

PRINCE2® Foundation

Draft Examination Specification

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AXELOS.com

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. PRINCE2 Foundation Syllabus	4-6
3. PRINCE2 Foundation Examination Design	7
4. Examination Administration	7
5. Question Types	7
6. Scoring	8
7. Weightings	8
8. Paper Build Rules	8-10

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline:

- an updated syllabus in terms of the learning outcomes of the PRINCE2 Foundation qualification and the assessment criteria a candidate is expected to meet for each learning outcome (with reference to the PRINCE2 *Managing Successful Projects with PRINCE2 publication, 2017 edition*)
- an updated examination design, in terms of question types to be used, exam duration and administrative considerations
- an adjustment in weightings (number of questions) across learning outcomes, assessment criteria and 'Bloom's level' (level of cognitive processing required to answer the question/task, according to Bloom's (revised) taxonomy).

Please note that this is a draft document, and may be subject to change during the exam development process.

The contents of this document are confidential.

The target audience for this document is:

- AXELOS internal staff
- PRINCE2 Foundation Update Examiner Team
- Examination Institute partners
- Accredited Training Organization partners

The purpose of the PRINCE2 Foundation Examination is:

- to assess whether the candidate can demonstrate sufficient recall and understanding of the PRINCE2 project management method, as described in the syllabus below, to be awarded the PRINCE2 Foundation qualification. (The PRINCE2 Foundation qualification is a prerequisite for the PRINCE2 Practitioner Examination, which assesses the ability to apply understanding of the PRINCE2 project management method in context.)

The target audience for this qualification is:

- Project Managers and aspiring Project Managers
- Other key staff involved in the design, development and delivery of projects, including: Project Board members (e.g. Senior Responsible Owners), Team Managers (e.g. Product Delivery Managers), Project Assurance (e.g. Business Change Analysts), Project Support (e.g. Project and Programme Office personnel) and operational line managers/staff.

2. PRINCE2 Foundation Syllabus

Table 1, below, specifies the learning outcomes of the PRINCE2 Foundation qualification, and the assessment criteria used to assess a candidate's achievement of these learning outcomes, subsequent to a course of study.

Table 1 - PRINCE2 Foundation Syllabus

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria (primary book references in parentheses) The verb for each assessment criteria indicates the Bloom's level: e.g. 'Identify', 'Define', 'Recall', 'Recognize' indicates Level 1 basic recall and recognition e.g. 'Describe', 'Explain', indicates Level 2 understanding/comprehension	Bloom's level (BL)
1. Understand key concepts relating to projects and PRINCE2.	1.1 Recall: a) the definition and characteristics of a project, (2.1) b) the six aspects of project performance to be managed, (2.3) c) the integrated elements of PRINCE2: principles, themes, processes and the project environment, (1.1) d) what makes a project a PRINCE2 project. (1.3)	BL1
	1.2 Describe: a) the features and benefits of PRINCE2, (1) b) the customer/supplier context on which PRINCE2 is based, including considerations when undertaking projects in a commercial environment. (2.5, 2.5.4)	BL2
2. Understand how the PRINCE2 principles underpin the PRINCE2 method	2.1 Explain the PRINCE2 principles: a) continued business justification, (3.1) b) learn from experience, (3.2) c) defined roles and responsibilities, (3.3) d) manage by stages, (3.4) e) manage by exception, (3.5) f) focus on products, (3.6) g) tailor to suit the project. (3.7)	BL2
	2.2 Explain which aspects of a project can be tailored, who is responsible, and how tailoring decisions are documented. (4.3.1-2)	BL2
3. Understand the PRINCE2 themes and how they are applied throughout the project	Business case theme	
	3.1.1 Explain the purpose of: a) managing business justification, (6.1) b) key management products: • business case, (A.2.1) • benefits management approach. (A.1.1)	BL2
	3.1.2 Describe what PRINCE 2 requires, as a minimum, for managing business justification. (6.2 (excl. subsections))	BL2
	3.1.3 Define key concepts related to business justification, and the differences between them: • outputs, • outcomes, • benefits. • dis-benefits. (6.1, fig. 6.1)	BL1
	Organization theme	
	3.2.1 Explain the purpose of: a) managing organization (7.1) b) key management products: • communication management approach. (A.5.1)	BL2
	3.2.2 Describe what PRINCE 2 requires, as a minimum, for managing organization. (7.2 (excl. subsections), fig. 7.3)	BL2

