Moving Professionals Forward

World Leader In Competence Based Certification

IPMA CERTIFICATION

IPMA
international
project
management
association

Professionalism in a changing world

The world is changing and project management is changing with it. IPMA is adapting:
» to the demands of its customers
» to improvements in technology and
» to innovations in ways of working.

We are improving the depth and breadth of our offerings – whilst driving closer harmonization and standardisation across the globe. Our certification system builds on our progressive 4 level model that starts with the core project manager role and builds out from there. This means that no matter what kind of role you are currently working in (Project Manager, Programme Manager, Portfolio Manager, Risk Manager, Agile Leader, Sponsor, Project Management Consultant, etc.) you are able to certify based on your experience (years and complexity) aligned with our competence model.

IPMA offers:
» a progressive, internationally recognised, competence based certification scheme
» in your own country, in your own language, at your own competence level, to an international standard
» and run by your local professional body.

Individual Professional

» Do you want to be recognised as a professional in Project Management?

» Do you want to be assessed on your current competence level evidenced by the full range of your recent experiences?

» Do you want to be assessed in your own country?

» Do you want a system that allows you to demonstrate progression as your competences improve?

» Do you want to know how you can improve in your chosen profession?

» Do you want a certification scheme that allows you to have the flexibility to work in different sectors and/or in different countries and/or for different employers?

You need a role based certification system that is run locally and commands global recognition. You certify based on your experience and maturity in your current role.

Organisations

» Do you want to employ or hire a Project Management professional who has demonstrated their competence to internationally recognised standards?

» Do you want to be able to compare the quality of your project professionals across the globe against a global standard?

» Do you want to show the proven quality and maturity of your Project Management professionals to your clients.

» Do you want to be sure that your Project Management professionals have the right competences to manage your next challenging project?

» Do you want the support offered by a local professional body, and local training organisations, who understand that standard and can interpret it for you?

» Do you want to be able to access the widest possible field of candidates who have been assessed against that common standard wherever in the world and from whatever sector of business they come from?

Individual Competence Baseline (ICB)

IPMA's vision is "Promoting competence throughout society to enable a world in which all projects succeed". In support of this vision, IPMA has defined a worldwide standard for competences in the areas of Project, Programme and Portfolio Management. For individuals, we have defined the **IPMA Individual Competence Baseline®, ICB version 4**. Based on the **ICB4**, we have also defined the competence baseline for Consultants, Coaches and Trainers in the field of projects, programmes and portfolios, the **ICB4CCT**. Based on these standards, we are able to recognise and certify professionals working in different roles within the field of Project Management.
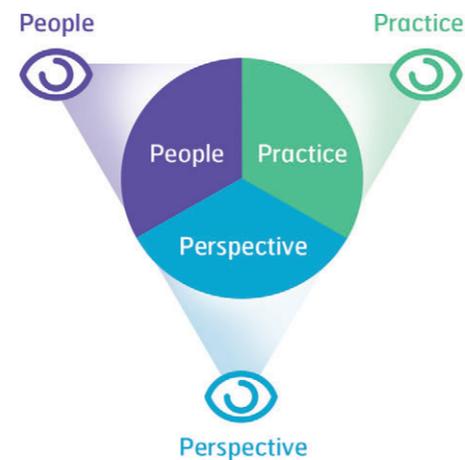
The ICB4 is the international standard for competence for Project, Programme and Portfolio Managers.

The competence needed in each of these domains is defined in the following competence areas:
» "**Perspective**" of the initiatives you're running;
» "**People**": how do you interact;
» "**Practice**" of our work.

ICB4 does not prescribe a method, methodology or specific process. You can use the competence model in any organisational context. The model is not related to a specific field (like ICT or investment or government or research). ICB4 gives a clear language, a basis for development and learning, suitable for all in the project management community.

ICB4 is downloadable from the IPMA website at products. ipma.world

People   Practice

People   Practice

Perspective

Perspective

What is the value of a certificate?

The IPMA Certification System is the only system that offers global, competence based certificates supported by local, national associations.

