

Certificate of Competence in Purchasing and Supply

Our Policy

All members of the Commercial function shall undertake appropriate professional training according to their grade and role.

Purpose

1. The purpose of this Commercial Policy Statement (CPS) is to provide guidance on undertaking the Certificate of Competence in Purchasing and Supply.
2. It is created as definitive guidance for Ministry of Defence (MOD) Commercial Officers.

Background

3. The Certificate of Competence in Purchasing and Supply (CCPS) is a Government specific purchasing qualification administered by the National School of Government. It forms part of the [Commercial Skills Strategy](#) and is a route to obtaining the equivalent of Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) Level 4.
4. The CCPS is a key element in raising the level of professionalism in Government. The real measure of professionalism is the ability not only to acquire the skills but to demonstrate them in the workplace. The Certificate therefore provides a major opportunity for civil servants engaged in purchasing and supply work to demonstrate their professionalism in the true sense of the word. For those awarded the Certificate, it will exempt them from the CIPS Foundation Diploma stage and will enable them to attain further professional qualifications through the Chartered Institute.
5. The CCPS comprises the following main elements and you can find further details in the [Commercial Professional Pipeline](#).
 - a. Up to 46 hours of on-line e-learning (CAPP / Business Intelligence / Service Contracting);
 - b. 5 days of mandatory commercial foundation training provided by the Defence Academy College of Management and Technology (DA-CMT);
 - c. 6 Revision training days provided by DA-CMT;
 - d. Self study - a minimum of 20 days individual effort across all examinations;
 - e. Assessment of candidates' performance in the workplace, recorded in a passport.

Examinations

6. An Examinations Board including representatives from the National School of Government and MOD, approves CCPS papers. The examinations comprise three papers of 3 hours each. Candidates will be required to undertake all of the prescribed examinations, in sequence (unless re-sitting), before they can apply for the Certificate. Each Paper is aligned to aspects of the Commercial training programme - Paper 1 relates to Commercial Awareness and Practitioner Programme (CAPP) Foundation, Paper 2 and Paper 3 to the remaining four modules. If candidates fail any examination, feedback will be given on areas of weakness and they can apply to re-sit the relevant part. For planning purposes candidates can expect examinations to be run in April and November each year at a number of locations, including Bristol, Sheffield and London.

Passport

7. Having successfully completed the CCPS and examinations outlined above, and gained the necessary experience, certified in their [Personal Passport](#), candidates may apply for the Certificate.

8. Success at the CCPS will provide individuals with an independently recognised professional qualification, recognised in both Government and the private sector.

Funding

9. The CCPS examination route for all Defence Commercial Function (DCF) staff is classed as MOD corporate business training and therefore the Commercial Capability team fund tuition. Candidates' own budget holders will need to fund their travel and subsistence costs to examination centres.

Level of Commitment

10. Entering this training commitment is not taken lightly by the Department and should not be underestimated by students or their line managers. Each module studied will require considerable commitment. Line Managers must endorse applications allowing sufficient time to attend the tuition, revision and exams. Line Managers should make provision for students to have study time and can find guidance on this in [DIN 2011DIN01-053](#).

Cancellation charges

11. Line Managers should be aware that cancellation charges will apply if an individual is prevented from attending any module or examination at short notice due to work commitments. Individuals' budget holders will ultimately bear these cancellation costs.

Eligibility

The CCPS examination route is available to any member of staff within the DCF. Completion of CAPP on-line training is a pre-requisite for undertaking the Certificate of Competence in Purchasing and Supply as the first exam is based on learning from the CAPP modules.

How to Apply

12. You can find details on how to apply for the CCPS examinations on the DA-CMT website.

Re-sit costs

13. The MOD permits students who fail an exam to undertake one re-sit per module. Individuals' budget manager will have to fund any additional re-sits required. The MOD would wish to keep the necessity for re-sits to a minimum.

Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) Student Membership

14. In the drive towards greater professionalism in the Commercial Function, CCPS students should be given the opportunity to become CIPS Student Members. This will provide exposure to all the benefits of CIPS membership and in turn assist students in achieving the greater professionalism the MOD requires.

15. The Commercial Function Management Board has endorsed this principle and has recognised the benefits and support for CCPS students to enrol as CIPS Student Members, as soon as they commence the CCPS Training. Enrolment as CIPS Student Members will provide the following benefits:

- a. Study Guides / Tips
- b. Publications on Best Practice
- c. Access to Member only pages on the CIPS Website
- d. Institute magazines available free of charge
- e. Receipt of special topical mailings
- f. Access to CIPS Bookshop
- g. Discounts on Courses, seminars and conferences
- h. Entitled to full services of CIPS (i.e. support in the workplace)

16. It is also hoped that, by exposing students to the work, support and benefits of CIPS membership early on in their career, they will be encouraged to consider furthering their ambitions beyond the CCPS and proceed to CIPS Professional Stage (Level 6).

17. Cost of [CIPS Student Membership](#) can be found on the [CIPS website](#). As with any other membership to a professional body, this cost will have to be borne by the individual's budget holder but the benefits to the individual and to the department outweighs this minimal outlay in funds.

Examination Tips

18. The DA-CMT will cover related useful information, including past papers at the CCPS Exam Revision workshops.

Contacts, Training and Further Information

19. The [Web Access Page](#) for this topic contains a summary of the topic, details of who you can speak to for advice, and what training is available. It also contains links to other relevant topics and information.