PMI® CAPM® Learning Guide

(QACAPM6)

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Note: PMI periodically updates its website and this may affect some of the links you have been provided with in this document. If this occurs, search the PMI website in the first instance. If you still cannot find the resource you are looking for, please ask your contact at QA for assistance – we're happy to help.

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Introduction

Welcome! This Learning Guide will help to set the context for your PMI® Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM®) course. You will also have a much better understanding of the various assets that are available to support you on your learning journey. Your time spent completing each activity will ensure that the course content can be related to project delivery within your organisation and help prepare you for the CAPM course and exam.

Your Learning Journey

PMI is proud of the credibility of the CAPM exam. PMI expects that the average study period for the CAPM is 1-2 months. Depending on your level of experience, QA suggests that the total study-time for the CAPM will be a minimum of 50 hours prior to attempting the exam - your personal study-time will depend on your current level of project management experience and familiarity with the course content. We recognise the commitment you're making in your efforts to achieve one of the world's most respected project management qualifications and we'll support you fully on each step of your learning journey.



Pre-course learning
10 hours



"Live" classroom
24 hours
(3 x 8hrs)



Personal study
16 hours

CAPM Study Checklist

	Activity	Complete?	Comments
1	CAPM introduction and watch video (30min)		
2	CAPM Certification Handbook (30min)		
3	CAPM Exam Content outline ECO (60min)		
4	Download your official study resources from PMI LOChoice (30min)		
5	CAPM Study 'Hints 'n Tips' (60min)		
6	APM webpage and watch the two videos - 'Introduction to Project Management' (30min)		
7	Watch video and consider reasons why projects might fail within your organisation (30min)		
8	Watch video and consider the benefits of project management for your organisation (30min)		
9	Watch video and list the key differences between linear (traditional) and iterative (agile) project delivery (30min)		
10	PMI Process Groups (90min)		
11	CAPM Exam Details (30min)		
12	Online Proctored testing (30min)		
13	Content Familiarization (120min)		
14	Course Case-Study: Tickets! (30min)		

1 PMI CAPM Overview (30min)

Read the short introduction to the CAPM.

 	Certified Associate in Project Management | PMI

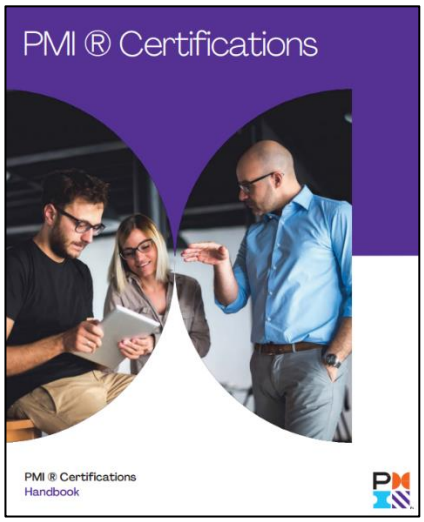
The same webpage also has a number of articles and videos that will help you understand what is involved when applying for and undertaking the CAPM qualification.

- *Why the CAPM*
- *How to apply*
- *Get started – CAPM Exam Prep*

You should also download the following documents from the PMI webpage:

	CAPM Certification Handbook	CAPM Exam Content Outline (ECO)

2 CAPM Certification Handbook (30min)



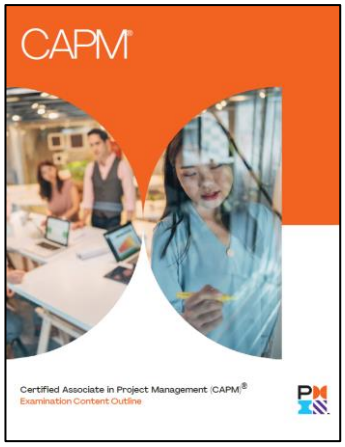
The 'Certification Handbook' should be read fully before your course. It contains useful information concerning:

- Applying for the exam
- Exam policies and procedures
- Certification policies and procedures
- Continuing certification
- Code of ethics and professional conduct

Additional questions relating to the CAPM course itself can be addressed by your QA booking contact in plenty of time before your course starts.

3 CAPM Exam Content Outline (ECO) (60min)

Please review the ECO document that you downloaded from the PMI website.

