

# **BCS Foundation Certificate in IS Project Management Syllabus**

**Version 8.4  
December 2016**

This professional certification is not regulated by the following United Kingdom Regulators -  
Ofqual, Qualification in Wales, CCEA or SQA

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## Change History

Any changes made to the syllabus shall be clearly documented with a change history log. This shall include the latest version number, date of the amendment and changes made. The purpose is to identify quickly what changes have been made.

<b>Version Number and Date</b>	<b>Changes Made</b>
Version 8.4 December 2016	Strapline regarding regulated statement has been added
Version 8.3 March 2015	Updated language requirements for additional time and use of dictionaries. Standardised the trainer requirements
Version 8.2 October 2013	Updated trainer requirements to show minimum pass rate.
Version 8.1 September 2012	Added in Reading List, Levels of Knowledge, Skill Levels, Classroom sizes, Trainer and Additional Time Requirements.
Version 8.0	Document control sheet updated. Learning hours added to the format of the examination. No change to the content of the syllabus.
Version 7.0	Re-branded and re-formatted. Added in the examination format on final page.

## Objectives

Candidates who pass the Foundation Certificate should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the principles of project management, including those that relate to project planning, monitoring and control, change control and configuration management, effort estimation, quality and risk management and communication between project stakeholders.

## Entry Criteria

There are no formal requirements for entry to the course although the candidate should have a basic working knowledge of IT and it is recommended that all candidates attend a training course run by an Accredited Training Organisation.

## Format and Duration of the Examination

The examination will last one hour and will consist of 40 multiple-choice questions. It is a 'closed book' examination, i.e. no notes or books will be allowed into the examination room. The pass mark is 26/40.

## Guidelines for Accredited Training Organisations

Each major subject heading in the syllabus is assigned an allocated time. The purpose of this is to give both guidance on the relative proportion of time to be allocated to each section of an accredited course and an approximate minimum time for the teaching of each section. Accredited Training Organisations may spend more time than is indicated and candidates may spend more time again in reading and research.

The total time specified in this syllabus is 18 hours of lecture and practical work.

The course may be delivered as a series of modules with gaps between them, as long as it meets all other constraints. Courses do not have to follow the same order as the syllabus.

## Additional time for candidates requiring Reasonable Adjustments due to a disability

Candidates may request additional time if they require reasonable adjustments. Please refer to the [reasonable adjustments policy](#) for detailed information on how and when to apply.

## Additional time for candidates whose language is not the language of the exam

If the examination is taken in a language that is not the candidate's native / official language then they are entitled to 25% extra time. If the examination is taken in a language that is not the candidate's native / official language then they are entitled to use their own **paper** language dictionary (whose purpose is translation between the examination language and another national language) during the examination. Electronic versions of dictionaries will **not** be allowed into the examination room.

# Syllabus

## 1. Projects and Project Work (3 hours)

- The definition of projects, as opposed to other types of work
- Terms of reference for a project
- The purpose of project planning and control
- The typical activities in a system development life-cycle
- System and project life cycles
- Variations on the conventional project life cycle, such as the use of prototypes or an iterative approach (e.g. the creation and testing of a series of versions of a product that converge on the final deliverable) or incremental approach (i.e. the phased creation and delivery of a series of products to users)
- Implementation strategies e.g. parallel running, 'sudden death', use of pilots
- Purpose and content of business case reports; the use and significance of discounted cash flows in such reports (Note: knowledge of the method of calculation is NOT required)
- Types of planning document: project initiation documents; project and stage plans, quality plan, communications plan, risk plan
- Post implementation review

## 2. Project Planning (3 hours)

**Note:** candidates are expected to have an understanding of both the product and activity based approaches to planning

- Project deliverables and intermediate products
- Work and product breakdowns
- Product definitions (including the identification of derived from, and component of relationships between products)
- Relationship between products and activities in a project
- Check points and milestones
- Lapsed time and effort required for activities
- Activity networks (using 'activity on node' notation)
- Calculation of earliest and latest start and end dates of activities and resulting float
- Identification and significance of critical paths
- Resource allocation, smoothing and levelling, including the use of resource histograms
- Work schedules and Gantt charts

### 3. Monitoring and Control (2 hours)

- The project control life cycle: including planning, monitoring achievement, identifying variances, taking corrective action
- The nature of, and the purposes for which, information is gathered
- Collecting progress information
  - Timesheets,
  - Team progress meetings
  - Error and change reports etc
- Presenting progress information
  - Content of progress reports
  - Graphical presentation of progress information e.g. accumulative resource charts (also known as S-curve charts)
  - Use of earned value analysis, including where it would be applied in project life-cycle (Note: it is not expected that candidates be able to calculate and interpret earned value figures)
- The reporting cycle
  - Reporting structures in projects
  - Timing, personnel and purpose of different types of reporting meetings
- Corrective action
  - Tolerance and contingency
  - Exception reports and plans
  - Management procedures involved in changing plans
  - Options, including extending or staggering deadlines, increasing resources, reducing Functionality or quality requirements, cancelling the project etc.

