KENT BUSINESS COLLEGE

COLLEGE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Associate Project Management

LEVEL 4 APPRENTICESHIP

PMP preparation and
AI in Project Controls and Management

PMP® preparation and AI in Project Controls: a purposeful route from project support to confident, evidence-led delivery.

PROGRAMME BOOK / 2026

A GUIDE TO YOUR CATALOGUE

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LIFE AT KENT BUSINESS COLLEGE

Begin with curiosity

College community in London · June 2026

A useful learning conversation begins with something real: a decision you are weighing, an assumption you want to test, or a task that did not go as expected. Bring that experience into your study. It gives the ideas a context and makes the discussion worth having.

You will arrive with strengths as well as questions. Other people will notice things you have missed, and you will do the same for them. Listening carefully, explaining your thinking and being willing to revise it are part of becoming more confident in your work.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional learning and recognition

Kent Business College's project management offer draws on professional training relationships with PMI, APMG International and APM. The named qualifications in your pathway have their own training, examination and recognition requirements.

PMP preparation supports a separate PMI certification journey. Eligibility, application and examination remain PMI decisions. Confirm the precise qualifications, examinations, membership and support included in your offer.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Which professional achievement would make the most useful difference to your work, and what would you need to demonstrate to earn it?

CHAPTER 01

Find your place in project work

Projects are carried forward by people who notice what needs doing and help others move together. You may organise tasks, clarify a request or keep a team informed when plans change. Those contributions are a useful place to begin. This chapter introduces a programme that connects practical responsibility with further learning, alongside the people who can support you. Bring your curiosity and your experience; you do not need to have every answer before taking the next step in your development.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Which part of project work already brings out your strengths?

KENT BUSINESS COLLEGE

The college and its purpose

Professional education should change what you can do at work. Kent Business College brings academic ideas into the decisions, projects and conversations that shape organisations. Our programmes connect specialist teaching with practice, mentoring and employer partnership, so that knowledge becomes a capability you can explain, demonstrate and continue to develop.

Our vision. We aim to earn international recognition for education and consultancy that turns research into useful action, strengthens professional practice and supports sustainable growth. The ambition is a continuing learning community in which individuals and organisations develop together. [C3]

Our mission. We connect rigorous thinking with real organisational challenges. Through apprenticeships, vocational learning and professional development, we work with employers to build relevant skills and prepare people for greater responsibility. Research matters here because it helps learners question assumptions, assess evidence and choose proportionate action. [C3]

Our values in practice. Empowering Futures means helping people recognise their potential and develop the means to act on it. Reducing Footprint means considering environmental consequences in how we learn and work. Strengthen Partnerships means involving employers and communities in meaningful development. Safeguarding and inclusiveness support all three: learners should be able to participate safely, respectfully and with appropriate support. [C1-C3]

The horse and the ibis. The horse connects the college with Kent and represents confidence, strength and forward movement. The ibis expresses the value of knowledge, careful thought and learning. Together they reflect the balance these programmes seek: the judgement to choose well and the capability to act. These symbols express a shared commitment to thoughtful progress: learning that gives people both the confidence to move forward and the judgement to choose their direction.

THE PROGRAMME

Turn project ambition into professional practice

A promising idea becomes valuable when people can organise its delivery. Someone must clarify what success means, make realistic commitments, bring colleagues together and notice when the plan needs to change. This programme develops that capability through a combination of occupational learning, PMP preparation and a practical AI specialism. It is designed for people who want to make a stronger contribution to projects while remaining grounded in the responsibilities and authority of their actual role. You work with schedules, costs, risks, stakeholders and decisions throughout the programme, building confidence by producing and explaining work that others can use.

Kent Business College proposes a twelve-month taught journey: eight months of project management core learning followed by four months of AI in Project Controls. The apprenticeship title on the national standard is Associate project manager, reference ST0310, Level 4. The standard's typical training duration is eighteen months and its typical

assessment period is five months; KBC's shorter delivery model must be supported by an individual training plan and sufficient new learning. Its currently published minimum compliance figure is 348 off-the-job hours. These are different measures: the course timetable, eligible learning hours and assessment period each need their own place in the agreement. [A1]

The intended result is a more capable project practitioner with a credible portfolio. Passing the apprenticeship assessment, achieving the KBC AI certificate and earning PMP are separate outcomes. Each has its own requirements. The combination offers an ambitious development route without implying that attendance alone awards a professional credential.

- Project delivery: define, plan, monitor, improve and communicate.
- Professional preparation: develop judgement through realistic PMP-style scenarios.
- Digital capability: build governed prompts, workflows, dashboards and automations.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

When has your organisation, persistence or communication helped a project move forward? What would you like to understand more fully next time?

THE KBC EXPERIENCE

People and support around your learning

A demanding programme is easier to sustain when you know who to approach. Tutors explain the subject and give feedback on learning. Coaches help apprentices connect study to their role, review evidence and agree achievable next steps. Your line manager creates opportunities to practise. The college office can direct questions about enrolment, funding, learning access and support to the appropriate team. [C1-C2]

Discuss barriers early. You do not need a diagnosis to ask for help with reading, concentration, technology, language, participation, physical access or assessment preparation. Explain what is difficult in the learning task and what has helped before. KBC can discuss accessible formats, tutoring, one-to-one support and appropriate adjustments, then review whether they are helping. External assessment bodies make their own adjustment decisions under their published arrangements. [C1]

English and maths. Learners aged 16–18 at the start must meet the applicable English and maths achievement requirements unless they hold accepted equivalents. For those aged 19 or over at the start, funded study can be agreed with the employer where needed. Initial assessment confirms the evidence and any separate mandatory qualification requirements. [C8]

Keep learning sustainable. Agree realistic time with your manager, protect recovery time and raise competing demands before they become missed submissions. The public charter describes optional Benenden Health support under its

membership terms, professional communities, workshops and graduation arrangements. The written offer confirms the particular benefits, availability and conditions for your intake; the catalogue does not add a separate cash entitlement. [C1]

A safe professional community. Respectful discussion, inclusion and responsible online behaviour are part of learning. Raise concerns about bullying, harassment, discrimination, exploitation or unsafe behaviour with your coach or the safeguarding team. Contact safeguarding@kentbusinesscollege.com or call 01622 958955 and ask for safeguarding. In immediate danger, call 999. Only share personal information where it is needed to obtain support or protect someone. [C1]

Your voice matters. Use teaching sessions, coaching and learner feedback to explain what is working and what needs attention. If a concern remains unresolved, use the published complaints process. A complaint about delivery, an appeal against an assessment decision and an employment issue may follow different routes; the college can help you find the correct one.

CHAPTER 02

Build a rhythm that supports you

Learning alongside employment is easier when it has a place in the week. A protected study session, a useful conversation with your manager and a manageable next task can make a difference. The pages ahead explain how teaching, practice and coaching connect. They also make the partnership around your learning visible. Consider what helps you concentrate, when you need feedback and how you will raise competing demands early. A sustainable rhythm makes room for both steady progress and ordinary life.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

What small change to your week would make learning easier to sustain?