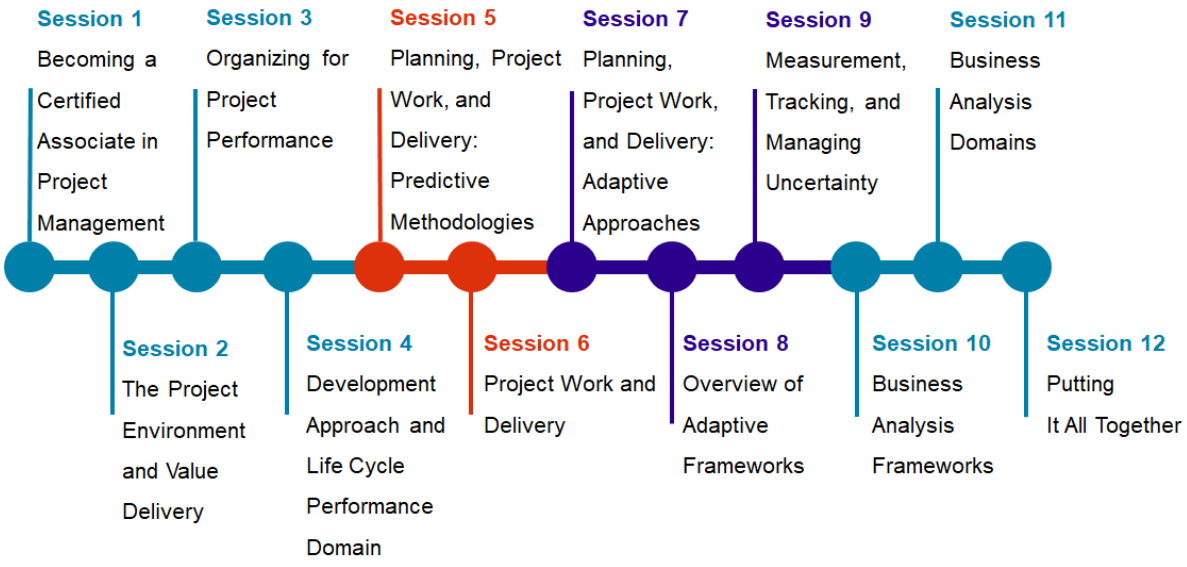


The ECO should be read fully before your course. It explains the content of each of the exam domains, tasks, and enablers:

1. Project management fundamentals and core concepts (5 tasks)
2. Predictive, plan-based methodologies (3 tasks)
3. Agile frameworks / methodologies (5 tasks)
4. Business analysis frameworks (6 tasks)

Additionally, it details the exam application and payment specifics that can also be found in the Certification Handbook.

Your course will follow the same structure as the ECO and your official study materials.



In advance of your course start date, you will be given access to your official CAPM courseware. You may find it useful to cross-reference your study materials with the CAPM ECO as this will give you a good idea of what the course entails. Be assured that the entire ECO will be covered during your learning journey. We will discuss the study materials in more detail later in your pre-course learning.

You can print and annotate Appendix A to help map the ECO to your study materials at the same time as identifying tasks and enablers that you are particularly concerned about.

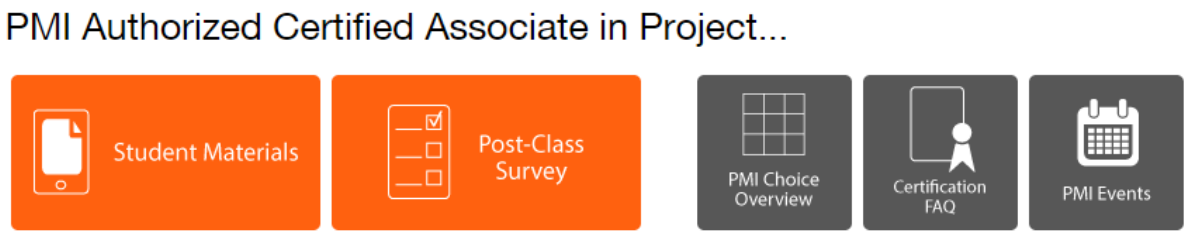
Note: The CAPM exam is based on the content of the ECO. It is NOT solely based on the content of the PMBOK® Guide – which is only one of many cited reference textbooks.



4. Official CAPM Prep Materials (30 minutes)

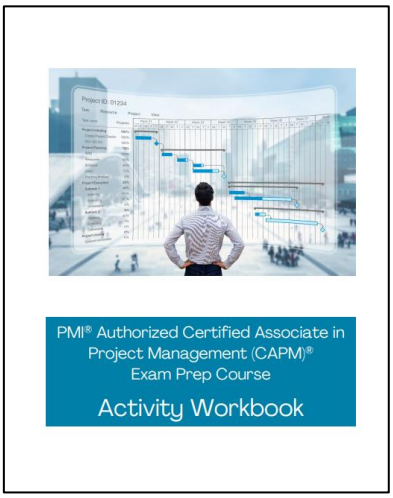
Familiarise yourself with the core digital study materials that can be accessed from your PMI Logical Operations account. QA will provide details of how to access your account before your course begins.

	https://pmi.lochoice.com/



The main content can be found in the Student Materials folder where you'll find your Activity Workbook and the content for each lesson that you will undertake.

