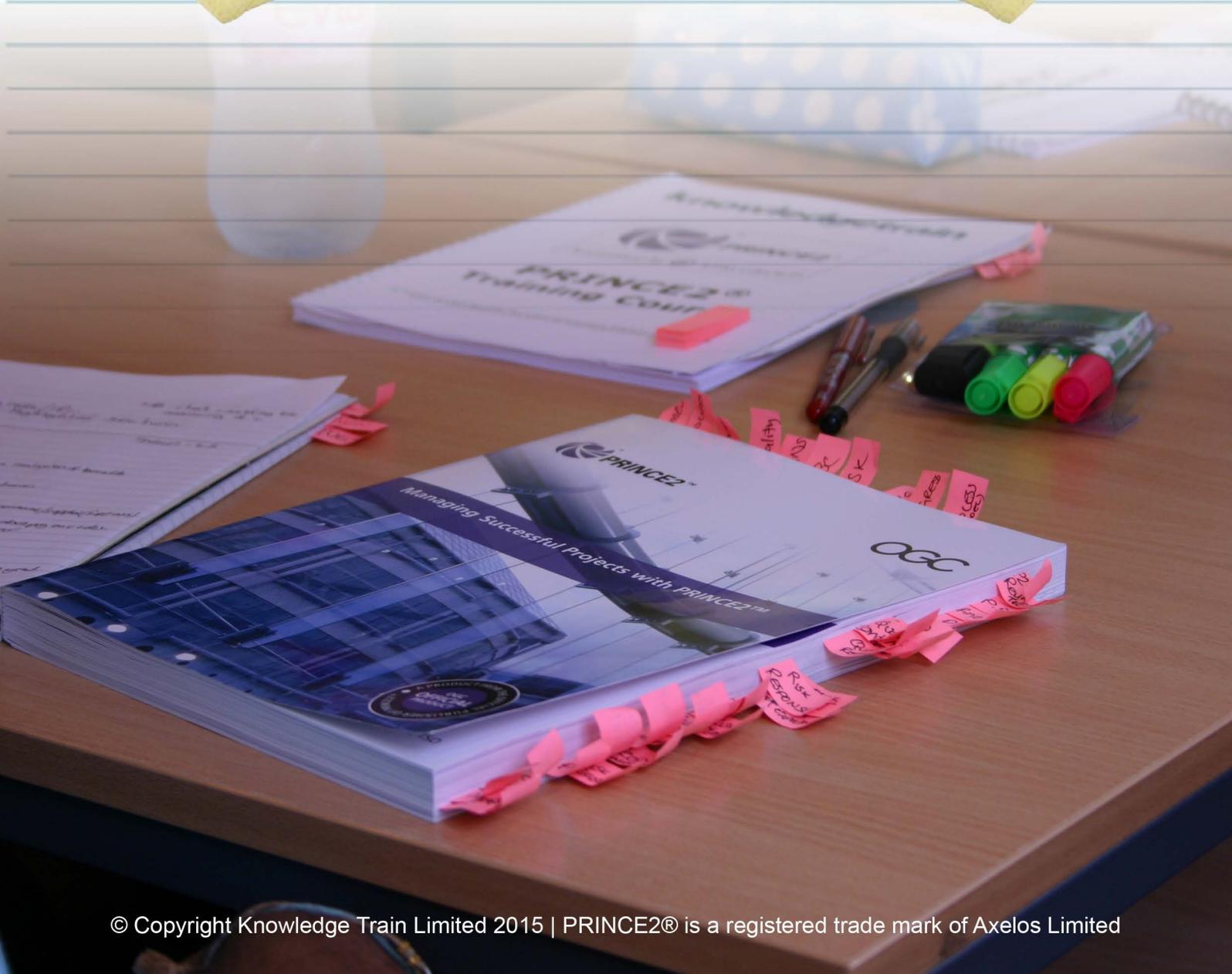


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Passing the PRINCE2<sup>®</sup>  
Foundation exam



## Passing the PRINCE2 Foundation exam

To pass your PRINCE2 Foundation exam with flying colours and prove your fabulous knowledge of the PRINCE2 methodology, your revision and exam preparation must be approached in the right way.