TWELVE MONTHS OF STRUCTURED DEVELOPMENT

A learning journey that works alongside employment

Your working week is the setting in which learning becomes useful. KBC's planning model allows around seven to eight hours of learning activity each week, combining live teaching, guided preparation, coached application and portfolio development. The final pattern is agreed with you and your employer. Protected paid learning time should be visible in the diary, with practical tasks chosen early enough to fit real project opportunities. A busy month should lead to a revised action plan rather than an unnoticed accumulation of missing work.

The first eight months develop a coherent project management foundation. You return to one workplace project or a connected set of responsibilities as your understanding grows: first the business case, then the scope and plan, then delivery decisions and evidence of improvement. The AI stage extends this work into digital reporting and controlled automation. Monthly coaching helps you connect study with your role; progress reviews bring the employer into decisions about opportunity, workload and support. A review should end with named actions, realistic dates and an agreed measure of progress. The delivery structure comprises three KBC learning credits: two for PMP preparation and one for applied AI. These are internal programme units, not regulated qualification credits or ECTS, and they do not award PMP or replace its eligibility and examination requirements. [A12]

The practical period ends when readiness is demonstrated, not simply when the calendar reaches month twelve. Assessment preparation is woven through the programme,

while the independent assessment has its own timetable. Reflection is useful during learning; the final EPA portfolio follows the specific evidence rules described later in this catalogue.

Stage	Development focus	Checkpoint
Months 1–2	Purpose, scope and stakeholders	A defensible project brief
Months 3–5	Planning, finance and uncertainty	An integrated control pack
Months 6–8	Delivery, governance and improvement	Workplace contribution reviewed
Months 9–12	AI design, build, test and govern	A practical capstone and evidence review

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Where does study realistically fit alongside work and life? Who needs to know about your plan, and what will you do if competing demands arise?

CHARTER COMMITMENTS

The learner and employer partnership

An apprenticeship develops capability through three active partners: the learner, the employer and the college. Before enrolment, agree the job role, new learning required, protected time, workplace opportunities and the person who will support the learner. The signed training plan and agreements translate those commitments into an individual arrangement. The public charters explain the partnership;

reading a catalogue does not sign a contract or establish funding eligibility. [C1-C2]

The strongest workplace opportunities are purposeful and proportionate. A learner may investigate a campaign, improve a forecast, prepare a business case or recommend a governance change. The manager helps set boundaries and obtain access. The learner records their own contribution, explains decisions and reflects on what the experience taught them. The tutor and coach help connect this work to the programme outcomes.

Partner	Core commitments
The learner	Participate; ask questions; complete authentic work; keep accurate learning records; prepare for coaching; protect confidential information.
The employer	Provide a suitable role and named manager; protect paid training time; arrange appropriate practice and evidence; attend reviews; report changes promptly.
Kent Business College	Assess starting points; agree a coherent plan; teach and support; provide feedback; review progress; explain assessment and costs; respond to concerns.

Tell the college promptly about changes in employment, working hours, duties, extended absence or support needs. These may require an adjusted plan or formal compliance review. Do not silently replace planned training with routine work. Employers should help learners access and understand evidence, while leaving the learner responsible for the assessed work. [C2]

Use authorised, anonymised or redacted workplace examples. Avoid uploading client information or personal data to public AI tools. Learning reflections and formal assessment evidence

have different purposes; where an assessment plan excludes reflective accounts from the portfolio, keep those records separate.

DELIVERY AND PARTICIPATION

A learning rhythm you can plan around

KBC combines teaching, guided study, workplace application and regular coaching. The public charter describes three teaching semesters per year, beginning in October, February and June, with soft-start preparation in the preceding month. Each semester contains 14 classes and one reading week. The individual offer and cohort timetable confirm actual dates, holidays and the sequence for your programme. [C1]

Frequency	Charter study rhythm
Teaching week	Two-hour interactive class, supported by recordings and agreed catch-up arrangements.
Each week	Two to three hours of guided materials, preparation and learning activities.
Each month	Approximately seven hours for an applied assignment and learning record, plus a one-hour coaching conversation.
Every ten weeks	A one-hour progress review involving the learner, coach and line manager.
Additional planned learning	Occupational practice and workshops required to meet the individual plan and applicable training minimum.

A reliable monthly routine. Submit the learning record and assignment by the 20th, or the next working day when it is not a working day. Bring a concise progress presentation to

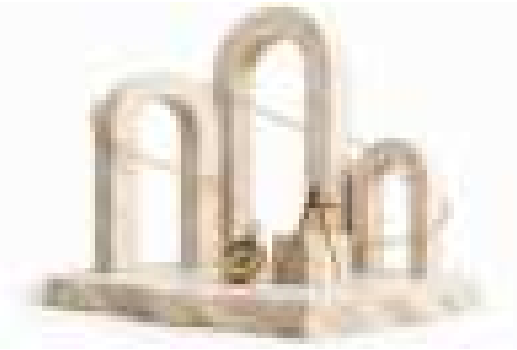
coaching, normally scheduled between the 20th and the 5th of the following month. Book coaching and reviews ahead and ask early if a deadline becomes difficult. [C1]

Attendance and supported flexibility. The live attendance route uses KBC's 85% target, with agreed absence and adjustment arrangements. An agreed flexible route uses recordings and directed learning with continuing tutor contact, coaching and reviews. Both require active participation and the full programme outcomes. [C1]

Study workload is not the same as eligible off-the-job training. Only qualifying new occupational learning counts. Routine duties, administration, reviews and examinations do not automatically count; record actual eligible time and avoid double counting. Your standard, start date and assessed prior learning determine the required plan. [C1,C5]

CHAPTER 03

Give a good idea a sound foundation



An enthusiastic idea needs attention before it becomes a workable project. People may understand success differently, a deadline may depend on an unseen task, and a budget may contain assumptions worth testing. The four core modules help you explore those connections. You will move from purpose and scope towards plans, resources and financial understanding. Think about a project you know as you read: whose needs matter, what has been agreed, and which unanswered question would be useful to discuss first?

PAUSE AND REFLECT

What would you clarify before asking a team to commit to a plan?

MONTH 1 · ASK WHY BEFORE ASKING WHEN

Core 01 · Purpose, value and the business case

Projects begin with a choice about what is worth doing. This opening module helps you investigate that choice before the team commits time and money. You examine the business problem, the people affected and the organisational outcomes the project is expected to support. A proposed system, event or operational improvement becomes a set of testable claims: what will change, who will benefit, what resources are required and what would happen if the organisation did nothing. You learn to distinguish a deliverable from a benefit and an enthusiastic assumption from evidence.