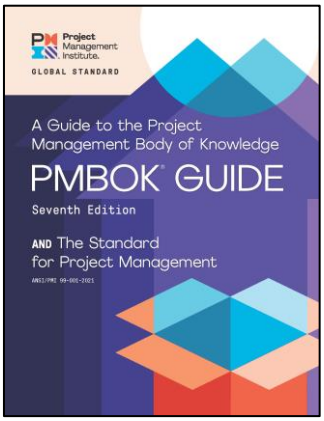
Note: The focus of your course will be on active learning of the course content and we won't cover every single slide in your resources. Your detailed study of the content is likely to take place after the three-day course.



Supplementary PMI Publications

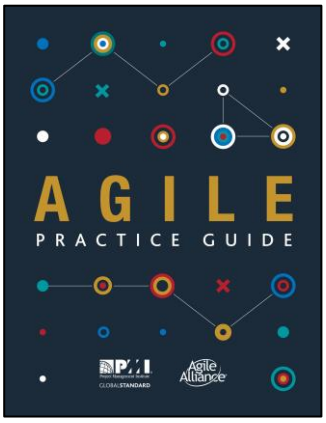
Upon joining PMI, you can download a protected personal PDF copy of the publications below which will support your study for the CAPM exam.

As a PMI member, you can also purchase printed copies of the publications at a discounted price. Details are on the PMI website.



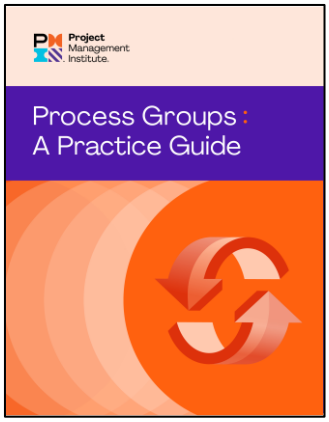
PMBOK® Guide 7th Edition

The standard for project management which introduces a system for value delivery and key project management principles



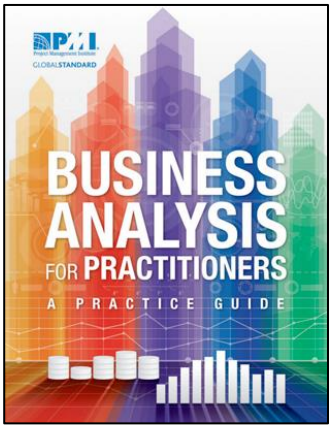
Agile Practice Guide

Equips project teams with the tools, situational guidelines, and an understanding of available agile techniques and approaches



Process Groups: A Practice Guide

Details the key project management tasks, tools and techniques that may be undertaken during each of the project management process groups – Initiating, Planning, Executing, Monitoring and Controlling, and Closing



Business Analysis for Practitioners

The guide details how to tackle the project-related issues associated with requirements and business analysis. This will help you better meet customer expectations and deliver solutions that drive business value.

5 CAPM Study "Hints 'n Tips" (30min)

5.1 CAPM Exam Study

There is little doubt that examinations can be stressful, irrespective of whether you have been successful or not on previous exams. This guide should help you:

- Understand the reasons for exams.
- Build awareness of common exam issues - and how you can overcome these.
- Develop a structured plan for revising and preparing for the CAPM exam.
- Identify strategies for use on the actual exam.
- Consider how you can manage and reduce stress before and during the exam.

The CAPM® shows the world that you possess the foundational knowledge and skills that project teams demand. It proves that you're ready to take on a wide range of projects too—with ways of working that include predictive project management, agile principles and business analysis. Earning your CAPM equips you with all you need to start a career in project management.	A+

5.2 Preparing for the CAPM Exam

Throughout your learning we emphasise the importance of adequate preparation for examinations. The exam provides an opportunity to consolidate your learning so far and address any areas of weakness that may still exist.



Revising for Exams

The CAPM exam covers a wide range of project management concepts. Revision typically involves the selection of topics that you're going to revise most, and this might mean spending more time on topics that are less familiar for you. For example, if you work as an engineer in a large manufacturing company, it's likely that you will be familiar with the concepts of quality management. Conversely, earned value management is widely used but may not be a technique that has been adopted in your organisation (nor is it likely to be).

Learners often make similar mistakes when revising for exams. These pitfalls may include some of the following.



1. **Leaving revision until the final minute.** Consider the importance of creating a realistic study plan and more importantly, adhering to it!
2. **Passively reading textbooks and notes.** Revision must be an active process and your study should include a combination of making notes, creating flashcards and mnemonics, drawing spray-diagrams, practising exam questions, etc.
3. **Trying to learn definitions, models and answers off-by-heart.** Not only would this activity take too much time, but it's likely to be pointless as the exact same question is unlikely to be asked in your exam.
4. **I don't have enough time.** H. Jackson Brown Jr. stated that *"you have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Pasteur, Michelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson, and Albert Einstein."* Make the best use of short spells of time - for example tea-breaks, lunchtime, commuting on public transport etc. Block out periods of time with your colleagues and co-learners and you are more likely to stick to these commitments.

