

# MSP Practitioner Candidate Syllabus

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# 1 Introduction

The MSP Practitioner qualification is intended for:

- programme managers and aspiring programme manager
- project managers/senior project managers
- business change managers
- operational line managers/staff (e.g. process owners) operating within a programme environment
- other key staff involved in the design, development and delivery of programmes, including: Programme Board members (e.g. senior responsible owner), programme assurance, programme management office personnel
- portfolio management staff
- specialist programme staff.

The MSP Practitioner examination is intended to assess whether the candidate can demonstrate sufficient ability to apply and tailor the MSP programme management framework (as described in the syllabus below) to be awarded the MSP Practitioner qualification. A successful Practitioner candidate should, with suitable direction, be able to start applying the framework to a real programme but may not be sufficiently skilled to do this appropriately for all situations. Their individual programme management expertise, the complexity of the programme, and the support provided for the use of MSP in their work environment will all be factors that impact what the practitioner can achieve.

Candidates must hold the MSP Foundation (5<sup>th</sup> Edition) qualification in order to satisfy the prerequisite requirement for the MSP Practitioner exam. Evidence of a successful pass must be uploaded to the candidate's PeopleCert portal prior to them sitting the Practitioner exam. Practitioner results will be withheld for those candidates who do not satisfy the prerequisite requirement.

## 2 Exam Overview

<b>Material allowed</b>	MSP manual	This is an 'open book' examination. The <i>Managing Successful Programmes 5<sup>th</sup> Edition</i> publication is permitted. No materials other than this publication and the examination materials may be used in the examination.
<b>Exam duration</b>	2 hours 30 minutes	NOTE: Candidates taking the exam in a language that is not their native or working language may be awarded 25% extra time, i.e. 188 minutes in total.
<b>Number of marks</b>	70 marks	Each Matching question has 3 question items to be matched. There are 18 Matching question items, in addition to 52 Standard Classic questions, therefore there are 70 question items in the exam in total.
<b>Pass mark</b>	42 marks	60% or higher - a raw score of 42 marks or above.
<b>Level of thinking</b>	Bloom's levels 3 & 4	"Bloom's level" describes the type of thinking needed to answer the question. For Bloom's level 3 questions, the candidate needs to apply their knowledge to a situation. For Bloom's 4 questions, the candidate needs to analyse the information provided and reason whether a course of action is effective/appropriate.
<b>Exam format</b>	Scenario booklet with additional information, & Question booklet	The candidate should read the 'Programme Scenario' which gives background information about the programme that the questions apply to. For at least one question, candidates will also need to use the 'Additional Information' in the Scenario booklet, which gives information about people who may be working on the programme.
<b>Question types</b>	Standard Classic & Matching	The questions are all 'multiple choice'. There is a short description of a situation, and then a question. For the 'Standard Classic' questions (1 mark), candidates are presented with a question and four answer options (A,B,C,D). For the 'Matching' questions (3 marks), candidates are presented with 3 pieces of information and are required to choose an answer for each from a list of 5 or 6 answer options.

Please see the sample paper for an example of the exam format and content.

## 2.1 QUESTION TYPES

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### Example 'Standard Classic' question:

The programme is in the XXX process in Tranche 2. The programme manager has decided to do X.

Was this an appropriate action for the programme manager to take, and why?

- A. Yes, because XXX
- B. Yes, because XXX
- C. No, because XXX
- D. No, Because XXX

### Example 'Matching' question:

Which role (A-E) is responsible for each task?

Choose only ONE role for each action. Each role can be used once, more than once, or not at all.

1) To do XXX	A. Sponsoring group members
2) To do XXX	B. Senior responsible owner
3) To do XXX	C. Programme manager
	D. Business change manager
	E. Programme office lead

### 3 MSP Practitioner Syllabus

The tables below give a summary of the concepts that are tested in the exam, and the main parts of the manual in which these are described (in parentheses). These refer to the section, but not the subsections within it.