The practical work develops a concise business case review. You compare options, identify important dependencies and consider how commercial, social, technological and environmental conditions could change the decision. You then discuss the implications with a sponsor or manager. The purpose is to offer useful analysis within your authority, including an honest account of uncertainty. A recommendation can be conditional: proceed only when an owner accepts a risk, a data gap is resolved or a resource commitment is confirmed. That discipline gives the project a stronger foundation than an unsupported promise of success.

Assessment practice asks you to explain the reasoning behind your recommendation. You retain the information used, the alternatives considered and the feedback received. As the programme continues, this initial case provides a reference point for evaluating whether the project remains worthwhile. The learning also supports a professional habit: being willing

to question a project constructively when circumstances change.

- Explore project, programme and portfolio relationships; governance and delivery approaches.
- Produce: a project context review, options comparison and business case feedback.
- Apply: agree a benefit measure and a named owner who can validate it.

MONTH 2 · MAKE THE PROMISE CLEAR

Core 02 · Scope, requirements and stakeholder agreement

A project can appear to be progressing while different people expect different results. This module makes those differences visible. You investigate requirements through structured conversations, examine the distinction between a genuine need and a preferred solution, and translate the findings into a workable scope. You also define what is outside the current agreement. Clear exclusions protect both the team and the customer: they make later requests easier to assess fairly and reduce the risk of an informal commitment becoming an unplanned obligation.

You develop a stakeholder view that goes beyond job titles. Influence, concerns, decision rights, accessibility and the consequences of change all matter. You practise presenting the same project issue in different ways for a sponsor, an operational colleague and a supplier. The module also introduces negotiation and conflict management. You learn to listen for the underlying concern, separate disagreement about evidence from disagreement about priorities, and

recognise when escalation is appropriate. Inclusion is treated as part of good requirements work: a service that some people cannot access may be technically complete and still fail its purpose.

Your practical output combines an agreed scope statement, a breakdown of deliverables and acceptance criteria. Where the project uses an iterative approach, you can express the same discipline through prioritised work, a clear definition of completion and a transparent change process. The important skill is choosing and justifying a structure that fits the work.

- Explore stakeholder analysis, requirements discovery, scope boundaries and acceptance.
- Produce: a scope and stakeholder engagement pack with an accessible communication plan.
- Apply: test one ambiguous requirement with its owner and record the agreed interpretation.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Whose needs might be missing from a project brief you know? What question could you ask before making assumptions on their behalf?

MONTH 3 · BUILD A PLAN PEOPLE CAN DELIVER

Core 03 · Planning, scheduling and resource decisions

A schedule is a model of how work can happen, not a collection of optimistic dates. You begin by connecting deliverables with activities, estimating effort and identifying dependencies. You then examine the effect of resource availability, working calendars, interfaces and uncertainty.

The programme encourages you to challenge a neat chart when its logic is weak: a missing approval, an overloaded specialist or an assumed supplier lead time can make the apparent finish date unreliable. Good planning brings these constraints into the conversation early.

You practise critical path analysis and explore what a change means for the wider plan. You compare possible responses, including resequencing work, adjusting resources, reducing non-essential scope or seeking a decision at the correct governance level. Each response has a trade-off. Adding people may create coordination effort; starting earlier may increase rework; compressing a review may weaken assurance. The aim is to recommend a proportionate course of action with a clear explanation of its consequences. Resource planning includes the capability needed to do the work, not simply the number of people available.

Your schedule is supported by assumptions and a resource view that another colleague can interpret. You establish a baseline and a repeatable update process. During practice, a simulated disruption tests whether the plan can support a meaningful management decision. The evidence records the original position, your analysis and the authorised response rather than only the final chart.

- Explore dependencies, estimates, critical paths, capacity and integrated planning.
- Produce: a schedule, resource plan, assumptions log and update procedure.
- Apply: explain one schedule change in terms of scope, cost, risk and stakeholder impact.

MONTH 4 · UNDERSTAND WHAT THE NUMBERS MEAN

Core 04 · Budgets, forecasts and performance insight

A project report should help someone decide what to do next. This module develops the numerical and analytical discipline behind that report. You compare estimating approaches, distinguish approved budget from current forecast and investigate the timing of expenditure. You also explore how progress should be measured. Money spent does not by itself show value earned, and work described as almost finished may still contain the activity that determines whether the outcome can be accepted. You learn to ask what each measure actually represents before relying on it.

Practical exercises introduce earned value concepts alongside simpler variance and trend analysis. You calculate indicators, test the consistency of the underlying data and explain the limitations of a forecast. The focus is interpretation: what has happened, what is likely to happen, what assumptions drive that view and what response would be proportionate. You practise communicating financial information to colleagues who do not work in project controls. A clear explanation connects the figures with delivery choices and avoids treating a formula as an automatic instruction.

Your output is a short performance pack with traceable calculations and an evidence-based recommendation. A deliberately imperfect dataset requires you to identify missing records, inconsistent dates or unsuitable progress measures. You then explain what can reasonably be concluded and what needs further investigation. This becomes an important

foundation for the later AI stage, where a fluent narrative must never conceal weak or misleading numbers.

- Explore estimating, budget control, forecasting, EVM and variance interpretation.
- Produce: a cost and progress report with calculations, assumptions and recommended action.
- Apply: challenge one performance indicator and explain the decision it should support.

THE VALUE OF A CONVERSATION

Projects are people working together

College community in London · June 2026

A concept often becomes clearer when you have to explain it to someone else. Try describing the choice you face, the evidence behind it and what remains uncertain. Invite a question before you rush to defend an answer.

Use teaching, coaching and workplace conversations to make those connections. Keep a brief note of the idea that changed your thinking, the action you will try and how you will judge whether it helped. That small habit can make learning easier to carry back into a busy working week.

CHAPTER 04

Care for delivery and the people within it

Once delivery begins, a project becomes a conversation between plans and reality. A supplier may need support, a risk may become an issue, or a colleague may see a concern that others have missed. Sound project practice helps you respond with proportion and care. These modules connect uncertainty, people, quality and closure with responsible judgement. Notice how a clear question, an honest update or a handover can protect both the work and the confidence of those who depend on it.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Where could one clearer conversation prevent avoidable difficulty?

MONTH 5 · RESPOND BEFORE SURPRISE BECOMES FAILURE

Core 05 · Risk, issues and controlled change

Every project contains uncertainty, but a long risk register does not automatically create control. This module develops the ability to identify the conditions that matter, describe their possible consequences and assign a practical response. You examine threats and opportunities, the difference between a risk and an issue, and the relationship between exposure and decision-making authority. The work begins with clear language: a cause, an uncertain event and an effect on an objective are more useful than a vague label such as supplier risk.

You assess proportionate responses using the information available. This includes who owns the action, what it will cost, when it must happen and how the team will know whether it has worked. You also practise escalation. A professional recommendation explains the decision needed and the implications of delay; it does not simply pass a problem upwards. Change control is taught alongside risk because a response may affect scope, cost, schedule, quality or benefits. You learn to document those effects and maintain the agreed configuration after an authorised decision.