IPMA level D is IPMA's starting level, aimed at starting professionals who want to demonstrate their knowledge to employers and clients. Level C is aimed at people who have gained 3-5 years of experience and want to demonstrate their competences in the race for high quality jobs and roles. Levels B and finally A are the levels for the very experienced and competent project, programme and portfolio managers. When you reach one of these levels, you have proved yourself as an all-round, experienced professional capable of running complex initiatives.

If you are looking for project, programme and portfolio managers who have proven competence, look for IPMA certified professionals. You can find out if someone is certified by looking at our database of certified professionals.

The benefits of IPMA Certification

» A broad orientation that looks across different business sectors
» A good broad business and theoretical foundation
» A competence approach makes professionals widely employable
» Competences: proven by the candidate; independently assessed
» An emphasis on the leader who takes responsibility
» Many decades of experience that IPMA has with the assessment of competences
» Self-reflection during the process makes the candidate aware of their own strengths and weaknesses
» Recertification encourages up-to-date knowledge and experience
» IPMA checks whether the candidate has been able to make a difference and has left an impact
» IPMA is a not for profit organisation

Recertification

A certificate needs to be current. **Every five years, the certified professionals need to be recertified**, showing they have maintained their competences at the right level.

IPMA Level A

Entry Criteria for Project Director

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a very complex project environment that has a strategic impact on the organisation. Eligibility criteria: within the last 12 years, the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years' experience as a project manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex projects of which at least three years were at a strategic level.

Entry Criteria for Programme Director

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a very complex programme environment that has a strategic impact on the organisation. Eligibility criteria: within the last 12 years, the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years' experience as a programme manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex programmes at a strategic level, or a minimum of four years' experience as a programme manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex programmes and a minimum of three years' experience as a project manager in

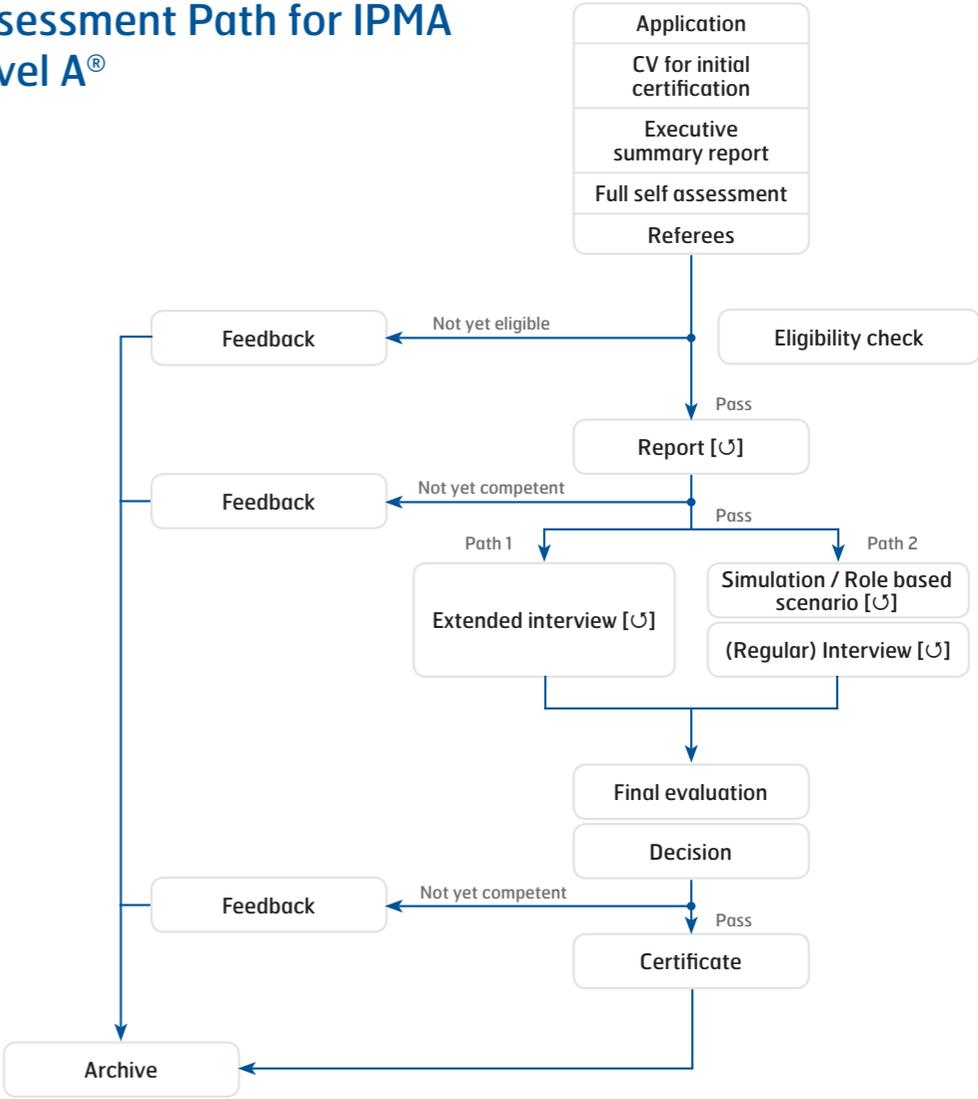a responsible leadership function managing very complex projects at a strategic level.

