



Government
Commercial
Function

PRACTITIONER

Training and accreditation
programme



July 2025

About the programme

■ The need for accredited contract management professionals

Citizens, service users, communities and the government all need to see value for money and service efficiency from the public sector spend on external contracts. Agreements with suppliers and partners may be well thought through, but no contract manages itself. It is important to have the skills in the public sector to match those of our private sector suppliers.

To manage these, contract managers need to be efficient, effective, skilled and knowledgeable. A recognised accreditation can lay the foundation for this to be achieved.

■ Building and recognising skills

The Practitioner programme is a structured programme of training for accreditation. It builds upon existing contract management expertise to offer recognition to those meeting the Contract Management Standards.

■ A blended approach

The programme offers instruction and learning through a range of formats for learners to engage with. We know many people learn through 70% experiential learning, 20% learning with peers and colleagues and 10% via formal, instructor-led learning. The Programme reflects this in its structure and organisation of the learning material to help practitioners connect theory with practice.

The programme will provide:

- a combination of on demand learning and instructional workshops
- self-directed learning, including interactive online activities that provide formative feedback and personal practice reflection
- participation in peer-learning group activities
- support and preparation for assessment
- interaction with specialist contract management instructors and learning and development specialists

■ Who should take on the Practitioner accreditation programme?

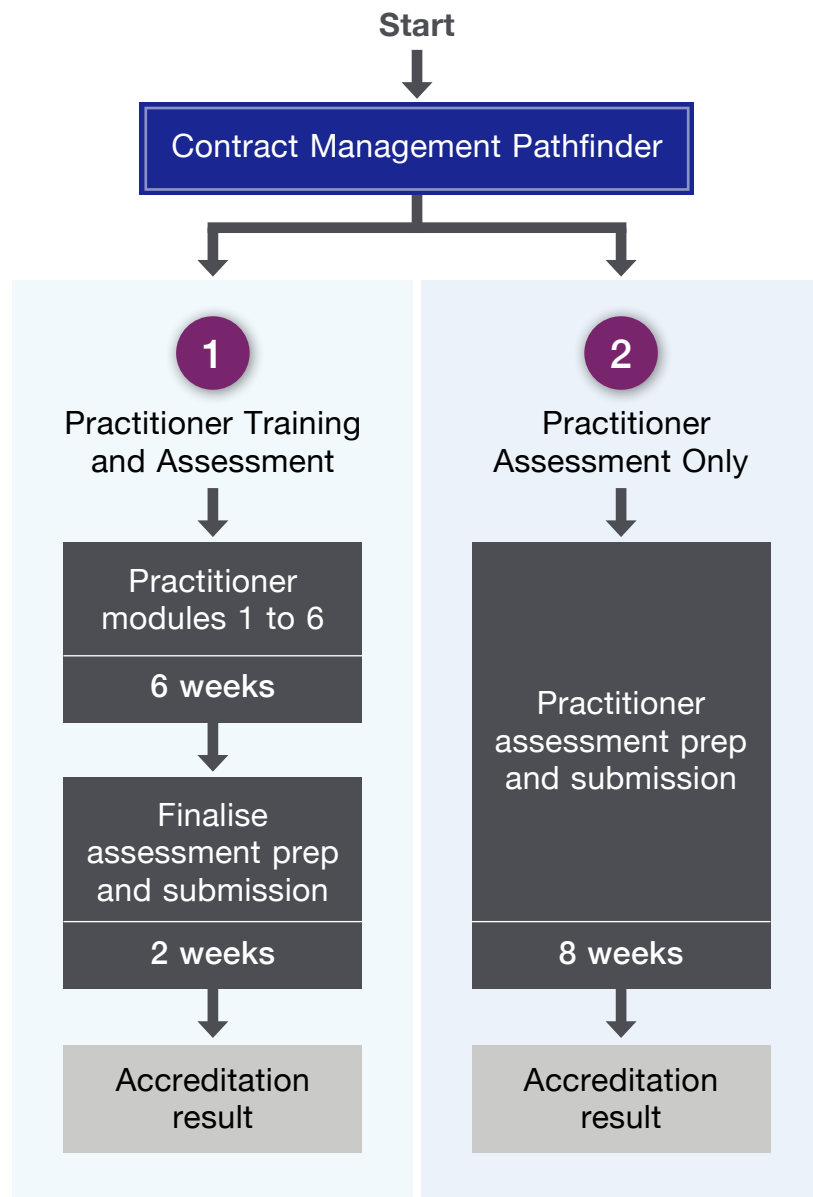
Practitioner is a technical and operational programme, with a focus on UK Government contracts. It has been designed for contract managers within:

- central government departments
- wider public sector organisations
- local authorities and arms length bodies
- social housing providers
- social enterprises
- third sector/charities
- academia and school business

The programme is suitable for anyone who is a full-time contract manager and brings at least 6 to 12 months experience in the role, gained from managing contracts with medium to high value and levels of risk. These would typically be silver or multiple bronze contracts as determined by the tiering tool for those whose organisations use it.



