

PRINCE2[®] certification

Author: Simon Buehring



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Introduction

PRINCE2, which stands for Projects IN Controlled Environments is a [structured project management method](#) widely recognized and used in the private and public sectors globally. The PRINCE2 method is in the public domain and offers best practice guidance on project management.

[PRINCE2](#) is the most popular project management certification in the UK and is increasing in popularity in Europe.

There are two core PRINCE2 qualifications - Foundation, and Practitioner - and a further two [PRINCE2 Agile certifications](#).

PRINCE2 certification is a valuable qualification for anyone seeking to progress in project management. The time, effort, and resources invested in obtaining this certification can significantly boost a candidate's career prospects and open new opportunities in the global job market. It's a matter of deciding which level and study method suit the candidate's circumstances and career goals best.

PRINCE2 Foundation

This is the first level of PRINCE2 certification. The [PRINCE2 Foundation](#) certification confirms that a candidate has a fundamental understanding of the PRINCE2 methodology. This level of understanding would enable someone to work effectively within, or as a member of, a [project management team](#) in a PRINCE2-supporting environment.

The Foundation certification is one of the prerequisites for the PRINCE2 Practitioner certification.

The Foundation examination is a 60-minute multiple-choice test, comprising 60 questions. The pass mark is 55%, or 33 out of 60. With dedicated study, it is achievable to complete the Foundation level within two days, or longer if studying at home.

PRINCE2 Practitioner

This is the second and more advanced level of PRINCE2 certification. [PRINCE2 Practitioner](#) verifies a candidate's ability to apply and tailor the PRINCE2 method in a real-life scenario. As a certified Practitioner, a candidate would be capable of starting and managing projects using the PRINCE2 methodology, under appropriate guidance.

The Practitioner examination is a 2.5-hour, open-book (PRINCE2 manual only), multiple-choice test with 68 questions. The pass mark is 55%, or 38 out of 68. This certification is achievable within 2 days by attending a training course, or several weeks if studying at home.

PRINCE2 Agile

[PRINCE2 Agile](#) is a complementary certification designed for those working in an agile environment. It provides guidance on how to tailor the PRINCE2 project management method in an agile context.

[PRINCE2 Agile certification](#) is available at both [Foundation](#) and [Practitioner](#) levels.

Training options to get certified

There are four ways to become PRINCE2 certified, not all of which include attending a [PRINCE2 training course](#).

1. Classroom-based training (physical classroom)

This is the traditional method and involves in-person training sessions, usually taking place over consecutive days. This method offers direct interaction with trainers and fellow students. Although this type of training stopped during the Covid-19 pandemic, it is now available but less frequently.

This is the most expensive way to learn about PRINCE2 and become certified. If joining a class through a PRINCE2 Accredited Training Provider (ATO) the candidate should receive a voucher(s) for the PRINCE2 exams which are taken online.

2. Classroom-based training (online virtual classroom)

This is the method which became widespread during the Covid-19 pandemic and involves in-person online training sessions using virtual classroom technology. This method also offers interaction with trainers and fellow students but requires no travelling to a course venue. Students require an internet connection, and computer with audio to participate.

This type of training is usually cheaper than the physical classroom training.

3. Online eLearning

Many providers offer online eLearning PRINCE2 courses, which can provide greater flexibility for those who may not be able to attend in-person training or prefer to study at their own pace. Students require an internet-enabled device with audio features. Although online eLearning courses often work on mobile devices, the small screen size usually gives a less than optimal learning experience.

Online eLearning courses are usually cheaper than virtual classroom training.

4. Self-study

This type of learning is the cheapest way to become PRINCE2 certified. This is a viable option for students who are highly self-motivated and if the other options are too expensive. Essential resources for this approach include the official PRINCE2 manual and other freely available supplementary materials from the internet.

Benefits of PRINCE2 certification

There are 5 main benefits for an individual becoming PRINCE2 certified. The benefits to individuals are different from the [benefits for organizations adopting PRINCE2](#). The 5 benefits for individuals are:

1. Employability

Many organizations, both in the public and private sectors, recognize and actively seek PRINCE2-certified professionals for project management roles. The certification on a candidate's resume can significantly increase their employability and career prospects.

2. Skills development

PRINCE2's comprehensive and structured approach helps develop essential project management skills, such as risk management, planning, and stakeholder engagement.