### 4. Change Control and Configuration Management (1 hour)

- Reasons for change and configuration management
- Change control procedures
  - Role of change control boards
  - Generation of change requests
  - Change request evaluation (e.g. its impact on the business case)
  - Change request authorisation
- Configuration management
  - Purpose and procedures
  - Identification of configuration items
  - Product baselines
  - Configuration management databases: content and use

### 5. Quality (2 hours)

- Definitions of the term 'quality' e.g. 'fitness for purpose'
- Quality control versus quality assurance
- Defining quality: definition and measurement
- Detection of defects during the project life cycle
- Quality procedures: entry, process and exit requirements
- Defect removal processes, including testing and reviews
- Types of testing (including unit, integration, user acceptance, and regression testing)
- The inspection process, peer reviews
- Principles of ISO 9001:2000 quality management systems
- Supplier evaluation

## 6. Estimating (2 hours)

- Effects of over and under-estimating
- Effort versus duration; relationship between effort and cost
- Estimates versus targets
- Use of expert judgement (advantages and disadvantages)
- The Delphi approach
- Top-down estimating
  - Identification of size drivers (e.g. function points etc)
  - Identification of productivity rates (e.g. function points per day)
  - Need for past project data to establish productivity rates
  - Factors affecting productivity rates (e.g. staff experience)
  - Estimation of effort for new projects using productivity rates and size drivers
- Bottom up approaches to estimating
- Use of analogy in estimating

## 7. Risk (2 hours)

- Definition of the term 'risk'; components of risk: risk events (or triggers), probability, impact
- Ways of categorising risk, e.g. business versus project
- Identification and prioritisation of risk
- Assessment of risk exposure (i.e. combining consideration of potential damage and probability of loss)
- Risk responses and actions: risk prevention, reduction, acceptance, transfer and contingency planning
- Typical risks associated with information systems development
- Assessment of the costs/benefits of risk reduction activities
- Maintenance of risk registers and risk logs

## 8. Project Communications and Project Organisation (3 hours)

- Relationship between programmes and projects
- Identifying stakeholders and their concerns
- The project sponsor
- Establishment of the project authority (e.g. project board, steering committee etc.)
- Membership of project board/steering committee
- Roles and responsibilities of project board, project manager, stage manager, team leader
- Desirable characteristics of project manager
- Role of project support office
- The project team and matrix management
- Reporting structures and responsibilities
- Management styles and communication (including same time/same place; same time/different place, different time/same place, different time/different place)
- Team building (including phases of team cohesion e.g. forming, storming, norming, performing, adjourning)
- Team dynamics

## Levels of Knowledge / SFIA Levels

The levels of knowledge above will enable candidates to develop the following levels of skill to be able to operate at the following levels of responsibility (as defined within the SFIA framework) within their workplace.

The levels of knowledge and SFIA levels are explained in on the website [www.bcs.org/levels](http://www.bcs.org/levels)

Level	Levels of Knowledge	Levels of Skill and Responsibility (SFIA)
<b>K7</b>		Set strategy, inspire and mobilise
<b>K6</b>	Evaluate	Initiate and influence
<b>K5</b>	Synthesise	Ensure and advise
<b>K4</b>	Analyse	Enable
<b>K3</b>	Apply	Apply
<b>K2</b>	Understand	Assist
<b>K1</b>	Remember	Follow

## Format of the Examination

Type	40 Question Multiple Choice
Duration	1 Hour. Candidates are entitled to an additional 15 minutes (25%) if they are sitting an examination in a language that is not their native/official language
Pre-Requisite	There are no pre-requisites although attendance at the course is strongly recommended
Supervised/Invigilated	Yes
Open Book	No
Pass Mark	26/40
Distinction Mark	N/A
Calculators	Calculators cannot be used during this examination
Delivery	Paper based exam or computer based exam via Pearson Vue
Learning Hours	18 hours

## Trainer Criteria

Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold the BCS Foundation Certificate in Project Management</li> <li>• Have 10 days training experience or hold a train the trainer qualification</li> <li>• Have a minimum of 3 years practical project management experience using PRINCE2 methodology</li> </ul>
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## Classroom Size

Trainer to candidate ratio:	1:16
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