



The APMP Certification Program

– Everything you need to know

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1. APMP Certification: Overview

APMP offers the world's first Professional Certification Program for those working in a bid and proposal environment. The Program uses a process of examination and assessments, which is consistent and measured against worldwide best practice standards. With the Certification Program, employers provide their employees world-class bid and proposal management know-how, and they improve process quality.

Signature Certifications:

APMP Foundation



APMP Practitioner



APMP Professional



APMP
Opportunity/
Capture
Practitioner



Micro-Certifications:





1.1 Signature Certifications

There are four 'signature' certifications. Participants start at Foundation and advance to Practitioner, and then to Professional. Each level is tested differently, requires a minimum level of experience, and verification with a self-selected reference. The Capture Practitioner is separate.

More information can be found on

The APMP Foundation™-Level



The APMP Foundation-Level Certification is the entry level for the program. Candidates should have one to three years of experience. With the Foundation-Level, candidates demonstrate their knowledge of Best Practices.

The APMP Foundation-Level is open to non-APMP members, too.

The APMP Practitioner™-Level



At APMP Practitioner-Level, participants must go beyond a basic understanding of concepts and terms and prove that they can also put these into practice comprehensively.

The APMP Practitioner-Level is for those with three to seven years experience. It is open to all APMP members who have achieved Foundation-Level.

The APMP Professional™-Level



This is the highest level. Professionals have made a significant impact on their organisations or an important contribution to the business development community.

The APMP Professional-Level is open to all APMP members who have achieved Practitioner-Level.

The APMP Opportunity/Capture™ Certification



The Capture Practitioner Certification is for anyone who is out pursuing new business.

All APMP members are entitled to submit an application to APMP to take this exam.



1.2 Micro-Certifications



As opposed to the Signature Certification Scheme (Foundation, Practitioner, Professional, and Capture Practitioner) that is designed to cover the entire spectrum of Bid and Proposal Managers' tasks, each Micro-Certification is focused on a single topic or small set of topics.

So, APMP's Micro-Certifications are targeted at all those who deal with this topic, whether they are Bid or Proposal Managers or not.

Current Micro-Certifications (as of 14 October) are:

- Executive Summaries
- Bid and Proposal Writing
- Graphics



2. Why APMP Certification?

The Certification brings many benefits for proposal professionals as well as for companies and organisations.

With getting APMP certified, participants acquire widely recognised best practice know-how and they benefit from increased respect and credibility.



2.1 For Individuals

The benefits for individuals of being recognised under our professional certification program are:

→ *Career Progress*

Individuals will become more valuable to employers because of an APMP certification:

- Proves ability as a proposal professional
- Proves impact as a proposal professional
- Provides a 'mark of quality'
- Identifies proposal professionals for recruitment, promotion and succession planning

→ *Stand Out From the Crowd*

Not everyone has what it takes to achieve an APMP certification – achieving this differentiates you from other proposal professionals:

- APMP certified proposal professionals are still a small percentage of the proposal management population
- Those achieving APMP certification have a current, proven and independently assessed record of proposal management
- No other scheme offers such tangible proof of impact

→ *Gain Professional Respect and Credibility*

APMP certified proposal professionals have equal standing with professionals in other professions. They:

- Demonstrate their commitment to reviewing and improving their skills and performance
- Move internally throughout organisations, and externally throughout industries, with recognised skills and credentials



2.2 For Employers

APMP certification assesses the tangible impact made by individual proposal professionals. Organisations can directly benefit from their employees being certified by APMP, as the Certification Program has been designed to ensure that it:

→ *Encourages Retention of Staff*

- 40% of employees value career development opportunities when assessing new employers.
- 55% of employees see the ability to develop everyone's potential as something which a 'responsible' organisation would be particularly good at.
- 81% of employees agree that responsible organisations are more likely to be creative and innovative.