Try to be realistic about the amount of time you can devote to revising. This will depend on a number of factors.

- Your personal work, family, and leisure commitments.
- Whether you study best in concentrated blocks or short bursts.
- What you want to get out of your learning.

Revision Techniques

Revising for an examination should be an active undertaking. Note taking is a learning strategy and is useful for a number of reasons.

- Focuses on the key points and ideas.
- Helps to process information.
- Aids structured writing.
- Develops understanding of course content.
- Serves as a memory aid - helping exam revision.

a. Mnemonics

Mnemonics are also a useful way to memorise key concepts and models as long as you understand the topic in the first place. The most common method of creating mnemonics is to use the first letter of each key word and create a real or fictional word (e.g., MOSCOW).

Topic	Mnemonic	Key words
Requirements prioritisation	*MoSCoW*	Must have, Should have, Could have, Won't have
Conflict resolution strategies	*CACAC*	Compete, Avoid, Compromise, Accommodate, Collaborate

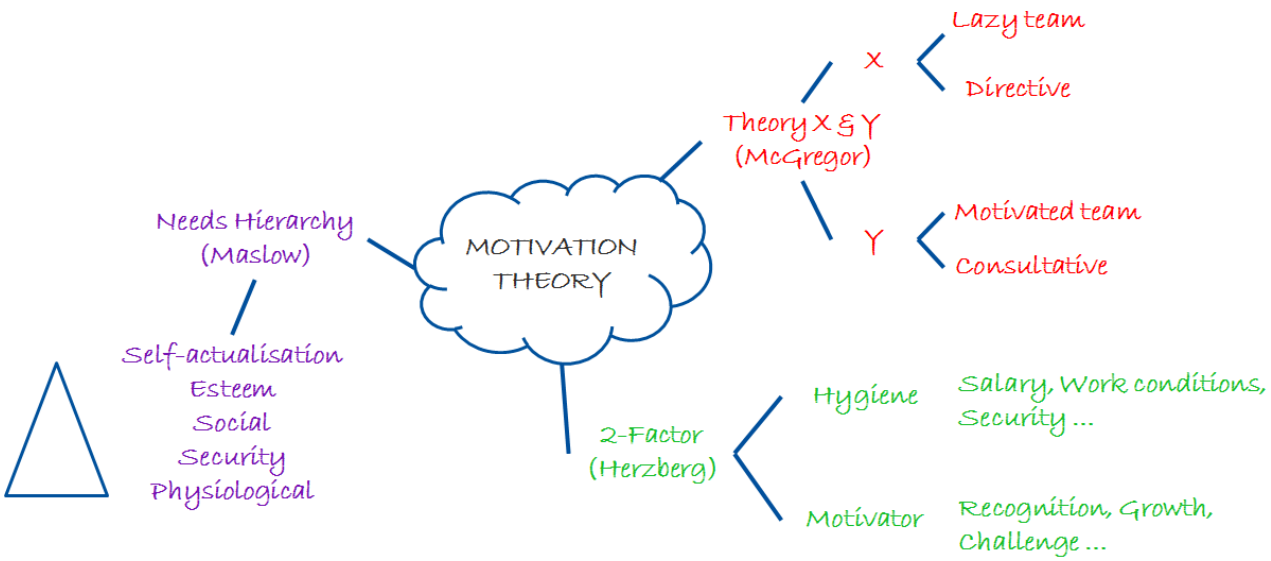
Personal preference will dictate the best technique for taking notes. Some people prefer a linear strategy - for example flashcards, tables, numbered and/or indented lists. Other may prefer a more visual non-linear strategy.

b. Spray Diagrams (mind-maps)

Spray diagrams (or mind-maps) help us get our ideas written down on the page in a relatively unstructured fashion. Spray diagrams use the following steps:

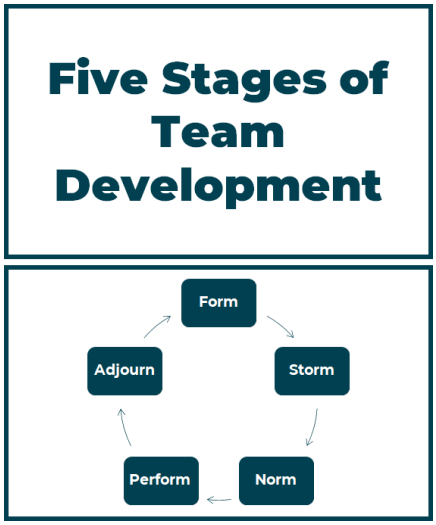
1. Place the title of the diagram in the centre of the page.
2. The main ideas radiate from the central topic.
3. Subsidiary ideas fan out from the main ideas.
4. All ideas should be limited to one or two words.
5. Create subsidiary diagrams if the topic is too broad for a single diagram.
6. Feel free to colour-code the diagram (e.g., each main idea has its own colour theme)

