INSTITUTE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

BSB41515 Certificate IV in Project Management Practice

Assessment Guide

Contents

INSTITUTE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

BSB41515 Certificate IV in Project Management Practice

Welcome to the BSB41515 Certificate IV in Project Management Practice. This course is designed for people who work with or support project initiation, planning, delivery and close in a variety of organisational and project contexts.

Good luck with your study!

Units of study

To successfully graduate, you will need to evidence competence in the following Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) units:

- BSBPMG409 Apply project scope management techniques
- BSBPMG410 Apply project time management techniques
- BSBPMG411 Apply project quality management techniques
- BSBPMG412 Apply project cost management techniques
- BSBPMG413 Apply project human resources management approaches
- BSBPMG416 Apply project procurement procedures
- BSBPMG415 Apply project risk management techniques
- BSBPMG417 Apply project life cycle management processes
- BSBPMG418 Apply project stakeholder engagement techniques

You can learn more about these units and this qualification here:

- https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/BSB41515

Instead of teaching these units one at a time, our program is structured to align with the project lifecycle. As you will see, studying and applying your knowledge in the order you do things in a real project (as opposed to learning via discrete 'knowledge areas') is a much more practical and enjoyable way to engage with project management.

What this means (from an administrative perspective) is that you will formally commence study in all AQF units of competence at once; and only complete them when you have successfully submitted all of your assessment activities.

This is important to note, as unlike in a traditional study program, should you withdraw from the program at any time (even if you are nearly finished!) we may not be able to assess you as competent in any of the AQF units.

Nevertheless, depending on how far you have progressed at the point of withdrawal, we may be able to assess you as competent in some alternative AQF units – we can have that conversation with you if and when the need arises.

If you would like to see how the AQF units map to our delivery method, we are also more than happy to share our government and industry audited training and assessment model.

We also recognise previous qualifications, knowledge and skills through work, education, training and life experiences. Your mentor will discuss this with you and apply credit transfer or RPL to those units that may be relevant.

More about our student policies, including your rights and obligations, can be found here:

- https://institute.pm/student-handbook/

Assessment

In order to successfully demonstrate competence to the requisite standard, students must successfully complete:

- 120 formative knowledge quizzes (OPEN)
- Seven (7) portfolio tasks, including:
    i. Project stakeholder register and communications plan
    ii. Project concept canvas with risk profile
    iii. Request for proposal
    iv. Project Gantt chart, including:
        - Multi-level work breakdown structure
        - Project schedule with dependencies
        - Task level resource allocations and overall project budget
    v. Risk register and management plan
    vi. Project status report and change request
    vii. Project reflection (report)
- Three (3) summative assessment interviews
- One (1) multi-media presentation

Templates with detailed instructions for each portfolio element can be found here:

- https://open.institute.pm/free-project-management-resources/

If you do not have access to relevant workplace projects, a case study project is provided for you to complete the portfolio. Note, however, that the project reflection must be performed on a recent, real-life professional or personal project that you made a significant contribution to.

You are also required to participate in assessment interviews – interviews – on each of the three (3) Modules in OPEN and again at the conclusion of the program (project reflection presentation). These assessments are typically conducted via Zoom or another video-conferencing platform.

Graduate outcomes

Upon completion of our Certificate IV in Project Management Practice, you will be able to:

- Apply basic project management concepts, methods and theories
- Demonstrate the technical skills of project management
- Understand the interpersonal aspects of project management
- **Manage the initiation, planning, delivery and close of simple projects**
- Communicate professionally with project stakeholders
- Critically reflect on own performance

You will also be directly admitted to the Institute of Project Management as a **Certified Project Officer** (or Certified Project Professional if you can evidence three (3) years' project experience). Students who attain an overall grade of 100% in the OPEN quizzes will further be entered into the Institute of Project Management's **Order of Merit**.

Study plan

To properly plan your progress, we recommend adopting the following study plan. There is no penalty for completing tasks ahead of schedule – if you have the available time, this is something you may wish to discuss with your mentor. Your mentor can also assist you in keeping to this plan and maintaining momentum throughout the course.

