



ITIL® Examination Institute Certification



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1. Becoming an Examination Institute

1.1. What is an EI?

An Examination Institute (EI) is an organisation accredited by APMG through the ITIL Qualifications Board and which is thereby permitted to operate an ITIL examination scheme through a network of Accredited Training Organisations (ATO), and Accredited Trainers with Accredited materials.

1.2. What can EIs do?

Each Examination Institute is authorised to

- Download examination questions based on APMG syllabi and guidelines from the central APMG databank of questions. This is prepared and maintained by an independent panel of examiners drawn from all over the world. The examination papers will follow a universal format/structure as approved by the ITIL Qualification Board so that all examinations are universally recognised. EIs may produce the examination papers of questions under an agreed commercial arrangement.
- Use the ITIL trade mark and other OGC IPR in their ITIL qualification and marketing material. Upon accreditation and a valid licensing agreement with APMG, EIs are granted this right.
- Accredite Course Providers to deliver specific training programmes leading to particular ITIL qualifications
- Operate a schedule of examinations, including handling all administrative aspects relating to each examination, hosting examinations, appointing invigilators, marking exam papers, notifying candidates & APMG of results.
- Sit on the ITIL Qualifications Board.

1.3. What can EIs not do?

- From 1st January 2008 Examination Institutes must work from a single APMG approved syllabus and cannot develop their own syllabus for the purpose of any ITIL examination or accreditation activity.
- From 1st January 2008 Examination Institutes must only utilise the live exam format, exam questions and marking guidelines developed by the ITIL Examination Panel and approved by the ITIL Qualification Board. Examination Institutes are prohibited from developing their own exam questions, exam format/structure and marking guidelines.
- Examinations Institutes are prohibited from appointing/accrediting an Examination Agent/s with the exception of providing only the following services to the EI:-
 - Operational Customer contact as defined in the EI's Quality Manual
 - Distribution of examination papers supplied by the EI to the Accredited Training Organisations.
 - Collection of the examination scripts from the examination candidates and their return to the EI for marking; and
 - Distribution of the ITIL certificates supplied by the EI to candidates who have succeeded in the examination
- Examination Institutes are only permitted to enter into such agreements with such agents once they:-

- Obtain the written consent of The Official Accreditor to the appointment of each such Delivery Agent
- Demonstrate to the satisfaction of The Official Accreditor that the terms of appointment of such Delivery Agent prohibit it from carrying out any of the functions of the Examination Institute other than Delivery Agent Services and
- Procure that the Delivery Agent enters into such intellectual property licences and confidentiality agreements as the Official Accreditor or OGC require.

1.4. What conditions do accredited EIs need to meet?

An organisation wishing to become and/or remain an Examination Institute must satisfy the following conditions:-

- The organisation must be independent from any Course Provider / Accredited Training Organisations or other party where there is a possibility of a conflict of interest between the activities in which the organisation engages. The EI cannot conduct training or consultancy services in ITIL.
- The organisation must be a legally constituted and recognised body according to the laws of the country in which it is based
- The organisation must be able to demonstrate 2 years' experience in the successful operation of examination schemes.
- The organisation must be able to demonstrate, through audited accounts, its financial viability to operate and maintain the scheme for a reasonable period in the future.
- The organisation must have or be capable of establishing a set of documentation, aligned with the key requirements of international standards ISO9001 (in relation to their quality management systems), EN45011 (in relation to their accreditation of products relating to ITIL) and ISO17024 (in relation to their accreditation of personnel). The key requirements are detailed in section 1.6
- The organisation must have defined process for the appointment of assessor & examiners including eligibility criteria.
- The organisation must have appropriately defined trainer and Accredited Training Organisation eligibility criteria.
- The organisation must have or be capable of establishing two formal panels of experienced and qualified subject matter experts who can act as examination markers and/or assessors. These individuals will be responsible for marking examinations and assessing candidate ATOs, trainers and course materials. This panel must comprise the required personal to meet the needs of the local communities in the areas of the world in which the EI offers examinations. Those sitting on the examiner / assessor panels should be at minimum certified to ITIL v2 manager level or v3 equivalent.
- All approved invigilators must agree to maintain the confidentiality and integrity of the process.
- Examinations offered by the EI must be open to all candidates who meet the entry criteria defined in the examination specification.
- The organisation must provide statistics covering the following, but to the level of detail defined in the EI licensing agreement :

