



# The APMP Certification Program

– Everything you need to know

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### **Overview**

APMP offers the world's first Professional Accreditation Program for those working in a bid and proposal environment. The Program uses a process of examination and competency-based assessment, which is consistent and measured against worldwide best practice standards. Each level is tested in a different way, requires a minimum level of experience, and verification with a self-selected reference.

#### **Benefits**

- *For individuals*
  - You demonstrate a personal commitment to your career and profession
  - You will gain the respect and credibility of your peers, clients and organisation's leaders
  - You improve both your own and your organisation's business development capabilities
  - You bring a focus on best practices to your team
  - The accreditation enhances your career progression
- *For Organisations*
  - It encourages retention of staff
  - It supports competency based recruitment and promotion of staff
  - It identifies performers, and it improves performance

#### **Three Levels**

- *Foundation™-Level (Basic Knowledge of Best Practice): Multiple Choice Exam*
  - When you achieve APMP-Foundation-Level Accreditation, you demonstrate to your peers, clients and organisation that you are knowledgeable of the best practices for proposal and bid management
- *Practitioner™-Level (Application of Best Practice): Assessment of Documented Experience Record*
  - Practitioners demonstrate through a rigorous review of their experience record that they can successfully apply best practices in the workplace.
- *Professional™-Level (Advocacy of Best Practice): Assessment of Impact, Presentation, and Competency Based Interview*
  - The APMP-Professional Level Accreditation clearly demonstrates business and personal achievement through their leadership, creativity and communications ability.

You will find a PDF version of this brochure under [www.cskmanagement.com/Accreditation](http://www.cskmanagement.com/Accreditation)



## 1. APMP Certification: Certification on three Levels

*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 competency-based assessment, 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.*

There are three levels. Participants start at Foundation and advance to Practitioner, and then to Professional. Each level is tested in a different way, requires a minimum level of experience, and verification with a self-selected reference.

More information can be found on <http://www.apmp.org/?page=AccreditationProgram>

### *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*



Practitioners demonstrate through a rigors review of their experience record that they can successfully apply best practices in the workplace.

The APMP Practitioner-Level 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 own organisations or a significant contribution to the business development community.

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



Association for Proposal Management Professionals

Through association and education, we provide our members access to tools, methods, processes, innovations, talent and specialised expertise that can directly improve the ability to acquire new business and to sustain growth and competitiveness in a dynamic and demanding marketplace.

Our membership is growing rapidly into an internationally recognised association with membership and corporate sponsors from a diverse range of disciplines and industries. Our members are committed to the pursuit of proposal excellence. Our journey has been one of promoting the professionalism of our members and shaping the future of the proposal profession.

See more about APMP on [www.apmp.org](http://www.apmp.org).



## 2. Why APMP Certification?

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

### 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 an APMP certification:

- Proves ability as a proposal manager
- Proves impact as a proposal manager
- Provides a "mark of quality"
- Identifies Proposal Managers 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 managers:

- APMP certified proposal managers 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 managers 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 Companies and Organisations

APMP certification assesses the tangible impact made by individual proposal managers. 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:

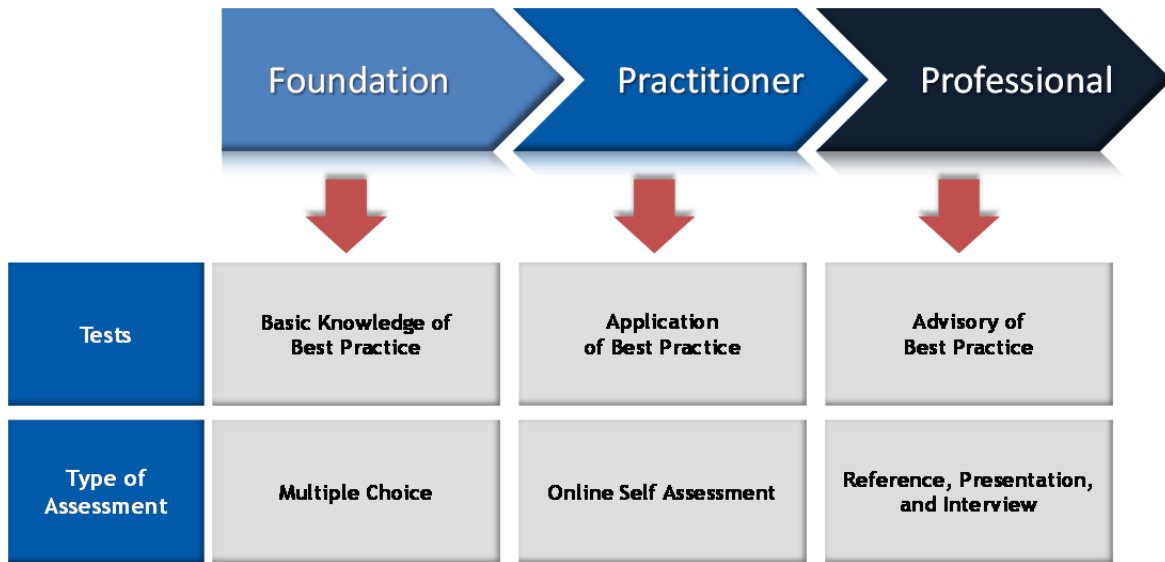
- Externally - with attraction and recruitment
- Internally - with development of key individuals



### 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.*

Fig. 3-1: The Certification Program is a series of sequential assessments. A direct entry to Practitioner or Professional is not possible.



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.

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)*

This level is aiming to measure whether a candidate would be able to apply process and procedures to running and managing a proposal / bid within a proposal / bid environment that supports process and procedures. To this end they need to exhibit the competencies required for the Proposal Practitioner qualification, and show that they can apply and tune principles, process and procedures to address the needs and problems of a customer response.

Practitioners not only have shown extensive knowledge of best practices, but also have demonstrated against global standards that they can both apply them individually and lead teams in their use. The APMP Practitioner-Level is open to all APMP members who have achieved Foundation-Level

Candidates need to provide a reference who can verify their experience and support a random check of the evidence they supply in their Proposal Practitioner Assessment Questionnaire (PPAQ).

To prepare for the Practitioner-Level, candidates can download the PPAQ™ (Proposal Practitioner Assessment Questionnaire™) from the APMP website and complete it off-line. They can then upload the completed form after their registration with APMGroup. The APMP assessor will then evaluate the document and inform the candidate about the result of the assessment.



**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. In addition they must practice excellent communications skills in impact presentation and answering behavioral 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 behavioral 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 own organisation, one of their clients or to the profession as a whole as a direct result of 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.

**4. What are the preconditions?**

*The APMP Certification Program is available for a broad target group. The preconditions depend on the certification level.*

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

	Foundation-Level	Practitioner-Level	Professional-Level
Experience	1 year (confirmation through reference person)	3 years (confirmation through reference person)	7 years (confirmation through reference person)
APMP Membership required	no	yes	yes
Precondition	no	Foundation-Level	Practitioner-Level
English Skills	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.  For the Foundation-Level, CSK offers also bilingual preparation training sessions in German and in English (with bilingual handouts but with English examination).		

Source: APMP International, CSK



## 5. What is the cost?

*The examination fees vary between EUR 300 and 680, depending on the Certification Level. The fees for the individual preparation support or certification training depend on the training provider.*

Fig. 5-1: Examination fees are between EUR 300 for the Foundation Level for APMP members and EUR 680 for the Professional Level.

Certification Level	US Dollars	Pound Sterling	Euro	Australian Dollars
Foundation-Level for APMP Members	USD 400	GBP 250	EUR 300	AUD 550
Foundation-Level for Non-Members	USD 600	GBP 430	EUR 480	AUD 930
Practitioner -Level (APMP Members only)	USD 650	GBP 470	EUR 520	AUD 1010
Professional-Level (APMP Members only)	USD 850	GBP 610	EUR 680	AUD 1310

The examination fees are subject of change.

Source: APMP International (Status: March 2015)

### ***Foundation-Level Certification Workshops***

Public Certification Workshops are typically around EUR 300-400 per participant, excluding the examination fee.