The practical assignment follows an emerging issue through analysis, stakeholder discussion and a change decision. Your evidence includes the original concern, the options considered, the approval and the updated records. You then review whether the response reduced exposure or introduced a new dependency. The lesson is a repeatable management cycle: identify, assess, decide, act and check.

- Explore uncertainty, response planning, escalation, configuration and change control.
- Produce: a risk review and a fully reasoned change request.
- Apply: identify the trigger that tells an owner when to act or escalate.

MONTH 6 · COORDINATE COMMITMENTS

Core 06 · People, suppliers and accountable delivery

Projects are delivered through relationships as well as plans. This module examines how an associate project manager can build trust, secure useful commitments and keep work moving without exceeding their authority. You explore the different pressures on technical specialists, operational teams, suppliers and sponsors. A missed action may reflect an unclear request, a resource conflict or a disagreement about priority. Understanding that context helps you choose an effective response rather than repeating the same reminder more loudly.

You practise meeting design, negotiation, constructive challenge and the management of disagreement. The exercises ask you to produce an outcome: a clear decision, an agreed owner or a properly escalated issue. Supplier discussions introduce procurement options, ethical conduct, sustainable choices and the link between contractual obligations and practical delivery. You learn to work with the organisation's commercial specialists and distinguish what you can recommend from what you may approve. Sensitive information, conflicts of interest and fair treatment are

considered within ordinary project situations rather than treated as distant policy topics.

Your practical evidence captures a stakeholder interaction and the action that followed. It might show how you clarified an expectation, resolved a delivery interface or helped a team agree a realistic sequence. A manager or colleague can provide factual witness evidence of your contribution. The aim is to make professional behaviour visible through decisions and conduct, while recognising that a successful outcome is usually shared across a team.

- Explore collaboration, influence, conflict, supplier coordination and ethical procurement.
- Produce: a meeting and negotiation pack with decisions, owners and follow-up.
- Apply: improve a recurring handover between two teams and test whether it reduces rework.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Think of a difficult handover or supplier conversation. What did the other person need to understand, and how might you make the next conversation clearer?

MONTH 7 · MAKE DELIVERY ASSURABLE

Core 07 · Quality, governance and responsible decisions

Good governance helps a project make the right decisions at the right level. You examine how delegated authority, reporting requirements, assurance and decision records work together. The module asks a practical question: if another person reviewed this decision six months later, could they

understand the evidence, the options and the reason for the choice? That standard of clarity improves day-to-day work as well as auditability. It also helps colleagues understand when an issue belongs with the project team and when it needs sponsor or organisational approval.

Quality is developed through requirements, planning and control. You translate broad expectations into acceptance criteria, identify review points and consider the cost of defects and rework. You examine how legislation, organisational policy, data protection and sustainability affect your own responsibilities. The focus is application rather than memorising regulations without context. For example, a project collecting customer information needs an approved purpose, suitable handling arrangements and a clear owner for decisions about access. A procurement choice may need to consider whole-life impacts as well as the initial price.

You produce a quality and governance pack for a realistic project decision. It includes the required checks, supporting evidence and escalation route. A simulated challenge asks you to defend the recommendation and identify where specialist advice is needed. The result should be a more confident professional who can move work forward while recognising the limits of their own knowledge and authority.

- Explore quality planning, assurance, delegated authority and responsible practice.
- Produce: acceptance criteria, a quality plan and a governance submission.
- Apply: trace one approval from source evidence to recorded decision and updated action.

MONTH 8 · LEAVE THE ORGANISATION STRONGER

Core 08 · Closure, benefits and professional judgement

Finishing activity is different from transferring a useful outcome. This module examines closure, handover and the continuing ownership of benefits. You consider whether the receiving team has the information, capability and support needed to use what the project has delivered. You review outstanding issues, warranties, operational responsibilities and the evidence of acceptance. Where the work continues beyond your part of the project, the same principles support a well-managed phase boundary or handover to another team.

You evaluate performance against the original intention and the decisions made along the way. The learning asks for a balanced account: what worked, what was less effective and what should change next time. A useful lesson contains enough context to inform a future decision. Simply recording communicate earlier tells the next team very little; identifying the missing stakeholder, the point at which their input was needed and a workable review step creates something reusable. You practise presenting this analysis to colleagues in a way that encourages improvement without assigning blame.

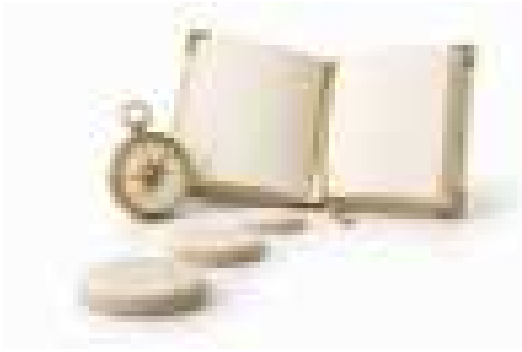
The final core review brings the programme together through scenario decisions and a workplace evidence conversation. You explain how scope, schedule, cost, people, risk and value interacted, and how your own contribution developed. PMP preparation at this stage focuses on reasoning under pressure rather than memorised answers. The next phase takes your most promising improvement opportunity and explores

whether a controlled digital workflow can make it more consistent, transparent or efficient.

- Explore handover readiness, benefits ownership, lessons and continuous improvement.
- Produce: a closure or phase review and an actionable improvement recommendation.
- Apply: agree one lesson that a future project can adopt, with an owner and review date.

CHAPTER 05

Build useful technology with judgement



A digital tool begins with a human need: less repetition, clearer information or more time for a decision. The AI studios take you from that need through design, construction, testing and handover. Throughout, your judgement remains essential. You will ask what information can be trusted, what action needs approval and how someone will understand the result. Allow yourself to experiment, notice what fails and improve the design. Testing is part of learning how to create something others can use confidently.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Which repetitive task would be worth improving, and who should decide the outcome?

MONTH 9 · SESSIONS 1–4 OF THE AI CERTIFICATE

AI studio 01 · Define the problem and design the workflow

The AI specialism begins with a work problem, not a subscription. You select a process where better preparation, analysis or coordination could create measurable value. Examples include a weekly project report, the handling of change requests or the movement of meeting actions into a controlled register. You map how the work happens today, identify the information used and agree how improvement will be measured. This makes it possible to challenge an attractive demonstration that has little practical value.

You then develop and test prompts for structured project outputs. A strong instruction supplies context, approved evidence, the task, constraints and a clear output format. It also makes uncertainty visible. You compare the response with the source, identify unsupported claims and improve the instruction. Prompt versions and test results become part of your evidence. The workflow design uses ChatGPT and Claude as teaching examples, while concentrating on transferable skills: specifying a task, evaluating a result and deciding where professional judgement is necessary.

