

# IFPSM Programme Accreditation Standard (PAS)

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## Introduction

The IFPSM Programme Accreditation Standard (PAS) provides an internationally recognised framework for evaluating procurement and supply chain education programmes that do not necessarily meet degree-equivalent requirements under the IFPSM Global Standard. PAS establishes minimum quality requirements while encouraging innovation, relevance and continuous improvement in procurement education.

The PAS is the successor to the previous IFPSM Certificate of Competence.

With the introduction of the IFPSM Global Standard in 2013, developed to recognize and accredit degree-equivalent study programmes, the creation of a detailed assessment framework was required to recognise programmes that provide **education and training** in the fundamentals of purchasing and supply chain management.

All programmes submitted for PAS evaluation must meet the requirement of providing at least 150 learning hours. Please note that this does not mean that course participants must attend **150 hours of classroom teacher-led sessions, but could be a combination of formal learning, project work, online learning, research, exams, individual study, etc.**

The PAS provides Providers with a benchmark for their programmes that ensures:

- Relevance to the current procurement and supply chain environment
- Contemporary sourcing models and procurement strategies
- Modern and resilient supply chains
- Integration of emerging procurement practices and technologies
- Effective governance and risk management
- Differentiation from the IFPSM Global Standard.

The PAS framework promotes future-oriented procurement and supply chain education and encourages Providers to integrate contemporary practices and technologies, as further described in Criterion 11.

It was designed to recognize and accredit specific programmes for SMEs, medium and large enterprises from all sectors and industries, while maintaining a general nature and structure. Some good examples would be a programme dedicated exclusively to the public sector or a contracts management focused course, recognized in the field of supply chain management, provided it demonstrates a rigorous structure and approach.

## Application

PAS assessment applies to only **one programme per assessment**. PAS accreditation applies to the programme rather than to the Provider. An organization may submit multiple programmes for assessment, each subject to a separate assessment fee.

The Provider shall submit a document demonstrating that the course/programme meets the PAS requirements, backed by supporting evidence, including examples of course structure/details and development, lecturers/trainers' qualifications and experience, examples of student feedback, and assessment protocol. Providers should include evidence of digital learning delivery, analysis of student engagement, input from industry consultants and continuous improvement mechanisms.

In addition, the applicant should produce a checklist compiled according to the PAS accreditation criteria, with answers and/or references to the supporting literature.

The portfolio should contain sections that provide evidence relating to the 12 areas of the PAS accreditation criteria, demonstrating that the course/programme meets PAS standards. It would be useful for the portfolio to be structured in a table format, with each item linked to the 12 topics.

It will be acceptable to provide web links in the table that allow the assessor to make a cross-comparison with the contents of the table; therefore, it will not be necessary to duplicate in paper format the information that the Provider wishes the assessor to consider.

## PAS Accreditation Criteria

The Provider shall submit to the IFPSM Secretariat a portfolio of evidence demonstrating how the course/programme meets the required standards.

### 1. Requirements for the Course/Programme Needs Assessment

The applicant shall describe how the course/programme relates to the procurement/supply chain sector:

- Identify which tasks, knowledge, and skills are included in the course/programme.
- Identify the digital, sustainability, and risk management skills covered within the course/programme- to identify level of digital skills you may use **Digital Literacy Assessment Guidelines and Sample Questionnaire**

### Profile of the target population of the course/programme

a) Current occupation

- b) Availability of technology (e.g. computer connectable to internal and/or cloud platforms, with access to advanced applications)
- c) Location (e.g. remote)
- d) Level of education
- e) Previous trainings
- f) Personal attributes
- g) Level of digital maturity
- h) Accessibility and inclusion considerations
- i) Language and intercultural communication considerations.

### **3. Aspect of procurement and supply chain management that should be covered by the course/programme**

All programmes must have at least 80% of their content dedicated to procurement and supply chain management.

Applicants' programmes shall demonstrate a good knowledge of current procurement practices, such as operational and strategic sourcing, supply management and category management, supply chain management and purchasing partnerships, procurement budgeting and governance, negotiation and contracting, analysis of the current global economic and geopolitical environment, supply markets, and risk management.