→ *Supports Competency-Based Recruitment and Promotion of Staff*

HR Professionals can use the APMP to help them:

- Externally – with attraction and recruitment
- Internally – with development of key individuals

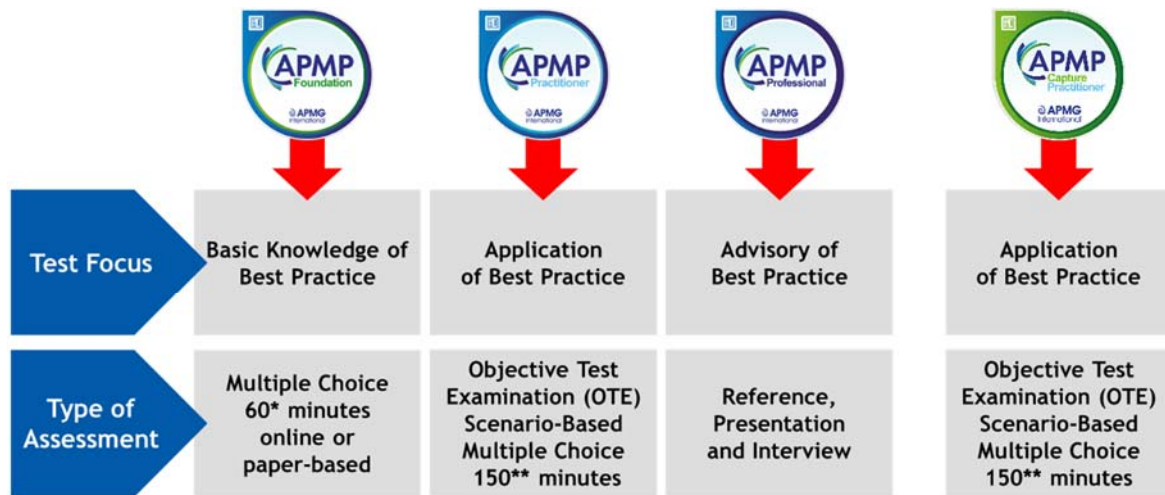


3. What will be tested?

The Professional Certification Program uses a process of competency assessment that is consistent and fair as well as measured against world best practice standards.

3.1 Signature Certifications

Fig. 3-1: The Legacy Certification Program is a series of three sequential assessments. A direct entry to Practitioner or Professional is not possible. The Opportunity/Capture can be done separately.



*75 minutes for non-native speakers

**190 minutes for non-native speakers

Source: CSK/APMP

Foundation™-Level (Knowledge of Best Practice)

This level is aiming to measure whether a candidate would be able to act as an informed member of a proposal/bid team within a proposal environment using appropriate methods to support process. To this end, they need to show they understand the principles and procedures and terminology of accepted methods of work.

APMP-Foundation-Level Certification is the starting point for professional growth and is best for proposal professionals with one year of experience.

Your one-year minimum experience working in a bid and proposals related environment will be verified with a reference you choose.

It is a one-hour multiple choice, pass-fail, open book exam with 75 questions. Candidates must answer 42 test questions correctly to pass. The examination tests 35 topics in five key competence areas. All questions are in English. Non-native candidates get 15 minutes more time.

Participants can take the exam as part of a Certification Preparation Course (offered by an Approved Training Organisation), or they can directly take the online Foundation Level exam on their own. We recommend preparing thoroughly, especially for non-native English speakers. These training sessions teach the specific terminology as well as appropriate answering techniques.



Fig. 3-2: The Foundation-Level tests the five Key Competency Areas (KCAs) of proposal management.



Source: CSK/APMP

Practitioner™-Level
(Experience, Application of Best Practice)

At APMP Practitioner™-Level, participants prove their understanding and that they can comprehensively apply their knowledge. This level of certification is open to all APMP members who have already achieved APMP Foundation™ Level.

The Practitioner™-Level is a multiple-choice exam based on a set scenario. Candidates have to use their industry knowledge and professional experience to match the correct answer to the scenario situation.

The exam takes 2.5 hours to complete. Non-native English speakers are granted 40 minutes additional time. The exam can be completed online with a proctor, through the APMP’s approved training organisations, or during a regional certification day associated with chapter conferences/symposia.

Practitioner™-Level certification is designed for professionals with three to seven years of experience. The only requirements for taking the Practitioner™ is that you must have passed APMP Foundation™ and you must have at last three full years’ experience as a bid and proposal professional.