- Examination taken by exam type,
 - Date and country of the exam,
 - Language of the exam,
 - ATO who ran the exam,
 - Trainer facilitating course,
 - Name of the invigilator for the exam
 - Candidate details, including name, address, contact details, DOB & sector in which they work
 - Examination results,
- on a quarterly basis to APMG. Exam statistics will be reviewed on a quarterly basis at the ITIL qualification board.
 - The organisation shall only refer to its examinations as being part of the ITIL Qualification Scheme where those examinations are recognised by the ITIL Qualifications Board as being part of the Scheme.
 - The organisation shall not launch into the market place any new examinations that it has created as part of the ITIL Qualification Scheme, prior to approval of the ITIL Qualification Board. Furthermore the organisation cannot develop or launch a qualification in direct competition to those qualifications recognised by the ITIL Qualifications Board as being part of the Scheme.
 - The organisation shall, in the case of examinations for Certificates recognised by the ITIL Qualifications Board use only examinations that conform to the format approved by the ITIL Qualifications Board.
 - The organisation shall, upon achieving accredited status, automatically earn a place on the ITIL Qualifications Board and will be expected to contribute to the ITIL Qualifications Board's decision-making processes, and shall respect the property, rights and reasonable interests of the members of the ITIL Qualifications Board. All member of the ITIL Qualifications Board will be required to sign and abide by a confidentiality agreement.
 - The organisation will notify the ITIL Qualifications Board at the earliest opportunity (request 3 months notice) of any intention to withdraw from the scheme. Each EI will sign a 3 year licensing agreement.
 - Organisations applying to become an EI must be able to offer the full range of qualifications offered under the ITIL Qualifications Scheme offered recognised by the ITIL Qualifications Board.
 - An agreed percentage of accreditation and examination revenue based on non discounted rates will be payable to APMG.

1.5. How can an organisation apply to become an EI?

The APM Group Ltd, as OGC's Official Accreditor, is responsible for accreditation of Examination Institutes. Any organisation wishing to become an Examination Institute (EI) needs to formally apply to the ITIL Qualification Board through its chair / agent APMG.

Applications can be requested from:

Email: - accreditation@apmgroup.co.uk

Telephone: - +44 (0) 1494 452 450

Postal: -The APM Group Ltd

Sword House

Totteridge Road
High Wycombe
HP13 6DG
United Kingdom

Applicants should be aware of the assessment requirement, it is wise to ensure as far as is possible that the organisation would be able to satisfy the full requirements as set out below.

1.6. How does an organisation submit their application?

Eligibility requirements

In order to maintain the quality of the examination process, EP's will need to agree that APMG will assess and accredit their activities in relation to their management systems, personnel and product assessment. The assessment that APMG will carry out on EIs will be based on APMG's experience of the accreditation standards ISO 9001 in relation to EP's quality management systems, EN 45011 in relation to EP's accreditation of products relating to ITIL and ISO/IEC 17024 in relation to EP's accreditation of personnel.

It is not mandatory for EIs to confirm exactly to the above standards, but they will be expected to demonstrate adherence to the major principals within the standards in a way which suits their individual businesses.

Requirements relating to EP's Management Systems – based on standard ISO 9001

The assessment of examination body's management systems will be based on the internationally recognised standard ISO 9001. There are eight key principles in ISO 9001 which all Exam Institutes accredited by APMG will have to be able demonstrate are integral parts of their management systems in order to become accredited. Below outlines the eight key principles, those in bolded italics are mandatory requirements: -

- ***Customer focus***
Requirement - Organisations will be expected to demonstrate the methods they employ in order to meet their customer's current and future needs.
Suggestion - Information on the SLAs in place with customers will be required together with detailed approaches and action to be taken where the exam body fails to meet these.
- ***Leadership***
Requirement – Leaders within the organisation are requested to demonstrate commitment to the quality management system within the organisation in order to ensure that employees are fully involved and able to deliver the company objectives.
Suggestion – Each exam body will be required to show the involvement of senior managers and people with positions of responsibility committed to monitoring and improving the quality management system.
- ***Involvement of people***
Requirement – That personnel at all levels have involvement and commitment to the quality management system.
Suggestion – Exam body to demonstrate the involvement of all staff to the QMS and show evidence that their suggestions for improvement are considered and taken into account.
- ***Process approach***

Requirement – That desired results are achieved more efficiently when activities and related resources are managed with a process approach.