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Bloom's Level	No. Marks
1. Understand how to apply the MSP principles in context	1.1 Analyse the application of MSP principles in context: (tab 4.1, tab 5.1, tab 6.1, tab 7.1, tab 8.1, tab 9.1, tab 10.1) a) Lead with purpose (2.1) b) Collaborate across boundaries (2.2) c) Deal with ambiguity (2.3) d) Align with priorities (2.4) e) Deploy diverse skills (2.5) f) Realize measurable benefits (2.6) g) Bring pace and value (2.7)	BL4	7
2. Understand how to apply and tailor relevant aspects of the MSP themes in context	2.1 Assess: a) The component parts of the programme strategy (3.4, tab 4.3, tab 5.4, tab 6.3, tab 7.3, tab 8.2, tab 9.4, tab 10.3) b) The component parts of the programme plans (3.5, tab 4.3, tab 6.3, tab 7.3, tab 9.4) c) How to apply the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle (3.3)	BL3	2
	<b>2.2 Organization theme (chapter 4)</b>		
	2.2.1 Apply the MSP requirements for the 'organization' theme, demonstrating an understanding of: a) The key documents required to support the 'organization' theme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme strategy: governance approach (including organization structure) (4.3, 4.5, 4.6, tab 4.3)</li> <li>• Programme strategy: stakeholder engagement approach (4.11, tab 4.3)</li> <li>• Stakeholder engagement and communications plan (4.12, tab 4.3)</li> </ul> b) The areas of focus for key roles associated with the 'organization' theme (tab 4.4) c) The recommended programme management team structure (4.5, 4.5.1-3, 4.6.1-3)	BL3	4
	2.2.2 Analyse whether an approach to applying the 'organization' theme is effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, and the purpose and requirements of the theme (chapter 4, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5)	BL4	2

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Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Bloom's Level	No. Marks
2. Understand how to apply and tailor relevant aspects of the MSP themes in context (continued)	<b>2.3 Design theme (chapter 5)</b>		
	2.3.1 Apply the MSP requirements for the 'design' theme, demonstrating an understanding of: a) The key documents required to support the 'design' theme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme strategy: design approach (5.3, tab 5.4)</li> <li>• Vision statement (5.4, tab 5.4)</li> <li>• Benefits map (5.5.2, tab 5.4)</li> <li>• Benefit profile (5.5.4, tab 5.4)</li> <li>• Risk register (5.6, tab 5.4)</li> <li>• Target operating model (5.7, 5.7.1, fig 5.8, tab 5.4)</li> </ul> b) The areas of focus for key roles associated with the 'design' theme (tab 5.5) c) The recommended approach to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The types of benefits and the path to benefits (5.5.1-2, fig 5.2)</li> <li>• The types of programme risk and risk prioritization (5.6.1-2)</li> <li>• The effectiveness of the target operating model and the gap between the current and future states (5.7, 5.7.1-2)</li> </ul>	BL3	4
	2.3.2 Analyse whether an approach to applying the 'design' theme is effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, and the purpose and requirements of the theme (chapter 5, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5)	BL4	2
	<b>2.4 Justification theme (chapter 6)</b>		
	2.4.1 Apply the MSP requirements for the 'justification' theme, demonstrating an understanding of: a) The key documents required to support the 'justification' theme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme mandate (6.3, tab 6.3)</li> <li>• Programme strategy: funding approach (6.4, tab 6.3)</li> <li>• Programme brief (6.5, tab 6.3)</li> <li>• Business case (6.6, tab 6.3)</li> <li>• Financial plan (6.7, tab 6.3)</li> </ul> b) The areas of focus for key roles associated with the 'justification' theme (tab 6.4) c) The recommended approach to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial and non-financial measures of benefits/ disbenefits, including justifying the investment (6.6.1, 6.6.1.1-2)</li> <li>• Key considerations when validating a business case (6.6.4)</li> <li>• Combined effects of risks (6.6.2, fig 6.4)</li> <li>• Financial planning, including budgets and cash flow, tracking and forecasting, management of financial contingency, and reporting on variances (6.7, 6.7.1-5, 6.6.3)</li> </ul>	BL3	4
	2.4.2 Analyse whether an approach to applying the 'justification' theme is effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, and the purpose and requirements of the theme (chapter 6, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5)	BL4	2