Week 1	OPEN Unit 1	
Week 2	OPEN Unit 2	
Week 3		P1: Stakeholder register and comms plan
Week 4	OPEN Unit 3	
Week 5		P2: Concept canvas and risk profile tool
Week 6	OPEN Unit 4	
Week 7		*Assessment interview – Project initiation*
Week 8	OPEN Unit 5	
Week 9		P3: Request for proposal
Week 10	OPEN Unit 6	
Week 11		P4: Project plan
Week 12	OPEN Unit 7	
Week 13		P5: Risk register and management plan
Week 14	OPEN Unit 8	
Week 15		*Assessment interview – Project planning*
Week 16	OPEN Unit 9	
Week 17	OPEN Unit 10	
Week 18		*Assessment interview – Project leadership*
Week 19	OPEN Unit 11	
Week 20		P6: Status report and change request
Week 21	OPEN Unit 12	
Weeks 23-26		P7: Project reflection and presentation

OPEN

OPEN is the Institute of Project Management's proprietary *Online Project EducatioN* learning hub.

Following a lifecycle approach, the 12 online units in OPEN – each with 10 featured topics with 2-5 microlessons – address all aspects of contemporary project management. A number of well-known and highly regarded methodologies, such as PMBOK, Agile, and PRINCE2, are referenced and integrated into the curriculum.

Visit here to learn more about OPEN: https://institute.pm/open-online-project-education/

Successfully completing all 120 of the **online quizzes** that follow each topic at a minimum passing grade of 70% will satisfy the foundational knowledge requirements for the BSB41515 Certificate IV in Project Management Practice.

As your digital textbook, OPEN also provides detailed contextual guidance on how to complete each portfolio task. For that reason, portfolio tasks are best completed in parallel with their relevant OPEN Unit.

P1: Stakeholder register and comms plan (OPEN Unit 2)

Prepare a **stakeholder register** and **communications plan** with a minimum of five (5) entries for a relevant professional or personal project.

At a minimum, the document must include:

- Identifying information such as:
  - The project name
  - The document owner (usually the project manager)
- Definitions of key values, including:
  - Stakeholder categories (*for example:* sponsor, client, supplier)
  - Stakeholder classifications (*for example:* power v interest)
  - Stakeholder engagement levels (*for example:* supportive, resistant)

At a minimum, each entry must include the stakeholder's:

- Name
- Organisational affiliation
- Position / role / location
- Contact details (*for example:* email, phone)
- Relationship to the project (*for example:* sponsor, client, contractor)
- Rating (*for example:* power v interest, salience)
- Engagement strategy (*for example:* inform, consult)
- Expectations – what they want from the project
- Opportunities – what they can do for the project
- Communication requirements – detail your engagement strategy
- Communication preferences – how and when should we communicate with them
- Last contact (with notes and actions)
- Next contact

You can prepare this using your workplace resources or the template provided here:
https://open.institute.pm/free-project-management-resources/

If you do not have a suitable professional or personal project, you should prepare this document using the following case study as a guide.

> *There are 100 project managers and team members in our organisation. Our CEO wants to recognise and reward those individuals who are performing at a very high level.*
>
> *Who are the stakeholders in this project and how will we engage them with this idea?*

For the purposes of assessment, you may make reasonable assumptions about your stakeholders that are consistent with organisational and project management good practice. Your mentor is available to assist at any time, and you should submit drafts of work-in-progress to receive feedback prior to final submission.

P2: Concept canvas and risk profile tool (OPEN Unit 3)

Prepare a **concept canvas** with **risk profile** for a relevant professional or personal project. At a minimum, these two (2) documents must include:

- The opportunity
- It's link to the objectives of the sponsoring organisation
- The essential and desirable outcomes intended by the opportunity
- Out of scope activities
- An expected duration, with early and late commencement constraints
- An expected price range, including the amount (if any) that is currently allowed for in the organisation's budget for this opportunity
- The client's name
- Other key stakeholders consulted
- An assessment of the level of risk the opportunity presents to the organisation, including:
    - Project cost risks
    - Project time risks
    - Project scope risks
    - Project impact risks
    - Project stakeholder risks
- An authorisation to proceed to the next stage of development, including a time, cost and owner assigned to this task

You can prepare this using your workplace resources or the templates provided here:
https://open.institute.pm/free-project-management-resources/

NOTE: Changes made to the concept canvas pdf will not save in your web browser window.