Suggestion – Any QMS submitted for assessment will be required to show the processes used and their interrelation.

- ***System approach to management***

Requirement – The identification, understanding and management of interrelated processes as a system contributing towards the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation.

Suggestion – Exam bodies are to demonstrate the benefits provided by their process approach and provide evidence of ongoing improvements made through a system approach to management.

- ***Continual improvement***

Requirement – The continual improvement of an organisation's performance should be an ongoing objective.

Suggestion – The QMS should demonstrate use of feedback within the organisation's operational improvement system.

- ***Factual approach to decision making***

Requirement – Effective decisions are made from the analysis of data and information.

Suggestion – The QMS submitted should demonstrate how data will be collected and the basis on which decisions will be made from analysis of such data.

- **Mutually beneficial supplier relationships**

Requirement – Organisations and their suppliers are interdependent mutually beneficial relationships that should enhance the ability of both to create value.

Suggestion – An exam body should be able to demonstrate how they interact with their suppliers to ensure beneficial relationships are achieved.

Requirements for Exam Body product and personnel certification – based on standards EN 45011 and ISO/IEC 17024

These standards are not as easy to map as ISO 9001 as there are no key principles within them and each section is given equal weight. Both EN 45011 and ISO/IEC 17024 have the same sections and splits, so they have been combined for the purpose of EI assessment. Therefore the same principles will apply to the assessment of an organisation certifying products and/or personnel. Less interpretation is required from this standard and so a summary of the mandatory requirements have been listed below under their various headings. This standard assessment should assess the ability of an exam body to accredit training courses/products: -

- ***Certification body***

- Policies and procedures under which the exam body operates to ensure non-discriminatory treatment of all applicants.
- Activities undertaken by the exam body will be made available to applicants.
- The exam body will not make decisions outside the scope of their accreditation.

- ***Organisation***

- The exam body shall ensure impartiality, responsibility for decisions

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regarding its award of certificate, identify suitable management for their certification activities, demonstrate legal status and liability cover, have a documented structure to safeguard impartiality, recruit and retain suitable personnel and refrain from carrying-out activities that compete with the products they are accredited to administer.

- **Operations**
 - A QMS submitted by an exam body which is compliant with the guidelines of ISO9001 will be sufficient to cover the requirements of this standard and no further work will be needed under this subject.
- **Quality system**
 - As with the operations section of this standard, a QMS submitted and approved against the guidance taken from ISO9001 will cover all requirements against the quality system of this standard.
- **Conditions and procedures for granting, maintaining, suspending and withdrawing product certification**
 - The exam body shall have due procedures to grant, maintain, suspend and withdraw certification within the scope of accreditation. This will include the reporting of certification status to the accreditation body.
- **Development and maintenance of a personnel certification scheme**
 - The exam body will be able to demonstrate defined methods and mechanisms for assessing candidates, review and evaluation of the certification scheme, undertake to give due notice of changes to the scheme to stakeholders, certification shall not be unduly restricted by price or other limiting conditions and undertake that examinations and assessments will be fair, valid and reasonable when testing the criteria.
- **Internal audits and management reviews**
 - The exam body will be able to demonstrate effective internal audits and management reviews on its processes and procedures to the accreditation body.
- **Documentation**
 - The exam body will maintain and make available on request documentation relating to the scope of accreditation, to include product certification system, rules and procedures of accreditation, information about evaluation processes, accounts, fee schedules, information about applicant and supplier duties, IPR statements, information about appeals/complaints/disputes and a directory of accredited products.
- **Records**
 - The exam body will have a suitable policy for maintaining records which will be available to the accreditation body on request.
- **Confidentiality and security**
 - Adherence to relevant legal requirements and those to protect the interest of the scope of accreditation will be enforced and demonstrated by the exam body.
 - All information held relating to the certification of products or personnel will be held in a secure manner (either electronically or in secured physical storage) and relevant data laws will be adhered to.
- **Certification body personnel**
 - The exam body will be able to demonstrate sufficient staff who are demonstrably competent for the roles they are employed to undertake.

This will apply to both administration staff and technical staff.

