

PgMP®

Exam Content Outline

Program Management Professional (PgMP)®



Project Management Institute

Program Management Professional (PgMP)[®] Examination Content Outline (ECO)

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Introduction

The Project Management Institute (PMI®) offers a professional credential for program managers, known as the Program Management Professional (PgMP®). PMI's professional credentialing examination development processes stand apart from other project management certification examination development practices. PMI aligns its process with certification industry best practices, such as those in the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing.

A key component of this process is that organizations wishing to offer valid and reliable professional credentialing examinations are directed to use a role delineation study (RDS) as the basis for the creation of the examination. This process utilizes knowledge and task-driven guidelines to assess the practitioners' competence and determine the level of salience, criticality, and frequency of each of the knowledge, tasks, and skills required to perform to the industry-wide standard in the role of a program manager.

The role delineation study ensures the validity of an examination. Validation assures the outcome of the exam is measuring and evaluating appropriately the specific knowledge and skills required to function as a program management professional. Thus, the role delineation study guarantees that each examination validly measures all elements of the program management profession in terms of real settings.

PgMP credential holders can be confident that their professional credential has been developed according to best test development practices and based upon input from the practitioners who establish those standards. Please see Appendix A for a detailed description of the process.

The PgMP examination is a vital part of the activities leading to earning a professional credential, thus the PgMP examination must reflect accurately the practices of the program management professional. All the questions on the examination have been written and extensively reviewed by qualified PgMP credential holders and tracked to at least two academic references. These questions are mapped against the PgMP Examination Content Outline to ensure an appropriate number of questions are in place for a valid examination.

PMI retained Professional Examination Service (PES) to develop the global PgMP Examination Content Outline. Since 1941, Professional Examination Service (PES) has provided a full range of assessment and advisory services to organizations across a broad range of professions, in support of professional licensure and certification, training, and continuing professional education. PES is dedicated to promoting the public welfare through credentialing as a mission-driven, not-for-profit organization.

Finally, while the PgMP Examination Content Outline and The Standard for Program Management have commonalities, it is important to note that those involved in the study described previously were not bound by The Standard for Program Management. They were charged with defining the role of individuals leading and directing programs, and using their experience and pertinent resources to help in this task.

Many of the domains, tasks, knowledge, and skills outlined by the PgMP Examination Content Outline are new, revised, or reclassified in comparison to what is found in The Standard for Program Management. Candidates studying for the examination will certainly want to include the current edition of The Standard for Program Management as one of their references and would be well advised to read other current titles on program management.

In March 2024, to ensure alignment with the 5th Edition of the Program Management Standards lexicon, the Exam Content Outline was reviewed and minorly updated by a group of Subject Matter Experts. A job-task analysis was not conducted for this update and the exam will continue to reflect this ECO. Exam questions are continually updated to ensure alignment.

Exam Content Outline (ECO)

The following table identifies the proportion of questions from each domain that will appear on the examination. These percentages are used to determine the number of questions related to each domain and task that should appear on the multiple-choice format examination.

Domain		% of Exam
I.	Strategic Program Alignment	15%
II.	Program Life Cycle Management	44%
III.	Benefits Alignment	11%
IV.	Stakeholder Engagement	16%
V.	Governance	14%
Total		100%

Domain I - Strategic Program Alignment	
Task 1	Perform an initial program assessment by defining the program objectives, requirements, and risks to ensure program alignment with the organization's strategic plan, objectives, priorities, vision, and mission statement.
Task 2	Establish a high-level road map with milestones and preliminary estimates to obtain initial validation and approval from the executive sponsor.
Task 3	Define the high-level road map and financial framework to set a baseline for program definition, planning, and execution.
Task 4	Define the program mission statement by evaluating the stakeholders' concerns and expectations to establish program direction.
Task 5	Evaluate the program's business case to develop, validate, and assess the program objectives, priority, feasibility, readiness, and alignment with the organization's strategic plan.
Task 6	Analyze the available information about organizational and business strategies, internal and external influences, and program drivers to identify and quantify the benefits that program stakeholders expect to realize using research methods such as market analysis and high-level cost-benefit analysis to develop the preliminary program scope and define the benefits realization plan.
Task 7	Estimate the high-level financial framework and nonfinancial benefits of the program to obtain/maintain funding authorization and drive prioritization of projects within the program.
Task 8	Evaluate program objectives relative to regulatory and legal constraints, social impacts, sustainability, cultural considerations, political climate, and ethical concerns to ensure stakeholder alignment and program deliverability.
Task 9	Obtain organizational leadership approval for the program by presenting the program charter with its high-level costs, milestone schedule, and benefits to receive authorization to initiate the program.
Task 10	Identify and evaluate integration opportunities and needs (for example, human capital and human resource requirements and skill sets, facilities, finance, assets, processes, and systems) within program activities and operational activities to align and integrate benefits within or across the organization.
Task 11	Exploit strategic opportunities for change to maximize the realization of benefits.