Please ensure you download it to your desktop to work on it!

If you do not have a suitable professional or personal project, you should prepare this document using the following case study as a guide.

> *There are 100 project managers and team members in our organisation. Our CEO wants to recognise and reward those individuals who are performing at a very high level.*
>
> *Prepare a concept canvas for this idea, focusing on the outcomes this opportunity might realise and the risks it may present to our organisation.*

For the purposes of assessment, you may make reasonable assumptions about the opportunity that are consistent with organisational and project management good practice. Your mentor is available to assist at any time, and you should submit drafts of work-in-progress to receive feedback prior to final submission.

Assessment interview – Project initiation (OPEN Module 1)

Upon completing OPEN Module 1 you should schedule a **45-60 minute interview** with your mentor to confirm your progress. You will also be assessed in that interview on the key ideas and concepts introduced in the Module and how they connect to each other and project management in practice.

You will be asked some of the following questions, which may lead to more detailed discussion. If there is a question here or from your own experience relevant to this Module that you would like to explore further, please be sure to raise it in the interview.

- Reflect on how your organisation initiates projects...
  - What works well?
  - What could be improved?
- Can a project have too much time or money?
- Which do you think is harder to deliver: one large project or lots of little projects?
- What is the benefit of a project methodology?
  - Can we ever over-document our projects?
- In your observation or experience, why do projects under-perform or fail?
- What are the differences between the roles of the project manager, sponsor and client?
- What do stakeholders typically expect of a project manager?
- What can stakeholders do for their project manager?
- What are some of the barriers to stakeholder engagement you have observed?
- What are some of the criteria you might use to assess the feasibility of different project alternatives?
- What are potential consequences of under- v over-estimating project costs and/or impacts?
  - How accurate do we need to be at the business case?
- What non-financial metrics might you use to baseline and measure…
  - …improved productivity?
  - …customer satisfaction?
  - …employee health and safety?
  - …corporate culture?
  - …environmental impact?
- What if your preferred option is not ‘proven’ by multi-criteria analysis?
- What if the decision-maker(s) go against your recommendation and choose another option?
- Considering the communication basic sender/receiver communication model, how can (and does) project communication go wrong?
- What is your personal communication style and how does that impact on your interactions with others?

- What are the risks of not sharing enough information with our stakeholders?
    - What are the risks of sharing too much?
    - If in doubt, where should we err (under- or over-share)?
- What are some things to keep in mind when writing reports?
- What are some things to keep in mind when preparing and delivering presentations?
- Using examples from your own experience, compare and contrast a ‘good’ and ‘bad’ meeting.
- Give an example from your own observation or experience of groupthink in action. How can you prevent and/or manage groupthink?
- Give an example of how you might provide feedback to team member?

You are encouraged to read widely to develop critical, practical responses to each question posed. You should also use examples in your responses where possible.

You will also be asked to **critically reflect** upon the assets you produced in the previous portfolio tasks (P1-2). Some of the questions you may be asked include:

- What process did you follow in preparing these documents?
- What assumptions did you make and how did/will you test them?
- How did you engage stakeholders in the process?
- What organisational or legislative constraints did you take into account?
- What lessons did you learn for the next time you undertake an activity like this?

This interview will be conducted via videoconference and recorded so as to provide evidence of your competence. You may refer to notes; however, you cannot read from a script. We retain the audio records of these assessments as per our regulatory obligations and privacy policy.

P3: Request for proposal (OPEN Unit 5)

Prepare a **request for proposal (RFP)** for procurement related to a relevant professional or personal project. At a minimum, the document must include:

- Relevant information about the requesting organisation
- An overview of the project the proposal relates to
- A detailed scope of work
- Expected delivery date
- Budget constraints
- Detailed selection criteria, including weightings and evidentiary requirements
- Conditions for participation (both administrative and organisational)
- Contact information, including request for information protocols

You can prepare this using your workplace resources or the template provided here: https://open.institute.pm/free-project-management-resources/

If you do not have a suitable professional or personal project, you should prepare this document using the following case study as a guide.

> *You have been tasked with sourcing entertainment for the project management awards banquet planned in portfolio task three (P3).*
>
> *Prepare a detailed request for proposal for prospective vendors.*

For the purposes of assessment, you may make reasonable assumptions about the project that are consistent with organisational and project management good practice. Your mentor is available to assist at any time, and you should submit drafts of work-in-progress to receive feedback prior to final submission.