Spray Diagram Example - Motivation Theory



c. Flash Cards

Flash cards aid study through the use of 'active recall. **You will learn more if you create your own flash cards rather than sharing with a colleague.** This helps to generate the neural pathways which will help you remember and connect the syllabus topics. There are various ways to use flash-cards effectively:



1. Mix pictures and words – people tend to remember images more than words
2. Write only one question per card – break complex topics into multiple questions
3. Speak your answers out loud when answering them – enlist a friend, colleague, or family member to quiz you
4. Study flash cards in both directions

d. Study Groups

For company specific courses, you may already know the rest of your fellow learners? Set a day, time, and topic then discuss, share ideas, and test each other. Helping each other is a fantastic way to enhance your own learning and understanding. You all have experience and talent that can be shared with each other.



Making this commitment also makes it more likely that you will stick to your study plan. Nobody says that project managers need to do everything themselves – and it's much more satisfying to work things out for yourselves, and it's more fun!

5.3 Study Plans

Unless you have a good idea of what you need to do, and by when, it is likely that you will spend a lot of time flitting between topics and wondering whether you are getting anywhere.



"A goal without a plan is just a wish."

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Being aware of your own knowledge, and where gaps exist, will help you create a focused and time-efficient revision plan. Making a 'study plan' is similar to creating a project plan. You have finite resources and time and need to create a realistic plan that is capable of producing a defined end goal.

It is possible to 'create' time by drawing up a plan of your typical work (W) and identifying where space exists to study (S). Be sure to include your existing work, family (F), and leisure (L) commitments. Once this activity is complete, you can then plan your revision for the relevant study periods.

w/c 01-Apr	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
AM	W	W	W	W	W	L	S
PM	W	W	S	W	W	S	F
EVE	S	L	F	S	L	F	S

6 What is Project Management? (30min)

Although it has been developed by another certification body, you may find it useful to read the short introduction to project management that can be found on the Association of Project Management (APM) website.

	https://www.apm.org.uk/resources/what-is-project-management/

The webpage also includes an excellent video (2min 18sec) that introduces the topics that will be discussed on your course.

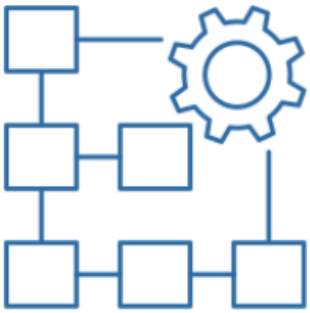
The article identifies the key components of project management and answers the following questions:

- *What is a project?*
- *When do we use project management?*
- *Why do we use project management?*
- *Who uses project management?*

From the same webpage, a second video (2min 01sec) specifically considers the importance of 'Starting the Project Well'. This topic will be an area of specific interest and will be discussed in detail when we look at the initiation of a project and the creation of the Project Charter.

PMI has a similar webpage that you may find of interest:

What is Project Management | PMI



7 Why Projects "Fail"? (30min)

Watch the short video (2min 18sec) in which QA discusses common reasons for projects being delivered unsuccessfully.

	Why projects fail

Consider how each of these reasons may be present within projects in your organisation. The topics covered in your course should help prevent each of these issues from occurring!

Reason for failure	Example	Why does this occur?
Unclear scope		
Failure to engage with the end-user		
Inadequate planning		
Poor change control		
Lack of risk management		
Demotivated team		

8 Benefits of Project Management (30min)

In this second video from QA (1min 44sec), we outline some of the benefits that may be realized by the tools and techniques we introduce on your CAPM workshop.

	Benefits of Project Management

You may find it useful to relate these benefits to your projects as they help to explain why effective project management is crucial to your organisation's ongoing success.

Benefit	How this helps your organisation
Focus on the customer	
Better management of risk	
Efficient and effective use of resources	
Improved stakeholder communication	
More likelihood of project delivery to time, cost and quality targets	
Sharing of project lessons across the organisation	

9 Introduction to “Agile” Delivery (30min)

In the short introductory video (4min 11sec), we introduce the topic of iterative (or agile) project delivery.

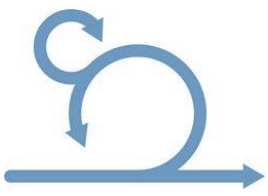
	What is Agile?

Consider the key differences between agile and a more traditional linear (or waterfall) project delivery approach. These concepts will be discussed during your course.