Knowledge Specific to Domain I

*(*Indicates knowledge is found in one other domain, shown in parentheses)*

- Business strategy
- Business/organization objectives* (V)
- Economic forecasting
- Feasibility analysis
- Financial measurement and management techniques
- Funding models
- Funding processes
- Intellectual property laws and guidelines
- Legal and regulatory requirements
- Marketing
- Portfolio management
- Program and constituent project charter development* (II)
- Program mission and vision
- Public relations* (IV)
- Requirement analysis techniques
- Scenario analysis
- Strategic planning and analysis* (II)
- System implementation models and methodologies
- Trend analysis

Domain II - Program Life Cycle Management	
Task 1	Develop the program charter consisting of the program scope, assumptions, constraints, high-level risks, high-level benefits and their realization, timing, key stakeholders, outcomes, resource allocation, and other provisions that tie the program to the business case, thereby enabling strategic alignment using input from all stakeholders to initiate and design program and benefits.
Task 2	Translate strategic objectives into high-level program scope statements by negotiating with stakeholders, including sponsors/steering committee, to create a program scope description.
Task 3	Develop a program roadmap using the goals and objectives of the program, applicable historical information, and other available resources (for example, work breakdown structure (WBS), scope statements, and benefits realization plan) to align the program with the strategy, and manage the expectations of stakeholders, including sponsors/steering committee.
Task 4	Develop a responsibility assignment matrix by identifying and assigning program roles and responsibilities to build the program management core team and differentiate between the program and project resources.
Task 5	Define standard measurement criteria, including key performance indicators, for success and review points for all constituent projects/components by analyzing stakeholder expectations and requirements across the constituent projects/components to monitor and control the program.
Task 6	Conduct program kick-off with key stakeholders by holding meetings to familiarize the organization with the program and obtain stakeholder buy-in.
Task 7	Develop a detailed program scope statement by incorporating the program vision and all internal and external objectives, goals, influences, and variables to facilitate overall planning.
Task 8	Develop program WBS to determine, plan, and assign the program tasks and deliverables.
Task 9	Establish the program management plan and schedule by integrating plans for constituent projects/components and creating plans for supporting program functions (for example, quality, risk, communication, and resources) to effectively forecast, monitor, and identify variances during program execution.
Task 10	Optimize the program management plan by identifying, reviewing, and leveling resource requirements (for example, human resources, materials, equipment, facilities, and finance) to gain efficiencies and maximize productivity/synergies among constituent projects/components.
Task 11	Define project/program management information system (PMIS) by selecting tools and processes to share knowledge, intellectual property, and documentation across constituent projects/components to maximize

	synergies, savings, and benefits realization per the governance framework.
Task 12	Identify and manage unresolved project-level issues by establishing a monitoring and escalation mechanism and selecting a course of action consistent with program constraints and objectives to achieve program benefits realization.
Task 13	Develop the benefits management plan including benefits integration, transition, and sustainment by defining exit criteria to ensure all administrative, commercial, and contractual obligations are met upon program completion.
Task 14	Develop key performance indicators (KPIs) by using decomposition/mapping to manage the program and implement a scope and quality management system within the program.
Task 15	Monitor human resources for program and project roles, including subcontractors, and identify opportunities to improve team motivation (for example, develop compensation, incentive, and career alignment plans) and negotiate contracts to meet and/or exceed benefits realization objectives.
Task 16	Charter and initiate constituent projects/components by assigning project managers and allocating appropriate resources to achieve program objectives.
Task 17	Establish consistency by deploying governance framework, uniform standards, resources, infrastructure, tools, and processes to enable informed program decision-making.
Task 18	Establish a communication feedback plan and reporting process to capture lessons learned and the team's experiences throughout the program.
Task 19	Lead human resource functions by training, coaching, mentoring, and recognizing the team to improve team engagement and achieve commitment to the program's goals.
Task 20	Review project managers' performance in executing the project per the project plan to maximize their contribution to achieving program goals.
Task 21	Execute the appropriate program management plans (for example, quality, risk, communication, resourcing) using the tools identified in the planning phase and by auditing the results to ensure the program outcomes are aligned with the strategy and deliver anticipated benefits.
Task 22	Consolidate project and program data using predefined program plan reporting tools and methods to monitor and control the program performance and communicate to stakeholders.
Task 23	Evaluate the program's status to monitor and control the program while maintaining current program information.
Task 24	Approve closure of constituent projects/components upon completion of defined deliverables to ensure scope is compliant with the functional overview.