P4: Project plan (OPEN Unit 6)

Using Gantt charting software, prepare a **work breakdown structure (WBS), schedule** and **resource plan** for a relevant professional or personal project.

At a minimum, it must include **at least 15** linked and resource-allocated tasks over two (2) hierarchy levels, with clearly marked dependencies and a critical path.

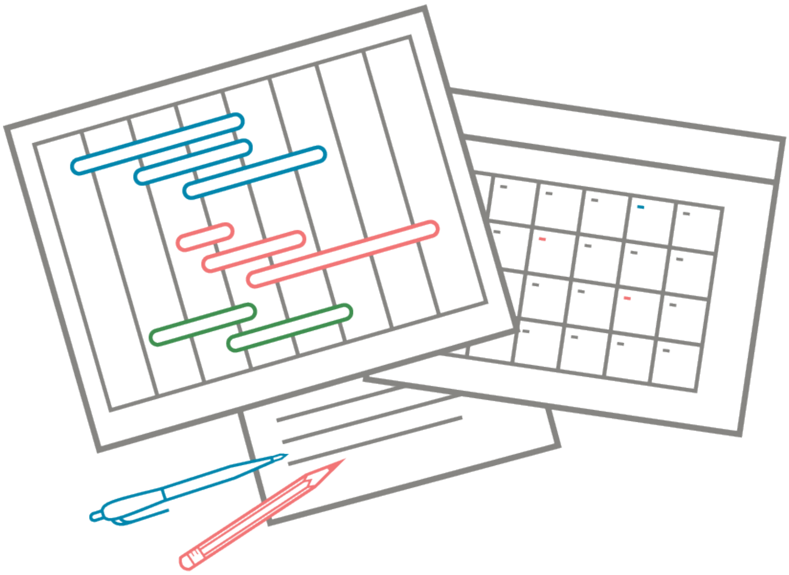
You can prepare this using your workplace preferred software or one of the free software solutions provided here: https://open.institute.pm/free-project-management-resources/

If you have never used Gantt charting software before (and even if you have) you should also view the video tutorial for Gantt Project here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rHCSa5ad34

If you do not have a suitable professional or personal project, you should prepare this document using the following case study as a guide.

> *An awards banquet has been chartered to recognise and reward our high-performing project managers. The event is expected to host 200-220 guests, have a three-course dinner and entertainment, with the venue and catering to be externally sourced.*
>
> *Prepare a detailed project plan for this event using Gantt charting software.*

For the purposes of assessment, you may make reasonable assumptions about the project that are consistent with organisational and project management good practice. Your mentor is available to assist at any time, and you should submit drafts of work-in-progress to receive feedback prior to final submission.



P5: Risk register and management plan (OPEN Unit 7)

Prepare a **risk register and management plan** with a minimum of five (5) entries for a relevant professional or personal project. At a minimum, the register must include:

- Identifying information such as:
  - The project name
  - Its scheduled start and end dates
  - The document owner (usually the project manager)
- Organisational definitions of key values, including:
  - Risk categories and descriptors
  - Probability and impact ratings and descriptors
  - Risk assessment methodology / matrix
  - Risk threshold / treatment strategy

At a minimum, each entry must include:

- Risk title and detailed description
- Risk owner
- Qualitative analysis of risk
- Risk priority rating
- Last and next review dates
- Potential triggers, their probability and rating
- Ratings of potential impacts on key project factors, such as:
  - Time
  - Cost
  - Scope
  - Operations
  - Health and safety
  - Brand / reputation
  - Natural environment
- Contingency plans, including reserves
- Analysis of secondary and residual risks

You can prepare this using your workplace resources or the template provided here: https://open.institute.pm/free-project-management-resources/

If you do not have a suitable professional or personal project, you should prepare this document using the following case study as a guide.

> *An awards banquet has been chartered to recognise and reward our high-performing project managers. The event is expected to host 200-220 guests, have a three-course dinner and entertainment, with the venue and catering to be externally sourced.*
>
> *Prepare a detailed risk register for this event.*

For the purposes of assessment, you may make reasonable assumptions about the project that are consistent with organisational and project management good practice. Your mentor is available to assist at any time, and you should submit drafts of work-in-progress to receive feedback prior to final submission.

