



Government
Commercial
Function

EXPERT

Training and accreditation
programme



July 2025

About the programme

■ The need for accredited senior contract management professionals

The government demands value for money and service delivery efficiency from the more complex and high risk contracts that are commissioned. In particular, those within the Government Major Projects Portfolio, or with similar levels of risk and complexity.

To manage high value and high risk contracts, contract managers from central government departments, contracting authorities, and across the wider public sector need to be skilled, have strong technical knowledge and be able to operate strategically. A recognised higher level accreditation following a comprehensive training programme will enable this.

■ Building and recognising skills

The Expert programme is a structured programme of training for accreditation. It builds upon existing contract management expertise to offer recognition to those meeting the Contract Management Standards.

A higher level technical qualification, it accredits contract management leadership and strategic level thinking.

■ A blended approach

The programme offers instruction and learning through a range of formats for learners to engage with. We know many people learn through 70% experiential learning, 20% learning with peers and colleagues and 10% via formal, instructor-led learning. The Programme reflects this in its structure and organisation of the learning material to help experts connect theory with practice.

The course will provide:

- a combination of on demand learning and instructional workshops
- self-directed learning, including interactive online activities that provide formative feedback and personal practice reflection
- participation in peer-learning group activities
- support and preparation for assessment
- interaction with specialist contract management instructors and learning and development specialists

■ Who should take on the Expert accreditation programme?

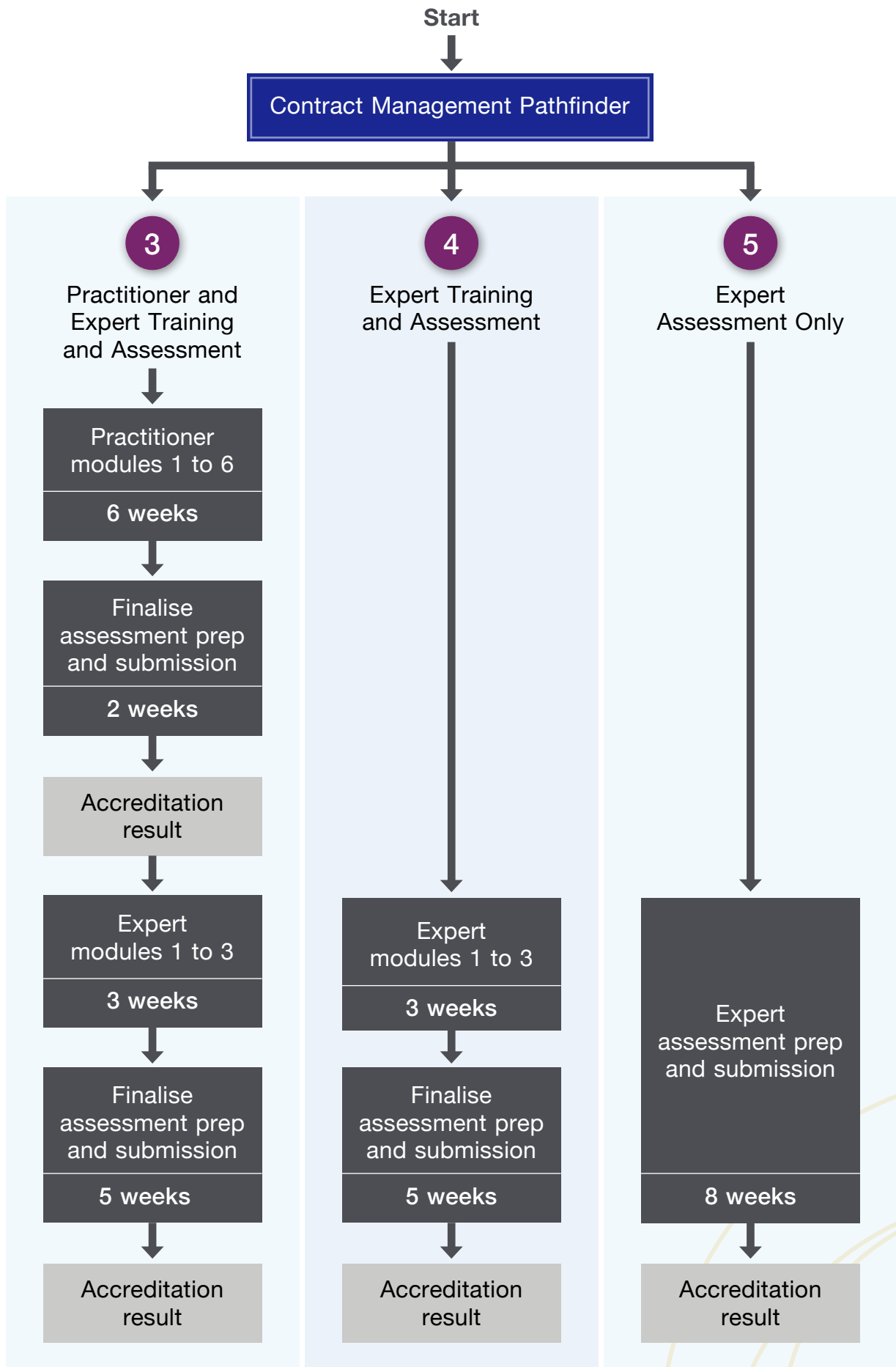
Expert is a strategic and technical course, with a focus on UK Government contracts. It has been designed for contract managers of higher risk and higher value contracts within:

- central government departments
- wider public sector organisations
- local authorities and arms length bodies
- social housing providers
- social enterprises
- third sector/charities
- academia and school business

The course will appeal to anyone who is a full-time contract manager or contract lead with at least 6-12 months experience in the role, gained from managing contracts with high value and levels of risk. These would typically be gold or multiple silver contracts as determined by the tiering tool, for those whose organisations use it.



EXPERT PATHWAYS



Benefits of the programme

Having trained and accredited contract staff within your organisation will reinforce to the government, service users, and the wider public domain that contracts are being efficiently managed. Without this, it's a contract risk. Contract risks are business risks.

■ Benefits for the organisation

The benefits for an organisation are:

- by placing contract managers on this higher level course it demonstrates a commitment to developing people at all levels
- having increasing numbers of people gaining a strategic level accreditation demonstrates credibility and how professional standards are maintained
- learners can put their knowledge from the training and accreditation into making cost savings and contract efficiencies
- the training and accreditation is shaped around examples from the workplace
- the programme focuses exclusively on UK public sector contracts

■ Benefits for the learner

The benefits for the learner are:

- an accreditation that is transferable across public sector roles
- a significant skills uplift and knowledge boost
- the CPD endorsement provides personal development time credits
- joining a community of accredited contract managers, boosting contract management as a recognised profession
- free membership of WorldCC - the professional association for the sector, for the duration of the course

■ Wider benefits

Everyone on the course will be able to benefit from putting their newly-acquired strategic knowledge and skills into practice. This could include:

- being a key part of driving contract efficiencies and securing value for money from high profile contracts
- helping to ensure that taxpayers' money is spent wisely
- gaining satisfaction from seeing major contracts being delivered efficiently so as to enhance the organisation's reputation
- being one of an elite cadre of accredited specialist contract managers working on high risk contracts across the sector
- forging stronger relationships with influential staff within suppliers to future-proof effective public sector contract management
- joining creative communities of experienced contract management professionals to share knowledge, expertise and good practice
- helping others benefit from knowledge by training and supporting less experienced colleagues



■ Demonstrating the benefits of the programme

The statistics tell the story. From a survey of all accredited Practitioner and Expert learners in 2025:



92% completing the programme have made contract savings



£182m cost savings have been reported or are anticipated this year



65% have benefited from better knowledge of contract terminologies



79% learners have brought about contract efficiencies



61% learners have improved their supplier relationships



75% learners now feel more skilled in managing risk

Course content

■ For Pathway 3 - Practitioner and Expert Training and Assessment ONLY

Practitioner Module 1 - Commercial Awareness for Contract Managers

- contract manager contribution to pre-procurement activities
- common commercial and contract terms and financial language
- commercial risk awareness at pre-award stage
- supply chain compliance and sustainability
- safeguarding measures to protect the authority

