A Guide to the PMP® Exam Changes

A new version of the PMP® Exam launched on **January 12, 2016**.

Why did the exam change?

In June of 2015, PMI announced that they would be changing the PMP Exam based on a recent Role Delineation Study (RDS). Role Delineation Studies are completed every three to five years in order to ensure that the PMP Exam is reflective of the current project management profession.

The project management profession continues to evolve, and it is important that the PMP Exam reflects these real-world changes so that the exam can continue to be considered a relevant and reliable indicator of project management proficiency.

How did the exam change?

The RDS examines the role of the project manager, assessing the needed competencies of this role, to determine the appropriate knowledge, tasks, and skills required to meet the industry standards of the profession. The RDS results are then used as the basis for the PMP Exam. The changes identified in this latest RDS were incorporated into the 2016 PMP Exam to ensure all areas are being adequately tested and to confirm exam validity. The changes to the performance domains, knowledge, tasks, and skills are also included in the *PMP® Exam Content Outline*.

What is the *Exam Content Outline*?

The *Exam Content Outline* (ECO) delineates all the content that will be evaluated in the PMP Exam. It is the framework used to design the exam itself. Included in the ECO are all the tasks you will be tested on, categorized by performance domains. Each domain has a fixed percentage of questions on the exam—this is also known as "weighting". In addition, the ECO outlines the knowledge and skill areas which cross-cut each domain and are also evaluated on the PMP Exam.

When did the exam change?

PREVIOUS VERSION OF EXAM	NEW VERSION OF EXAM
Available until January 11, 2016	Available after January 11, 2016
Based on ECO from August 2011	Based on ECO from June 2015

What specifically changed?

The RDS examined the previous ECO and a number of changes, both big and small, were implemented for the new ECO. Below, we have outlined these changes and called out specific alterations that may impact your exam preparation.

Minor Changes

- The weighting of the exam changed, and therefore the number of questions per domain also changed. These weightings include:
    - Executing—increased to 31% (previously was 30%)
    - Closing—decreased to 7% (previously was 8%)
- Some tasks in the new ECO were changed very slightly in order to clean-up wording, language, and terminology. There is no change to the core content of these tasks.
- Some tasks were removed, and will no longer be tested on the new exam.

Major Changes

- Eight new tasks were added, resulting in 25% of the new exam focusing on these new topic areas which were not previously tested.
- Emphasis was added to the following topics:
    - **Benefits Realization:** There is added emphasis on business strategy and benefits realization. Focus is now placed on project managers participating in projects earlier in the process. This additional involvement results in project managers focusing more on business goals and business benefits than specific deliverables.
    - **Value of Lessons Learned:** Lessons learned are now emphasized throughout the entire project, not simply at the end or beginning in the closing and initiating phases. Key to this new emphasis is knowledge transfer and documentation of lessons learned.
    - **Project Charter:** Project manager responsibilities related to the project charter have changed. The sponsor or customer now creates and approves the charter, and the project manager contributes to its development, and informs others about the charter. Project managers are no longer solely responsible for creating the project charter.
    - **Stakeholder Relationships:** Emphasis on continual development of stakeholder relationships has been increased. Engagement with stakeholders and two-way

relationships with stakeholders are extremely important, and one-way communication is discouraged. Project managers should encourage stakeholder engagement whenever possible.

♦ The next few pages outline the ECO changes as they effect each specific performance domain. More generally, the following knowledge and skill areas were added: business acumen, laws/regulations, change management, coaching/mentoring/training, customer satisfaction, delegation, cultural and diversity sensitivity, expert judgement, meeting management, organizational and operational awareness, finance, quality assurance, risk assessment, situational awareness, stakeholder management, virtual/remote team management.

Domain I: Initiating

Task and Weighting Changes	Key Content Changes
New Tasks: ♦ Task 2 ♦ Task 7 ♦ Task 8	Emphasis placed on the following items: ♦ Increased focus on organizational factors, organizational strategy, and business strategy in relation to the project and its deliverables ♦ Lessons learned from previous projects are crucial ♦ Role in project charter creation is now as a participant, not owner **New Skills:** Analytical Skills and Strategic management

Domain II: Planning

Task and Weighting Changes	Key Content Changes
New Tasks: ♦ Task 13	Emphasis placed on the following items: ♦ Significant revision of task 2, develop a scope management plan based on approved scope and using approved techniques ♦ *Managing* cost, schedule, communications and procurement ♦ Defining quality standards **New Skills:** Cost management, budgeting, selecting contract types, estimating, HR planning, Lean and efficiency principles, Regulatory and environmental assessments, Stakeholder management planning.

Domain III: Executing

Task and Weighting Changes	Key Content Changes

New Tasks:
   ♦ Task 6
   ♦ Task 7
 	
New Weighting: 31%
	Emphasis placed on the following items:
	
	   ♦ Following HR Plans
	   ♦ Managing execution of tasks
	
	New Skills: Contract management, interdependencies among projects, vendor management

Domain IV: Monitoring/Controlling

Task and Weighting Changes	Key Content Changes

New Tasks:
   ♦ Task 6
   ♦ Task 7
	Emphasis placed on the following items:
	
	   ♦ Monitor and assess risk
	   ♦ Review issue log
	
	New Skills: Process analysis techniques (LEAN, Kanban, Six Sigma), finance principles, monitoring tools and techniques, quality best practices and standards (IEEE, ISO), measuring quality using charts and statistics, validation and verification of quality.

Domain V: Closing

Task and Weighting Changes	Key Content Changes

New Weighting: 7%	Emphasis placed on the following items:
	
	   ♦ Sharing final project report
	   ♦ Obtaining feedback from stakeholders
	
	New Skills: Use performance measurement techniques (KPI and key success factors).

Preparing for the Exam

How will my preparation change?

The CertWise Learning System for PMP® Exam Preparation was developed explicitly with the new ECO content in mind—this ensures your preparation is be up-to-date for the new exam. If you purchased other review materials or attended classes for the previous exam, you should first read the updated

PMP® Exam Content Outline. It is advised that you updated your training materials or take a course that incorporates the new exam changes.

Who can I talk to about these changes?

If you have any questions about the exam changes, or how you can prepare for the exam using *The Learning System for PMP® Exam Preparation,* please feel free to contact our customer care team at PM-info@certwise.com or by phone at +1-844-767-8444 (USA/Canada) or +1-651-905-2688 (worldwide).

Our goal is to help you succeed.