For inhouse workshops, ask for an individual offer.

### ***Coaching for Practitioner and Professional Certification***

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





## 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. In Europe, there are currently four ATOs.*

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 bilingual 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.

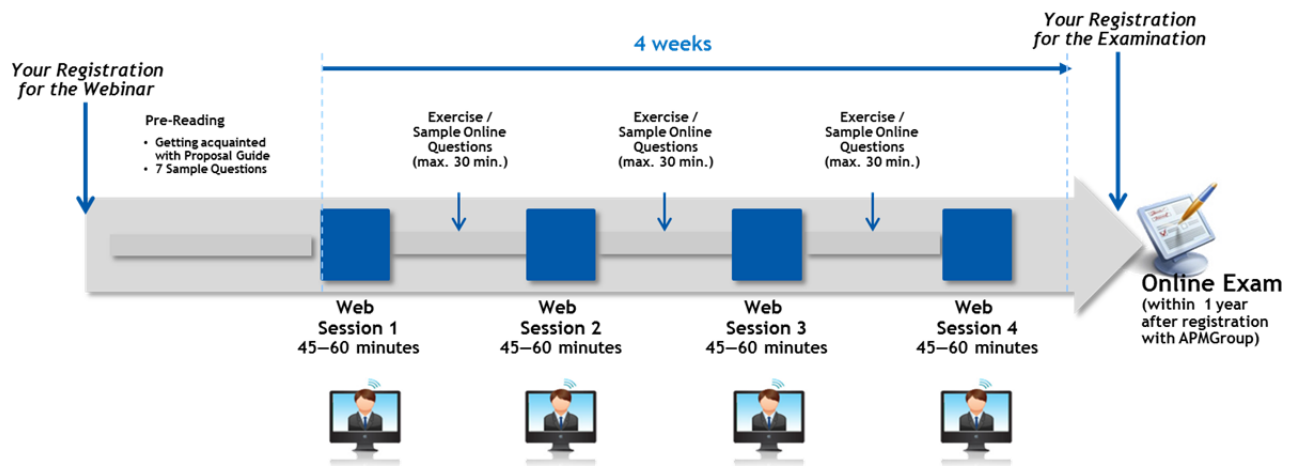


**b) The CSK Webinar: Maximum Flexibility**

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

Experience shows that fully automated trainings 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 is increased. To compensate with 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 four training sessions of 45–60 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.

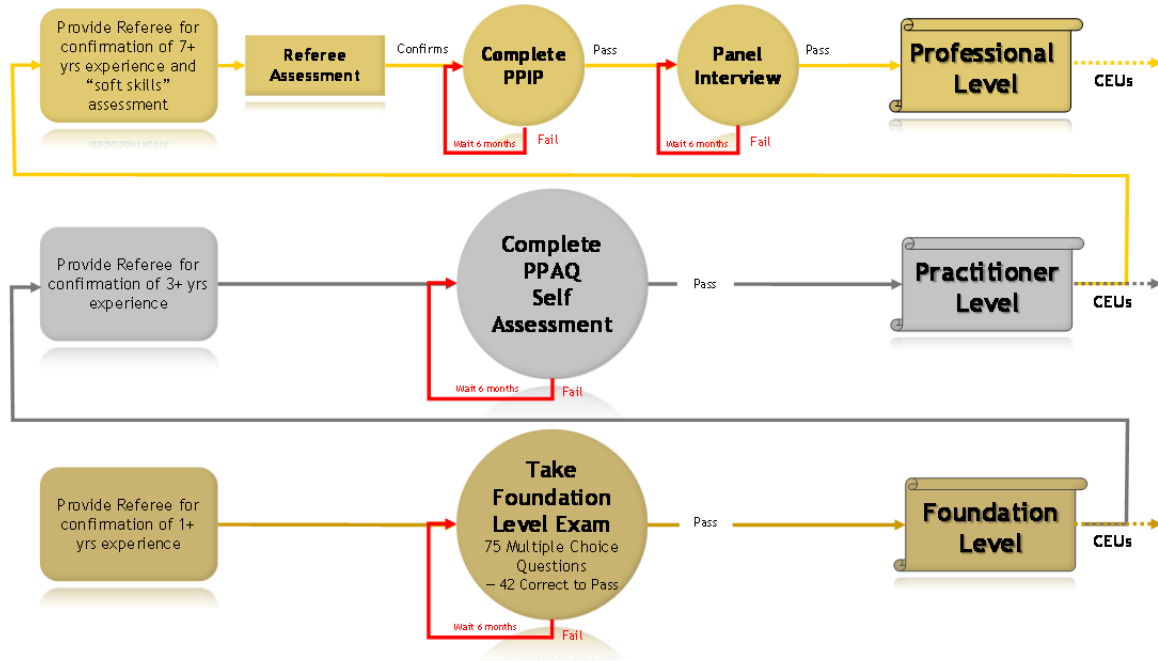
This course is suited for native English speakers.