Assessment interview – Project planning (OPEN Module 2)

Upon completing OPEN Module 2 you should schedule a **45-60 minute interview** with your mentor to confirm your progress. You will also be assessed in that interview on the key ideas and concepts introduced in the Module and how they connect to each other and project management in practice.

You will be asked some of the following questions, which may lead to more detailed discussion. If there is a question here or from your own experience relevant to this Module that you would like to explore further, please be sure to raise it in the interview.

- Reflect on how your organisation plans projects...
  - What works well?
  - What could be improved?
- The client should define high-level acceptance criteria in project initiation. What should you do if this hasn't been done? What should you do if the stakeholders cannot agree?
- What is the value of a handover checklist? When should it be prepared and who should you consult?
- What should you do if your project estimates of time or cost vary significantly from what was authorised in the project charter?
- What are some possible causes of estimation error? How can you improve confidence in your estimates?
- What is a project's critical path and why does it matter?
- Explain the differences between and different uses for a project schedule network diagram and Gantt chart.
- What process should you follow when evaluating tender responses and negotiating terms with successful vendors? What legal, probity or policy constraints should you be aware of?
- How should you manage requests for information (RFIs) once the EOI or RFP is published?
- Give an example of a conflict of interest. How should this be managed?
- What are some typical sources of project risks?
- Give an example of how a single risk could have both positive and negative impacts?
- What is meant by an organisation's risk appetite? How will risk appetite affect an organisation's tolerance of project risk?
- Using examples, explain the difference between a contingency and management reserve. Why is this distinction important?
- How should you monitor and control risks during project delivery?
- How can you encourage better risk management practices in your projects?
- Using examples, explain the key principles of quality management. How are these principles applied in managing projects?
- What is the cost of quality theory? How might it impact how we plan our project?
- What do you think are the pros and cons of agile project management methods?
- What criteria should we use when deciding the level of detail to which we document our projects?

You are encouraged to read widely to develop critical, practical responses to each question posed. You should also use examples in your responses where possible.

You will also be asked to **critically reflect** upon the assets you produced in the previous portfolio tasks (P3-5). Some of the questions you may be asked include:

- What process did you follow in preparing these documents?
- What assumptions did you make and how did/will you test them?
- How did you engage stakeholders in the process?
- What organisational or legislative constraints did you take into account?
- What lessons did you learn for the next time you undertake an activity like this?

This interview will be conducted via videoconference and recorded so as to provide evidence of your competence. You may refer to notes; however, you cannot read from a script. We retain the audio records of these assessments as per our regulatory obligations and privacy policy.

Assessment interview – Project leadership (OPEN Units 9 & 10)

Upon completing OPEN Units 9 and 10, you should schedule a **45-60 minute interview** with your mentor to confirm your progress. You will also be assessed in that interview on the key ideas and concepts introduced in these Units and how they connect to each other and project management in practice.

This interview will be conducted via videoconference and recorded so as to provide evidence of your competence. You may refer to notes; however, you cannot read from a script. We retain the audio records of these assessments as per our regulatory obligations and privacy policy.

Role play

You have recently accepted a project management position with a large, high profile organisation in your chosen industry. Your new employer is well regarded as an ethical entity that is highly respectful of its staff and stakeholders.

There are 12 project team members, from different backgrounds and with differing levels of expertise. Some team members have worked with the organisation for a number of years and have significant project experience. Other team members are relatively new, while some have worked in other departments/ sections of the organisation before being transferred to this project.

The project team is co-located on a single site, and the physical environment is otherwise conducive to high performance.

The reason for your appointment is that the project has not been meeting its scope, time and cost targets. The previous project manager was away on leave for one month prior to your appointment, and no one filled the leadership role

The project sponsor has identified a number of problems in the team:

- communication between team members appears to be strained at times
- levels of cooperation are falling, and two team members are in open conflict
- the prioritisation of tasks appears to occur on an *ad hoc* basis, and
- important project stakeholders are complaining about being uninformed on progress

While each of the team members was selected for their role on the basis of demonstrated skills and expertise, they seem unable to work together effectively.