3. Increased earnings

The average salary for PRINCE2 certified professionals tends to be higher compared to non-certified professionals in project management.

4. Confidence boost

Candidates with a PRINCE2 certificate often exhibit greater confidence that they can contribute more to their organization's projects.

5. Global recognition

PRINCE2 is recognized globally, meaning a candidate's certification and skills can be applied internationally, broadening their career opportunities.

PRINCE2 Foundation vs Practitioner

Deciding whether to aim for PRINCE2 [Foundation](#) or [Practitioner](#) certification depends on what the candidate's aims are. If a candidate aims to start managing projects using PRINCE2, then Practitioner certification is required. If a candidate only wants to learn about good project management best practices, then Foundation certification is sufficient.

If a candidate's aim is to participate on a project as a team member, then Foundation is sufficient. However, if a candidate performs a role on a project higher than the project manager role (for example programme manager) then it is advisable to aim for Practitioner certification.

PRINCE2 vs PRINCE2 Agile

Deciding whether to choose PRINCE2 or [PRINCE2 Agile certification](#) depends upon the types of projects a candidate is involved in.

If a candidate is not involved in any agile projects, then they should aim for PRINCE2 certification. If the candidate is involved in agile projects, either as a team member, team leader, project manager, Scrum Master, or Scrum Product Owner, then they should choose PRINCE2 Agile certification.

PRINCE2 certification FAQs

Does PRINCE2 certification count towards CPD?

Yes, PRINCE2 certification does count towards CPD. Many Continuing Professional Development awarding bodies count [PRINCE2 courses](#) towards their CPD units. To find out if your PRINCE2 certification course has CPD units, contact your PRINCE2 training provider or CPD awarding body.

Does PRINCE2 certification expire?

No. PRINCE2 certifications do not expire. However, from January 2023, [PRINCE2 certifications](#) will have a renewal date set 3 years from the date of the exam. For certificates issued before 30 June 2020 a renewal date of 1 July 2023 will be set. Renewing a certificate is optional.

To renew a PRINCE2 certification requires a candidate to choose one of the [3 available renewal options](#).

Candidates that do not renew within 3 years of the award date (or before 1st July 2023 if they obtained their certification during or before June 2020) will still be included on the PRINCE2 Successful Candidates Register but their record will indicate that their certification is not aligned with current certification requirements.

How do I get PRINCE2 certification?

You get PRINCE2 certification by passing one of the two [PRINCE2 certification exams](#). Most people get their PRINCE2 certification by attending either a classroom PRINCE2 course or studying at home using a PRINCE2 eLearning course. A third option is to buy the PRINCE2 certification exam either directly PeopleCert, the PRINCE2 examination institute, or from a PRINCE2 Accredited Training Organisation (ATO). Then you need to self-study, perhaps using free materials you can find on the internet.

How do I renew my PRINCE2 certification?

There are 3 ways to renew your PRINCE2 certification.

1. Retake the same PRINCE2 exam

- Certification can be renewed by re-taking the original exam before its renewal date which is normally 3 years from the date of the exam.

2. Take further courses and certifications

- Certification can be renewed by attending another course and taking an exam within the same product suite before the renewal date. PRINCE2 is in the Project, Programme & Portfolio Management Product Suite which includes: PRINCE2®, PRINCE2® Agile, MoR®, MSP®, MoV®, MoP®, and P3O®.

3. Collect and log AXELOS CPD points

- This option is available from March 2023.

How long does it take to get PRINCE2 certification?

The minimum time it takes to get [PRINCE2 certified](#) is two days. This is the typical length of a PRINCE2 Foundation course. A PRINCE2 Practitioner course also takes either two or three days, usually with the exam

on the third day. So, to study for, and pass both PRINCE2 certification exams, you need to plan for 5 days minimum.

If you study using PRINCE2 online self-paced eLearning, it often takes most people more than five days. If you choose the cheaper self-study route, it usually takes considerably longer than one week.

How much does PRINCE2 certification cost?

The cost of PRINCE2 certification varies widely depending upon the PRINCE2 Accredited Training Organisation (ATO) you choose, and the method of study.

The cheapest way of getting PRINCE2 certified is to self-study using free study materials available on the internet. Studying this way requires you to buy your certification exam either from PeopleCert, the PRINCE2 examination institute, or from an ATO.

