P3O® Foundation Exam Guidance

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Introduction

The objective of the examination is to enable you to demonstrate an understanding of the P3O models, principles, lifecycles techniques and roles. The Foundation exam uses objectives test questions, which require you to choose a response to a question from a set of choices, for which the correct answer is pre-determined.

The following paragraphs explain the format of the question papers, and the different styles of question asked. Some suggestions on how to approach answering the various styles of question are also included.

Structure of the Paper

The examination paper consists of:

A question booklet that contains 75 questions – 70 exam questions and five trial questions. Each question covers a different syllabus topic and is worth 1 mark, but trial questions are not scored. The use of trial questions enables new questions to be trialled without affecting a candidate's marks. There will be no indication of which questions are exam questions and which are trial. The pass mark is 35 (50%).

The answer sheet on which your answers must be given. There will only ever by *one answer* to each question. If more than answer is marked on the answer sheet, the response line will be void and will attract no marks. Marks are not subtracted for incorrect answers.

P3O Syllabus Areas Addressed

The exam consists of 75 questions in total that cover all areas of the P3O Foundation syllabus.

Styles of Question

There are a number of different test styles used within the paper. All test styles are based on the selection of the correct answer from a choice of 4 options.

The test styles are: standard, negative, select (list) and select (evaluation).

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Standard

What type of role is a Project Officer?

a) Consultancy
b) Functional
c) Generic
d) Management

Negative

Which is **NOT** included within the definition of project management?

a) Planning a project
b) Monitoring a project
c) Achieving outcomes
d) Motivating a team

Select (list)

Which of the following are attributes of gated reviews:

1. Are undertaken at key decision points in a programme or project
2. Assess how a programme is performing compared with its objectives
3. Establish the Key Performance Indicators for a programme or project
4. Check the quality of decision support information provided

a) 1, 2, 3
b) 1, 2, 4
c) 1, 3, 4
d) 2, 3, 4

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SELECT (EVALUATION)

Which of the following statements about processes for existing temporary offices are true?

1. Defined information flows for the supported programme should be implemented
2. Resources within the Portfolio Office should be managed

a) Only 1 is true
b) Only 2 is true
c) Both 1 and 2 are true
d) Neither 1 or 2 is true

Editorial Notes

GENERAL PRESENTATION

Through the exam, title case has been used for all references to P3O lifecycle processes and roles.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following standard abbreviations used in the guide/ manual will not be expanded in the paper:

COE – Centre of Excellence

P3M3 – Portfolio, Programme and Project Management Maturity Model

P3O – Portfolio, Programme and Project Offices

PPM – Portfolio, Programme and Project Management

USES OF 'SHOULD' AND 'MUST'

Should is used to express obligation – something that is good or important or recommended. It is less strong than must and is used to test whether something should occur because it is consistent with the principles and recommended practices in P3O.

Must is used when talking about something that is necessary or has to occur ie something that is mandatory.

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Time Management

The exam is 60 minutes in duration. You must manage your time in order to complete all questions. All 75 questions should be attempted. If you wish to write your answers on the question paper first, you must be aware of the additional time needed to transfer the answers to the Answer Sheet. Only answers correctly submitted on the Answer Sheet will contribute to the result.

No support material is permitted – this is a closed book exam.

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