The future process identifies triggers, rules, human approvals and exception routes. You decide which steps should remain deterministic and which might benefit from language-based analysis. An AI-generated recommendation cannot authorise a budget change simply because it sounds persuasive. The design therefore states what the system may prepare, what it may read, when it must stop and who can approve the next action. These four sessions establish the foundation for the subsequent build. [A7]

Build	Evidence of quality
Opportunity canvas	A defined problem and baseline measure
Prompt library	Versioned instructions and reviewed test outputs
Current and future workflow	Roles, decisions, exceptions and approval points
Implementation specification	Acceptance tests and explicit boundaries

MONTH 10 · SESSIONS 5–8 OF THE AI CERTIFICATE

AI studio 02 · Build a trustworthy data and reporting layer

Reliable automation needs reliable information. You create a structured project controls workbook with identifiers, owners, dates, status definitions and a data dictionary. Baseline values are separated from current results, and raw source information is distinguished from calculations. This is practical data discipline: two records with different date formats or inconsistent status meanings can produce a convincing but inaccurate report. You build validation checks before adding AI commentary, so that missing or contradictory information can be identified rather than silently interpreted.

Using n8n as the teaching workflow platform, you connect a trigger to an approved data source, apply rules and generate a draft output. You learn how fields move between steps and why authentication, permissions and failure handling matter. A simple working process is preferred to an elaborate sequence that cannot be explained. You test normal records, incomplete entries and interrupted runs, then review the

evidence of what happened. Any write-back to a workplace system remains subject to the organisation's approval arrangements.

The dashboard work begins with the decision a user needs to make. You define indicators, filters and useful detail before constructing a Lovable prototype. A connection is then tested against approved data to check that the displayed result matches the underlying record. The four sessions produce a joined-up reporting demonstration, accompanied by operating notes. Tool versions, connections and subscriptions are confirmed for the cohort; the educational purpose is to understand data flow and control rather than depend on one interface. [A7]

- Build: a governed workbook, an automation and a connected dashboard.
- Test: data completeness, indicator calculations, permissions and refresh behaviour.
- Explain: where each displayed figure came from and who may change its source.

MONTH 11 · SESSIONS 9–12 OF THE AI CERTIFICATE

AI studio 03 · Govern agents and meeting-to-action workflows

A useful agent needs a narrow purpose and understandable limits. You design a project controls assistant that can inspect approved information, identify a condition and prepare a recommendation. Its instructions specify available tools, prohibited actions, escalation points and the evidence expected in its response. You challenge the design with ambiguous and high-risk cases. If an activity is overdue, for

example, the assistant may request an update; it should not invent a new completion date or contact a client without the required authority.

You build the controlled process and test the full decision cycle, including a rejected recommendation. This matters because a system that performs well only when every suggestion is accepted does not provide meaningful human oversight. You retain the source record, proposed action, reviewer decision and resulting update. Permissions are kept proportionate to the teaching task. The resulting demonstration should make it clear who remains accountable and how an incorrect action can be contained.

Meeting analysis provides a second application. You convert a transcript or workshop record into proposed actions, decisions, risks and unresolved questions. You check that a suggestion has not been mistaken for an agreement and that owners and dates are supported by the evidence. The subsequent workflow includes review, duplicate checks and a controlled route into the action register. An anonymised or synthetic training record can be used where workplace information is unsuitable. These sessions develop practical judgement about what automation may assist and what still requires a person to decide. [A7]

- Build: an agent design card, governed prototype and meeting-to-action process.
- Test: missing owners, conflicting dates, repeated inputs and rejected recommendations.
- Explain: the source, the uncertainty and the human decision behind every approved action.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

For an automation you would like to build, which decisions should require a person's approval? How would you make a rejected action stay rejected?

MONTH 12 · SESSIONS 13–14 AND CAPSTONE REVIEW

AI studio 04 · Integrate, demonstrate and hand over

The final stage connects the learning into a solution that another person can review and operate. You examine how an application programming interface moves information between systems and how records are matched safely. A controlled integration blueprint identifies the source of truth, field mappings, permissions and the action required when a connection fails. The practical build may link a project application, a workbook, an automation and a dashboard. The exact tools depend on the cohort and employer environment; the discipline of testing and explaining the connection remains the same.

Your capstone demonstrates a defined use case with an evidence trail. Suitable choices include a reporting assistant, a risk-review workflow or a meeting-to-action process. You compare the result with the baseline agreed at the beginning, using a small number of sensible measures such as preparation time, correction effort or completeness of action records. A measured pilot is more credible than a claim that the system transforms every project. The presentation also addresses limits: where human review is essential, what data is unsuitable and what must be monitored after implementation.

The governance pack brings together acceptable use, approval roles, incident response, version records and operating instructions. The KBC certificate learning plan specifies fourteen two-hour live sessions over four months, with a practical portfolio and capstone reviewed against the College's criteria. The resulting award is the Kent Business College AI in Project Controls Certificate, subject to successful completion. It is a KBC award; reference to PMI's AI standard supports curriculum alignment and does not convert it into a PMI qualification. [A7, A8]

- Submit: a working prototype or controlled demonstration, test record and operating guide.
- Defend: usefulness, traceability, permissions, approval controls and measured benefit.
- Transfer: a realistic improvement roadmap with a named workplace reviewer.

CHAPTER 06

Show the work that is yours

Assessment preparation begins with understanding your own work. What did you do, why did you choose that approach, and what difference did your contribution make? These questions help turn a collection of files into an account of practice. The next pages connect knowledge, skills and behaviours with gateway and independent assessment. Keep learning reflections useful while respecting the separate portfolio rules. You are preparing to explain experience with clarity, including the challenges, limits and lessons that made the work meaningful.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Which example could you explain confidently without a prepared script?

ST0310 · K1–K31

Knowledge coverage · understand the whole project

Knowledge becomes valuable when it explains a choice. Across the programme, you are encouraged to connect concepts with the situation in front of you: why a particular delivery approach fits, why a forecast needs qualification or why a stakeholder should be involved earlier. The following navigation map includes every knowledge code in the current standard. Its theme labels provide concise summaries; the linked occupational standard remains the authoritative statement. [A1]

KBC uses the map to plan opportunities across the core and AI stages. It should not become a tick-box claim that a topic is complete because a slide mentioned it. A learner may first encounter a concept in a workshop, apply it to a workplace task and later explain its limitations during coaching. Those different activities build depth. Where your role does not yet offer an appropriate opportunity, the coach and employer agree how access, responsibilities or project exposure can develop.

Codes	Knowledge theme	Application outcome
K1–K4	Purpose and context	Explain the project within its organisation.
K5–K8	Governance, structures and life cycles	Justify the delivery arrangements.
K9–K10	Business case and benefits	Review continuing value.
K11–K12	Integrated plan and scope	Connect commitments with deliverables.