Linear	Iterative (Agile)

The video briefly mentions the 4 values and 12 principles of the Agile Manifesto – the Manifesto forms the basis of all Agile frameworks. 20% of the CAPM exam questions are based on a hybrid or agile project delivery model and you will benefit from an awareness of the Manifesto’s content. You can download a personal copy by accessing the link below:

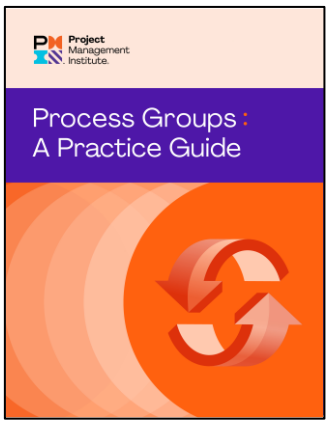
PDF	Agile Manifesto



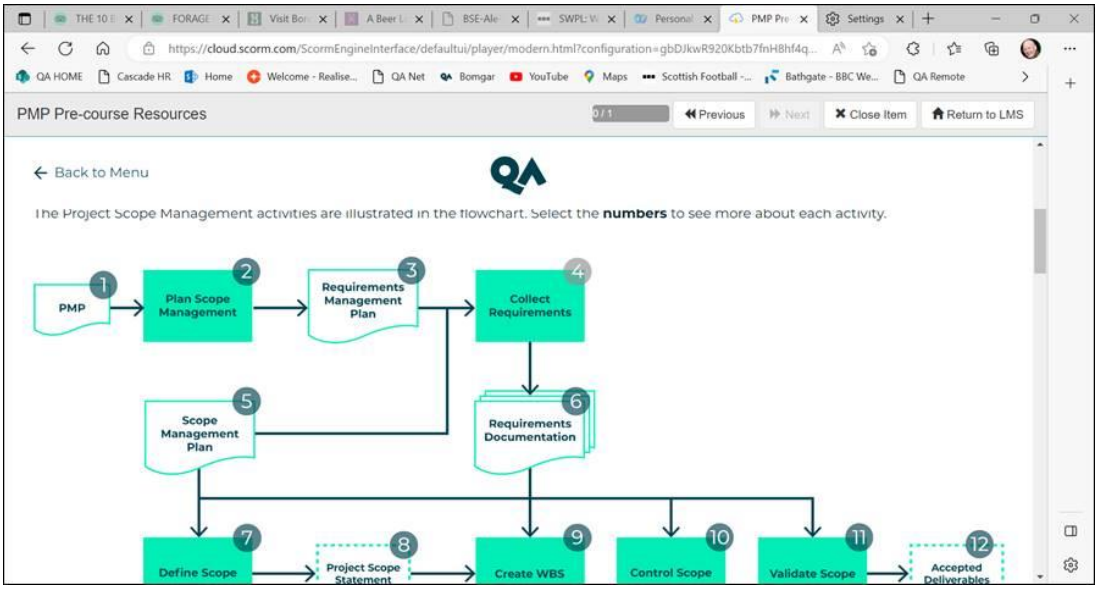
10 PMI Process Groups (90min)

One of the publications that we listed in section 4 was PMI's 'Process Groups: A Practice Guide'.

The Process Group Practice Guide details the key project management tasks, tools and techniques that may be undertaken during each of the project management process groups – Initiating, Planning, Executing, Monitoring and Controlling, and Closing.



Your pre-course learning in MyQA has a link to a digital overview of the PMI Process Groups. This online asset will help you understand the context behind PMI processes and includes some short activities to reinforce your learning.



11 CAPM Exam Details (30min)

11.1 The CAPM Exam

Exam concerns

List the main worries that you have about preparing for and sitting the CAPM exam. Your trainer can help you address each of these concerns.

	Concern	Action
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Management learning and exams

How does your role as a project manager require similar skills to those that may be required in an exam?



When appropriately prepared for, an exam presents a challenge which can produce a number of positive effects. It forces the individual learner to consolidate their learning and effectively communicate what they understand about a specific topic.

Please don't forget! The majority of QA learners are successful in obtaining a widely sought-after certification that demonstrates their competence in project management.

There's a reason project professionals in more than 200 countries have earned and maintained their Project Management Professional (CAPM®) certification. It delivers real value in the form of professional credibility, deep knowledge and increased earning potential.

11.2 Managing Exam Stress

It is common for learners to feel tense as exams draw closer. This is normal and you're definitely not alone. The content that you have covered during your study will prepare you very well for the CAPM exam. As you approach the exam, you have the opportunity to consolidate your learning and hone your exam technique. If you're feeling overly stressed, then there are actions that you can take.