Entry Criteria for Portfolio Director

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a very complex portfolio environment that has a strategic impact on the organisation. Eligibility criteria: within the last 12 years, the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years' experience as a portfolio manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex portfolios at a strategic level or a minimum of four years of experience as a portfolio manager in a responsible leadership function in very complex portfolios and a minimum of three years' experience as a project or programme manager in a responsible leadership function managing very complex projects or programmes at a strategic level.

Note: You don't need to have an IPMA Level B certificate to be eligible for IPMA Level A.

Assessment Path for IPMA Level A®

Application
→ CV for initial certification
→ Executive summary report
→ Full self assessment
→ Referees

Eligibility check
- Not yet eligible → Feedback
- Pass → Report [↻]
  - Not yet competent → Feedback
  - Pass

Path 1 → Extended interview [↻]

Path 2 → Simulation / Role based scenario [↻] / (Regular) Interview [↻]

→ Final evaluation
→ Decision
- Not yet competent → Feedback
- Pass → Certificate

→ Archive

[↻] = If deemed not yet competent at first attempt step can be repeated once.

IPMA Level B

Entry Criteria for Senior Project Manager

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a complex project environment within an organisation. Eligibility criteria: within the last eight years the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years' experience as a project manager of which at least three years were in a responsible leadership function managing complex projects.