Codes	Knowledge theme	Application outcome
K13–K17	People, communication and information	Choose an appropriate engagement approach.
K18–K22	Estimates, change, EVM, schedules and resources	Interpret a credible delivery position.
K23–K26	Risk, procurement, quality and lessons	Recommend proportionate controls.
K27–K29	Law, sustainability and ethics	Explain responsible project choices.
K30–K31	Digital tools and presentations	Make information useful and understandable.

ST0310 · S1–S26 AND B1–B5

Skills and behaviours · make your contribution visible

The skills map is a guide to the evidence you should be able to discuss. A polished template is useful only when you can explain how you used it, the decision it supported and your own contribution. The programme therefore asks you to retain suitable working records and seek factual feedback. The map below covers all skill codes, grouped for navigation rather than replacing the official definitions. [A9]

Professional conduct runs through every assignment. The five behaviour codes concern adaptability (B1), collaboration (B2), ownership (B3), integrity and confidentiality (B4), and continuing development (B5). [A9] In practice, that may mean acknowledging an error, consulting an affected colleague, keeping a commitment or asking for help before a problem grows. A reflective learning conversation can reveal progress, but final assessment evidence must follow the relevant EPA

rules. Building an authentic record over time gives you a stronger account than trying to reconstruct a year of work immediately before gateway.

Codes	Capability	Possible evidence
S1, S7–S8, S20–S21	Analyse performance and support decisions	Cost review and governance submission
S2–S6, S18	Engage, influence and collaborate	Decisions and factual witness evidence
S9, S11	Review value and improve plans	Business case and plan recommendations
S10, S25	Control change and configuration	Approved request and updated baseline
S12, S17, S22, S26	Schedule work and manage resources	Integrated plan and resource review
S13–S14, S24	Evaluate and respond to uncertainty	Risk analysis and response evidence
S15–S16	Assure quality and improve practice	Quality plan and implemented lesson
S19, S23	Use technology responsibly	Governed digital output and compliance record

BEFORE INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT

Gateway · prepare an authentic assessment story

Gateway is the point at which readiness is confirmed. Your employer decides whether you can work at the required

occupational level, supported by evidence and advice from KBC. For the current plan, gateway includes English and maths requirements under the applicable funding rules, an assessment project scoping document of no more than 500 words, and a mapped portfolio. The work project and research take place before gateway; the assessed written report begins afterwards. The portfolio typically contains twenty discrete pieces of evidence and supports the professional discussion rather than receiving its own grade. [A2]

Plan the evidence early. Choose examples where your contribution can be identified and where the project context is clear. A useful record shows what you were responsible for, the information available at the time and what happened following your action. An employer witness can describe observed conduct; a general compliment offers less help. Avoid including confidential information simply because it makes a document look complete. Agree suitable redaction or an approved alternative with the relevant parties.

The EPA portfolio excludes reflective accounts and self-assessment, although reflection remains useful in teaching and coaching. Evidence must be attributable to you, with employer and apprentice confirmation. [A10] The AI element of the programme makes authenticity especially important. Keep a clear record of any permitted tool assistance and the work you personally performed. Before submission, follow the appointed assessment organisation's current instructions on AI, accessibility, confidentiality and evidence format. Practise explaining your reasoning without relying on a prepared script: the assessor needs to understand your competence, not the fluency of a document.

- Readiness review: role competence, learning completion, evidence quality and support needs.

- Practical check: access to records, quiet assessment space and suitable equipment.
- Next step: agree the assessment schedule and responsibilities before gateway closes.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

In your learning journal, separate from the EPA portfolio, identify an example that you understand thoroughly. What was your contribution, and what would you explain if an assessor questioned your choice?

TWO METHODS · ONE OCCUPATIONAL JUDGEMENT

End-point assessment · show what you can do

The assessment combines a written project report with presentation and questioning, and a portfolio-supported professional discussion. The report is 3,500 words, with a ten per cent tolerance; specified supporting material is excluded from that count. Report and presentation materials are submitted by EPA week twelve. Presentation and questioning last sixty minutes, normally twenty plus forty. The separate professional discussion lasts sixty minutes. Each method includes at least six questions. Both methods must pass; overall distinction requires distinction in both. [A2, A11]

KBC's preparation should help you explain an evidence-based project story. Set out the business context, your responsibilities, the options you considered and the consequences of your decisions. Use figures where they improve the explanation, but make the underlying assumptions clear. A strong answer can acknowledge a limitation or an unsuccessful approach and show how you

responded. The aim is to demonstrate informed judgement in your own setting, not to suggest that every project was perfect.

Mock practice can help you select examples, organise your thoughts and respond calmly to a question you did not expect. It should use legitimate practice material and preserve the independence of the final assessment. Reasonable adjustments are agreed through the assessment organisation. A failed method may be re-sat or re-taken with employer agreement; the current plan normally caps the eventual grade at pass unless exceptional circumstances apply. Reassessment is not a route for upgrading an existing pass. [A10] Dates and arrangements are confirmed with the appointed EPAO, and any later standard revision must be checked for the learner's actual start and assessment route.

Prepare	Demonstrate
Report	A coherent account supported by relevant evidence
Presentation	A selective explanation of contribution and results
Questioning	Reasoning, ownership and a balanced evaluation
Discussion	Breadth of capability across workplace situations

YOUR DEVELOPMENT

Notice the progress you are making

College community in London · June 2026

Progress is not always dramatic. Sometimes it is a more precise question, a clearer recommendation, an honest account of what you do not yet know, or the confidence to ask for support before a difficulty grows.

Look back at the work you brought into the programme. What can you now explain, improve or approach more thoughtfully? Keep the evidence of that change. It can help you recognise your development and decide what you want to learn next.

CHAPTER 07

Take the learning forward

Your development will continue beyond the taught programme. Professional preparation, workplace responsibility and further learning may each have a place, depending on your experience and ambitions. This chapter helps you consider those possibilities alongside the details of funding and support. Take time to understand the commitments and the conditions attached to each award. Then return to the work itself: the plan, the better question or the more reliable handover that will show how your capability has grown in everyday practice.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

What change in your work would make this investment feel worthwhile?

A SEPARATE PMI CERTIFICATION

PMP preparation · ambition with a clear route to eligibility

PMP preparation is an important part of KBC's proposition, but PMP is awarded by PMI after its own application and examination requirements are met. It is not automatically awarded with the apprenticeship. Under PMI's July 2026 outline, eligible experience must be within the preceding ten years. Depending on recognised education, applicants need 60, 48, 36 or 24 non-overlapping months leading projects, plus the applicable 35-hour training requirement. The 24-month route requires a qualifying PMI GAC-accredited degree. PMI determines the acceptability of an applicant's education and experience; this Level 4 apprenticeship should not be assumed to meet a higher educational tier. [A3]

Your initial discussion should therefore distinguish apprenticeship suitability from PMP examination eligibility. You may have substantial relevant experience that needs organising and verification, or you may be at the beginning of a longer professional journey. In either case, the taught material should help you develop stronger project judgement. An experience record is useful when it accurately captures your responsibility, dates, project setting and contribution. It should never inflate a supporting role into leadership or count overlapping months twice. Where PMP eligibility has not yet been reached, agree a realistic progression plan and the treatment of any examination support in the written offer.

