IPMA USA

international project management association

ipma-usa.org

Level A

Candidate Guidance



For Inquiries

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CANDIDATE GUIDANCE

IPMA LEVEL A:
CERTIFIED PROJECT DIRECTOR

INTRODUCTION

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The IPMA Level A certification is designed for experienced project professionals who can demonstrate the ability to manage complex projects, programs, or portfolios at a strategic level.

This certification is designed for individuals with a minimum of five years' experience as a project, program or portfolio manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex projects, of which at least three years were at a strategic level.

You will be assessed on 28 competences for project management via a report and an interview. To pass, you must provide evidence a minimum of 23 out of 28 competences. All evidence for Level A must have been obtained within the last 12 years.

The guide includes guidance for all elements in the Level A assessment including the application, the report and the interview. Candidates must understand the the syllabus and outcomes to be successful in the assessment

LEVEL DEFINITION:

Knowledge of the IPMA competence elements related to project management.

All syllabuses developed for IPMA qualifications are based on the IPMA Individual Competence Baseline, version 4.0 (ICB4).

This means that candidates are examined on the 28 project competence elements described in ICB 4, Section 4.

CERTIFICATION PROCESS

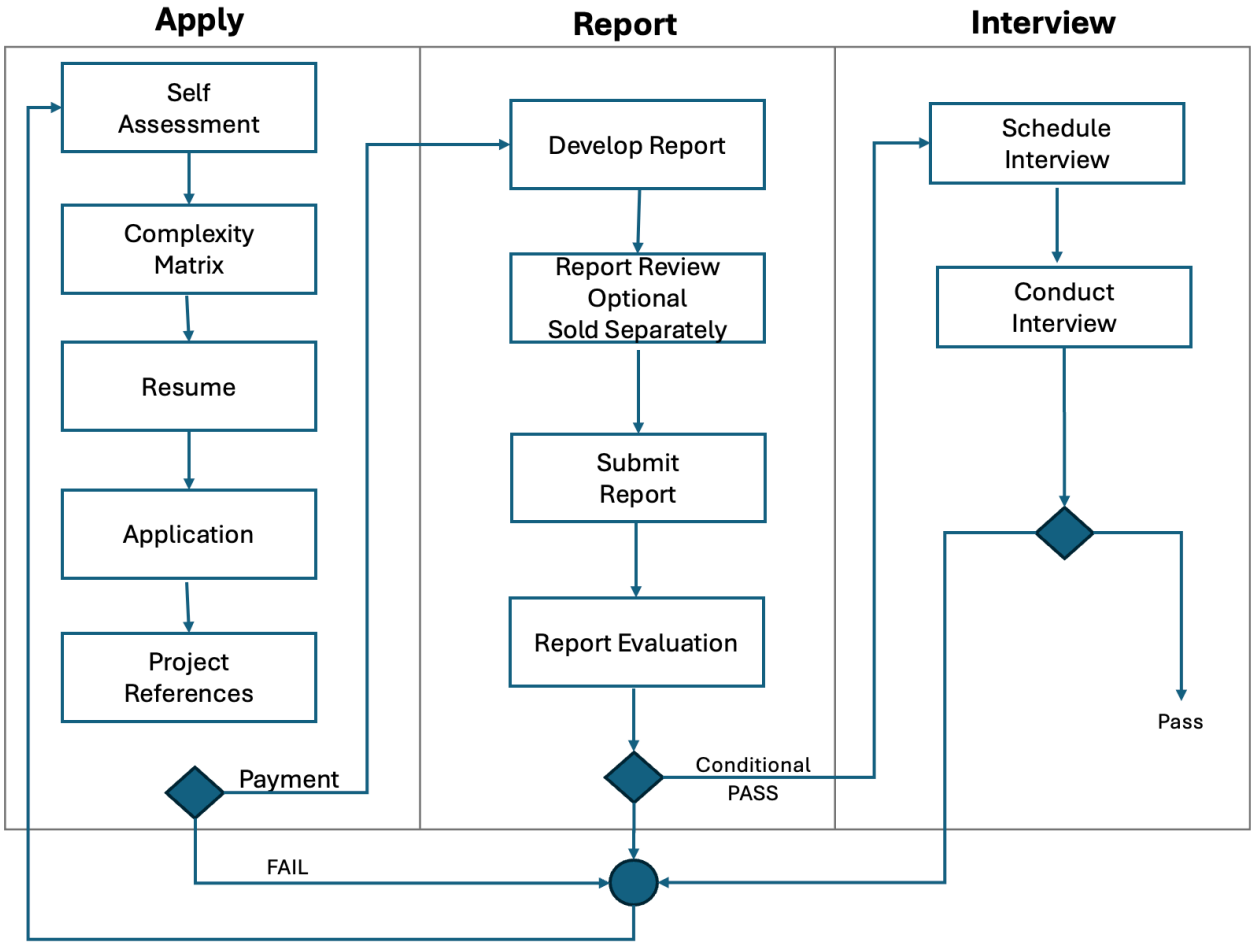
The certification is a three-stage process:



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LEVEL A ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

The following process flow depicts the process at a high level.