PRACTITIONER PATHWAYS



Benefits of the programme

Having trained and accredited contract managers within your organisation will reinforce to the government, service users, and the wider public sector that contracts are being efficiently managed. Without this, it's a contract risk. Contract risks are business risks.

■ Benefits for the organisation

The benefits for an organisation are:

- placing contract managers on the programme demonstrates a commitment to developing your people
- increasing numbers of people gaining accreditation demonstrates credibility and how professional standards are maintained
- learners can put their knowledge from the training and accreditation into making cost savings and contract efficiencies
- training and accreditation is shaped around real world examples from your work
- the programme focuses exclusively on UK public sector contracts

■ Benefits for the learner

The benefits for the learner are:

- an accreditation that is transferable across public sector roles
- a significant skills uplift and knowledge boost
- the CPD Standards Office endorsement provides personal development time credits
- joining a community of accredited contract managers, boosting contract management as a recognised profession
- free membership of WorldCC, the professional association for the sector, for the duration of your programme

Benefits of the programme

■ Wider benefits

Everyone on the programme will be able to benefit from putting their newly-acquired knowledge and skills into practice. This could include:

- being a key part of achieving value for money in contracts
- gaining satisfaction from seeing the contracts being delivered meeting organisational objectives
- being a fundamental part of contracts being delivered to time and to budget
- ensuring taxpayers' money is spent wisely
- forging stronger relationships with suppliers to future-proof effective public sector contract management
- joining creative communities of contract management professionals to share knowledge, expertise and good practice right across the public sector
- helping others benefit from knowledge by training and supporting less experienced colleagues



■ Demonstrating the benefits of the programme

The statistics tell the story. From a survey of all accredited Practitioner and Expert learners in 2025:



92% completing the programme have made contract savings



£182m cost savings have been reported or are anticipated this year



65% have benefited from better knowledge of contract terminologies



79% learners have brought about contract efficiencies



61% learners have improved their supplier relationships



75% learners now feel more skilled in managing risk

Programme content

Practitioner Module 1 - Commercial Awareness for Contract Managers

- contract manager contribution to pre-procurement activities
- common commercial and contract terms and financial language
- commercial risk awareness at pre-award stage
- supply chain compliance and sustainability
- safeguarding measures to protect the authority

Practitioner Module 2 - Managing Contract Mobilisation

- the importance of planning
- key documentation for planning
- the intelligent client function (ICF) and governance
- what else should be on a contract manager's radar during mobilisation?
- reflective practice, evidence and portfolio-building

Practitioner Module 3 - Managing Contract Risk and Change

- risk mindset and management
- performance-related risk and risk indicators
- managing change control
- evidencing your risk and change practice and its impact

Practitioner Module 4 - Managing Contract Delivery

- maintaining oversight over time
- evidence-based decision-making and recommendations
- clarity of processes
- management information and reporting
- managing (poor) performance and disputes

Practitioner Module 5 - Managing Relationships with Suppliers and Stakeholders

- background to supplier relationship management both inside central government and in other contracting organisations
- fundamentals of relationship management in publicly funded contracts
- what stakeholders are
- engagement and treatment strategies

Practitioner Module 6 - Managing Contract Exit and Transition

- contract exit, contract transition, or both?
- managing the contract exit or transition plan
- relationships with suppliers during exit/transition
- managing stakeholders in the exit or transition phase
- preparing for assessment

Essentials



Entry pre-requisite: Minimum of Foundation level understanding of the fundamentals and 6 to 12 months experience in a role which covers contracts with medium level value, complexity and risk. For organisations who use the tiering tool, this is typically associated with silver level or multiple bronze level contracts.



First step: After recommendation from the contract lead, the first step for learners is to complete the Contract Management Pathfinder which will guide and signpost to the right programme and pathway.



Delivery method: Online blended learning which means there is no need to travel. A suitable broadband internet connection is needed, along with suitable audio to listen and participate in any group sessions. All content is delivered through the Government Commercial College.



Programme dates: 3 intakes per year.



Assessment: Based on an ePortfolio of evidence against the Contract Management Professional Standards, assessed by contract management specialists.



Accreditation: Government recognised accreditation.

■ Pathway 1: Practitioner Training and Assessment



Length of programme: 12 weeks from start to accreditation results. 6 weeks of training and building the ePortfolio with L&D support then 2 weeks to finalise and submit the ePortfolio. 4 weeks for assessment, marking and moderation.



Time commitment: Approximately 42 hours of instruction and learning plus self-directed ePortfolio build. Each module is 7 hours in duration.



Cost: £6,100. Some funding is available.

■ Pathway 2: Practitioner Assessment Only



Length of programme: 8 weeks to build and submit the ePortfolio with L&D support. 4 weeks for assessment marking and moderation.



Time commitment: ePortfolio build is self-directed.



Cost: £2,200. Some funding is available.