This ebook contains plenty of tips and advice for PRINCE2 students who are ready to tackle the Foundation exam and achieve a pass.

With a little preparation and knowledge of what to expect, you should feel confident and hopefully pass this important exam, which can improve your career prospects, and will enable you to go ahead and study for PRINCE2 Practitioner.

### What does the exam test?

The PRINCE2 Foundation exam tests that your knowledge and understanding of the method is sufficient to be able to work effectively with, or as a member of, a project management team working within an environment supporting PRINCE2.

It is also a pre-requisite of the Practitioner exam. It addresses each area of the Foundation syllabus:

- Principles
- Processes
- Themes
- Roles
- Techniques
- Management products
- Overview of PRINCE2
- Benefits of using PRINCE2

### The exam tests:

- Principles
- Processes
- Themes
- Roles
- Techniques
- Management products
- Overview of PRINCE2
- Benefits of using PRINCE2

The exam board (APMG International) says that successful candidates should understand:

- The characteristics and context of a project and the benefits of adopting PRINCE2
- The purpose of the PRINCE2 roles, management products and themes
- The PRINCE2 principles
- The purpose, objectives and context of the PRINCE2 processes

### What does the exam consist of?

The exam is made up of 75 multiple choice questions, which you must complete in 1 hour. All the questions are contained within a question booklet. However 5 of these questions are “trial” questions and do not carry a mark. The remaining questions carry one mark each, so this means that there are 70 marks available on the whole exam paper. Be aware however, that the 5 trial questions are not highlighted as such. In fact they look like any other question, so you must try to answer all 75 questions.

The pass mark is 50% so you need to score at least 35 correct answers to pass. The exam is closed book, which means that you cannot take the manual or any other printed or electronic materials with you into the examination room.

75 questions  
- 5 trial questions  
= 70 real questions  
(1 mark each)  
Total marks = 70.  
Pass mark is 35+ (50%)

the one where the certificate will be sent.

The invigilator will provide you with a unique candidate number – usually in the format P2R/123456. This number uniquely identifies you and you must write this number onto the candidate details form. Once you have completed this form, the invigilator will check your photo-ID and collect up the forms.

From then on, everything you write must be in pencil – ideally HB, as this is the only type which can be scanned easily.

#### The answer sheet

You will then be given an answer sheet where you must fill in your candidate number at the top – see the picture on the next page. When the exam starts, you will fill in your answers on this sheet.

There are only 2 correct ways to complete your answer sheet: either completely fill in the oval shape, or draw a thick horizontal line through the oval. Any other way and you run the risk that the machine which scans your paper may not read it properly and so you could fail. See the example on the next page.

The questions focus on defining terminology, explaining the benefits of the PRINCE2 methodology, and identifying the relationship between PRINCE2-specific roles, products and processes.

The questions are always in multiple-choice format, so you simply need to pick one answer out of the four options given. There are no trick questions on the exam paper and each question only has one correct answer.

#### The candidate details form

Just prior to the examination starting, the exam invigilator will read out the instructions and rules for the exam. You will be given a candidate details form to fill in – in ink – where you can fill in your name and address. Your name will be printed on your certificate and the address you enter is



Candidate Number

**The Foundation Examination Answer Booklet**

Use an **HB PENCIL** and only mark the paper where directed.

Enter your candidate number in the space provided at the bottom of the page and also in the 6 boxes on the right. Fill in the associated ovals next to the 6 boxes, e.g. for candidate 597, fill ovals 000597.

1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	+
2	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	+
3	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	+
4	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	+
5	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	+
6	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	+

Select your answers by filling in the appropriate ovals. Ovals must be darker than the grey square at the top of the page and filled between 80% - 100% as follows:

Do **NOT** use the following marks as they may be ignored.