Entry Criteria for Senior Programme Manager

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a complex programme environment within an organisation. Eligibility criteria: within the last eight years the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years' experience as a programme manager of which at least three years were in a responsible leadership function managing complex programmes.
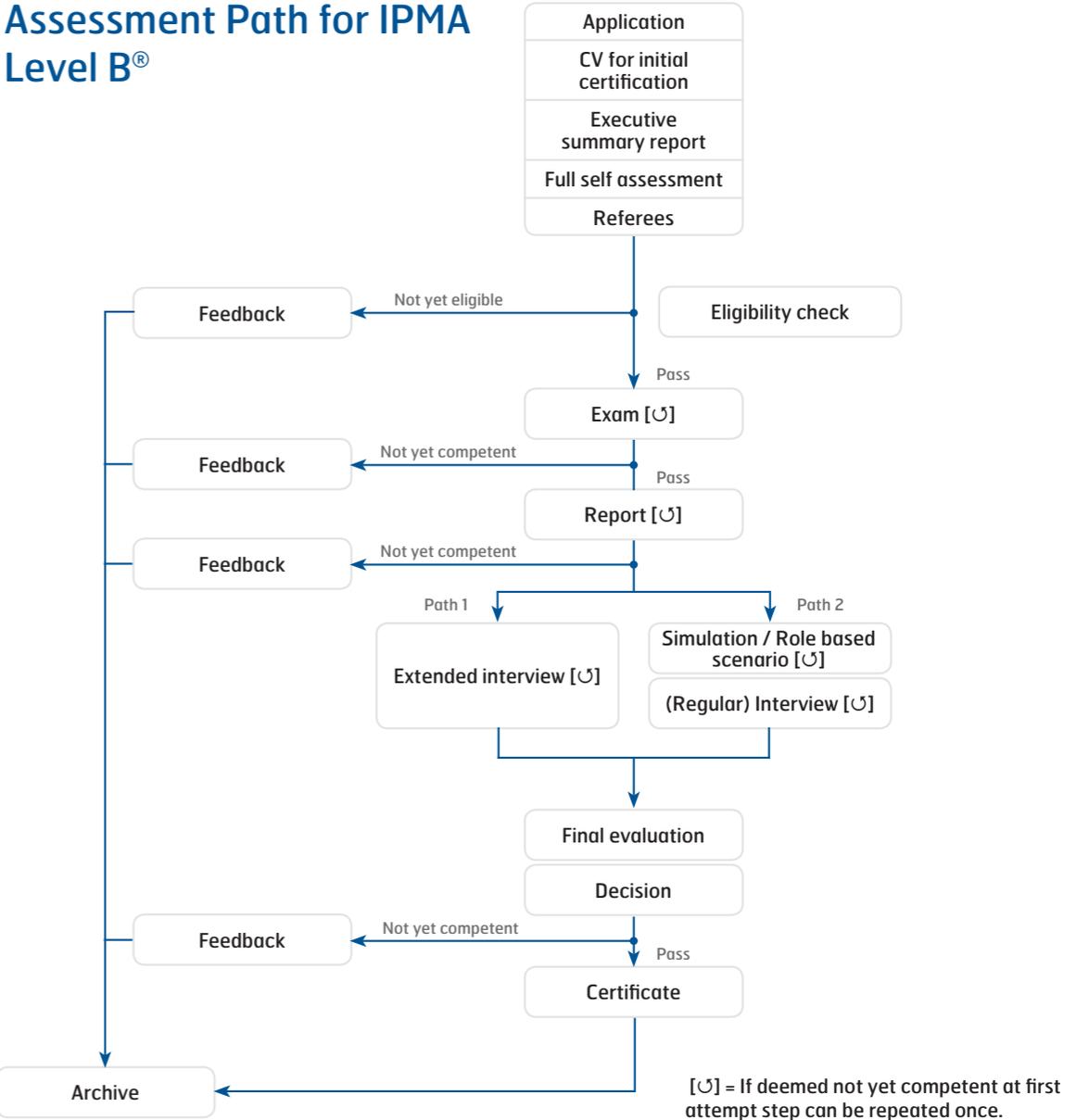
Entry Criteria for Senior Portfolio Manager

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a complex portfolio environment within an organisation. Eligibility criteria: within the last eight years the candidate needs to have a minimum of five years' experience as a portfolio manager of which at least three years were in a responsible leadership function.

Note: You don't need to have an IPMA Level C certificate to be eligible for IPMA Level B and Level B is the first time that IPMA Certificates differentiate between Project, Programme and Portfolio domains.

Assessment Path for IPMA Level B®

Application
CV for initial certification
Executive summary report
Full self assessment
Referees

Feedback ← Not yet eligible ← Eligibility check

Pass

Exam [↺]

Feedback ← Not yet competent

Pass

Report [↺]

Feedback ← Not yet competent

Path 1 — Extended interview [↺]

Path 2 — Simulation / Role based scenario [↺] / (Regular) Interview [↺]

Final evaluation

Decision

Feedback ← Not yet competent

Pass

Certificate

Archive

[↺] = If deemed not yet competent at first attempt step can be repeated once.