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Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Bloom's Level	No. Marks
2. Understand how to apply and tailor relevant aspects of the MSP themes in context (continued)	<b>2.5 Structure theme (chapter 7)</b>		
	2.5.1 Apply the MSP requirements for the 'structure' theme, demonstrating an understanding of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The key documents required to support the 'structure' theme:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme strategy: delivery approach (7.3, tab 7.3)</li> <li>Delivery plan; including resourcing, dependencies, transition and benefits baseline (7.5, tab 7.3)</li> <li>Benefits realization plan (7.8, tab 7.3)</li> <li>Programme strategy: resourcing approach (7.9, tab 7.3)</li> </ul> </li> <li>The areas of focus for key roles associated with the 'structure' theme (tab 7.4)</li> <li>The recommended approach to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing the appropriate pace (including balancing capacity and ability, and balancing achievability and affordability) (7.4, 7.4.1-2)</li> <li>Delivery planning, including incremental progression, landing points and tranches (7.5)</li> <li>Multimodal delivery (7.6)</li> <li>Dependencies (7.7)</li> <li>Benefits realization planning (7.8)</li> <li>Procurement and supply chain management (7.9.1)</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	BL3	4
	2.5.2 Analyse whether an approach to applying the 'structure' theme is effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, and the purpose and requirements of the theme (chapter 7, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5)	BL4	2
	<b>2.6 Knowledge theme (chapter 8)</b>		
	2.6.1 Apply the MSP requirements for the 'knowledge' theme, demonstrating an understanding of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The key documents required to support the 'knowledge' theme:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme strategy: knowledge and learning approach (8.3, tab 8.2)</li> <li>Programme strategy: information approach (8.6, tab 8.2)</li> </ul> </li> <li>The areas of focus for key roles associated with the 'knowledge' theme (tab 8.3)</li> <li>The recommended approach to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge management (8.4)</li> <li>Ensuring lessons are learned (8.5)</li> <li>Information management (8.7)</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	BL3	4
	2.6.2 Analyse whether an approach to applying the 'knowledge' theme is effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, and the purpose and requirements of the theme (chapter 8, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5)	BL4	2



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Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Bloom's Level	No. Marks
2. Understand how to apply and tailor relevant aspects of the MSP themes in context (continued)	<b>2.7 Assurance theme (chapter 9)</b>		
	2.7.1 Apply the MSP requirements for the 'assurance' theme, demonstrating an understanding of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The key documents required to support the 'assurance' theme:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme strategy: assurance approach (9.3, tab 9.4)</li> <li>• Assurance plan (9.5, tab 9.4)</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) The areas of focus for key roles associated with the 'assurance' theme (tab 9.5)</li> <li>c) The recommended approach to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assurance at multiple levels (9.4, 9.4.1-3)</li> <li>• Assurance planning and activities (9.5, 9.5.1, tab 9.2)</li> <li>• Timing and resourcing of assurance activity (9.5.2)</li> <li>• How to plan successful assurance activities (9.5.3, tab 9.3)</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	BL3	2
	2.7.2 Analyse whether an approach to applying the 'assurance' theme is effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, and the purpose and requirements of the theme (chapter 9, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5)	BL4	2
	<b>2.8 Decisions theme (chapter 10)</b>		
	2.8.1 Apply the MSP requirements for the 'decisions' theme, demonstrating an understanding of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The key documents required to support the 'decisions' theme:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme strategy: decision-making approach (10.3, tab 10.3)</li> <li>• Programme strategy: issue resolution approach (10.4, tab 10.3)</li> <li>• Programme strategy: risk response approach (10.5, tab 10.3)</li> <li>• Decision register (10.3, tab 10.3)</li> <li>• Issue register (10.4, tab 10.3)</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) The areas of focus for key roles associated with the 'decisions' theme (tab 10.4)</li> <li>c) The recommended approach to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determining appropriate decision points and layers of decision-making (10.3)</li> <li>• Resolving issues (10.4)</li> <li>• Responding to risks, including generic responses to threats and opportunities (10.5, 10.5.1, tab 10.2)</li> <li>• Data-gathering and reporting (10.6, 10.6.1-2)</li> <li>• Options analysis (10.7)</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	BL3	4
	2.8.2 Analyse whether an approach to applying the 'decisions' theme is effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, and the purpose and requirements of the theme (chapter 10, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5)	BL4	2

