



Government
Commercial
Function

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY PROGRAMME

Four years in:
progress and benefits realisation



April 2023

The journey to here

The programme was launched in 2018 to provide training, development and accreditation for the many thousands of staff who manage contracts, often as part of their main role. It has enabled better knowledge and application of the principles of contract management - building skills and confidence to work more closely with our suppliers to deliver services for the public sector.

Four years in, we remain fully committed to maintaining the quality, integrity and credibility of our training and development provision for contract managers through the Contract Management Capability Programme.

Here's an insight into how we've been doing.



Programme success

■ Soundbites

“Across the UK, mission-critical public services are provided under contract. Negotiating a contract creates the potential for value, managing a contract delivers on that. So how expertly we manage contracts is key to delivering high value services for citizens.”



Alex Chisholm

Chief Operating Officer for the Civil Service and Permanent Secretary (Cabinet Office)



Gareth Rhys Williams

Government Chief Commercial Officer

“Managing contracts well is vital in order to deliver the outcomes that citizens and ministers expect. Our agreements with our suppliers and partners are well thought through, but no contract manages itself. Hence why we need a cadre of well-trained colleagues capable of turning a contract into delivery. This programme has transformed our capability - over 17,000 people have passed the foundation level. A great beginning!”

Programme success

“Over 20,000 civil servants have now secured an accreditation in contract management through the programme and we have many hundreds more on their journey towards a professional qualification.

We’ve received tremendous feedback on the quality of our development courses, and user satisfaction now stands at 98%. The programme has come a long way these past few years.”



Marco Salzedo

Director of Commercial and Contract Management Capability

■ Delegates



“Your **self-confidence** in **understanding contract management terminology** inspires confidence in others that you know what you’re talking about...”

Patrick Murray, Foreign & Commonwealth Development Office



“It really helped me **grow as an individual**. The number of times in my contract management experience I’ve picked up things I’ve learned from the sessions and applied them...”

Henry Prudden, NHS Blood & Transplants



“It was about **utilising my existing skills** and **developing contract management skills** so it was invaluable for me...”

Ima Orosei, Cabinet Office



■ Evidence: people success

11,875
Foundation
accreditations
from central
government

A further 8,225
Foundation
accreditations from
the wider public
sector

Skills uplifts in every
category reported by
learners at Practitioner
and Expert

Over 200 accreditations at
practitioner- and expert-
level with hundreds more
on their journey

Over two-thirds
at practitioner-
level have moved
from 'improving' to
'skilled'

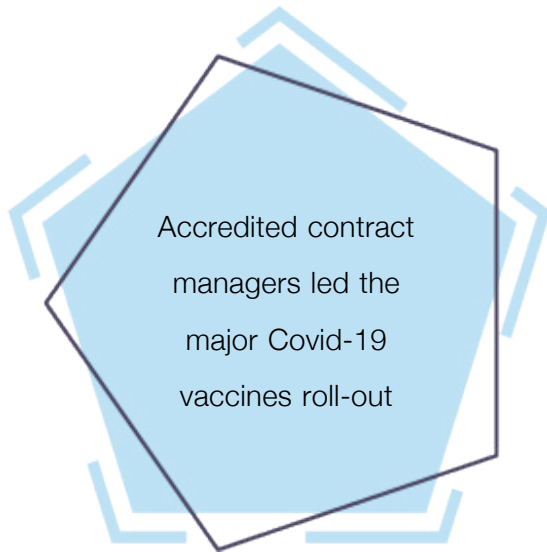
The pass rate for
technical interview at
accreditation assessment
is now 92%

99% of learners
said that the
coaching that was
provided "added
value"

Over 700 different
public sector
organisations have
staff enrolled on to
the programme

The accreditation
rate has increased
to 74% from an
initial 40%

■ Evidence: realising the benefits



Accredited contract managers led the major Covid-19 vaccines roll-out



Over £873m of savings have been reported by learners over the period after completing the programme



More than £666m further savings ahead are now anticipated by accredited learners



One government department now envisages savings of more than £100m over the duration of the contract



74% have secured improved value for money from their contractual outcomes since completing the programme



62% reported enhanced identification and management of risks and issues

How the programme is progressing

FOUNDATION

Accreditation: The baseline programme, which covers the fundamental principles of contract management, has seen more than 20,000 successful accreditations, with a further 12,670 now en route to accreditation.