Note: You don't need to have an IPMA Level C certificate to be eligible for IPMA Level B.
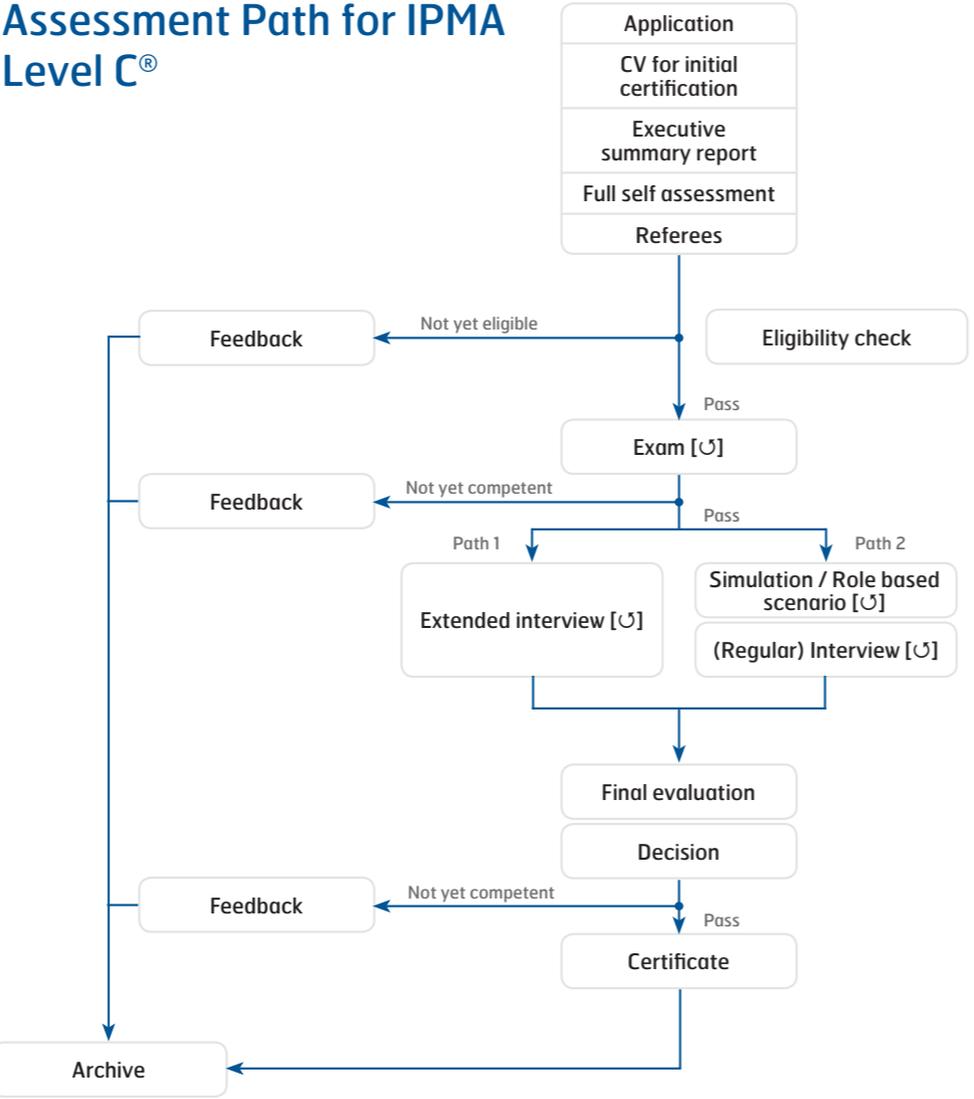
IPMA Level C

Entry Criteria for Project Manager

This IPMA certificate requires that the candidate has acted in a project management role within a moderately complex project environment within an organisation. Eligibility criteria: within the last six years the candidate needs to have a minimum of three years' experience as a project manager within projects of moderate complexity, or a minimum of three years' experience in a responsible project management role assisting the project manager in complex projects.

Note: You don't need to have an IPMA Level D certificate to be eligible for IPMA Level C.