The updated PMP examination uses 180 questions over 240 minutes. Its domain weightings are People 33%, Process 41% and Business Environment 26%. [A3] Preparation should use the current examination outline and appropriately licensed

materials. PMI's July 2026 update also places greater emphasis on business impact, AI and sustainability; older study resources need checking against the current examination. [A4] A preparation course or mock score cannot guarantee a result.

- Confirm eligibility and the applicable examination version before booking.
- Record exactly which training, first attempt, membership or support costs are included.
- Treat any future certification maintenance as a separate professional commitment.

COSTS AND WRITTEN AWARDS

Understanding the funding routes

Three different funding concepts appear in KBC programme offers. Government apprenticeship funding supports eligible training and assessment within the approved funding band. KBC or IPC support may fund additional professional development and agreed learner benefits. A separately approved bursary for a commercial programme has its own price, award and balance. These amounts must not be counted twice or treated as interchangeable. [C2,C7]

The government policy for new starts from 1 August 2026 distinguishes the employer's levy position and the apprentice's age at the start of training. The summary below applies within the funding band and remains subject to eligibility. The current policy is administered through the Department for Work and Pensions; older KBC material refers to the Department for Education. [C4-C5]

Position at the applicable start	Funding treatment
Levy account with sufficient funds	Eligible training and assessment are paid through the apprenticeship service account.
Eligible learner aged 16 to 24; non-levy employer or levy account with insufficient funds	Government funds eligible training and assessment within the band; no employer co-investment.
Learner aged 25 or over; non-levy employer	Normally 95% government support and 5% employer co-investment.
Learner aged 25 or over; levy account with insufficient funds	Normally 75% government support and 25% employer co-investment.

An apprentice is not charged eligible apprenticeship training or assessment costs. Employers remain responsible for wages and any agreed costs outside funding limits. Earlier starters follow their applicable rules. The written agreement confirms the negotiated price, funding source and contribution. [C4-C5]

Professional memberships, optional examinations, travel, workshops and bursaries require the scope and conditions in the written offer. Confirm included attempts, resits, membership periods and additional charges before agreeing. A KBC or IPC award is not an automatic entitlement, a cash payment to the learner or a guarantee of professional-body recognition. [C1-C2]

MAKE THE FINANCIAL AGREEMENT CLEAR

Funding, costs and the professional development package

The programme has £7,000 in Department for Education apprenticeship funding for eligible training and assessment, within the ST0310 v1.5 funding band. [A1] The Institute of Project Controls provides a separate £1,000 from the IPC Fund for agreed professional development and learner benefits. Eligibility, prior learning and any employer contribution are assessed before enrolment. Your written offer confirms the covered items and conditions. IPC support is separate from government apprenticeship funding and must not be counted twice. [A6]

For starts from 1 August 2026, an eligible non-levy employer with an apprentice aged twenty-five or over normally contributes five per cent; at a £7,000 agreed price this is £350. A levy-paying employer with insufficient funds normally contributes twenty-five per cent for that age group: £1,750 at the same price. Eligible apprentices aged sixteen to twenty-four at the start are fully funded within the band where the employer does not pay the levy or has exhausted levy funds. Sufficient levy funds or an approved transfer can meet eligible costs. Individual eligibility and the start-date rules still apply. [A5]

The written quotation should separate apprenticeship costs from optional professional services. Confirm the PMP examination arrangement, any resit provision, AI software or API usage, materials, travel and optional events. A bursary decision should name what it pays for and when it becomes

available. The employer should also plan for paid learning time and workplace supervision. A transparent agreement enables both learner and employer to judge the full commitment before enrolment.

- Government funding: eligible apprenticeship training and assessment under current rules.
- KBC/IPC support: only the amount and additional items approved in writing.
- Learner protection: no charge to the apprentice for eligible apprenticeship training or assessment.

A PORTFOLIO WITH A PURPOSE

The value you take back to work

The most persuasive evidence of development is a change in the quality of your work. By the end of the programme, you should be better able to organise a project task, explain a delivery problem and recommend a practical next step. Your portfolio can show that progression through a business case review, an integrated plan, a performance report, a controlled change and a digital improvement. These outputs are useful in coaching and assessment, but their first purpose is to help you contribute more effectively to the organisation.

For the employer, the opportunity is to develop project capability around real priorities. A learner might improve the consistency of reporting, make handovers clearer, identify a neglected dependency or introduce a properly controlled automation. Agree a small number of measures at the start and revisit them during reviews. For example, you could assess the completeness of action records, the number of corrections required in a monthly report or the time needed to

prepare information for a decision. Avoid claiming that every improvement is caused by training alone; describe the learner's contribution alongside the wider team's work.

Your next step may be broader responsibility in project delivery, a specialist project controls role or further professional learning. The choice should follow evidence of readiness and the opportunities available, rather than a promised job title. Before applying, bring a current role description, examples of relevant experience and an initial view of employer support. KBC can then help establish whether this programme offers sufficient new learning, how the twelve-month model would work in practice and when professional certification preparation becomes the right next step.

- For you: visible project capability, stronger judgement and a practical digital portfolio.
- For your employer: reusable controls, clearer information and an agreed improvement focus.
- Before enrolment: confirm role fit, time, funding, assessment arrangements and professional award conditions.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

What small improvement would make a noticeable difference to your team? How could you show your contribution while recognising the work of others?

CHAPTER 08

Project judgement in practice

Follow the fictional Harbour Services project from an initial request to an informed commitment. These activities turn project concepts into decisions that colleagues can understand and challenge.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Which assumption in your current project most deserves to be tested before the organisation commits further?

YOUR PROGRAMME

The project behind the promise

The following learning journey uses a fictional organisation, Harbour Services, which wants to improve the way customers book and attend appointments. Its sponsor has asked for a new digital portal, but the underlying problem is broader: customers repeat information, staff chase missing details and some people cannot use the existing online service. An associate project practitioner begins by investigating that experience. Interviews, process observations and a small sample of anonymised records help separate the symptoms from the causes. A new interface may be useful, but changing the information requested or the handover between teams might remove more frustration.

The first professional contribution is therefore a carefully framed decision, supported by evidence. Define whose experience should improve, what improvement would look like and how it could be observed. Compare a limited process change, a small pilot and a wider replacement, including the consequences of doing nothing. Record assumptions without disguising them as established facts. The sponsor retains the investment decision; your responsibility is to make its basis clearer. This approach supports project judgement throughout the programme because a deliverable only makes sense in relation to the outcome it is intended to enable.

