

Government Programme & Project Management Profession Recommended Professional Memberships

Introduction

The Government Programme and Project Management (PPM) leadership community is working collectively to enhance the skills, capability, and capacity of public sector bodies to deliver Government policy successfully. A key element of this approach is to develop the skills and capability of the staff members who are working as programme and project managers, or in specialist roles within the support offices for specific programmes and projects – collectively these groups make up the Government PPM Profession.

This document provides recommendations for Central Government bodies when considering their policies regarding choice and funding of professional memberships for PPM professionals. These recommendations were approved for publication by the cross-Government [PPM Council](#) at a meeting on 9 March 2009.

Why recommend professional memberships?

In order to uplift Government delivery skills and capability, PPM professionals in Government bodies should be encouraged by their employers to follow a continuous professional development (CPD) path, as is the case in many other professions.

Government bodies already invest significantly in learning and development for PPM professionals, but training budgets alone may not be sufficient to enable all members of the Government PPM Profession to develop their skills and capability to the depth and level that the increasing public sector delivery challenge demands. Membership of appropriate professional bodies helps to bridge this gap by giving access to information sources, networking opportunities, events, sources of learning and development, and to professional qualifications, that public sector bodies themselves may be unable to provide.

The funding of professional memberships for PPM professionals also gives a clear signal, both externally and within an organisation, of Government's commitment to improve its capability to successfully deliver programmes and projects.

Where did these recommendations come from?

These recommendations result from the findings of an information gathering exercise, conducted in autumn 2008 at the request of the cross-Government PPM leadership community. Twenty Government organisations participated by confirming which professional memberships are already widely in use, or indeed mandatory, in their organisations, and the degree to which they would recommend their use to other Government organisations. The professional memberships below are therefore listed in order of the significance collectively awarded them by the participating Government bodies.

These findings were reviewed by the Careers and Membership Groups (consisting of departmental representatives leading on PPM skills and capability and on PPM community development) and by departmental PPM Leaders before final recommendations were approved by the PPM Council (consisting of Heads of PPM Profession from 21 Departments).

Please note: This is only the first tranche of recommendations and suggestions on professional memberships for people working in programme and project management across Government. More will be added to this list after further research into the professional memberships recommended by other Government professions for people working in specialist delivery areas.

Recommended professional membership – [Association for Project Management](#)

Membership of the Association for Project Management (APM) is recommended for Project Managers, for the following reasons:

1. 14 of the 20 Central Government organisations participating in the information gathering exercise are already recognising and funding APM membership – in some organisations it is mandatory or desirable for specialist roles – and the majority of these organisations also recommend it to other Government Departments. No other professional body with similar strong relevance for project management (eg. PMI, MPA, IPMA) was endorsed by more than five participating organisations.
2. The APM has applied for chartered body status, which would make it the industry standard for PPM in the UK. There are many benefits to Government of standardising as much as possible on membership of the chartered body for PPM, including commonality of language, competency assessment, and qualifications, both across Government and down the supply chain.
3. If the APM is successful in its bid to become chartered, the benefits of APM membership to individuals within the Government PPM profession include the opportunity to become a Chartered Project Professional, and increased mobility as a result of common language, competency assessment, and qualifications.

APM membership may also be beneficial to Programme Managers and to those working in Programme and Project Support Offices, or otherwise at the beginning of their PPM careers, but this should be considered on an individual basis.

Suggested professional memberships for specialist roles

The following professional memberships are worth considering for specialists within the Government PPM environment, either as the primary professional membership most relevant to the main purpose of their role, or as a secondary membership (eg. supplementing APM membership), albeit at an entry (eg. associate or student) level.

[Institute of Risk Management \(IRM\)](#)

Membership of the Institute of Risk Management should be considered for anybody who specialises, and/or is pursuing a career, in the management of programme and/or project risk. Seven of the 20 organisations participating in the 2008 information gathering exercise were already funding IRM membership for specialist staff.

[Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply \(CIPS\)](#) and the [Government Procurement Service \(GPS\)](#)

The Government Procurement Service (GPS) recommends CIPS and GPS membership for procurement professionals in Government. Membership of CIPS and/or of the GPS may also be of value to PPM professionals who specialise in the delivery of large acquisition-based programmes and projects. The findings of the 2008 information gathering exercise support this suggestion, as 15 of the 20 participating organisations were already widely recognising and funding CIPS membership, and making it mandatory or desirable for some specialist roles.

British Computer Society (BCS)

The Government IT Profession recommends membership of the British Computer Society (BCS) to its members. This membership also may be of value to PPM professionals who specialise in the delivery of IT programmes and projects. The findings of the 2008 information gathering exercise supports this suggestion, as at least half of the participating organisations were already widely recognising and funding BCS membership, and making it mandatory or desirable for some specialist roles.

Other possible memberships for PPM professionals

The following professional memberships may also be considered, particularly as secondary memberships, or if there is a strong reason why these are more appropriate to the organisation, programme or project environment, and/or to the individual, than the ones above.

PPM professional bodies

There are members of the following PPM professional bodies across Government, but none were widely used by more than five of the organisations participating in the 2008 information gathering exercise:

- [International Project Management Association \(IPMA\)](#)
- [Project Management Institute \(PMI\)](#)
- [Major Projects Association \(MPA\)](#)

Professional management bodies

The following memberships may be of interest to PPM professionals aiming to progress into general management roles, and/or to senior and/or already qualified PPM professionals. However, neither of these was widely in use for PPM professionals in more than six of the 20 organisations participating in the 2008 information gathering exercise.

- [Chartered Management Institute \(CMI\)](#)
- [Institute of Directors \(IoD\).](#)