- **Requirements for examiners**
 - The exam body will set and apply criteria for examiners to ensure that personnel recruited are familiar with the relevant certification scheme, have a thorough knowledge of the relevant examination methods and documents, have appropriate knowledge within the subject field to be examined, are fluent both in writing and orally in the language they examine in and are free from any interest which may effect their ability to make impartial and non-discriminatory decisions.
- **Changes to the certification requirements**
 - The exam body will undertake to give due notice of any changes to their certification system taking into account the views of all stakeholders.
- **Appeals, complaints and disputes**
 - The exam body will keep records of all appeals/complaints/disputes raised against them with the action taken and the effectiveness of this action.
- **Application for certification**
 - Applicants will be provided with details about the evaluation and certification process from the exam body, details of the rights and duties involved and up to date documentation on application to the exam body.
- **Preparation for evaluation**
 - Prior to proceeding with evaluation, the exam body will be able to demonstrate a contract review on the product applicant to ensure all rules and understood and requirements met.
- **Evaluation**
 - All product applicants will be reviewed against the current standards set by the exam body.
- **Evaluation report**
 - Reporting procedures will include (at minimum) the personnel appointed to complete the evaluation, full report on evaluation and actions taken subsequent to that report and recommendations of success from the appointed personnel.
- **Decision on certification**
 - The certification body will be responsible for confirming certification decisions and are not permitted to delegate this authority.
- **Surveillance**
 - Surveillance of certified products shall be performed and suitable intervals against the current standards.
- **Use of licences, certificates and marks of conformity**
 - The exam body will exercise proper control over the use of IPR, logos, certificates and marks granted to those they have accredited.
- **Complaints to suppliers**
 - The exam body will be required to review complaints raised against those they have accredited and document appropriate action taken.

Assessment process

The assessment process has 5 stages: -

- Application

- Application review
- Pre-assessment
- Assessment process
- Post assessment

An organisation wishing to apply for Examination Institute status must first be aware of all requirements as stated in this document.

Application

An original copy of the application signed by the authorised person within the EI must be submitted to APMG. The application must include:-

- Organisational details, e.g. address, level of permanent and voluntary support, name of legally responsible member of staff (permanent), any links with organisations that may have an interest in examination results.
- Outline of experience in the examination field
- Brief financial details sufficient to demonstrate viability
- Proposed area of operation including indications of where the candidates will be sourced.
- Details of proposed experienced and qualified subject matter experts who can act as examination marks and/or assessors.
- Outline of facilities available for the hosting of examinations

No fee is applicable at this time at this stage of the process.

A sample pro-forma application can be obtained from APMG

Application review

Upon receipt of an EI application APMG's staff will review the application and check the following details:-

- EI is financial viable
- Relevant EI eligibility requirements are met
- Nominated personal meet the relevant eligibility requirements
- The applicant has signed the application as having received, read and understood the requirements for accreditation

Normally, the Accreditation Manager will make the decision to accept an application. Minor deviations from the eligibility criteria are to be referred to the Managing Director for consideration; otherwise application forms not meeting requirements will be referred back to the applicant. The ITIL Qualification Board will be notified of the application together with APMG's recommendation.

Pre-assessment

Once the application has been approved to proceed to assessment APMG will issue the contract and raise an invoice for the appropriate fee. This fee is to cover expenses incurred in the evaluation process.

The fee is not returnable in the event of failure to be approved by the ITIL Qualifications Board for Accredited Examination Institute status.

At this time the candidate EI will be asked to submit (on papers and electronic format) their quality management systems, as well as details relating to their processes and procedures for accreditation of products and accreditation of personnel relating to ITIL. This must provide sufficient details for the assessors to perform a reasonable evaluation. This documentation must also address all the points identified in above in section 1.4.

This information should be submitted in the form of a quality manual and at a minimum should contain details of the following processes and procedures for:-

- Registration of examination candidates
- Notification from ATO of examination date, time and venue
- Dispatch of relevant examination material (e.g. exam papers, case studies etc.)
- Maintaining the security of examination papers
- Appointing and monitoring the performance of examiners / assessors
- Marking completed papers, ensuring fair and consistent results
- Special needs policy
- Provision of a mechanism to enable candidates to re-take examination
- A defined appeals process
- A defined dispute resolution procedure for ATOs and candidates to use
- Notification of results
- Information transfer to APMG to facilitating the ordering of certificates
- Maintaining statistics of:-
 - i. Examination taken by exam type,
 - ii. Date and country of the exam,
 - iii. ATO who ran the exam,
 - iv. Trainer facilitating course,
 - v. Candidate details, including name, address, contact details, DOB & sector of work
 - vi. Examination results, - pass/fail rates
- Creation of examination papers using live databank of questions.
- Accounting for all income and expenditure including exam fee and accreditation income royalties or other EIs, expenses incurred in running exams, hosting board examiner/assessor and other meetings.
- Accreditation, audit and re-accreditation procedures for:
 - Accredited Training Organisation
 - Approved Trainers
 - Course Material
- Quality Control and continuing improvement