Your initial role, therefore, is that of trouble-shooter, problem-solver and team facilitator. You need to bring this group of people together to form a cohesive, effective and productive team.

The sponsor has asked for detailed advice on how you will achieve this.

Explain in a logical sequence how you will develop your project team. Give reasons for each of your actions and the expected outcomes.

What will each of these tasks look like in your project plan?

What will you do if these measures do not work?

In your advice you may be asked about:

- team roles and dynamics
- the various stages of team development
- the importance of agreed goals
- skills/ competency analysis
- the need to link individual goals with project and organisational goals, and individual performance measures
- strategies to encourage input into planning and decision-making
- the need for performance evaluations/ reviews
- providing praise and constructive feedback
- reward and recognition
- the role of diversity
- constructive versus destructive conflict
- trust, reliability, consistency and relationship building
- the importance of, and appropriate formats for, meetings
- initiative, responsibility, motivation, delegation
- the need to monitor, measure and evaluate the team's development
- stakeholder communication, especially with high power / interest stakeholders
- your own interpersonal skills
- ethical considerations
- the project manager as a role model

Remember too that you are the new team member. How will your introduction impact on team dynamics?

Alternate assessment

You may have already experienced a similar situation in your working life.

If you have, you can choose to report on the methods you used to develop your team and solve both its internal and external problems.

How successful were they and why were they successful?

Your report must cover the concepts of team development discussed in this course. They must also demonstrate understanding and application of the same criteria as those required for the case study.

P6: Status report and change request (OPEN Unit 11)

Activity 1: Status report

Complete a detailed report on the status of a relevant professional or personal project. At a minimum, the **status report** should include:

- The project title
- Project manager's name
- Overall status, as well schedule, budget and scope / quality status
- Work completed since the last report
- Work to be completed by the next report
- Exceptions, including
  - The issue or risk and its priority and the date it was first reported
  - Its impact on schedule, budget, scope and/or quality
  - Actions required and/or currently in place

You may also use earned value management or other analytic techniques to assist in the interpretation of data.

You can prepare this using your workplace resources or the template provided here:
https://open.institute.pm/free-project-management-resources/

Activity 2: Change request

Prepare a detailed **change request** for consideration by your project's sponsor and/or governance group with regard to a significant issue identified in your status report.

At a minimum, the change request should include:

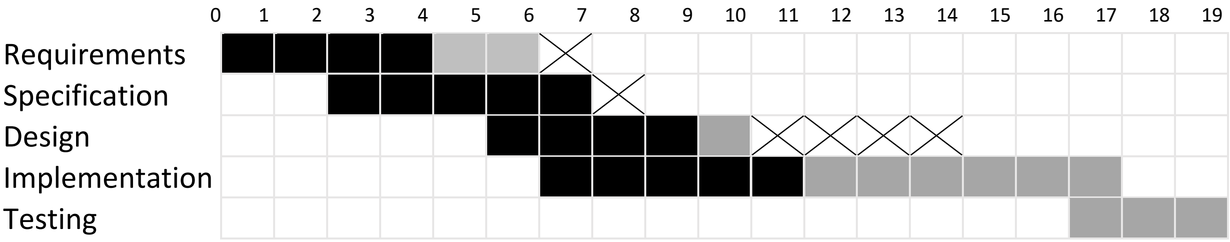
- The project title
- The project manager and sponsors' names
- The date of the request
- The status of the request
- The owner responsible for actioning the change
- The justification for the change
- A list of the stakeholders and secondary sources consulted
- The impact of doing nothing on scope, schedule, budget and outcomes
- Options considered as a response to doing nothing (including their impacts in the same factors) and any secondary and/or residual risks
- A recommended change
- Actions required to implement the change, including updates to the:
  - Project plan (WBS, schedule and budget)
  - Risk register
  - Stakeholders

You can prepare this using your workplace resources or the template provided here:
https://open.institute.pm/free-project-management-resources/

Case study

If you do not have a suitable professional or personal project, you should prepare this document using the following case study as a guide.

This is the first time status has been reported for this project – it is now the end of Week 12.