The next cheapest way of getting PRINCE2 certified is to buy an online eLearning course which usually comes with the certification exam(s). Usually, the most expensive way to get certified is to attend a classroom PRINCE2 course which either take place in a virtual learning environment, or in a physical classroom. If you choose a virtual classroom, it is likely to be cheaper than the physical classroom course.

To check the latest prices of eLearning or classroom training, see the [PRINCE2 training](#) page.

Is PRINCE2 certification worth it?

To decide whether PRINCE2 certification is worth it, depends upon your reasons for taking it. If you want to learn more about how to manage projects using a structured methodology, then it is worth it. If you want to get PRINCE2 certification because you want to get a better job, then you must consider whether you have project management experience already. If you have, then a PRINCE2 certification will help your resume stand out and help you to secure a project management role.

If you already have an existing project management certification such as one from the UK-based Association for Project Management (APM), or the American Project Management Institute (PMI), then getting a PRINCE2 certification will complement your APM or PMI certification.

If you have another certification already, such as an agile one (e.g. Scrum) then getting a PRINCE2 certification will complement your agile knowledge and experience because most agile certifications are not specifically project management methodologies. (Note: there are exceptions to this, such as DSDM – Dynamic Systems Development Methodology, and AgilePM – Agile Project Management).

To decide whether a PRINCE2 certification is worth it also depends upon where you are based. PRINCE2 is very popular in the UK, Australia, and many European countries, but less so in the Americas. If you live outside of the UK, Australia, and Europe, you might find it better to seek certification from the PMI.

What are the levels of PRINCE2 certification?

There are 2 levels of PRINCE2 certification:

1. PRINCE2 Foundation, and,
2. PRINCE2 Practitioner.

There are also a further 2 levels of PRINCE2 Agile certification:

1. PRINCE2 Agile Foundation, and,
2. PRINCE2 Agile Practitioner.

So, in total there are 4 levels of PRINCE2 certification.

What is PRINCE2 certification?

PRINCE2 certification is a professional project management qualification awarded by PeopleCert on behalf of AXELOS. PRINCE2 certification is available either at Foundation or Practitioner levels. You cannot gain Practitioner certification though unless you have already passed the Foundation certification.

What is the benefit of PRINCE2 certification?

There are 5 main benefits for an individual gaining PRINCE2 certification. These are:

1. Employability

Many organizations actively recruit PRINCE2-certified professionals for project management roles, especially in the UK. Certification can increase a candidate's employability and career prospects.

2. Develop skills

Attending PRINCE2 certification training helps a candidate develop essential project management skills.

3. Confidence boost

Candidates holding PRINCE2 certification often exhibit greater confidence of being able to contribute more to the projects in their organization.

4. Globally recognised

PRINCE2 is a globally recognized project management methodology, so a candidate's certification can be broadening their career opportunities.

5. Increased earnings

In the UK, average salaries for PRINCE2 certified professionals tend to be higher compared to non-certified project management professionals.

What is the PRINCE2 certification governing body?

AXELOS is the PRINCE2 certification governing body. Since 2013 AXELOS has owned PRINCE2 after ownership was transferred from HM Cabinet Office. At that time the PRINCE2 examination institute was PeopleCert. In 2021, PeopleCert acquired AXELOS whilst remaining the exam institute.

AXELOS sets the examination standards and is responsible for updates to the PRINCE2 guidance. Although PeopleCert issues examination certificates, they do so on behalf of AXELOS.

What is the PRINCE2 certification renewal cost?

The cost of PRINCE2 certification renewal depends on which of the following 3 renewal choices is made.

1. Retake the same PRINCE2 exam

- Check the price of a [PRINCE2 training course](#) for the same certification.

2. Take further courses and certifications

- Check the cost of getting an additional certification for [PRINCE2® Agile](#), [MSP®](#), [P3O®](#), [MoV®](#), [MoP®](#), or [MoR®](#).

3. Collect and log AXELOS CPD points

- This is an annual renewal cost so it is important to factor in the cost of doing this for 3 years. Check the cost of [MyAXELOS membership](#) before deciding.

What is the PRINCE2 register?

The PRINCE2 register is otherwise known as the [successful candidates register](#). It is a register of all the students who sat a PRINCE2 examination and gave their permission for their details to appear on the register. If granting consent, the register shows the candidate's name, date of exam, the name of the exam (Foundation or Practitioner), and the result (pass or fail). The register does not show the score obtained on the exam.

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