Professional™-Level (Advocacy)

APMP Professional-Level Certification clearly demonstrates business and personal achievement through their leadership, creativity and communications ability. Professionals qualify by making a significant business development related impact on their organisations or on a chosen business development community. Also, they must practice excellent communications skills in impact presentation and answer behavioural questions.

The APMP Professional-Level is open to all APMP members who have achieved Practitioner-Level.

Candidates need to have at least seven years experience in a bid and proposal environment. They need to provide a reference that will be asked to rate them on nine behavioural and attitude-based competencies in the areas of managing and motivating others to carry out required actions.

Candidates for Professional level certification prepare a Proposal Professional Impact Paper. The PPIP documents a significant impact that they have made in the bid/proposal or business development profession. They must demonstrate that they have made a real contribution to the success of either their organisation, one of their clients or to the profession as a whole as a direct result of the application of their business development skills. The document, APMP Professional Certification Panel Interview Standards and Guidelines, available for download below, is the reference for preparing for the Professional level presentation and questions.

After completing the PPIP, candidates will participate in a 45-minute panel interview (telephone or face-to-face) where they present and answer questions about their PPIP.

Opportunity/Capture Practitioner™-Level (Experience, Application of Best Practice)

The APMP Opportunity/Capture Practitioner™ Level is very similar to the Practitioner™ Level. It is more opportunity/capture focussed than bid/proposal focused. It is open to all APMP members. Candidates must have at least three years of experience in the opportunity/capture, sales, bid or proposal fields.

3.2 APMP Micro-Certifications

The purpose of APMP Micro-Certification is to measure whether a candidate has sufficient knowledge and understanding of the APMP body of knowledge to act as an informed member of a bid and proposal team with regards to the relevant topic. In Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, the Micro-Certification qualification examines at levels 1 (recall) and 2 (understand).



4. What are the preconditions?

The APMP Certification Program is available for a broad target group.

4.1 Pre-requisites for Signature Certifications

The preconditions depend on the certification level. There are no formal pre-requisites for taking a Micro-Certification.

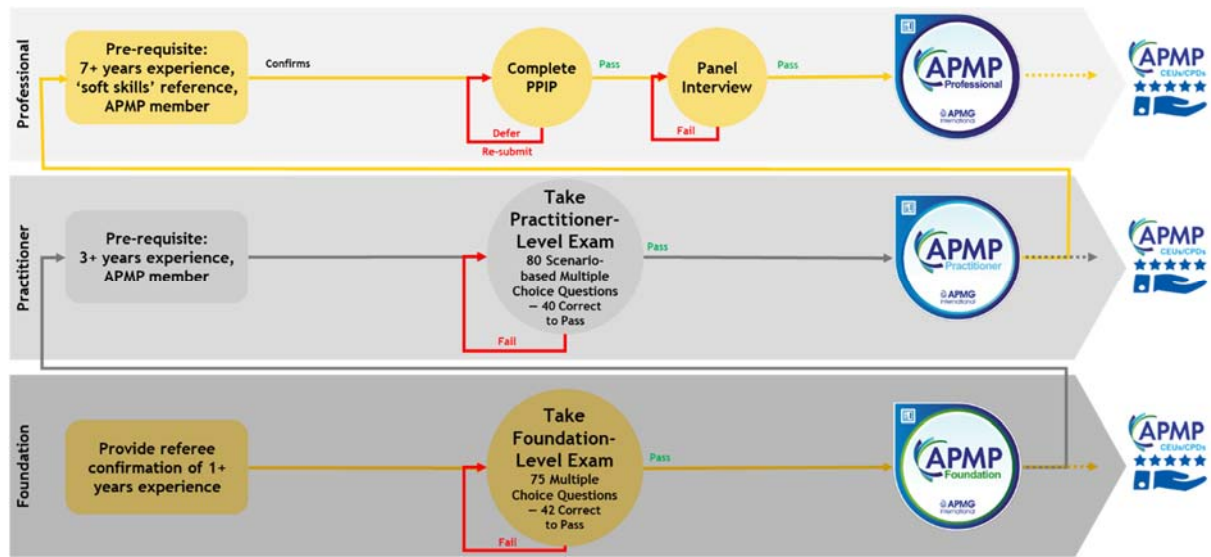
Fig. 4-1: The preconditions for the APMP Signature Certification Program depend on the examination level.