+ 1.	a	b	c	d	21.	a	b	c	d	41.	a	b	c	d	61.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 2.	a	b	c	d	22.	a	b	c	d	42.	a	b	c	d	62.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 3.	a	b	c	d	23.	a	b	c	d	43.	a	b	c	d	63.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 4.	a	b	c	d	24.	a	b	c	d	44.	a	b	c	d	64.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 5.	a	b	c	d	25.	a	b	c	d	45.	a	b	c	d	65.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 6.	a	b	c	d	26.	a	b	c	d	46.	a	b	c	d	66.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 7.	a	b	c	d	27.	a	b	c	d	47.	a	b	c	d	67.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 8.	a	b	c	d	28.	a	b	c	d	48.	a	b	c	d	68.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 9.	a	b	c	d	29.	a	b	c	d	49.	a	b	c	d	69.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 10.	a	b	c	d	30.	a	b	c	d	50.	a	b	c	d	70.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 11.	a	b	c	d	31.	a	b	c	d	51.	a	b	c	d	71.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 12.	a	b	c	d	32.	a	b	c	d	52.	a	b	c	d	72.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 13.	a	b	c	d	33.	a	b	c	d	53.	a	b	c	d	73.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 14.	a	b	c	d	34.	a	b	c	d	54.	a	b	c	d	74.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 15.	a	b	c	d	35.	a	b	c	d	55.	a	b	c	d	75.	a	b	c	d	+
+ 16.	a	b	c	d	36.	a	b	c	d	56.	a	b	c	d						+
+ 17.	a	b	c	d	37.	a	b	c	d	57.	a	b	c	d						+
+ 18.	a	b	c	d	38.	a	b	c	d	58.	a	b	c	d						+
+ 19.	a	b	c	d	39.	a	b	c	d	59.	a	b	c	d						+
+ 20.	a	b	c	d	40.	a	b	c	d	60.	a	b	c	d						+

[.....] [.....] Total <.....> [.....] [.....]

% | | | | | | | %

to start. At this point the invigilator will give you the question booklet. This will contain all of the 75 questions. You must write your candidate number on the front cover. This booklet may not leave the room, so if you go to the toilet during the exam, you must leave this booklet in the examination room. It must also be handed back to the invigilator at the end of the exam along with your answer sheet.

### Question styles

Many of the questions can be answered quickly. For example, consider the following:

Q. In which of the following processes does the Project Board choose a suitable risk response?

- a. Controlling a Stage
- b. Managing a Stage Boundary
- c. Directing a Project
- d. Starting Up a Project

If you remember that the Project Board only performs one of the seven processes then the answer is straightforward – it's Directing a Project, option c.

However, some questions require more thought, such as this example:

Q. Which of the following tasks form part of the product-based planning method?

- i. Writing the product descriptions
- ii. Creating a product flow diagram
- iii. Designing the plan

iv. Creating the product breakdown structure

- a. (i), (ii) and (iii)
- b. (ii), (iii) and (iv)
- c. (i), (ii) and (iv)
- d. (i), (iii) and (iv)

For the above question, read the statements i-iv, and then decide which three form part of the product-based planning method. I suggest that you read each of the 4 options and tick the ones you are sure form part of the technique. If there are only 2 options you are sure about, at least you have reduced your last decision to a choice between the 2 remaining options, so pick one of them and then mark your answer paper accordingly.

As you can see, it really does help to be able to quickly recall your PRINCE2 knowledge quickly. With such limited time and no manual allowed, revision must be top of your Foundation exam preparation plan.

### How to revise

Remember to  
practise the  
sample exams  
beforehand

The number one revision method is to practice those exam questions! As the questions are compiled from a limited question bank, the more practice questions you attempt, the more prepared you will be. The PRINCE2 exam board provides 2 sample Foundation exam papers to PRINCE2 Accredited Training Organizations, so if you have studied using an accredited training course, these should be provided to you.

Practising the sample papers also helps you to refine your technique, and you will be able to predict how well you are likely to perform in the actual exam.

If you find it difficult to remember things, try colour-coding or highlighting your revision notes.

Colour-code or  
highlight your  
revision notes

Visual revision tools, such as flow charts and organisational models, are also an invaluable form of preparation. Memorizing and reproducing these for yourself will further aid your understanding of PRINCE2, and ultimately improve your chances of exam success.

Post-it note: Create your own diagrams as a revision tool

### Tackling the exam

There are three things to keep in mind during the Foundation exam – timing, question complexity and making sure to answer every question.