Task 25	Analyze variances and trends in costs, schedule, quality, and risks by comparing actual and forecast to planned values to identify corrective actions or opportunities.
Task 26	Update program plans by incorporating corrective actions to ensure program resources are employed effectively to meet program objectives and deliver program benefits.
Task 27	Manage program-level issues (for example, human resource management, financial, technology, scheduling) by identifying and selecting a course of action consistent with program scope, constraints, and objectives to achieve program benefits.
Task 28	Manage changes per the change management plan to control scope, quality, schedule, cost, contracts, risks, and rewards to achieve program benefits.
Task 29	Conduct impact assessments for program changes and recommend decisions to obtain approval per the governance framework.
Task 30	Manage risk per the risk management plan to ensure benefits realization.
Task 31	Complete a program performance analysis report by comparing actual values to planned values for scope, quality, cost, schedule, and resource data to determine program performance.
Task 32	Conduct program closure within the boundaries of the governance framework.
Task 33	Execute the transition and close-out of the program and all constituent projects and/ or components (for example, perform administrative and PMIS program closure, archive program documents and lessons learned, and transfer ongoing activities to the functional organization) to transition program benefits and meet program objectives and/or ongoing operational sustainability.
Task 34	Conduct the post-review meetings by presenting the program performance reports to obtain feedback and capture lessons learned.
Task 35	Report lessons learned and best practices observed and archive to the knowledge repository to support future programs and organizational improvement.

Knowledge Specific to Domain II

(*Indicates knowledge is found in one other domain, shown in parentheses)

- Benchmarking
- Closeout plans, procedures, techniques, and policies* (V)
- Decomposition techniques (for example, work breakdown structure (WBS))
- Financial closure processes* (V)
- Logistics management

- Performance and quality metrics* (III)
- Phase gate reviews* (V)
- Procurement management
- Product/service development phases
- Program and constituent project charter development* (I)
- Program and project change requests* (V)
- Program initiation plan
- Program management plans
- Quality control and management tools and techniques
- Resource estimation (human and material)
- Resource leveling techniques
- Root cause analysis
- Schedule management, techniques, and tools
- Scope management
- Service level agreements
- Statistical analysis* (V)
- Strategic planning and analysis* (I)
- SWOT analysis
- Talent evaluation
- Team competency assessment techniques
- Training methodologies* (IV)

Domain III - Benefits Management	
Task 1	Develop the benefits realization plan and its measurement criteria to set the baseline for the program and communicate to stakeholders, including sponsors /steering committee.
Task 2	Identify and capture synergies and efficiencies identified throughout the program life cycle to update and communicate the benefits realization plan to stakeholders, including sponsors /steering committee.
Task 3	Develop a sustainment plan that identifies the processes, measures, metrics, and tools necessary for the management of benefits beyond the completion of the program to ensure the continued realization of intended benefits.
Task 4	Monitor the metrics (for example, by forecasting, analyzing variances, developing “what if” scenarios and simulations, and utilizing causal analysis) to take corrective actions in the program and maintain and/or potentially improve benefits realization.
Task 5	Verify that the close, transition, and integration of constituent projects /components and the program meet or exceed the benefit realization criteria to achieve the program’s strategic objectives.
Task 6	Maintain benefits register and record program progress to report the benefit to stakeholders via the communications plan.
Task 7	Analyze and update the benefits realization and sustainment plans for uncertainty, risk identification, risk mitigation, and risk opportunity to determine if corrective actions are necessary and communicate to stakeholders.
Task 8	Develop a transition plan to operations to guarantee the sustainment of products and benefits delivered by the program.

Knowledge Specific to Domain III

*(*Indicates knowledge is found in one other domain, shown in parentheses)*

- Benefit optimization
- Business value measurement
- Decision tree analysis
- Maintenance and sustainment of program benefits post-delivery
- Performance and quality metrics* (II)
- Program transition strategies

Domain IV - Stakeholder Engagement	
Task 1	Identify stakeholders, including sponsors/steering committee, and create the stakeholder matrix to document their position relative to the program.
Task 2	Perform stakeholder analysis through historical analysis, personal experience, interviews, knowledge base, review of formal agreements (for example, request for proposal (RFP), request for information (RFI), contracts), and input from other sources to create the stakeholder engagement plan.
Task 3	Negotiate the support of stakeholders, including sponsors/steering committee, for the program while setting clear expectations and acceptance criteria (for example, KPIs) for the program benefits to achieve and maintain their alignment with the program objectives.
Task 4	Generate and maintain visibility for the program and confirm stakeholder support to achieve the program's strategic objectives.
Task 5	Define and maintain communications adapted to different stakeholders, including sponsors/steering committee, to ensure their support for the program.
Task 6	Evaluate risks identified by stakeholders, including sponsors/steering committee, and incorporate them in the program risk management plan, as necessary.
Task 7	Develop and foster relationships with stakeholders, including sponsors/steering committee, to improve communication and enhance their support for the program.