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria (primary book references in parentheses) The verb for each assessment criteria indicates the Bloom's level: e.g. 'Identify', 'Define', 'Recall', 'Recognize' indicates Level 1 basic recall and recognition e.g. 'Describe', 'Explain', indicates Level 2 understanding/comprehension	Bloom's level (BL)
3. (continued) Understand the PRINCE2 themes and how they are applied throughout the project	Organization theme (continued)	
	3.2.3 Describe the roles and responsibilities of the: a) Project Board, (7.2.1.1) e) Project Assurance, (7.2.1.5) b) Executive, (7.2.1.2) f) Change Authority, (7.2.1.6) c) Senior User, (7.2.1.3) g) Project Manager, (7.2.1.7) d) Senior Supplier, (7.2.1.4) h) Team Manager, (7.2.1.8) i) Project Support, (7.2.1.9) including j) which roles can be combined. (7.2.1.10)	BL2
	3.2.4 Explain key concepts related to organization: a) stakeholder, (7.1) b) the three project interests and how these are represented within the four levels of management. (7.1, fig. 7.1, fig. 7.2)	BL2
	Quality theme	
	3.3.1 Explain the purpose of: a) managing quality, (8.1) b) key management products: • project product description, (A.21.1) • product description, (A.17.1) • quality register, (A.23.1) • quality management approach. (A.22.1)	BL2
	3.3.2 Describe what PRINCE 2 requires, as a minimum, for managing quality. (8.2, excl. subsections)	BL2
	3.3.3 Explain key concepts related to quality, and the differences between them: a) quality planning and quality control, (8.1.1) b) project assurance and quality assurance, (8.1.1) c) customer quality expectations and acceptance criteria. (8.1, 8.3.6, 8.3.8)	BL2
	Plans theme	
	3.4.1 Explain the purpose of: a) managing plans, (9.1) b) types of plan: • project plan, (9.2.1.1, A.16.1) • stage plan, (9.2.1.2, A.16.1) • exception plan, (9.2.1.3, A.16.1) • team plan. (9.2.1.4, A.16.1)	BL2
	3.4.2 Describe the PRINCE2 minimum requirements for managing plans (9.2, excl. subsections)	BL2
	3.4.3 Recall: a) the steps in the recommended approach to planning (fig. 9.2), including b) the steps in the recommended product-based planning technique (9.3.1.1-7), and explain: c) the factors to consider when structuring the project into management stages. (9.3.1.1)	BL1
		BL2
	Risk theme	
	3.5.1 Explain the purpose of: a) managing risk, including the purpose of a risk budget, (10.1, 10.3.7) b) key management products: • risk management approach, (A.24.1) • risk register. (A.25.1)	BL2
	3.5.2 Describe what PRINCE 2 requires, as a minimum, for managing risk. (10.2, excl. subsections)	BL2