	Foundation-Level	Practitioner-Level	Professional-Level	Capture-Practitioner-Level
Experience	1 year (confirmation through reference person)	3 years (confirmation through reference person)	7 years (confirmation through reference person)	3 years (through application)
APMP Membership required	no	yes	yes	yes
Precondition	no	Foundation-Level	Practitioner-Level	no
English Skills	<p>CSK Recommendation: At least, candidates should show a comfortable Cambridge First or comparable level (for Foundation-Level: primarily passive knowledge). Currently, the certification program is only offered in English or Japanese.</p> <p>For the Foundation-Level, CSK also offers bilingual preparation training sessions in German and in English (with bilingual handouts but with English examination).</p>			

Source: APMP International, CSK

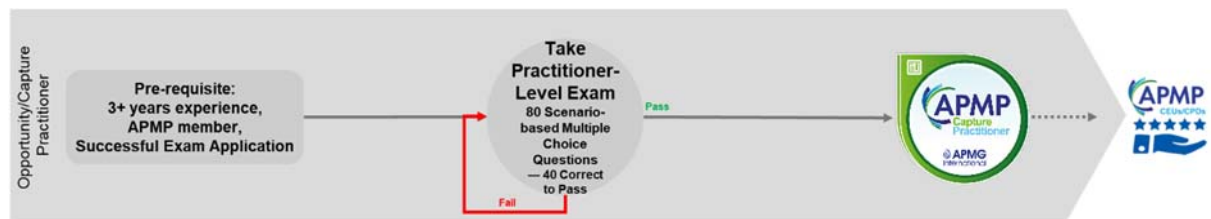


Fig. 4-2: Foundation, Practitioner, and Professional certifications can only be done sequentially. Candidates need to have passed the previous level before sitting the next higher exam.



Source: APMP, CSK

Fig. 4-3: The Opportunity/Capture Practitioner does require having passed the Foundation-Level.



Source: APMP, CSK

4.2 No pre-requisites for Micro-Certifications

There are no formal pre-requisites needed to take the exam.

- In particular, there is no APMP membership required. However, the exam fee for non-members is significantly higher, and without membership, you don't have free access to the online APMP BoK.
- There is no minimum industry experience required.
- There are no requirements with regards to CEUs/CPDs.



5. What is the cost?

The examination fees vary, depending on the Certification Level. The fees for the individual preparation support or certification training depend on the training provider.

5.1 Exam Fees for Signature Certifications

Fig. 5-1: Examination fees are between USD 425 (EUR 372) for the Foundation Level for APMP members and USD 900 (EUR 843) for the Professional Level.

Certification Level	USD	GBP*	EUR*	AUD*	INR*	ZAR*
Foundation (APMP member price)	425	310	372	644	17,200	3,745
Foundation (non-member price)	780	559	624	1,183	31,566	6,874
Practitioner levels (APMP member price)	425	310	372	644	17,200	3,745
Professional level (APMP member price)	900	756	843	1,365	72,845	15,863

Including local taxes. The examination fees are subject of change. Please check www.apmp.org

Source: APMP International (Status: June 2023)

Foundation-Level Certification Workshops

Public Certification Workshops are typically around USD 300-600 per participant, excluding the examination fee.

For in-house workshops, ask for an individual offer.

Coaching for Practitioner and Professional Certification

Ask your training provider or your ATO (Approved Training Organisation).



5.2 Exam Fees for Micro-Certifications

Fig. 5-2: Examination fees depend on the topic.

Micro-Certification	USD	GBP*	EUR*	AUD*	INR*	ZAR*
Executive Summaries (APMP member price)	150	131	151	227	6,070	1,322
Executive Summaries (non-member price)	300	262	302	455	12,141	2,644
Bid and Proposal Writing (APMP member price)	199	160	190	290	8,215	1,730
Bid and Proposal Writing (non-member price)	398	327	370	580	16,435	3,460

Including local taxes. The examination fees are subject of change. Please check www.apmp.org

Source: APMP International (Status: as of October 2023)



6. Who offers Certification Workshops?

To offer Certification training and preparation workshops, the training provider needs to be an “Approved Training Organisation” (ATO) of APMP and accredited by APMG International.