The Level A Assessment consists of three stages:

1. **Apply.** The candidate completes the initial documentation that helps the assessors understand if the candidate is qualified and ready to apply for the Level A certification.

2. **Report.** The candidate completes a report to demonstrate their expertise in the pre-selected competence elements.

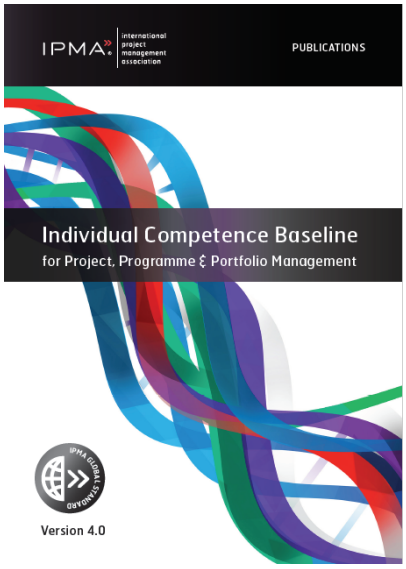
3. **Interview.** The candidate takes an interview with 1-2 assessors to provide their experience with pre-selected competence elements.

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IPMA COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK

IPMA certifications are all based on the same competence framework but with increasing levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities assessed at each level from Level D to Level A

IPMA INDIVIDUAL COMPETENCE BASELINE VERSION 4



IPMA certifications are all based on the IPMA Individual Competence Baseline (ICB 4), and candidates need to have a copy of the baseline to support the training and for revision.

Candidates can download the ICB 4 from our E-Learning or download free of charge from the IPMA site: https://www.ipma.world/

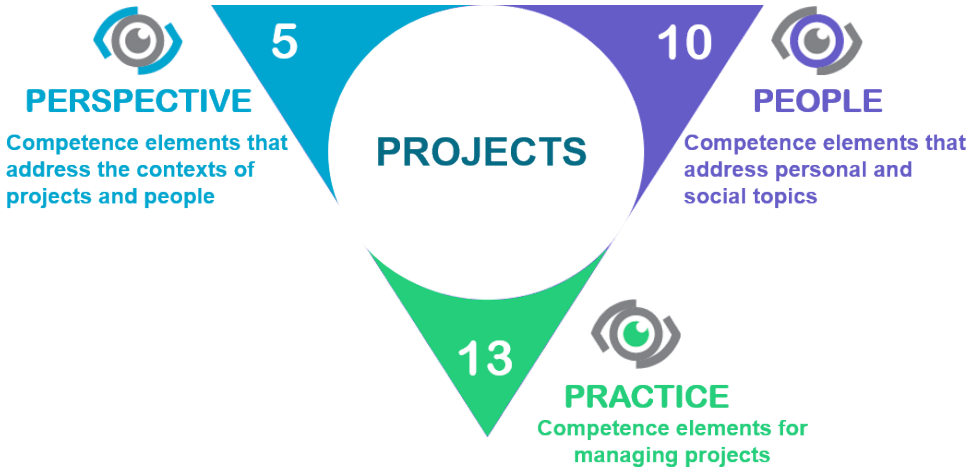
The IPMA Level C qualification is based on the Project Management Section of ICB 4.

ICB 4 COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK

IPMA group the competence elements in the framework into 3 sections:

- Perspective competences, People competences and Practice competences.

The IPMA “Eye of Competence” shown below is taken from ICB4:



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ICB 4 COMPETENCE ELEMENTS

PERSPECTIVE (4.3)	PEOPLE (4.4)	PRACTICE (4.5)
STRATEGY (4.3.1)	SELF-REFLECTION AND SELF-MANAGEMENT (4.4.1)	PROJECT DESIGN (4.5.1)
GOVERNANCE, STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES (4.3.2)	PERSONAL INTEGRITY AND RELIABILITY (4.4.2)	REQUIREMENTS AND OBJECTIVES (4.5.2)
COMPLIANCE, STANDARDS AND REGULATION (4.3.3)	PERSONAL COMMUNICATION (4.4.3)	SCOPE (4.5.3)
POWER AND INTEREST (4.3.4)	RELATIONSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT (4.4.4)	TIME (4.5.4)
CULTURE AND VALUES (4.3.5)	LEADERSHIP (4.4.5)	ORGANISATION AND INFORMATION (4.5.5)
	TEAMWORK (4.4.6)	QUALITY (4.5.6)
	CONFLICT AND CRISIS (4.4.7)	FINANCE (4.5.7)
	RESOURCEFULNESS (4.4.8)	RESOURCES (4.5.8)
	NEGOTIATION (4.4.9)	PROCUREMENT (4.5.9)
	RESULTS ORIENTATION (4.4.10)	PLAN AND CONTROL (4.5.10)
		RISK AND OPPORTUNITY (4.5.11)
		STAKEHOLDERS (4.5.12)
		CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION (4.5.13)



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IPMA LEVEL B SYLLABUS

LEVEL B APPLICATION

The application process is designed to help the candidate present their knowledge, skills and experience in a consolidated format for the initial review.