Assessment Path for IPMA Level C®

Application
CV for initial certification
Executive summary report
Full self assessment
Referees

Eligibility check
Not yet eligible → Feedback
Pass

Exam [↻]
Not yet competent → Feedback
Pass

Path 1 → Extended interview [↻]

Path 2 → Simulation / Role based scenario [↻] / (Regular) Interview [↻]

Final evaluation
Decision
Not yet competent → Feedback
Pass

Certificate

Archive

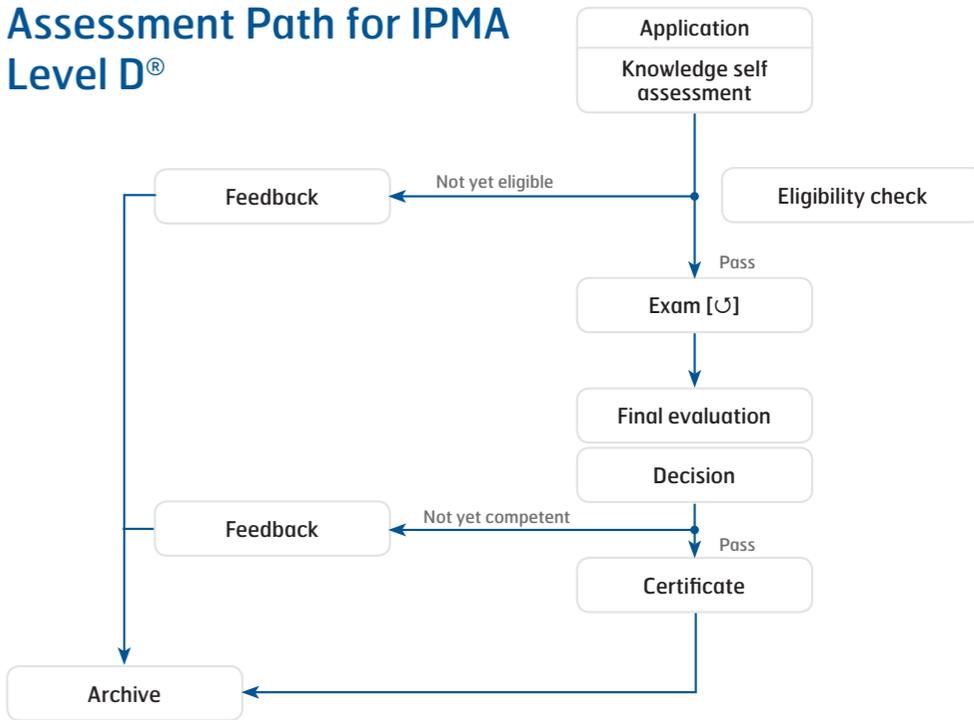[↻] = If deemed not yet competent at first attempt step can be repeated once.

IPMA Level D

Entry Criteria for Project Management associate

An IPMA certificate at Level D requires that the candidate has knowledge in the Competence Elements (CEs) related to project management. As such, they usually have broad project management knowledge and may work in a project team. Eligibility criteria: there is no previous experience required and only knowledge regarding CEs related to project management are assessed.

Assessment Path for IPMA Level D®

Application
Knowledge self assessment

Eligibility check
Not yet eligible → Feedback
Pass

Exam [↻]

Final evaluation
Decision
Not yet competent → Feedback
Pass

Certificate

Archive

[↻] = If deemed not yet competent at first attempt step can be repeated once.

Complexity in projects, programmes and portfolios

The more competent you are as a project, programme or portfolio professional, the more complex your initiatives and environment will probably become. Complexity is also of value when you want to assess your current competence level. So, how do we measure complexity of projects, programmes and portfolios?

We see 10 factors that define complexity of initiatives. These 10 are listed below and described in the International Certification Regulations (ICR).

Every Certification Body has a table for assessing the complexity of the candidate's initiatives. Self-assessment is part of the application.

Complexity of initiatives is defined through 10 factors:

Capability perspectives:

» input related complexity
» process related complexity
» output related complexity
» risk related complexity

Context perspectives:

» strategy related complexity
» organisation related complexity
» socio-cultural related complexity

Management/Leadership perspectives

» team-related complexity
» innovation-related complexity
» autonomy-related complexity