- Ensure that you make the time to follow your revision plan; being poorly prepared is the main cause of pre-exam worry and procrastination uses up more energy than actually studying!
- Speak to your trainer.
- Work with your peers (who are likely to have similar fears).
- Take proper breaks from study.
- Maintain some of your regular leisure activities especially where these involve some form of physical exercise.
- Maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle - *treat yourself AFTER the exam!*
- Get plenty of sleep - especially the night before the exam.

Managing Stress During the Exam

You also need to consider how to place yourself in a position where you can really demonstrate your knowledge and understanding during the exam.

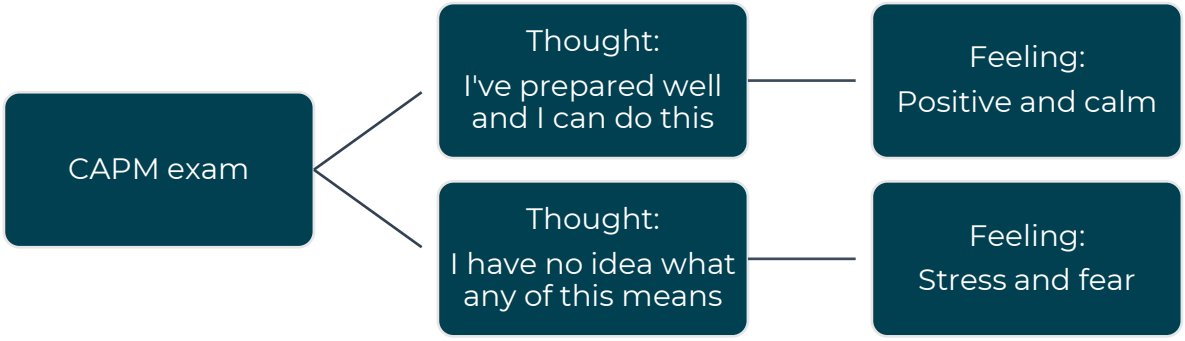
- Try to relax - go to the toilet before sitting down and wear comfortable clothing
- Take a deep breath with your eyes closed, then review the exam paper (some people prefer to immediately 'brain-dump' the models, formulae etc. that they

have memorised; you have spare paper to do this)

- Manage your time evenly throughout the exam – don't put yourself in the position where you need to rush your final questions
- Avoid perfectionism - remember that 80% of your marks are likely to come from 20% of your mental effort
- If you panic - put your pen down, close your eyes, breathe slowly, stretch, and remind yourself how well-prepared you are.

Positive mental attitude ...

Having a positive mental attitude in exams will help you realise your potential and make the exam a more enjoyable experience.



The main source of exam stress is poor preparation. You are therefore the person who is best placed to reduce any anxiety levels.		Get a good night's sleep and think of the exam as a challenge, not a threat. Your preparation is complete and it's now time to demonstrate what you know.

11.3 CAPM Question Types

The CAPM examination contains 150 questions and you have 180 minutes to complete the exam. Questions are in multiple different formats.

Multiple choice	One correct answer from four possible choices
Multiple response	Select two or more correct responses for the question asked
Matching	Match two sets of related items
Fill in the blank	Input the information that is missing from the statement in the question
Hotspot	Select the correct visual or image from those that are provided

There are various textbooks and mobile apps that offer CAPM study support, example questions etc. QA is unable to recommend any third-party content that is not authored by QA or PMI.



12 Online Proctored Testing for PMI Certifications (30min)

Guidance on the online examination setup and IT requirements can be found at:

	Online Proctored Testing | PMI



This webpage has an excellent overview of the IT requirements for the PMI examinations (including an explanatory video) and should be read carefully before you apply for the exam. You will apply for the exam after attending the course and this will satisfy the 23 hours directed study pre-requisite.

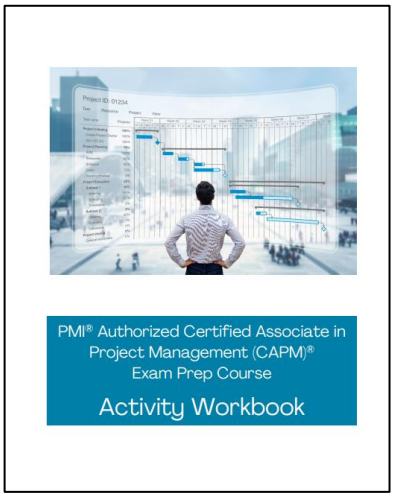
The IT advice provided by PMI covers:

- Do's and don'ts for online proctoring
- Advice from exam takers
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Scheduling logistics
- Exam experience and technology
- Security questions

Note: Any technical issues that you uncover should be discussed with the 'online chat' support that is available when testing your system. Failing this, you should speak to your IT department who should be able to help.