Budget	**Budget**	**Actual**
Requirements	$10,000	$9,500
Specification	$15,000	$15,000
Design	$20,000	$22,000
Implementation	$50,000	$10,000
Testing	$10,000	$1,000
	$105,000	$57,500

- Work completed is shown in black
- Work to be completed is shown in grey
- Float is marked as X

All expenses are accrued in direct proportion to the time elapsed; in other words, there no up-front or significant 'spikes' in cash flow)

Risks

- The client has indicated that they wish to expand the scope of the project.

Issues

- The design team leader is required on another project commencing immediately.
- The implementation team is frustrated by the poor documentation and number of quality errors coming out of the previous processes.

For the purposes of assessment, you may make reasonable assumptions about the project that are consistent with organisational and project management good practice. Your mentor is available to assist at any time, and you should submit drafts of work-in-progress to receive feedback prior to final submission.

P7: Project reflection (OPEN Unit 12)

This this final portfolio task you are required to identify a project you have recently made a significant contribution to and **critically reflect** upon its performance.

Activity 1 – Written report

The final output will take the form of a written report aimed at recommending improvements for the performance of future projects. The recommendations are primarily intended for organisation that delivered the project. The reflection should **not** be a (product) review of the deliverable created by the project.

In addition to common requirements for business writing, the Reflection should include the following major elements:

- An overview of the project
- Critical analysis of:
    - Project initiation
    - Project planning
    - Project delivery
    - Project close
- A conclusion that is linked to your previous discussion
- Clearly articulated and supported (SMART) recommendations

For assessment purposes, the Reflection must be **at least 2,000 words** in length. The word count does not include headings and titles, footnotes, references and/or appendices. Documents relevant to your project may also be appended or linked to your report.

Step 1 – Gather data

There are two (2) stages to data collection; however, they are not necessarily consecutive. The first stage involves gathering and reviewing all the relevant project planning documentation, including (but not necessarily limited to) the baseline and subsequent versions of the project:

- Concept brief
- Business case
- Stakeholder register
- Project charter
- Work breakdown structure
- Schedule
- Budget
- Risk register

You should also review any and all project:

- Contracts and collateral
- Meeting agendas and meetings
- Status reports
- Change requests
- Change and issues logs
- Lessons learned registers
- General correspondence

From this data, you will begin to get a sense of what the project did well, and where you may have opportunities to improve the future delivery of like projects. You might also draw important conclusions from the poor recordkeeping within (or even absence of) any or all of these documents.

These first impressions should then inform and guide any stakeholder interviews you wish to conduct (stage two). Interviewing people such as the project manager, sponsor and client can give you new perspectives and insight into how the project performed and opportunities for improvement.

As you are also likely to discover more relevant documents as part of this process, you should continually update you secondary (document) sources and the relationships that exist therein.

> *Mentor support*
> *At this point, your mentor is an excellent resource to bounce ideas off and begin to challenge some of your formative analysis. Although your mentor will not directly review any of the data you gather (or, for example, propose stakeholder questions for you); they can support, encourage and guide you as you consolidate your findings.*

Step 2 – Analyse and report

Data analysis is the process of converting all the fragments of *information* you have collected into reliable, actionable *intelligence*.

Unfortunately, the amount of data you have likely generated could answer an incredible number of questions – you could spend the rest of your life trying to analyse all of that information! That is why it is important to go back to the original questions that you are trying to answer.

At the highest level, these questions can be found in your reflection terms of reference; drilling down they may be included in your pre-defined report template. Beyond that, look at other ideas and themes that have emerged from your data (surprises), and consider them in terms of how they relate to your questions and their potential implications for the performing organisation.

You should always be looking for multiple points of evidence for each of your conclusions, all of which will lead to actionable recommendations – the entire purpose of your reflection.

Using the Project Reflection template

Although you may use any report format, a project reflection template appropriate to this assessment task can be downloaded from https://open.institute.pm/free-project-management-resources/. Ensure the blue guidance text is deleted – it cannot be included in your word count!

Minimum word counts for each section are suggested below; however, they are presented as a **rough guide**, and not intended to be prescriptive. For example, not all the items in *Section 4 – Lessons Learned* may actually reveal lessons to learn! You are encouraged here to use your expert judgment in selecting how much detail to respond with at each criterion.