BEYOND FOUNDATION

Development: This concise and essential 'pathway' course towards the higher technical accreditations has armed many hundreds of learners with the pre-requisite skills, ready to move forward to Practitioner and Expert.

PRACTITIONER

Accreditation: This now nationally-recognised and CPD-endorsed accreditation programme has over 350 successfully completed training, with over one hundred already accredited.

EXPERT

Accreditation: The programme's strategic level qualification has now seen almost 250 delegates complete the course, and rapidly approaching a further hundred achieving accreditation.

SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OWNER

Development: The newly-reinvigorated executive-level development programme will roll out in 2023, with senior transformational leads already signed up to participate, and more sign-ups in the pipeline.

EVENTS AND WEBINARS

Complementary **CMCP webinars** as part of a topical monthly programme and one-off **podcasts** and **masterclasses** on themes such as procurement, grants and social value all provide extra support.

How the programme is progressing

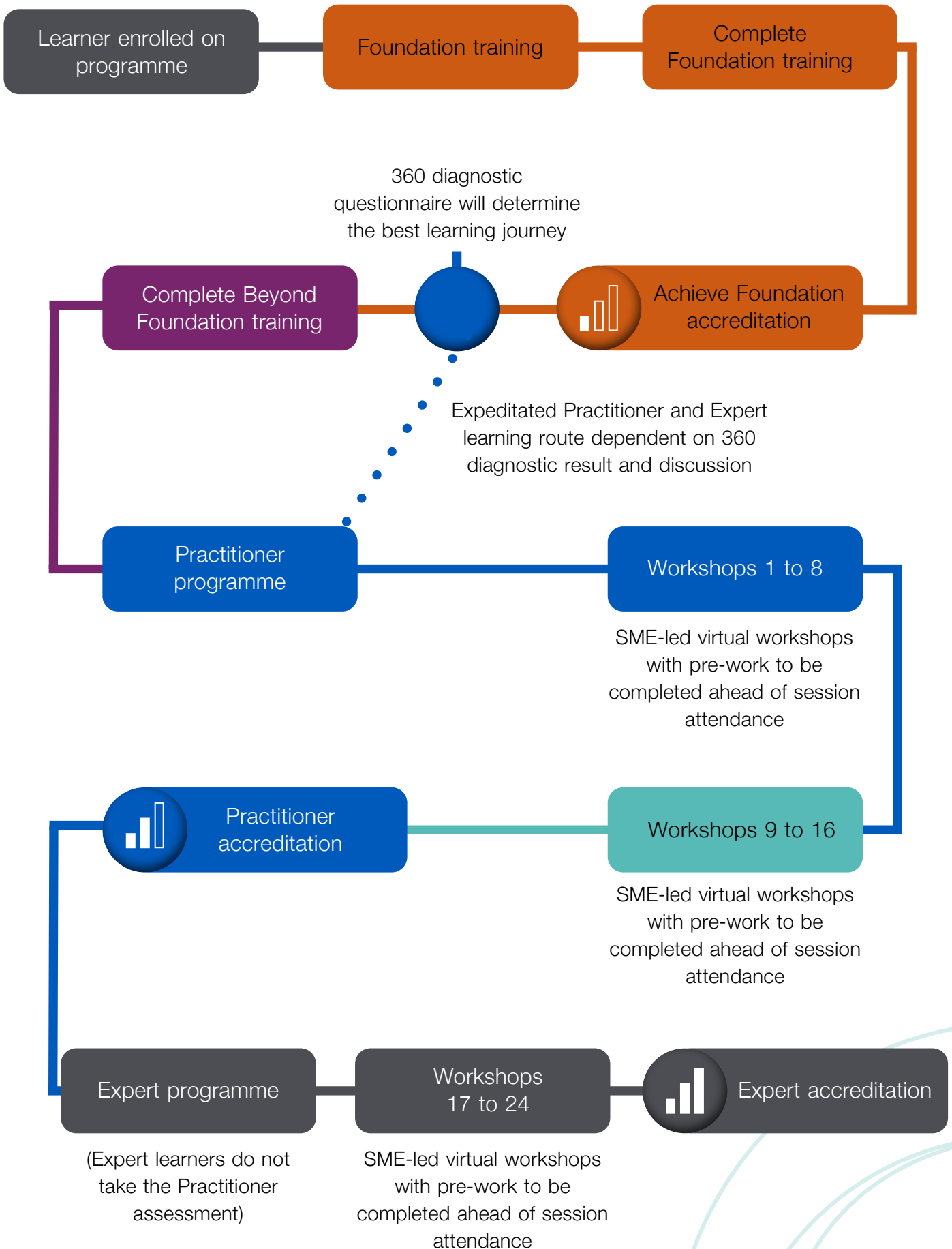
Since the programme began, there have been clear indications of the benefits for the learners and their organisations through:

- enhanced technical knowledge and a skills boost for those learners managing contracts or suppliers to demonstrate back on their workplaces
- increasing numbers of professionally qualified and accredited people
- greater efficiencies through having confident individuals in place to manage risk and complexity are showing
- better value is being provided through more informed and timelier contract management decision-making
- higher quality services have led to more satisfied service users
- the programme has seen government departments demonstrate a commitment to setting and maintaining contract management professional standards by nominating their staff for the programme
- people sharing good practice with each other across the sector in communities of practice

As part of the programme the Contract Management Professional Standards were launched in February 2018 and are now fully embedded into the accreditation programmes; Foundation, Practitioner and Expert, and also the development programmes; Beyond Foundation and Senior Responsible Owner. These outline the behavioural competencies and technical skills needed by anyone involved in managing government contracts effectively.

The programme has been strengthened to now provide a natural flow through the levels of technical expertise, and learners can progress from foundation-level through to the more strategic levels, dependent upon the nature of their role.

How the programme is progressing



Realising the benefits

Learning and development managers and partnership managers stay in touch with the accredited contract management professionals, surveying delegates, and collecting feedback, evidence and examples of how the learning has been put into practice since accreditation, and how the benefits of the programme have been realised.

Some notable responses received on how **skills and attributes** have been boosted through the programme:

- “better ability to structure the commercial elements of complicated programme issues”
- “I was part of the pilot scheme. Attending helped me understand what my ‘customers’ would be learning. I am now the CMCP contact for the army so I fully endorse the programme.”
- “informed approach to capability development and career development - contributed to current choice of role and promotion”
- “contract literacy and ‘speaking the same language’ have been immensely helpful, as has the design and development”
- “better understanding of risk and how to articulate it in this environment and the

transition from risk to an issue and issue management”

- “greater awareness of the end-to-end contract lifecycle and how each area inter-links”
- “understanding the supplier mindset better and the drivers behind some of their behaviours”

And some responses about how **financial benefits** have been realised:

- “meetings that drove savings of **£850,000** in one contract and **£456,000** in another due to charging errors and contractual delivery improvements”
- “as a result of the training I was able to draw upon the learning and I would say that it was the relationship and risk mindset that enabled me to reduce a proposed procurement by **c.£120m**”
- “reduced cost of contract delivery of **£622m** by transitioning to a new supplier”
- “reduced costs of change by **£808,000**”
- “negotiation of contract amendments of **c.£5m**”
- “**£143m** savings delivered through contract T&Cs as well as £17.8m delivered through scrutiny and analysis of costs, risk allocation and robust negotiation strategy”

How the programme has evolved

As the programme is organic, it keeps evolving. We take feedback on the learning, systems and administrative processes from learners, leads and Boards, and make programme improvements and changes to our processes on an ongoing basis.

YOU SAID:

“I have to balance learning with my day-to day workload and home commitments.”