Timing is the most important aspect to keep in mind. The exam consists of 75 questions, and there are 60 minutes to answer them. This only allows 48 seconds per question. When faced with this small time frame, it's best to have a good strategy during the exam which maximizes your chances of scoring highly. The strategy we recommend is the **three pass approach**.

### The three pass approach

**Pass 1** – go through the entire question paper from start to finish and answer those questions which you feel confident about and only take a few seconds to answer. Mark your answer on the answer sheet and mark your question paper so show you have answered the question. Leave any questions you are unsure about. Often at the end of this first pass, you might only have spent 15-20 minutes and possibly answered 30-40% of the questions.

**Pass 2** – go through the unanswered questions, this time spending 10-15 seconds reading each one. If you don't understand what it is asking you, read it one more time. Mark the answer sheet with your answers and your question paper to show you have

answered the question. At the end of this pass you will only be left with those questions which take a long time to answer, or you are still not sure about.

**Pass 3** – re-read the remaining questions. By a process of elimination, discount those options which you think are definitely wrong. Cross them out on the question booklet. If you do this, you can often eliminate 2 options straightaway which will leave you with 2 options left to choose from. Read the question and the 2 remaining options one more time and if you really cannot decide guess.

Whatever you do, make sure that one option has been selected on your answer sheet for all 75 questions in the question booklet.

- Apply the **three pass approach** to maximize your chances of gaining the required marks
- Do **NOT** spend too long on complex questions. It's always better to skip these questions and answer them at the end
- Be careful about over-analyzing questions and think carefully before changing answers. Your initial response is often the correct one
- Only select one option for all 75 questions and ensure you have filled these in on the answer sheet

Preparing well, knowing what to expect and thoroughly understanding the PRINCE2 methodology, will all greatly improve your chances of success. Also, statistics show that high-

scorers in the Foundation exam will have a better chance at getting a high score in Practitioner, which is certainly something to keep in mind.

### Things to remember

On the day of the exam, you must bring:

- **Photo ID** (such as a passport or driving licence) – you cannot take the exam unless you have proof of ID to show the invigilator.
- **Pencils and an eraser** – for answering those questions!
- **Pen** – for filling in the candidate details form
- **Water** – ensure you have water to drink during the exam. Studies show that students who drink water during exams, on average score 4.8% higher marks than students who don't drink water. <sup>[1]</sup>

Don't forget to bring these things to the exam: photo-ID, HB pencil with eraser, pen and lots of water!

Other points to remember:

- If English is not your first language or you have certain conditions such as dyslexia, you may feel that completing the exam in the allotted



time will be a challenge. Inform your trainer before the exam, and they may be able to organise extra time for you

- Tell the invigilator if the exam environment is bothering you (such as noise or sunlight) or you feel unwell. Do this preferably before the exam begins
- If you need to change an answer, you should rub out the wrong answer as thoroughly as you can in order to avoid ambiguity when the answer sheet is marked
- All mobile phones and electronic devices must be switched off for the duration of the exam
- If you fail the exam, you can re-take it at a later date, although you will need to pay the exam fee again
- At the end of the exam, the invigilator will mark your answers and give you a provisional result. You will therefore know on the day if you have provisionally passed or failed. Two weeks later, the exam board (APMG) will confirm the result
- If you have passed, you should expect to receive the certificate about four weeks after receiving your results, and your name, candidate number, exam date and training company will appear on APMG's online successful candidate register. You can also opt-out of this if you wish, but it is a good way for potential employers to see proof of your PRINCE2 qualification

## Conclusion

We hope you have found this guide to passing the PRINCE2 Foundation exam useful. Thorough knowledge of how PRINCE2 works and a great exam technique will lead to exam success, and you should feel reassured that all the questions are multiple-choice. Confidence, effective study, and practicing sample exams will all boost your chances of passing the exam, and achieving a qualification recognised in industries throughout the world.

## References

[1] Pawson, C. (2004, April). Bring water into exams to improve your grade. <http://www.uel.ac.uk/news/press-releases/2012/04/waterexams.htm>

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