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria (primary book references in parentheses) The verb for each assessment criteria indicates the Bloom's level: e.g. 'Identify', 'Define', 'Recall', 'Recognize' indicates Level 1 basic recall and recognition e.g. 'Describe', 'Explain', indicates Level 2 understanding/comprehension	Bloom's level (BL)
3. (continued) Understand the PRINCE2 themes and how they are applied throughout the project	3.5.3 Define key concepts related to risk, and the differences between them: a) a risk: threat or opportunity, (10.1) b) recommended risk response types, (tab.10.3) c) risk owner and risk actionee, (10.4.4) d) cause, event and effect, (10.4.1.2) e) risk probability, risk impact and risk proximity. (10.4.2.1)	BL1
	3.5.4 Describe the risk management procedure. (10.3.2, 10.4.1-5)	BL2
	Change theme	
	3.6.1 Explain the purpose of: a) managing change, including the purpose of a change budget, (11.1,11.3.6) b) key management products: • change control approach, (A.3.1) • configuration item record, (A.6.1) • issue register, (A.12.1) • issue report, (A.13.1) • product status account. (A.18.1)	BL2
	3.6.2 Describe what PRINCE 2 requires, as a minimum, for managing change. (11.2, excl. subsections)	BL2
	3.6.3 Describe: a) types of issue, (11.1, tab. 11.1) b) the recommended issue and change control procedure. (fig.11.1, 11.4.1-5)	BL2
	Progress theme	
	3.7.1 Explain the purpose of: a) controlling progress, (12.1) b) key management products: • daily log, (A.7.1) • lessons log, (A.14.1, 12.2.2.3) • lessons report (A.15.1) • work package, (A.26.1, 12.2.2.1) • end stage report, (A.9.1, 12.2.2.4) • end project report, (A.8.1, 12.2.2.4) • checkpoint report, (A.4.1, 12.2.2.4) • highlight report, (A.11.1, 12.2.2.4) • exception report. (A.10.1, 12.2.3)	BL2
	3.7.2 Describe what PRINCE 2 requires, as a minimum, for controlling progress. (12.2, excl. subsections)	BL2
	3.7.3 Explain key concepts related to progress: a) event-driven and time-driven controls, (12.2.2) b) tolerances and exceptions, including how tolerances are set and exceptions are reported. (12.2.1, fig.12.1, 12.2.3)	BL2
4. Understand the PRINCE2 processes and how they are carried out throughout the project	4.1 Explain the purpose of the PRINCE2 processes: a) starting up a project, (14.1) including h) the purpose of the project brief, (A.19.1) b) directing a project, (15.1) including i) the purpose of the project initiation documentation, (A.20.1) c) initiating a project, (16.1) d) controlling a stage, (17.1) e) managing product delivery, (18.1) f) managing a stage boundary, (19.1) g) closing a project. (20.1)	BL2
	4.2 Explain the objectives of the PRINCE2 processes (a-g above). (14.2, 15.2, 16.2, 17.2, 18.2, 19.2, 20.2)	BL2
	4.3 Explain the context of the PRINCE2 processes (a-g above). (14.3, 15.3, 16.3, 17.3, 18.3, 19.3, 20.3)	BL2

3 PRINCE2 Foundation Examination Design

3.1 Examination Administration

Duration: 60 minutes

NOTE: Candidates taking the exam in a language that is not their native or working language may be awarded 25% extra time, i.e. 75 minutes in total.

Materials permitted: This is a 'closed book' examination. No materials other than the examination materials are permitted.

3.2 Question Types

All 60 questions are Objective Test Questions (OTQs), which present four options from which one option is selected. Distractors (wrong answers) are options that candidates with incomplete knowledge or skill would be likely to choose. These are generally plausible responses relating to the syllabus area being examined. Question styles used within this type are: 'Standard MCQ', 'Cloze MCQ' (or 'missing word'), 'List' (2 correct items), and, exceptionally, 'Negative' standard MCQ.

Example Standard MCQ:

What is the purpose of the issue register?

- a) To do Q
- b) To do P
- c) To do R
- d) To do S

Example List question:

Which statements about product-based planning are CORRECT?

- 1. It does Q
 - 2. It does P
 - 3. It does R
 - 4. It does S
- a) 1 and 2
 - b) 2 and 3
 - c) 3 and 4
 - d) 1 and 4

NOTE: Two of the list items are correct. List style questions are never negative (see below)

Example Cloze MCQ

Identify the missing word(s) in the following sentence.

During the Controlling a Stage Process, the Team Manager should update the [?] to reflect the timing of the Work Packages that have been authorized.

- a) Product Q
- b) Product P
- c) Product R
- d) Product S

Example Negative Standard MCQ:

Which role should NOT be shared with the role of Project Manager?

- a) Role Q
- b) Role P
- c) Role R
- d) Role S

NOTE: Negative questions are only used, as an exception, where part of the learning outcome is to know that something is not done or should not occur.

3.3 Scoring

Number of questions: 60

Marks: Each question is worth 1 mark. There are 60 marks available. (There are no ‘trial’ questions.)

There is no negative marking.

Pass mark: 60% or higher - a raw score of 36 marks or above

3.4 Weightings

Table 2 - Weighting per learning outcome

Learning Outcome	No.OTQs	Approx. weighting
1. Understand key concepts relating to projects and PRINCE2	5	8%
2. Understand how the PRINCE2 principles underpin the PRINCE2 method	8	13%
3. Understand the PRINCE2 themes and how they are applied throughout the project	31	52%
4. Understand the PRINCE2 processes and how they are carried out throughout the project	16	27%
	60 OTQs	100%

Table 4 (page 9) shows the marks weighting per assessment (sub)criterion and Bloom’s level.