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Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Bloom's Level	No. Marks
3. Understand how to apply and tailor relevant aspects of the MSP processes in context	3.1.1 Carry out the 'identify the programme' process, demonstrating an understanding of: a) The activities, inputs and outputs (12.3, tab 12.1, 12.4.1-7) b) The recommended roles and responsibilities within the process (tab 12.2) c) How the themes may be applied (tab 12.3)	BL3	2
	3.1.2 Analyse whether the 'identify the programme' process activities, roles and responsibilities are effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, the themes, and the purpose and objectives of the process (chapter 12)	BL4	1
	3.2.1 Carry out the 'design the outcomes' process, demonstrating an understanding of: a) The activities, inputs and outputs (13.3, tab 13.1, 13.4.1-11) b) The recommended roles and responsibilities within the process (tab 13.2) c) How the themes may be applied (tab 13.3)	BL3	2
	3.2.2 Analyse whether the 'design the outcomes' process activities, roles and responsibilities are effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, the themes, and the purpose and objectives of the process (chapter 13)	BL4	1
	3.3.1 Carry out the 'plan progressive delivery' process, demonstrating an understanding of: a) The activities, inputs and outputs (14.3, tab 14.1, 14.4.1-6) b) The recommended roles and responsibilities within the process (tab 14.2) c) How the themes may be applied (tab 14.3)	BL3	2
	3.3.2 Analyse whether the 'plan progressive delivery' process activities, roles and responsibilities are effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, the themes, and the purpose and objectives of the process (chapter 14)	BL4	1
	3.4.1 Carry out the 'deliver the capabilities' process, demonstrating an understanding of: a) The activities, inputs and outputs (15.3, tab 15.1, 15.4.1-7 (including 15.4.2.1-2)) b) The recommended roles and responsibilities within the process (tab 15.2) c) How the themes may be applied (tab 15.3)	BL3	2
	3.4.2 Analyse whether the 'deliver the capabilities' process activities, roles and responsibilities are effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, the themes, and the purpose and objectives of the process (chapter 15)	BL4	1
	3.5.1 Carry out the 'embed the outcomes' process, demonstrating an understanding of: a) The activities, inputs and outputs (16.3, tab 16.1, 16.4.1-6) b) The recommended roles and responsibilities within the process (tab 16.2) c) How the themes may be applied (tab 16.3)	BL3	2
	3.5.2 Analyse whether the 'embed the outcomes' process activities, roles and responsibilities are effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, the themes, and the purpose and objectives of the process (chapter 16)	BL4	1

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Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Bloom's Level	No. Marks
3. Understand how to apply and tailor relevant aspects of the MSP processes in context (continued)	3.6.1 Carry out the 'evaluate new information' process, demonstrating an understanding of: a) The activities, inputs and outputs (17.3, tab 17.1, 17.4.1-5) b) The recommended roles and responsibilities within the process (tab 17.2) c) How the themes may be applied (tab 17.3)	BL3	2
	3.6.2 Analyse whether the 'evaluate new information' process activities, roles and responsibilities are effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, the themes, and the purpose and objectives of the process (chapter 17)	BL4	1
	3.7.1 Carry out the 'close the programme' process, demonstrating an understanding of: a) The activities, inputs and outputs (18.3, tab 18.1, 18.4.1-4) b) The recommended roles and responsibilities within the process (tab 18.2) c) How the themes may be applied (tab 18.3)	BL3	2
	3.7.2 Analyse whether the 'close the programme' process activities, roles and responsibilities are effective and fit for purpose, taking into consideration: the programme's environment, the MSP principles, the themes, and the purpose and objectives of the process (chapter 18)	BL4	1