional

Members must earn the specified number of CEUs every 2 years:

Certification Level	Number of CEUs Required Every 2 Years
Foundation	20
Practitioner	40
Professional	40

CEUs are earned by participating in the following types of activities:

- ✓ Training (APMP approved training earns more CEUs)
- ✓ Individual Study
- ✓ Event Attendance
- ✓ Volunteering
- ✓ Blogging
- ✓ Publishing Articles
- ✓ Presenting

Detail guidelines for CEUs are on the APMP website.

The 2-year period begins on the date you pass a given level (Certification date), and ends on the second anniversary of the Certification date. The 2-year cycle begins again on each 2-year anniversary. Members are responsible for keeping track of their own CEUs. A random check of members is made. Just create a log of what, when, and where using the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Guidelines for the APMP Certification Program (APMP CEU Guidelines.pdf). Here is how to use the APMP website to track your CEUs.

9.2 How do I track my CEUs on APMP's website?

Here is how to get to the web page to log your CEUs:

- ✓ Be sure you have added your Certification status to your profile > “Manage Profile” on right-hand side > “Edit My Bio”
- ✓ Then go back to > “Manage Profile” on the right-hand side > “Certifications” lower left-hand side
- ✓ Enter your CEUs under Journal Entries
- ✓ Your status will show incomplete until you earn the correct number of CEUs for your current period
- ✓ Do not delete entries for the previous 2-year period; they will be used to verify your previous CEU period

9.3 I got a message from the APMP website that my CEUs have expired. I know I have earned the required number of CEUs. What happened?

First, don't panic. Our website is an off-the-shelf solution for managing association memberships. It is great in many ways, but in some cases we are stuck with its template wording. This message means your 2-year cycle is beginning again.

Here is an example of what happens:

- 1) You earn Foundation on 8/24/2010.
- 2) You then have 2 years to earn 20 CEUs—that is, until 8/24/2012.
- 3) You did that—earning 20 CEUs before your Certification anniversary date, 8/24/2012.
- 4) On 8/24/2012, at your 2-year anniversary, those CEUs expire.
- 5) If you were audited after 8/24/2011 but before 8/24/2014 you would pass the audit with flying colors—20 CEUs in your past 2-year period.
- 6) After 8/24/2012, you are now into your second 2-year period and have 2 years until 8/24/2014 to earn 20 CEUs.

If you move up to Practitioner, your CEU 2-year period starts again with the new anniversary date of Practitioner Certification.