3.5 Paper Build Rules

The updated PRINCE2 Foundation Examination is designed to test the both the breadth and depth of the syllabus. All assessment criteria are tested on each assessment (ensuring that breadth is covered). Not all assessment sub-criteria are tested on each assessment, but those not tested on every assessment share an equal probability of being presented within the general criterion (thus requiring that the candidate acquire depth of knowledge in a high proportion of the syllabus content). Question selection, in terms of sub-criteria assessed, must be random, outside of the rules outlined in Table 4 and ‘Additional considerations’.

Questions must be presented in random order, not in the order of the syllabus. Answer options must be presented in the order given, and not in alphabetical order/order of length.

Table 3, below, shows the number of questions per question style that must appear on any one assessment.

Table 3 - Number of questions per question style on each assessment

Question style	No.OTQs
Standard	Max. 52 Min. 50
Negative	Max 2
Cloze	4
List	4
	60 OTQs

3.5 Paper Build Rules (continued)

Table 2 - Number of OTQs per learning outcome, assessment (sub)criterion and Bloom's level (BL) on any one assessment.

Learning Outcome	Assessment (sub) criteria		No.OTQs			Additional considerations
			BL1	BL2	Total	
1. (Projects and PRINCE2).		1.1a-d	3	0	5	Max. 1 OTQ on any one sub-criterion
		1.2a/b	0	2		Max. 1 OTQ on any one sub-criterion
2. (PRINCE2 principles)		2.1a-g	0	7	8	Max. 1 OTQ on any one sub-criterion
		2.2	0	1		
3. (PRINCE2 themes)	Business case theme	3.1.1 a/b	0	1	3	See note (1)
		3.1.2	0	1		
		3.1.3	1	0		
	Organiz-ation theme	3.2.1a/b	0	1	7	See note (1)
		3.2.2	0	1		
		3.2.3a-d	0	4		Max.2 OTQ from these 4 subcriteria Max. 1 OTQ on any one subcriterion
		3.2.3e-j				Max. 1 OTQ on any one subcriterion
		3.2.4	0	1		
	Quality theme	3.3.1a/b	0	2	4	Max. 1 OTQ on any one sub-criterion See note (1)
		3.3.2	0	1		
		3.3.3a-c	0	1		
	Plans theme	3.4.1a/b	0	1	4	See note (1)
		3.4.2	0	1		
		3.4.3a/b	1	0		
		3.4.3c	0	1		
	Risk theme	3.5.1a/b	0	1	5	See note (1)
		3.5.2	0	1		
		3.5.3a-e	2	0		Max. 1 OTQ on any one subcriterion
		3.5.4	0	1		
	Change theme	3.6.1a/b	0	1	3	See note (1)
		3.6.2	0	1		
		3.6.3a/b	0	1		
	Progress theme	3.7.1a/b	0	2	5	Max 1 OTQ on any one subcriterion Also see note (1)
		3.7.2	0	1		
		3.7.3a/b	0	2		Max 1 OTQ on any one subcriterion
4. (PRINCE2 processes)	Purpose	4.1a-g	0	5	16	Max 1 OTQ on any one subcriterion
		4.1h/i	0	1		
	Objectives	4.2a-g	0	5		Max 1 OTQ on any one subcriterion
	Context	4.3a-g	0	5		Max 1 OTQ on any one subcriterion
Total			BL1 = 7	BL2 = 53	60	

3.5 Paper Build Rules (continued)

Additional considerations

Note (1)

The number of questions specifically testing knowledge of the purpose of the PRINCE2 management products (listed in Appendix A of Managing Successful Projects with PRINCE2 publication, 2017 edition) is limited to a minimum of 3 OTQs, and a maximum of 5 OTQs

One OTQ for each of 3.3.1b, 3.7.1b and 4.1(h/i) are mandated in the paper build (see table 4.1), therefore a maximum of 2 OTQs may be presented to test 3.1.1b, 3.2.1b, 3.4.1b, 3.5.1b and/or 3.6.1b.