Recertification

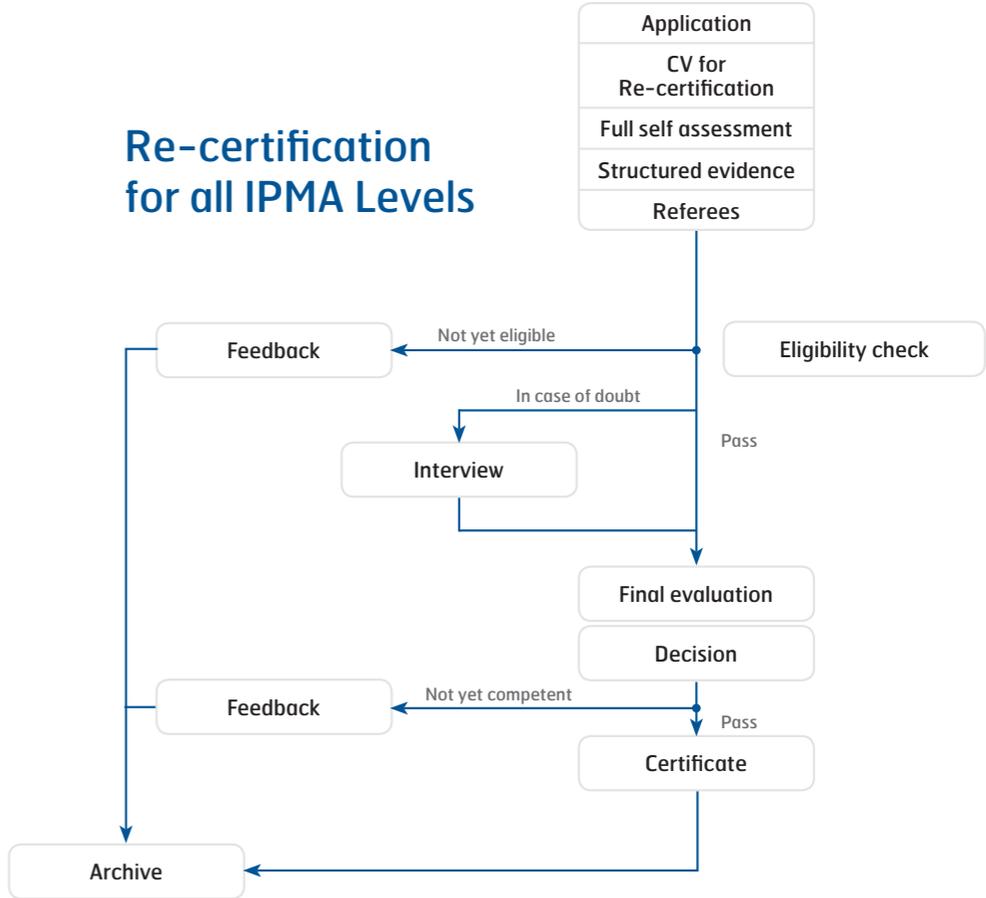## Maintain your level of professionalism

People change and take different career paths. Certificate only has value when it is current, accurate and descriptive of the individual's competences. Therefore, the validity of an IPMA certificate is 5 years.

A professional could attain further competences, gather more experience and knowledge and operate in more complex environments. This might be rewarded with a higher level of certification, so we would assume the candidate will try to go for a higher level.

Some professionals might have maintained the experience level, but have not yet attained enough competences for the next level. The recertification process requires validation of the certificate level after 5 years without having to go through a full assessment. It is a check-up for the professional and it shows their clients that their professionalism is maintained.

For a full description of the processes and requirements, please refer to the International Certification Regulations (ICR). If you want to embark on recertification, please contact your local Certification Body, they can provide you with all the details.

Re-certification for all IPMA Levels

Application
CV for Re-certification
Full self assessment
Structured evidence
Referees

Feedback — Not yet eligible — Eligibility check
In case of doubt
Interview
Pass
Final evaluation
Decision
Feedback — Not yet competent — Pass — Certificate
Archive