Knowledge Specific to Domain IV

*(*Indicates knowledge is found in one other domain, shown in parentheses)*

- Customer relationship management
- Customer satisfaction measurement
- Expectation management
- Public relations* (I)
- Training methodologies* (II)

Domain V - Governance	
Task 1	Develop program and project management standards and structure (governance, tools, finance, and reporting) using industry best practices and organizational standards to drive efficiency and consistency among projects and deliver program objectives.
Task 2	Select a governance framework structure including policies, procedures, and standards that conforms program practices with the organization's governance structure to deliver program objectives consistent with organizational governance requirements.
Task 3	Obtain authorization(s) and approval(s) through stage gate reviews by presenting the program status to governance authorities to proceed to the next phase of the program.
Task 4	Evaluate key performance indicators (for example, risks, financials, compliance, quality, safety, and stakeholder satisfaction) to monitor benefits throughout the program life cycle.
Task 5	Develop and/or utilize the program management information system), and integrate different processes as needed, to manage program information and communicate status to stakeholders.
Task 6	Regularly evaluate new and existing risks that impact strategic objectives to present an updated risk management plan to the governance board for approval.
Task 7	Establish escalation policies and procedures to ensure risks are handled at the appropriate level.
Task 8	Develop and/or contribute to an information repository containing program-related lessons learned, processes, and documentation contributions to support organizational best practices.
Task 9	Identify and apply lessons learned to support and influence existing and future programs or organizational improvement.
Task 10	Monitor the business environment, program functionality requirements, and benefits realization to ensure the program remains aligned with strategic objectives.
Task 11	Develop and support the program integration management plan to ensure operational alignment with program strategic objectives.

Knowledge Specific to Domain V

*(*Indicates knowledge is found in one other domain, shown in parentheses)*

- Archiving tools and techniques
- Business/organization objectives* (I)
- Closeout plans, procedures, techniques, and policies* (II)
- Composition and responsibilities of the program management office (PMO)
- Financial closure processes* (II)
- Go/no-go decision criteria
- Governance frameworks
- Governance processes and procedures
- Metrics definition and measurement techniques
- Performance analysis and reporting techniques (for example, earned value analysis)
- Phase gate reviews* (II)
- Program and project change requests* (II)
- Statistical analysis* (II)

Core Knowledge (Required in Three or More Domains)

- Benefits measurement and analysis techniques
- Brainstorming techniques
- Budget processes and procedures
- Business environment
- Business ethics
- Business models, structure, and organization
- Change management
- Coaching and mentoring techniques
- Collaboration tools and techniques
- Communication tools and techniques
- Conflict resolution techniques
- Contingency planning
- Contract negotiation/administration
- Contract types
- Cost-benefit techniques
- Cost management
- Cultural diversity/distinctions
- Data analysis/data mining

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- Decision-making techniques
- Emotional intelligence
- Human resource management
- Impact assessment techniques
- Industry and market knowledge
- Information privacy
- Knowledge management
- Leadership theories and techniques
- Management techniques
- Motivational techniques
- Negotiation strategies and techniques
- Performance management techniques (for example, cost and time, performance against objectives)
- Planning theory, techniques, and procedures
- PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
- Presentation tools and techniques
- Problem-solving tools and techniques
- Project Management Information Systems (PMIS)
- Reporting tools and techniques
- Risk analysis techniques
- Risk management
- Risk mitigation and opportunities strategies
- Safety standards and procedures
- Social responsibility
- Strategic management
- Succession planning
- Sustainability and environmental issues
- Team development and dynamics

Core Skills (Required in All Domains)

- Active listening
- Analytical thinking
- Capacity planning
- Change management
- Communicating
- Critical thinking

- Customer-centricity/client focus
- Distilling and synthesizing requirements
- Employee engagement
- Executive-level presentation
- Facilitation
- Integration
- Innovative thinking
- Interpersonal interaction and relationship management
- Interviewing
- Leadership
- Leveraging opportunities
- Managing expectations
- Managing virtual/multicultural/remote/global teams
- Maximizing resources/achieving synergies
- Negotiating/persuading/influencing
- Prioritizing
- Problem-solving
- Stakeholder analysis and engagement
- Systems thinking
- Time management
- Vendor management

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