The ATO status (Approved Training Organisation) allows CSK to provide APMP training workshops and run APMP Foundation™-Level certification exams.

All prospective ATOs must go through an exhaustive approval process to ensure they meet the high-quality course delivery of APMP certification standards. The process includes designating a lead trainer, attending and auditing workshops led by APMP’s Chief Examiner, developing course materials that meet APMP certification standards and having those materials approved.

CSK is the first multilingual ATO worldwide.





a) The CSK Foundation-Level Certification Workshop

The agenda of this workshop is designed to maximise the chances to pass the examination.

This 1-day workshop prepares the participants for the APMP Foundation-Level examination. It finishes with the written exam. To allow for sufficient preparation, we run two webinar sessions in advance.

- We guide the participants through the APMP Syllabus to make sure they know what areas are going to be tested.
- The participants learn the necessary terminology.
- We go through a complete set of sample questions to prepare for the exam.
- The participants get tips and tricks for the examination (time management, answering techniques)
- The course finishes with the exam. Participants are informed directly after they have made the test (pass/fail).

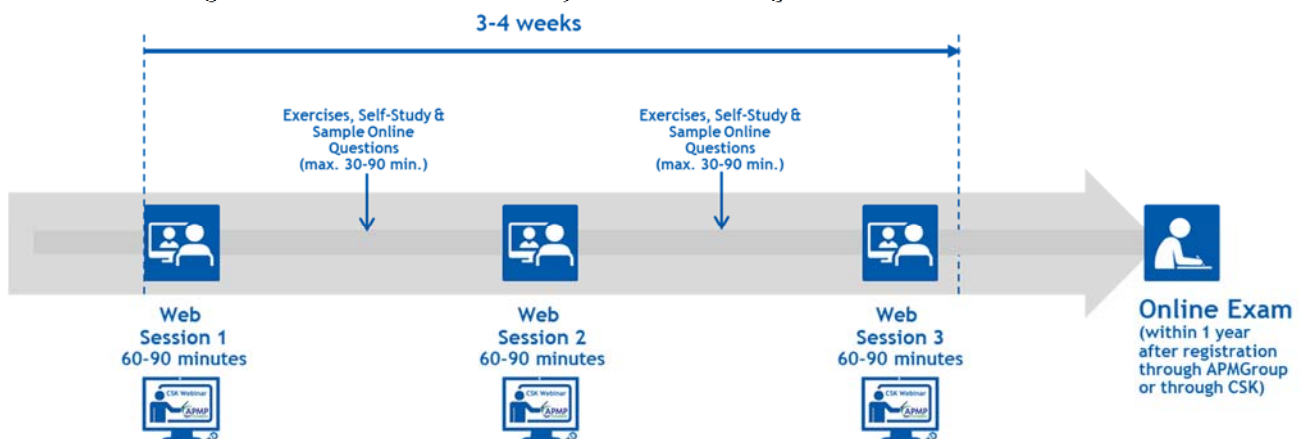
The course (and the examination) is in English.

b) The CSK Foundation-Level Webinar: Maximum Flexibility

The CSK Certification Webinar offers its proven Certification Preparation Workshop over the web (using Zoom). To combine the cost benefit of a typical web-based solution with the advantages of on-site training, CSK offers a series of three Webinar sessions with a high level of interaction with a real trainer.

Experience shows that fully automated training cannot lead to the same high level of pass rates as those where participants can discuss issues live with a trainer. As opposed to typical online training concepts, CSK provides interactive access to a real trainer delivered over the web. This means learners can resolve issues in real time and comprehension and retention are increased. To compensate for the potential disadvantage of the fact that you might not be able to attend all the sessions, we record all webinars for you so that you still have access to the same content, too.

The Webinar is comprised of three training sessions of about 90 minutes each. Experience shows that sessions longer than this result in a clearly reduced learning effect.