## 7. What happens if I fail?

*Unless the candidate does not submit an appeal, he can retake the examination again after six months.*

Fig. 7-1: In case a candidate does not pass a hurdle, candidates can retake every step after six months



Source: APMP, CSK



## 8. How much time does it take?

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

### **Foundation-Level: Total Effort ~1–2 days**

We recommend to spend about 1 day for your individual preparation, and then a Certification Workshop, offered by an *Approved Training Organisation*. These workshops are offered as inhouse 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: Total Effort ~10 days**

The completion of the PPAQ (Proposal Practitioner Assessment Questionnaire) requires that the candidate explains in 35 areas his experience with a text of 250 words each. From experience, this takes up to 10 days for non-native English speakers. The complete process including the assessment of the material takes about 2–4 weeks.

### **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.

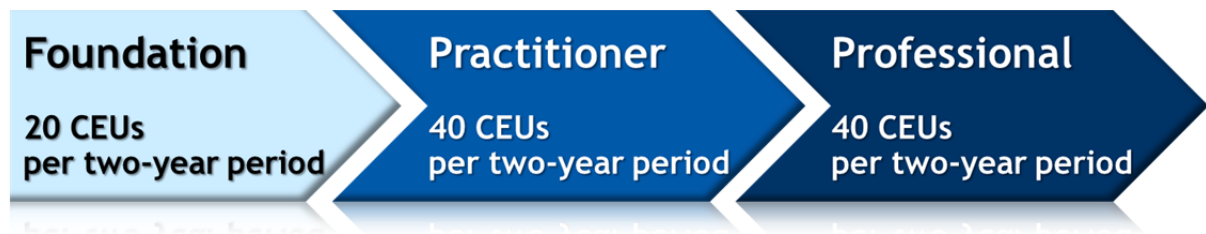


## 9. How long is my Certification valid? – Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

*In order to maintain an active certification status and to satisfy CPD program requirements and, once you are certified to any level, you must earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) 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 for your certification level, the APMP will continue to endorse your achievement.*

If you are certified, at any level, after 1 January 2007, 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 in a two-year period begins again. The table below shows how many CEUs are required at each certification level.

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



Source: APMP/CSK

CEUs can be collected through:

- Home based learning
- Attendance of conferences
- Participation in APMP chapter meetings
- Completion of training sessions
- Presenting at conferences
- Publishing of articles or books
- Involvement in APMP activities
- etc.

CEUs 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 to keep a simple log in an Excel file, or to log the activities on the APMP website [www.apmp.org](http://www.apmp.org) (after the login, select „Manage Profile“, then „Certifications“ under „Content & Features“). Here you can manage comfortably your CEUs. The effort to manage your CEUs is usually less than an hour per year.

The detailed list of activities that the APMP will currently recognise as qualifying for CEUs can be found here: [http://www.apmp.org/resource/resmgr/accreditation/apmp\\_ceu\\_guidelines.pdf](http://www.apmp.org/resource/resmgr/accreditation/apmp_ceu_guidelines.pdf)



## 10. APMP Documentation

*The complete documentation on the APMP Certification Program can be found on the APMP website.*

Please click on <http://www.apmp.org/?page=AccreditationProgram>

Fig. 10-1: APMP offers a complete documentation, available for download.