Practitioner Module 2 - Managing Contract Mobilisation

- the importance of planning
- key documentation for planning
- the intelligent client function (ICF) and governance
- what else should be on a contract manager's radar during mobilisation?
- reflective practice, evidence and portfolio-building

Practitioner Module 3 - Managing Contract Risk and Change

- risk mindset and management
- performance-related risk and risk indicators
- managing change control
- evidencing your risk and change practice and its impact

Practitioner Module 4 - Managing Contract Delivery

- maintaining oversight over time
- evidence-based decision-making and recommendations
- clarity of processes
- management information and reporting
- managing (poor) performance and disputes

Practitioner Module 5 - Managing Relationships with Suppliers and Stakeholders

- background to supplier relationship management both inside central government and in other contracting organisations
- fundamentals of relationship management in publicly funded contracts
- what stakeholders are
- engagement and treatment strategies

Practitioner Module 6 - Managing Contract Exit and Transition

- contract exit, contract transition, or both?
- managing the contract exit or transition plan
- relationships with suppliers during exit/transition
- managing stakeholders in the exit or transition phase
- preparing for assessment

■ For Pathway 3 - Practitioner and Expert Training and Assessment, Pathway 4 - Expert Training and Assessment and Pathway 5 - Expert Assessment Only

Expert Module 1 - Leading Good Practice through the Contract Management Lifecycle

- revisiting the contract management lifecycle from an Expert perspective
- commercial awareness
- contract delivery
- contract exit contracts and transition between more complex contracts
- sound contract management practices
- a model of reflection for considering your practice against the Professional Standards

Expert Module 2 - Strategic Contract Management

- what strategy is in Expert contract management and what it is not
- benefits realisation - defining, capturing, and accountability
- governance in contract management
- supply chain sustainability
- anti-fraud and corruption

Expert Module 3 - Leading on Contract Change, Risk and Relationships

- risk mindset, appetite, and management
- understanding strategic risk
- uncertainty and contract management
- advanced communication with stakeholders
- advanced stakeholder management and relationship-building
- leading on change control

Essentials



Entry pre-requisite: Minimum of Foundation level understanding of the fundamentals and 6 to 12 months experience in a role which covers gold level, high-risk and high value contracts or multiple silver level contracts.



First step: After recommendation from the contract lead, the first step for learners is to complete the Contract Management Pathfinder which will guide and signpost to the right programme and pathway, and confirm that the more strategic Expert level is the correct route.



Delivery method: Online blended learning which means there is no need to travel. A suitable broadband internet connection is needed, along with suitable audio to listen and participate in any group sessions. All content is delivered through the Government Commercial College.



Course dates: 3 intakes per year.



Assessment: Based on an ePortfolio of evidence against the Contract Management Professional Standards and a 45 minute live oral assessment.



Accreditation: Government recognised accreditation.

■ Pathway 3: Practitioner and Expert Training and Assessment



Length of programme: This pathway is spread over 2 intakes.

Practitioner (intake 1) is 12 weeks from start to accreditation results. This includes 6 weeks of training and building the ePortfolio with L&D support then 2 weeks to finalise and submit the ePortfolio. There is then 4 weeks for assessment marking and moderation.

Expert (subsequent intake) is 12 weeks from start to accreditation results. This includes 3 weeks of training and building the ePortfolio with L&D support then 5 weeks to finalise and submit the ePortfolio. There is then 4 weeks for assessment marking and moderation.



Time commitment: Approximately 63 hours of instruction and learning plus self-directed ePortfolio build. Each module is 7 hours in duration.



Cost: £7,700. Some funding is available.

■ Pathway 4: Expert Training and Assessment



Length of programme: 12 weeks from start to accreditation results. 3 weeks of training and building the ePortfolio with L&D support then 5 weeks to finalise and submit the ePortfolio. 4 weeks for assessment marking and moderation.



Time commitment: Approximately 21 hours of instruction and learning plus self-directed ePortfolio build. Each module is 7 hours in duration.



Cost: £3,700. Some funding is available.

■ Pathway 5: Expert Assessment Only



Length of programme: 8 weeks to build and submit the ePortfolio with L&D support. 4 weeks for assessment marking and moderation.



Time commitment: ePortfolio build is self-directed.



Cost: £2,600. Some funding is available.