Assessors

Once APMG have received the EI Quality Management Systems APMG will nominate one or two Assessors for the assessment. The nominated Assessors will be responsible for the assessment through to final recommendation.

The assessment will comprise both a desk check and an on-site visit. The assessment team must always have the expertise to cover the full scope of accreditation required by the applicant.

Assessment

The Assessors will review with the applicant information provided, and any information

provided subsequently, to assess conformance with the required standards. In particular, conformance with the requirements of the APMG/EI Agreement will be checked.

At the site visit administrative staff involved in the process of accreditation and examinations will be assessed for their knowledge of the system and their competence in performing allocated tasks.

Visit report

At the conclusion of the assessment visit, an oral report will be given to the applicant and, if applicable, a written Issues Log provided.

The oral report will be followed by a full written report by the Assessors to APMG within one week of the on-site visit. The report is to follow the lines of an internal audit report and make recommendations as to the applicant's suitability for accreditation as follows: -

- Recommendation for immediate accreditation as an Examination Institute
- Recommendation for accreditation following satisfactory resolution of non-conformances
- Rejection

Follow-up

The Assessor will be responsible for assessing the resolution of non-conformances/suggested improvements within the agreed timescale, if necessary consulting the Chief Assessor, Accreditation Manager or Managing Director. When satisfied that non-conformances/suggested improvements have been satisfactorily resolved (and seen to be resolved) the Assessor is to inform APMG in writing.

Post-assessment

The Board of APMG will make the certification decision. In making it, he will consider the recommendations of the Assessor's report, taking into consideration any follow-up actions and any other information relevant to certification. APMG will notify the applicant organisation, the Assessor and the ITIL Qualifications Board of the certification decision. In addition, APMG will provide the ITIL Qualifications Board with a copy of the Assessor's assessment report together with other information relevant to the certification decision.

Certification

Once final sign-off from the ITIL Qualifications Board has been received the successful applicant organisation will be awarded an APMG Accreditation Certificate, which makes clear the scope of accreditation. The certificate awarded has a validity of 3 years from the date of the last successful audit.

Surveillance

At intervals of no longer than 6 months, APMG will carry out a full re-assessment/audit on each Examination Institute to confirm that courses continue to meet the required standards. Additionally, the following procedures apply: -

- APMG will monitor the performance of Examination Institutes in a variety of ways, e.g. by short notice audit visits (24 hours notice will be given) and random spot-checks of marked examination papers, assessment reports for Accredited Training Providers, course material and/or trainers.
- At quarterly intervals, APMG will collate data from Examination results to monitor performance. Results are to be provided to the ITIL Qualifications Board.
- Assessors who believe there to be a weakness in a particular set of candidate answers during their marking of a set of papers or the Accreditation Manager can trigger a full review. In these circumstances an Assessor will be asked to conduct a review and/or unannounced visit to confirm that the correct message is given and/or the correct procedures are followed.
- APMG reserve the right to monitor this and take necessary action accordingly.

All audit reports from monitoring activity will be sent to the Examination Institute and will be treated as “In Strictest Confidence”.

1.7. How do EIs appeal against the result of an accreditation assessment?

Appeals by Examination Institutes against decisions by Assessors will be considered in accordance with the process for Appeals.

Examination Institutes are required to comply with any changes in regulations that the ITIL Qualifications Board make. Sufficient notice will be given to EIs to enable them to initiate changes within their processes and procedures.

Accreditation may be withdrawn at any time if examinations are being offered in conditions that contravene those specified at the time of accreditation. For example, due consideration will be given to the current quality of administrative staff and processes, examinations venues, etc. Examination Institutes must not make misleading claims regarding the examinations and must ensure that where problems are identified prompt, appropriate remedial action is taken.

Accreditation and re-accreditation will involve payment of a fee.