13 Content Familiarization (120min)

It would be useful to familiarize yourself with the PMI LO-Choice resources before your course. To help focus your learning on areas that are most important for you, you can list any unfamiliar topics in Appendix-A so that you're ready with questions for your course trainer. Whilst we appreciate that your self-knowledge rating doesn't guarantee proficiency in a certain topic, this exercise will help track your understanding and focus you on bridging any gaps that you identify.



1. Project management fundamentals and core concepts
2. Predictive, plan-based methodologies
3. Agile frameworks / methodologies
4. Business analysis frameworks

QA doesn't expect you to have read and understood all content before your course starts. Your detailed study may well come after the course.

Activity 5 'CAPM Study Hints 'n Tips' describes a number of techniques that will make your study of the main resources a more active learning experience – ensuring that you're fully prepared for the exam. Use the techniques described throughout your study - mnemonics, spray diagrams, flashcards, etc.

Remember that the resources available during your study include:

- Notes Handouts
- Activity Workbook
- *PMBOK® Guide 7th Edition*
- *Agile Practice Guide*
- *Process Groups: A Practice Guide*
- *Business Analysis for Practitioners: Practice Guide*

14 Course Case-Study: Tickets! (30min)

Your Activity Workbook includes a short fictional case-study that will be used in many of the exercises within each lesson. It will help you prepare for the exercises if you have a quick read through the case-study information but please don't attempt any of the exercises – we'll cover these during your course.

Your project will be to help Tickets! – an online concert ticket agency which has been tasked with selling tickets for a forthcoming tour for major music star, Tracy Fastone. Their initial attempt at doing this ended in catastrophic internet issues and the rescheduling of the entire tour – not a good start!

Exercises that you and your fellow classmates will undertake will include:

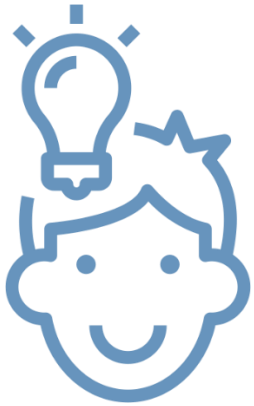
- Ethical project management
- Choosing a project development approach
- Project scoping
- Project charter
- Stakeholder analysis and engagement
- Vision statements
- Information radiators
- Defining roles and responsibilities
- Choosing communication channels
- Project requirements
- User stories





Appendix A: Mapping the CAPM ECO to your Study Guide

At QA, we want all our learners to assume more responsibility for their own learning - applying and reflecting upon new knowledge gained throughout the programme. Metacognition means "learning to learn" more effectively, helping you to become a more strategic and reflective learner.

Tacit learners are unaware of their metacognitive knowledge. They do not think about any particular strategies for learning and merely accept if they know something or not.	Aware learners know about some of the kinds of thinking that they do such as generating ideas, finding evidence etc. However, thinking is not necessarily deliberate or planned.	
Strategic learners organise their thinking by using problem-solving, grouping and classifying, evidence-seeking and decision-making, etc. They know and apply the strategies that help them learn.	Reflective learners are not only strategic about their thinking, but they also reflect upon their learning while it is happening, considering the success or not of any strategies they are using and then revising them as appropriate	

You can use the tables below to identify 3-4 tasks / enablers of specific concern for each Domain and track your understanding throughout your studies. Complete the chart to assess your current level of knowledge for each topic – low / medium / high. This is very similar to a KWL chart which is commonly used by students to help you assume more responsibility for your own learning.

Domain 1: Project Management Fundamentals and Core Concepts (36%)

#	Task: Enabler	Lesson #: Topic	Low	Med	High

Domain 2: Predictive, Plan-Based Methodologies (17%)

#	Task: Enabler	Lesson #: Topic	Low	Med	High

Domain 3: Agile Frameworks / Methodologies (20%)

#	Task: Enabler	Lesson #: Topic	Low	Med	High

Domain 4: Business Analysis Frameworks (27%)

#	Task: Enabler	Lesson #: Topic	Low	Med	High

Bibliography and Useful Assets

PMI Supporting Resources

https://www.pmi.org/certifications/project-management-CAPM

This website contains links to the following resources:

- Certification overview
- How to apply
- Advice on studying for the CAPM (including a list of the 10 most frequently cited reference textbooks)
- Link to the CAPM application webpage

CAPM Textbooks

PMI (2021). *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide, 7th Edition*. PMI Publishing

PMI (2021). *Agile Practice Guide*. PMI Publishing

PMI (2023). *Process Groups: A Practice Guide*. PMI Publishing

Mulcahy et al. (2023). *CAPM® Exam Prep, Fifth Edition*. Mulcahy Publications

KWL Charts and Metacognitive Learning

https://cambridge-community.org.uk/professional-development/gswmeta/index.html

Tyler, S (2007). *The Manager's Good Study Guide*. Open University

