

IPMA[»]

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ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATIONS

IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Portfolio Manager

IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Programme Manager

IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Project Manager

IPMA Level B qualifications

The Association for Project Management (APM) is the UK certifying body for the International Project Management Association (IPMA) and is validated to deliver IPMA accreditations at Levels A to D. This document outlines the specifications for the assessment methods for each of the three domains.

- IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Portfolio Manager
- IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Programme Manager
- IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Project Manager

1. Context

All syllabuses for IPMA qualifications developed by APM are based on the *IPMA Individual Competence Baseline, version 4.0 (ICB4)*. The IPMA Level B qualifications require candidates to demonstrate the leadership of others in complex projects, programmes or portfolios throughout the life cycle.

The ICB4 is made up of 28 competence elements for project management, to pass candidates must successfully evidence a minimum of 23 out of the 28. The oral exam covers six competence elements, the report covers 16 competence elements and the interview covers six competence elements.

For programme and portfolio management, there are 29 competence elements, to pass candidates must successfully evidence a minimum of 24 out of the 29. The oral exam covers six competence elements, the report covers 17 competence elements and the interview covers six competence elements.

Candidates are assessed against assessment criteria in the syllabus. Evidencing the assessment criteria demonstrates the candidate's ability to meet competence elements tested in each qualification. Candidates must demonstrate understanding of a minimum number of competence elements, specified in each qualification, to be successful.

In examinations, candidates are tested against the assessment criteria in the syllabus. Successfully evidenced assessment criteria count towards demonstrating competence elements. Only the competence elements that candidates have successfully met contribute to the overall qualification. In addition, candidates must achieve a minimum of 60 per cent of the marks available to pass the exam.

2. Structure

If an applicant enters through an APM Accredited Provider, it is the provider's responsibility to carry out the eligibility check so that a decision on their suitability can be taken. If an applicant books on to a qualification directly with APM, the applicant will be asked to confirm they have completed the eligibility check, a decision on their suitability will be made by APM.



Candidates have 18 months to complete the qualification from the date of application being accepted. Candidates must pass each assessment stage before moving on to the next one. Once awarded, the IPMA certification period lasts for five years.

3. Assessment overview

	Report competence elements	Report minimum score	Oral exam	Oral exam pass mark	Interview competence elements	Cumulative number of competence elements needed to pass
IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Portfolio Manager	17	14	12 questions covering six competence elements	60%	6	24/29
IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Programme Manager	17	14	12 questions covering six competence elements	60%	6	24/29
IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Project Manager	16	13	12 questions covering six competence elements	60%	6	23/28

4. Report specification

Below details the specification of the report for all three domains.

- The report will be based on the project(s) used by the candidate in their executive summary report.
- Maximum of 25 sides of A4.
- Font size 11.
- A maximum of 15 sides of A4 of supporting evidence as appendices.
- Each competence element passed will receive one mark.
- Minimum coverage is defined in the candidate guidance.
- Report to contain the following areas:
 - **Background:** a detailed description of the project, the candidate's role in context, key stakeholders and objectives, project organisation and the associated resources for which the candidate is responsible (maximum three sides of A4).
 - **Description of the management and leadership challenges:** this should include how these were addressed, results achieved and a reflection on these results and lessons learned (maximum three sides of A4).
 - **Competence assessment:** one side of A4 per competence element explaining how the candidate has demonstrated each of the following assessment criteria:

**Assessment coverage for IPMA Level B:
Certified Senior Portfolio Manager report**

Unit	Learning outcome	Assessment criteria (ICB competence element)
1	1	1.1, 1.2 (strategy)
1	4	4.1, 4.3 (resources)
1	4	4.2 (finance)
2	2	2.1, 2.2 (personal communication)
2	2	2.3, 2.4 (relationships and engagement)
2	3	3.4, 3.5 (teamwork)
2	4	4.3, 4.4 (negotiation)
2	5	5.1, 5.2 (change and transformation)
3	1	1.1 (benefits)
3	1	1.2, 1.3 (stakeholders)
3	1	1.4, 1.5 (portfolio design)
3	2	2.1 (scope)
3	2	2.2, 2.4 (select and balance)
3	2	2.3 (time)
3	3	3.1 (procurement)
3	3	3.2 (quality)
3	3	3.3, 3.4, 3.5, (plan and control)

**Assessment coverage for IPMA Level B:
Certified Senior Programme Manager report**

Unit	Learning outcome	Assessment criteria (ICB competence element)
1	1	1.1, 1.2 (strategy)
1	4	4.1, 4.4, 4.5 (resources)
1	4	4.2, 4.3 (finance)
2	2	2.1, 2.2 (personal communication)
2	2	2.3, 2.4 (relations and engagement)
2	3	3.4, 3.5 (teamwork)
2	4	4.3, 4.4 (negotiation)
2	5	5.1, 5.2 (change and transformation)
3	1	1.1, 1.8 (benefits and objectives)
3	1	1.2, 1.3 (stakeholders)
3	1	1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7 (programme design)
3	2	2.1, 2.2 (scope)
3	2	2.3 (select and balance)
3	2	2.4, 2.5 (time)
3	3	3.1, 3.2, (procurement and partnership)
3	3	3.3 (quality)
3	3	3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, (plan and control)