The application consists of the following documents:

1. **Self-Assessment.**

   The self-assessment is designed to help assessors understand the candidates experience and current competency level, as based on a self assessment.

2. **Executive Summary Report**

   Each candidate shall submit a report of a maximum 15 pages which shall include:

   - Information on their current organization to include company details, industry and project types, principle objectives of the organization and the business unit in which the candidate is employed.
   - A one-page summary for each of the projects which are being used to support the application.
   - The role of the candidate in their organization to include an organizational structure chart, which identifies their position, their area of responsibility, an overview of the project management procedures they use and their relationship with all stakeholders.
   - A description of how they have led each project and how they meet the complexity criteria for level B.

3. **Complexity Matrix.**

   This tool is designed to better understand the depth and breadth of complexity which will help ensure that the candidate is being assessed at the right level.

4. **Resume/CV.**

   Please provide your up-to-date and accurate resume / CV. Projects which are referenced in the Executive summary report should also be referenced in the CV.

5. **Application Form.**

   Please complete the Application Form.

6. **Personal References.**

   Please identify 1-2 individuals that can be used as personal references.

Once these items are accepted by IPMA, the candidate will need pay for the certification prior to advancing. Please refer to your accredited training organization or APMG for payment.

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LEVEL A REPORT

The report is expected to cover all of the elements list below.

LEVEL B REPORT COMPETENCES	
CE	**COMPETENCE ELEMENT NAME**
4.4.1	**Self-reflection and self-management**
4.4.4	**Relationships and engagement**
4.4.5	**Leadership**
4.4.6	**Teamwork**
4.4.7	**Conflict and crisis**
4.4.8	**Resourcefulness**
4.4.9	**Negotiation**
4.4.10	**Results orientation**
4.5.1	**Project Design**
4.5.2	**Requirements and objectives**
4.5.3	**Scope**
4.5.4	**Time**
4.5.6	**Quality**
4.5.9	**Procurement**
4.5.10	**Plan and control**
4.5.11	**Risk and opportunity**
4.5.12	**Stakeholders**

Overview

The Level A Report is an opportunity for the candidate to describe your approach to managing projects. The report uses a Reference Project as the main focus to describe competences in a real world scenario.

A candidate will submit a 25-page report (font size 11) based on projects which have been referred to in the executive summary report. A maximum of 15 additional pages may be used in the form of supportive appendices. Please use the report template provided. The report will focus on the application of their leadership of others, using the competence elements for the level being assessed. The level of complexity described in this report must correspond to the level applied for. The report must contain, as a minimum, the following information;

- Background: a detailed description of the project, the candidate's role in context, key stakeholders and objectives, project organisation and the associated resources for which the candidate is responsible (maximum three sides of letter size paper).

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- Description of the management and leadership challenges: this should include how these were addressed, results achieved and a reflection on these results and lessons learned (maximum three sides of letter size paper).
- Competence assessment: one side of letter size paper per competence element explaining how the candidate has demonstrated the assessment criteria for level B. The report should include project(s) where their role has been sufficiently involved to enable them to cover all the CEs that are assessed in the report and interview. Candidates can not refer to project(s) in the interview that are not included in the report. The report will assess the specific CEs that are detailed in the relevant specification.
- Successful reports tend to have the following features:
  - The report must be written in English.
  - .5-1 page of text per competence element.
  - Each CE must address at least 3 key competence indicators.
  - Use illustrations as needed, however the report must include enough written content as to fully describe

LEVEL A INTERVIEW

The last stage of the process is the interview which gives the assessors an opportunity to question the candidate in a structured yet open discussion about the candidates experience.

LEVEL B INTERVIEW	
CE	**COMPETENCE ELEMENT NAME**
4.3.4	**Power and interests**
4.3.5	**Culture and values**
4.4.2	**Personal integrity and reliability**
4.4.3	**Personal communication**

It should be noted that all competence elements may be included into the interview as needed.

LEVEL A FINAL ASSESSMENT

At the conclusion of the interview the assessors will make a final decision based on the exam, report, and interview. The final determination will be PASS or NOT YET COMPETENT. The results will be communicated to the candidate and inputted into the Certification Information System(CIS) which will generate a certificate and badge from Credly.

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