APMP Certification in General	
APMP Certification Program Syllabus	<a href="http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.apmp.org/resource/collection/7C14A554-031E-4591-B7C0-51088E8B7D3D/apmp_accreditation_syllabus.pdf">http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.apmp.org/resource/collection/7C14A554-031E-4591-B7C0-51088E8B7D3D/apmp_accreditation_syllabus.pdf</a>
Frequently Asked Questions for the APMP Certification Program	<a href="http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/7C14A554-031E-4591-B7C0-51088E8B7D3D/Certification_FAQ_5_14_2013.docx">http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/7C14A554-031E-4591-B7C0-51088E8B7D3D/Certification_FAQ_5_14_2013.docx</a>
Benefits of the APMP Professional Certification Program to Organisations & Individuals	<a href="http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/7C14A554-031E-4591-B7C0-51088E8B7D3D/apmp_accreditation_benefits.pdf">http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/7C14A554-031E-4591-B7C0-51088E8B7D3D/apmp_accreditation_benefits.pdf</a>
Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Guidelines for the APMP Certification Program	<a href="http://www.apmp.org/resource/resmgr/accreditation/apmp_ceu_guidelines.pdf">http://www.apmp.org/resource/resmgr/accreditation/apmp_ceu_guidelines.pdf</a>
Foundation-Level	
Taking APMP's Foundation Level Exam	<a href="http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/1EB7F120-C764-46FF-A72D-08D48D7D22EC/Foundation.pdf">http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/1EB7F120-C764-46FF-A72D-08D48D7D22EC/Foundation.pdf</a>
Practitioner-Level	
Advancing to Practitioner Certification	<a href="http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.apmp.org/resource/collection/263796EA-4AF1-41F5-A8BF-99C16DBD51F0/Practitioner.pdf">http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.apmp.org/resource/collection/263796EA-4AF1-41F5-A8BF-99C16DBD51F0/Practitioner.pdf</a>
APMP Proposal Practitioner Assessment Questionnaire (PPAQ) Standards and Guidelines	<a href="http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/263796EA-4AF1-41F5-A8BF-99C16DBD51F0/apmp_ppaq_guidelines.pdf">http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/263796EA-4AF1-41F5-A8BF-99C16DBD51F0/apmp_ppaq_guidelines.pdf</a>
APMP® Proposal Practitioner Assessment Questionnaire (PPAQM) 2005	<a href="http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/263796EA-4AF1-41F5-A8BF-99C16DBD51F0/apmp_ppaq.docx">http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/263796EA-4AF1-41F5-A8BF-99C16DBD51F0/apmp_ppaq.docx</a>
Professional-Level	
APMP's Professional Certification	<a href="http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/02C1D9DE-8194-452C-93CB-A09B58615477/Professional-2.pdf">http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/02C1D9DE-8194-452C-93CB-A09B58615477/Professional-2.pdf</a>
APMP Professional Certification Panel Interview Standards and Guidelines	<a href="http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/02C1D9DE-8194-452C-93CB-A09B58615477/apmp_ppip_guidelines.pdf">http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/02C1D9DE-8194-452C-93CB-A09B58615477/apmp_ppip_guidelines.pdf</a>
FAQ's and Candidate Guidelines for the APMP Proposal Professional Panel Interview and Guidelines	<a href="http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/02C1D9DE-8194-452C-93CB-A09B58615477/apmp_ppip_interview_guidelin.pdf">http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/02C1D9DE-8194-452C-93CB-A09B58615477/apmp_ppip_interview_guidelin.pdf</a>
Proposal Professional Impact Paper (PPIP)	<a href="http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/02C1D9DE-8194-452C-93CB-A09B58615477/apmp_ppip.pptx">http://www.apmp.org/resource/collection/02C1D9DE-8194-452C-93CB-A09B58615477/apmp_ppip.pptx</a>

Sources: APMP, Overview CSK



## Questions? – We are here for you

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*We are happy to answer your questions*

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CSK is an Approved Training Organisation (ATO) of APMP



*Bid Alliance*

CSK is a founding member of the Bid Alliance



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