Course programmes should reflect current procurement practice and, where appropriate, include contemporary digital and sustainability concepts consistent with Criterion 11.

### **4. Course/Programme Design Requirements**

The course/programme shall consider principles of adult learning, including, where applicable:

- a) goal-oriented learning
- b) experience-based learning
- c) valorisation of previous experiences
- d) practical applications of knowledge
- e) focus on relevance
- f) motivation
- g) foster autonomy
- h) promotion of positive self-esteem
- i) students' active engagement.

### **5. The course/programme shall have a student-centred approach**

- a) encourage the active participation of each student
- b) support and facilitate self-directed learning
- c) allow for the integration of personal experiences

- d) ensure that knowledge and skills are acquired at a pace appropriate to individual students
- e) emphasize the importance of lifelong learning
- f) respond to the diverse student needs
- g) support personalised and adaptive learning paths, where appropriate
- h) promote digital collaboration and peer-to-peer learning.

**6. The course/programme should combine teaching strategies and applicable methods:**

- a) direct instruction (e.g. face-to-face instruction, individual instruction)
- b) indirect instruction (e.g. problem solving)
- c) interactive instruction (e.g. brainstorming, group discussion)
- d) experiential learning (e.g. role playing, case studies, on-the-job training)
- e) self-directed learning (e.g. homework, essays)
- f) visual learning
- g) learning by reading
- h) e-learning
- i) simulation-based learning
- j) technology-enhanced learning (AI-driven virtual and augmented reality)
- k) customised learning materials
- l) collaborative digital learning activities.

**7. The course/programme shall include realistic examples, applications and realistic conditions, associated with each intended learning outcome.**

- a) The Provider shall identify the best learning mix (e.g. classroom, e-learning) of the course/programme and provide information on the platforms and technologies used.
- b) The Provider shall ensure that the chosen medium of delivery of the course/programme meets the needs of the target audience and verify that the selected technology is accessible and appropriate for the target audience.
- c) For courses/programmes delivered in the classroom, the Provider shall define the maximum number of participants per class.
- d) The Provider shall define the prerequisites that students should possess before participating in the course/programme, where applicable.
- e) The course/programme shall include methods for providing formal and/or informal instructor feedback to each student throughout the duration of the course/programme.
- f) The course/programme shall include appropriate assessment methods, based on the key tasks of the course. The assessment process may include quality assurance evidence.
- g) The course/programme should include practical procurement scenarios, simulations and real case studies.
- h) The Provider shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations

## **8. Course Development**

- a) The Provider shall describe the process used to develop the course/programme (e.g., involvement of subject matter experts, pilot testing, peer review).
- b) The Provider shall describe the process used for course/programme maintenance (e.g., integrating student feedback, encouraging industry feedback), and should demonstrate periodic curriculum reviews to ensure alignment with current best practices, emerging technologies and sustainability requirements.
- c) The course/programme shall present the topics in a logical sequence allowing the development of knowledge and skills throughout different course modules, ensuring the fulfilment of the expected tasks.
- d) The course/programme shall include measurable learning outcomes for the key topics or skill-based topics, including corresponding criteria to determine the achievement of the intended learning outcome.
- e) The content of the course/programme shall provide information to support and reinforce each of the intended learning outcomes.
- f) The course/programme shall provide opportunities for application of knowledge to achieve each of the intended learning outcomes, including assessment and feedback, as applicable.
- g) The duration of the course/programme shall be sufficient to ensure a student with reasonable ability to achieve all the intended learning objectives.
- h) The Provider shall offer students the opportunity to anonymously evaluate the course/programme so that the feedback can be used for continuous improvement.
- i) The course/programme shall demonstrate continuous improvement and alignment with current procurement practices. It shall include opportunities for the development of digital, analytical and problem – solving skills.
- j) Where applicable, the Provider shall demonstrate that curriculum updates reflect developments described in Criterion 11.