Between the Webinar sessions, you will (according to your level of experience and skills) be able to go through exercises and online sample questions.



c) The CSK eLearning Tutorials for Foundation and Micro-Certifications

The interactive, self-paced eLearning courses prepare you for the APMP exams. CSK eLearning modules work on all Windows PCs, Macs and iPads. Candidates have access to the courses for 180 days. During this time, they get free access to APMP-approved study materials and online lookup to the APMP Industry Glossary.

The option pack includes all shown slides as a printable PDF file as well an additional set of 75 online sample questions and their answers.



Foundation-Level Prep Course

The course gives a comprehensive overview on proposal management best practices. It covers all five key competency areas. Over 70 APMP approved sample questions prepare you for the exam. It also provides useful hints on how to approach the Foundation exam. It takes between three and six hours to complete this training.

Micro-Certification Prep Courses

Please check CSK's website for the current portfolio on Micro-Certification prep courses.

7. What happens if I fail?

In case candidates fail to pass an exam, they can retake the examination. For Foundation, without a waiting period.





8. How much time does it take?

Depending on the Certification Level, it takes between one day and two weeks to prepare for each level.

Foundation-Level: Total Effort ~1–3 days

We recommend spending about 1 day for your individual preparation, and then a Certification Workshop, offered by an *Approved Training Organisation*. These workshops are offered as in-house training or as public workshops. They include the examination, and the result is communicated immediately after taking the exam. The online exam is only recommended for native English speakers with significant experience in the bid and proposal management environment.

Practitioner-Level and Capture-Practitioner-Level: Total Effort ~5-10 days

Practitioner candidates should thoroughly brush up on their Foundation Level certification knowledge and use the Practitioner syllabus to study up on their weak areas and/or the Compendium (The Ultimate Bid and Proposal Compendium). We seriously recommend preparing for the test with an approved training organisation (ATO).

Professional-Level: Total Effort ~ 3–5 days

For the Professional Certification, the candidate develops a short presentation using a given template. For this so called PPIP (Proposal Professional Impact Paper), he/she will need about 2–4 days. The candidate will present his PPIP in a 45-minute interview. The assessors will also ask a series of specific questions to evaluate the communication skills of the candidate. The complete process including the assessment of the PPIP and the interview takes about 2–6 weeks.

Micro-Certifications: It depends...

In general, they require less preparation time than Signature Certifications. The prep time very much depends on the topic and the candidate's experience.



9. How long is my Certification valid?

To maintain an active certification status and to satisfy Signature Certification requirements and, once you are certified to any level, you must earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) respectively CPD (Continuing Professional Development) points through carrying out activities that will improve and broaden your skills and personal development. As long as you are able to evidence that you have earned the right number of CEUs/CPDs for your certification level, the APMP will continue to endorse your achievement. For Micro-Certifications, you do not need to collect CEUs/CPDs.



If you are certified, at any level, the two year period begins on the date you pass at that level, and ends on the second anniversary of the certification date. If you achieve a higher level of certification within the two-year period, the requirement to earn the appropriate number of CEUs/CPDs in a two-year period begins again. The table below shows how many units are required at each certification level.

All CSK training sessions are officially approved for APMP CEUs/CPDs.

Fig. 9-1: CEUs/CPDs are collected over a two-year timeframe. Each Certification level requires a different number of CEUs/CPDs.



Source: APMP/CSK

CEUs/CPDs can be collected through:

- Self-study of APMP materials
- Attendance of APMP conferences, APMP events and APMP webinars
- Participation in APMP chapter meetings
- Completion of APMP-approved training sessions
- Presenting at conferences
- Publishing of articles or books
- Involvement in APMP activities
- etc.

CEUs/CPDs are usually rather easy to collect as long as you work in a bid and proposal environment.

Members are monitored on a two-yearly cycle on a random basis. The International Standard for monitoring requires that the random testing of evidence should cover more than 60% of members who have achieved certification at each level.

We recommend keeping a simple log in an Excel file, or to log the activities on the APMP website www.apmp.org. Here you can manage your CEUs/CPDs comfortably. The effort to manage your CEUs/CPDs is usually less than an hour per year.



Questions? – We are here for you

We are happy to answer your questions

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CSK is an Approved Training Organisation (ATO)