Requirements for recertification

The table below indicates the requirements for recertification at the same level. More details can be found in the ICR. As can be seen from this table, the professional has to spend enough time, at the applicable level, in a responsible role, and has to keep their professional competence current.
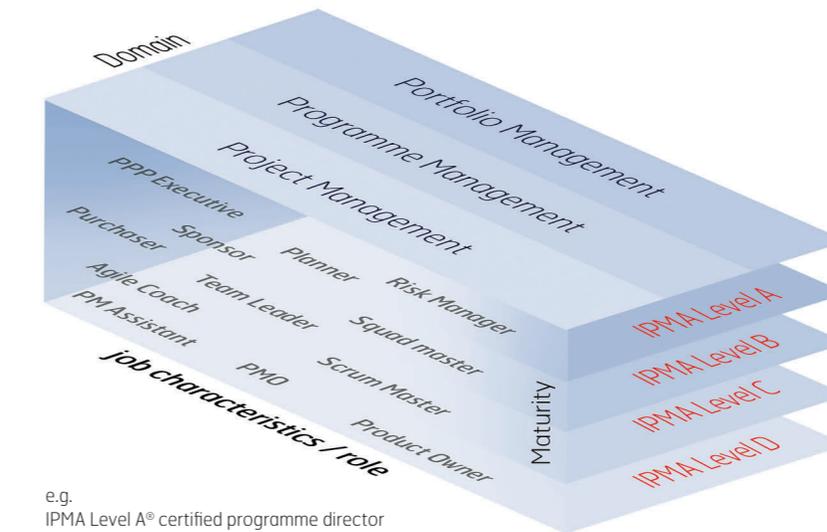
Recertification process

The flowchart below describes the recertification process. As can be seen, this is a much easier process than for initial certification.

	Level A	Level B	Level C	Level D
Domain-related experience required by the applicant	Evidence of minimum 30 months of practical eperience over five-year period			Not applicable
	Complexity			Not applicable
	Leadership of others		Management of others	Not applicable
	Minimum of 35 hours' evidence of CPD per annum (175 hours total) since the last (re-)certification			

Project management roles

The maturity of professionals within projects, programmes and portfolios is recognised in the four level certification (4LC) scheme. Other professionals are working in the field of projects, programmes and portfolios. in different roles (eg Project Planner, Agile Leader, Project Risk Manager, etc.). In most countries we provide certification for these roles as well as the core leadership roles. Please contact your local Certification Body or Membership Association for information. If your country doesn't support the qualification, these can be obtained in other countries.

Domain

Portfolio Management

Programme Management

Project Management

PPP Executive
Purchaser   Sponsor   Planner   Risk Manager
Agile Coach   Team Leader   Squad master
PM Assistant   PMO   Scrum Master
Product Owner

Job characteristics / role

Maturity

IPMA Level A
IPMA Level B
IPMA Level C
IPMA Level D

e.g.
IPMA Level A® certified programme director
IPMA Level B® certified senior project planner
IPMA Level C® certified Scrum master
IPMA Level D® certified PM assistant

While IPMA manages the 4-L-C certification system for individuals, the Certification Bodies of our Member Associations perform the actual assessments and certification.

IPMA World Map

ALGERIA
ARGENTINA
AUSTRALIA
AUSTRIA
AZERBAIJAN
BOLIVIA
BOSNIA AND
HERZEGOVINA
BRAZIL
BULGARIA
CANADA
CHILE
CHINA
COLOMBIA
COSTA RICA
CROATIA
CYPRUS
CZECH REPUBLIC
DENMARK
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
ECUADOR
EGYPT
ESTONIA
FINLAND
FRANCE
GEORGIA
GERMANY
GREECE
GUATEMALA
HUNGARY
ICELAND
INDIA
INDONESIA
IRAN
IRELAND
ITALY

JAPAN
KAZAKHSTAN
KOSOVO
LATVIA
LITHUANIA
MALAYSIA
MONTENEGRO
MOROCCO
MEXICO
NEPAL
NETHERLANDS
NIGERIA
NORWAY
PANAMA
PERU
POLAND
PORTUGAL
PHILIPPINES
ROMANIA
RUSSIA
SERBIA
SLOVAKIA
SLOVENIA
SOUTH AFRICA
SOUTH KOREA
SINGAPORE
SPAIN
SWEDEN
SWITZERLAND
TAIWAN (CHINA)
TURKEY
UNITED KINGDOM
UKRAINE
UNITED STATES
URUGUAY

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