**Assessment coverage for IPMA Level B:
Certified Senior Project Manager report**

Unit	Learning outcome	Assessment criteria (ICB competence element)
1	1	1.1, 1.2 (strategy)
1	4	4.1, 4.4, 4.5 (resources)
1	4	4.2, 4.3 (finance)
2	2	2.1, 2.2 (personal communication)
2	2	2.3, 2.4 (relations and engagement)
2	3	3.4, 3.5 (teamwork)
2	4	4.3, 4.4 (negotiation)
2	5	5.1, 5.2 (change and transformation)
3	1	1.1 (requirements and objectives)
3	1	1.1, 1.2, 1.3 (stakeholders)
3	1	1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, (project design)
3	2	2.1, 2.2 (scope)
3	2	2.3, 2.4, 2.5 (time)
3	3	3.1, 3.2, 3.3 (procurement)
3	3	3.4, 3.5 (quality)
3	3	3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9 (plan and control)

5. Oral exam specification

Each oral exam will be conducted by two assessors appointed by APM, either face to face or virtually via video link (in accordance with the IPMA regulations) and will last up to 90 minutes. The IPMA Level B oral exam is to ensure that:

- it is explicit that candidates need to answer all 12 questions;
- the order of questions is randomised rather than following the order within the syllabus;
- all assessment criteria are given equal weighting;
- each question stands alone and does not provide the answer to another question on the paper or rely on an answer from another examination question in the paper;
- candidates are given 25 minutes invigilated reading time and 65 minutes to answer the questions and;
- each question is worth five marks.
- minimum coverage is defined in the candidate guidance.

**Assessment coverage for IPMA Level B:
Certified Senior Portfolio Manager oral examination**

Unit	Learning outcome	Assessment criteria (ICB competence element)
1	1	1.3, 1.7 (governance, structure and process)
1	1	1.4, 1.5, 1.6 (compliance, standards and regulations)
1	3	3.1, 3.2, 3.3 (organisation and information)
2	3	3.1, 3.2, 3.3 (leadership)
2	3 (4)	3.8, 4.5, 4.6 (results orientation)
3	4	4.1, 4.2, 4.3 (risk and opportunity)

**Assessment coverage for IPMA Level B:
Certified Senior Programme Manager oral examination**

Unit	Learning outcome	Assessment criteria (ICB competence element)
1	1	1.3, 1.7 (governance, structure and process)
1	1	1.4, 1.5, 1.6 (compliance, standards and regulations)
1	3	3.1, 3.2, 3.3 (organisation and information)
2	3	3.1, 3.2, 3.3 (leadership)
2	3 (4)	3.8, 4.5, 4.6 (results orientation)
3	4	4.1, 4.2, 4.3 (risk and opportunity)

**Assessment coverage for IPMA Level B:
Certified Senior Project Manager oral examination**

Unit	Learning outcome	Assessment criteria (ICB competence element)
1	1	1.3, 1.7 (governance, structure and process)
1	1	1.4, 1.5, 1.6 (compliance, standards and regulations)
1	3	3.1, 3.2, 3.3 (organisation and information)
2	3	3.1, 3.2, 3.3 (leadership)
2	3 (4)	3.8, 4.5, 4.6 (results orientation)
3	4	4.1, 4.2, 4.3 (risk and opportunity)

6. Interview specification

Below details the specification of the interview for all three domains.

- The interview will be conducted either face to face or virtually via video link (in accordance with the IPMA regulations) and will last up to two hours.
- The interview will be conducted by two assessors.
- The interview will be based on the projects submitted in the report.
- Each competence element passed will receive one mark.
- Minimum coverage is defined in the candidate guidance.
- All candidates will be asked "Is there anything else that you wish to add to support your application?"
- Once the interview is complete and the applicant has departed, the assessors will reach an assessment recommendation of pass or not yet competent. This will be based on their assessment of the evidence presented in the interview when added to the competence elements satisfied in the exam and report.
- The following areas will be covered by professional discussion questions along with other competence elements that require further clarification from the previous stages to enable candidates to meet the minimum requirements. The number of additional competence elements covered will be dependent on the time available in the interview.

Assessment coverage for IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Portfolio Manager interview

Unit	Learning outcome	Assessment criteria (ICB competence element)
1	2	2.1, 2.2 (power and interest)
1	2	2.3, 2.4 (culture and values)
2	1	1.1, 1.2 (self-reflection and self-management)
2	1	1.3, 1.4 (personal integrity and reliability)
2	3	3.6, 3.7 (resourcefulness)
2	4	4.1, 4.2 (conflict and crisis)

Assessment coverage for IPMA Level B: Certified Senior Project Manager interview

Unit	Learning outcome	Assessment criteria (ICB competence element)
1	2	2.1, 2.2 (power and interest)
1	2	2.3, 2.4 (culture and values)
2	1	1.1, 1.2 (self-reflection and self-management)
2	1	1.3, 1.4 (personal integrity and reliability)
2	3	3.6, 3.7 (resourcefulness)
2	4	4.1, 4.2 (conflict and crisis)

Assessment coverage for IPMA Level B:
Certified Senior Programme Manager interview

Unit	Learning outcome	Assessment criteria (ICB competence element)
1	2	2.1, 2.2 (power and interest)
1	2	2.3, 2.4 (culture and values)
2	1	1.1, 1.2 (self-reflection and self-management)
2	1	1.3, 1.4 (personal integrity and reliability)
2	3	3.6, 3.7 (resourcefulness)
2	4	4.1, 4.2 (conflict and crisis)

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