## **9. The Provider shall provide prospective students with information regarding:**

- a) course/programme format
- b) expected learning outcomes of the programme
- c) student evaluation (e.g., assessment format and procedures, pass/fail criteria)
- d) recertification requirements (e.g., certification expiration date)
- e) the number of instructors required for the successful delivery of the course/programme
- f) instructor performance monitoring
- g) teaching materials for instructors, where applicable
- h) information regarding digital learning requirements and access to technology
- i) learner support mechanisms and accessibility provisions.

## **10. Course/Programme Materials shall:**

- a) Demonstrate good document layout and document management practices (e.g., document revision number, appropriate page numbering).
- b) Include all important points of the topics addressed,
- c) Include examples, reports, and/or forms, where applicable.
- d) Course/programme materials may include sample exam questions during the course/programme, provided that the integrity of official student assessments is not compromised.
- e) The Provider shall provide an appropriate learning environment (e.g., facilities, equipment, software).
- f) Each student shall be evaluated at the end of each module
- g) All assessment tools shall be developed and maintained in a secure manner to ensure their integrity is maintained.
- h) The Provider shall define criteria to determine successful completion of the course/programme.
- i) The Provider shall record and communicate the assessment outcome to each student (e.g., certificate, grade, pass/fail).
- j) Course/programme materials shall include, where applicable, current procurement practices, digital procurement concepts, and sustainability considerations.
- k) Digital learning materials and online resources shall be maintained and reviewed regularly.
- l) Assessment activities shall include, where appropriate, application-based and scenario-based assessment methods.
- m) The Provider shall ensure the secure handling and storage of learner data and assessment materials.

## **11. Digital Procurement, Sustainability and Emerging Technologies**

The Provider shall demonstrate coverage of contemporary procurement and supply chain management practices, including:

- Digital procurement systems
- Procurement analytics
- AI-assisted procurement
- Automation
- ESG and sustainability
- Responsible sourcing
- Supplier risk and resilience
- Cybersecurity
- Data-driven decision-making
- Emerging procurement technologies

## **12. Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement**

The Provider shall maintain a documented quality assurance process that includes:

- Regular periodic programme review

- Analysis of learner feedback
- Monitoring of instructor performance
- Engagement with industry stakeholders
- Curriculum update processes
- Monitoring of learner achievements and completion data.

## Application Process

The procedure for evaluating the program(s) of applicants is as follows:

- a) The applicant submits an enquiry by email to [info@ifpsm.com](mailto:info@ifpsm.com).
- b) An introductory meeting is held (if required).
- c) The applicant submits the application, attaching supporting documentation demonstrating that the programme meets the PAS requirements, and sends it to [info@ifpsm.com](mailto:info@ifpsm.com).
- d) The applicant receives the invoice.
- e) Assessment commences after the invoice is paid.
- f) The assessment report is issued.
- g) IFPSM Board endorsement is obtained.
- h) Notification of the assessment outcome is issued to the applicant.
- i) Certificate is issued and sent to the applicant.

## Review and Re-Accreditation

It will be important to regularly review the elements of accredited courses/programmes. PAS accreditation will be valid for a period of three years, after which a re-accreditation audit shall take place, which would effectively renew the PAS for an additional three years.

Re-accreditation would involve only a "simplified" assessment. This would be conducted via virtual interview (if needed), after the applicant has submitted an updated document outlining any changes and improvements to the programme.

Upon completion of the six-year period, the Provider will be invited to reapply with a new application and a virtual assessment or meeting, if requested. Re-accreditation requests must include proof that the programme follows Criterion 11 and current procurement and supply management practices.

## Pricing

**Initial accreditation:** €2,650 per programme (valid for 3 years).

**Accreditation renewal:** €1,350 per programme (valid for an additional 3 years).

**Certificate of Recognition (COR) for course/programme participants/students**

As a value-added service, IFPSM can issue an individual Certificate of Recognition (COR). This certificate is issued to all candidates who successfully complete a PAS-accredited course/programme. This certificate should be requested by the Provider by submitting a list of the individual names to IFPSM. The certificates will be sent to the Provider for distribution to students who pass the exam. Certificates can be verified online using the attached QR code.

The cost of this service is **€13 per student**.

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