WE DID:

All modules are now flexible. Any group sessions can be date planned and self-selected in advance.

YOU SAID:

“Taking time out of the office to attend sessions is becoming increasingly difficult.”

WE DID:

Modules are now all online so there is no need to travel to take part in group sessions - they are virtual.

YOU SAID:

“The assessment day and technical interview can be a little daunting.”

WE DID:

Coaching and Q&A ‘drop in’ sessions to help prepare are now offered. 98% found this beneficial, 95% passed their technical interview first time.

YOU SAID:

“The Big Blue Button platform can sometimes cause disruption.”

WE DID:

Platform bandwidth has been increased to allow users to receive faster and higher quality audio and visual.

YOU SAID:

“I’ve been experiencing some difficulty in booking sessions.”

WE DID:

We’ve removed booking restrictions and brought all module sessions into view and they can all be advance booked.

YOU SAID:

“In some group exercises the ask was unclear at the start and this led to time being wasted and rushed discussion.”

WE DID:

Session times have been extended for group exercises, and the subject matter experts now visit breakouts to check on the direction of travel.

YOU SAID:

“I needed more support outside of the timetabled sessions to help me to apply the learning.”

WE DID:

A consistent support framework has been designed, with; guidance available through Government Commercial College, one-to-one coaching sessions, a dedicated L&D Manager, greater access to Subject Matter Expert expertise and informal SME drop-in sessions now made available.

Improving the learner experience

Based on feedback provided, we've also been improving and enhancing the experience for both learners for the duration of their study programme, and for potential learners as they look to register to begin their course of study.

This includes:

- **making better use of resources;** structural changes and time-saving improvements such as; self-booking, a more dynamic welcome session process, and an auto-registration option with a sector professional body for access to their resources
- **the sessions and the journey to accreditation;** compressing the speed of journey to accreditation for experienced and determined learners, and reducing the number of separate sessions for learners
- **moving to Microsoft Teams as a preferred delivery platform;** as this will bring better functionality and flexibility
- **alternative routes to accreditation;** we're exploring different routes to account for different levels of experience - such as for existing contract managers with significant experience already, or a 'top up' from practitioner-level to expert-level
- **aligning with the Transforming Public Procurement programme;** ensuring connectivity with the training and information from the initiative and the new legislation
- **offering complementary resources to help with learning;** we have developed a diverse annual programme of webinars that will particularly appeal to learners, and are building a platform where good practice Powerpoints, webinar recordings, briefings, and programme documents are stored

The challenges ahead

With the programme in a healthy position and ready for further development and expansion, we have some ambitious projects starting.

■ Expansion of the programme to wider public sector organisations

With over 400 public sector organisations, agencies and bodies in existence, our plan is to make the programme even more wide-reaching and inclusive. Working in collaboration with Crown Commercial Services, and through initiatives such as the *Pioneer Programme* with local authorities, aim is to support the uplift in commercial and contract management capabilities with the wider government space and build resilience within roles.

■ A less resource-intensive Assessment Development Centre

'ADC 2.0' is an internal transformational project which will develop a new model for the Assessment Development Centre. Following initial stakeholder workshops, the work is being scoped and future options generated. This will ensure our funding resources are channelled more efficiently.

■ Government Commercial College system reform

We're undertaking business process re-engineering work in this area, with the aim of streamlining and upgrading the Government Commercial College for both Commercial Capability Programme and Contract Management Capability Programme learners. This will result in a better end-to-end experience for all users.

■ A new platform and changes to the way people register

The move to a Microsoft Teams facility brings a number of organisational challenges, but a plan is in place to ensure a seamless move to a new platform.

■ Annual conference and programme of webinars

The programme held its first annual conference in 2021 to promote good practice and debate the key

The challenges ahead

topical issues. With over a thousand registrations each time, and the conference in its third year, we will ensure the event becomes established.

Due to successful delegate numbers, the new annual programme of complementary monthly webinars has moved to a second year, with many hundreds of delegates registering for each one.

More information

For more information about the programme, our work and the challenges ahead email contract-management@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