1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

- 1.1 Project description .... 100 words
- 1.2 Intended outcomes .... 50 words
- 1.3 Strategic objectives .... 50 words

2 PROJECT PERFORMANCE

- 2.1 Performance against baseline plans .... 100 words
- 2.2 Outcomes delivered .... 50 words

This section is all about critical analysis. For some topics, you might simply acknowledge that there were no major issues or lessons to be learned – for others, you may present several hundred words of analysis. Where you place your emphasis depends on the specific contingencies of the project you are reflecting upon.

Total: 2,000 words

Mentor support

You should look to engage your mentor at least twice during the analysis and reporting stage, prior to submitting your final report.

In the first instance, you should provide a 'dot-point draft' to your mentor. This involves noting your thoughts for each sub-section of the report, without going into any real detail. The process allows you to organise your thinking into a coherent structure for high-level discussion and feedback. Note that if you write too much at this stage – and subsequently discover you are not on the right track – you may waste significant effort in re-work.

Your second draft should incorporate the feedback provided and begin to flesh out the ideas into a more complete, evidenced analysis. As a guide, the draft you provide to your mentor here should be around 75% complete.

Following this, you should be ready to finalise your report, applying appropriate formatting and style so that it presents as well as it reads.

Although these stages are proposed here as the ideal points of collaboration, in practice you may choose as few or as many interactions as you like as part of the unlimited, on-demand nature of the mentoring program.

Activity 2 - Presentation

Upon accepting your completed report, you mentor will schedule a 45-60 minute interview with you.

In that interview, they will invite you to make a **10-minute presentation** of your project reflection findings. This will be followed by a detailed **question and answer session**.

In order to successfully complete this final interview, you will need to be familiar with larger issues, such as project management frameworks, theories and best practice; more importantly, you need to have a deep understanding of the project you have reflected upon and the major issues encountered.

As this presentation will be conducted via videoconference, you should have with you important materials for easy reference in the course of your interview; these may include key project documents, stakeholder interview notes and the like.

Your interview is evaluated in terms of content and clarity, as well as style. Do not speak too fast and do not overly rely on notes. Be prepared to clarify or elaborate on your assumptions, theoretical positions, methods, and conclusions. Often an examiner plays the devil's advocate to see how well you can think on your feet and justify yourself.

During the interview, do not rush your answers. It is perfectly acceptable to think for a couple of seconds or ask if you are on the right track. If you are not clear about the question, you are entitled to ask for clarification.

Try to be concise and to the point, but at the same time demonstrate that you have a good grasp of the complex issues involved. In other words, do not give superficial answers, but at the same time, do not try and present an entire PhD-level theory of project management in each response.

Importantly, you should put up a good defence of your findings without being defensive. A good defence means that you can provide strong logical arguments and empirically support or defend your position or recommendations. However, don't become hostile if the examiner is critical of your work.

If they are able to point out some real flaws or weaknesses in your reflection, accept their criticisms with humility, and indicate how you might learn from this for the future.

Note that this is an essential real-world skill and may be directly assessed!

Language, literacy and numeracy (LLN)

Language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) are key underpinning skills that support vocational learning and the development of foundational workplace communication skills.

The Institute is committed to ensuring successful learner outcomes by enrolling learners who have the capacity to fulfil the requirements to complete the qualification in which they have enrolled.

The Institute also ensures that our mentors implement appropriate strategies to assist learners needing LLN assistance or are provided with support through external providers specialising in LLN, and maintain fairness, confidentiality, and equality when dealing with these learners.

Please contact your mentor directly if you feel you would benefit from any additional assistance in this regard.

Assessment Integrity

Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, allowing another candidate to copy work for an assignment or an examination, and any other conduct by which a candidate:

- seeks to gain, for themselves or for any other person, any academic advantage or advancement to which they or that other person is not entitled, or
- improperly disadvantages any other candidate.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. It is taking and using someone else's thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own, for example:

- using an author's words without putting them in quotation marks and acknowledging the source
- using an author's ideas without proper acknowledgment, or
- copying another candidate's work.

All your assessable works may be submitted to the plagiarism checking service *TurnItIn* to obtain a report on possible instances of plagiarism. Assessable works may also be included in a reference database.

Candidates engaging in any form of academic misconduct may be subject to the imposition of penalties that range from a deduction/ cancellation of marks to exclusion from the course.