- Draft a problem statement without naming a preferred product.
- Identify one assumption that could change the preferred option.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Listen before fixing the requirement

In the fictional Harbour Services project, the operational manager wants fewer calls while customers want reassurance that their appointments are confirmed. Those interests may align, but removing the telephone route too quickly could leave some customers stranded. Requirements work begins with listening to the people who experience the service, including colleagues who handle exceptions. Ask what happens on an ordinary day and what happens when the normal process fails. A requirement such as "the system must be easy" becomes more useful when someone can describe the task, the difficulty and the conditions under which success will be judged.

Bring these accounts together without promising that every preference will become part of the first release. Distinguish essential access needs, operational controls and optional conveniences, then ask the accountable owner to agree priorities. Record acceptance criteria that people can test: a customer can amend an appointment, staff can identify the current booking, and an authorised colleague can resolve a failed confirmation. Check the proposed wording with the people who supplied the need. This closes the gap between a thoughtful conversation and an implementable agreement, while making later disagreement easier to explore with specific evidence.

- Rewrite two vague requirements as observable acceptance criteria.

- Test an exception with a colleague who handles customer enquiries.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Choose a delivery approach with purpose

Harbour Services has a fixed date for retiring its old booking software, yet uncertainty remains about the best customer journey. In this fictional situation, one delivery method does not answer every question equally well. Infrastructure preparation may need a carefully coordinated sequence, while prototype screens benefit from short cycles of feedback. Describe the nature of the work before recommending an approach. Consider how stable the requirements are, who can make decisions, how quickly feedback can be obtained and which commitments cannot move. A preference for familiar terminology is a weaker basis than an examination of these conditions.

A practical recommendation might combine an agreed transition plan with iterative design and testing. Explain how the parts connect: what can change within a cycle, what needs a formal decision and when the whole service must be ready. Make responsibilities visible so that flexibility does not become uncertainty about authority. In scenario practice, examine why another plausible approach would be less suitable under the same conditions. That comparison strengthens professional judgement and PMP preparation: the aim is to understand the reason for a decision, then recognise when changed circumstances justify a different response.

- Describe one stable commitment and one uncertain design choice.

- Set out how a design change reaches the transition decision.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Make the schedule believable

The fictional project team has drawn an attractive plan showing design, build, testing and launch in four consecutive blocks. The dates look tidy, but the plan assumes the same operational specialist can support design workshops and train colleagues at the same time. An associate practitioner should make that conflict visible before the team starts treating the finish date as a promise. Break the work into meaningful activities, connect genuine dependencies and check resource availability. Include approvals, data preparation and the time needed to resolve defects, rather than treating these as details that will somehow fit around the main work.

A credible schedule also explains its assumptions. Record the working calendars, the source of important duration estimates and the circumstances that would change the plan. When the sponsor requests an earlier launch, compare realistic responses rather than simply moving the final milestone. A reduced pilot, an additional qualified resource or a revised sequence may each help, but they carry different costs and risks. Present the consequences and identify the decision owner. Keep the approved baseline alongside the current forecast so that later reporting can explain what changed and why, without rewriting the original commitment.

- Find a resource conflict hidden by the current activity sequence.
- Prepare two launch options with their assumptions and trade-offs.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Give costs a clear meaning

A fictional supplier offers Harbour Services a low implementation price, but the proposal excludes data cleansing, colleague training and support after launch. Comparing only the headline quotation would hide the work the organisation must still fund. Start with the agreed scope and identify the resources required to deliver and use it. Separate one-off expenditure from recurring costs, and record where an estimate remains uncertain. Ask who owns each cost and which assumptions have been accepted. A budget becomes more useful when another colleague can understand what it includes and what would trigger a revision.

During delivery, explain the difference between money spent, orders committed and the expected cost of completing the remaining work. A low spend can indicate efficiency, delayed invoices or work that has not happened. It does not explain itself. Use a consistent reporting date and check the underlying records before offering an interpretation. If costs are likely to rise, connect the forecast to the cause and the available decisions. The practitioner's contribution is a transparent recommendation, with sufficient supporting detail for a manager to challenge it, rather than a reassuring total that obscures the exposure.

- List three costs that sit outside the supplier's headline price.
- Explain a favourable spending variance using two competing causes.

YOUR PROGRAMME

A decision brief people can use

By the end of the fictional project's definition stage, the team has enough information to choose between a limited pilot and a full launch. The sponsor does not need every working document reproduced in a presentation. They need a clear account of the decision, the evidence and the consequences. Begin the brief with the choice that requires authority. Describe the options fairly, using the same comparison criteria for each. Include customer access, delivery confidence, cost exposure and the ability to learn. Where evidence is weak, state what remains uncertain and whether that uncertainty can be reduced before committing.

Close with a recommendation that follows from the analysis. Explain the conditions attached to it, the person responsible for the next step and the point at which the decision should be revisited. Invite challenge without treating disagreement as a personal criticism. A colleague may know about a dependency or operational constraint that the project has missed. Retain the agreed decision and its rationale, then update the plan accordingly. This provides a useful learning record: you can later examine whether the assumptions held and how your own analysis influenced the quality of the discussion.

- Write a one-page pilot decision brief with comparable options.
- Ask a colleague to challenge the weakest supporting assumption.

CHAPTER 09

Deliver, adapt and learn

Explore the conversations and control decisions that keep a project useful as circumstances change. The fictional case continues through risk, change, acceptance and handover.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Where could a clearer explanation of your own contribution strengthen the evidence of your development?

YOUR PROGRAMME

Respond to risk before it becomes an issue

During preparation for the fictional Harbour Services pilot, the team discovers that appointment data may contain duplicate customer records. The duplicates are not yet a delivery failure, but they could lead to incorrect confirmations and additional work at launch. Describe the uncertainty clearly: its cause, the event that might occur and the consequence for the project. Establish who can investigate and who can authorise a response. A useful risk conversation focuses on what could change the outcome, rather than on finding an impressive score for a register that nobody subsequently uses in practice.

Compare proportionate responses such as validating a sample, cleaning priority records or restricting the pilot population. Each has a cost and a remaining exposure. Agree an owner, a review point and a signal that would trigger escalation. If the problem has already occurred, manage the actual issue and its recovery while retaining relevant uncertainty about the wider data set. Keep reporting connected to the decision required. Your learning evidence should show how new information changed the response, including occasions when an initially plausible concern proved less significant than the team had feared.

- Write one risk using cause, uncertain event and consequence.
- Define the evidence that would trigger an escalation decision.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Manage a change without losing the purpose

In the fictional pilot, a manager asks the team to add automated reminders for a second service. The request sounds small because the first service already uses reminders, but the additional workflow has different consent preferences, scheduling rules and staff responsibilities. A constructive practitioner acknowledges the potential benefit while investigating the impact. Clarify the need, check whether it belongs within the agreed scope and examine the effect on the remaining work. Include testing, training, support and dependencies in the analysis, rather than considering only the visible development task or the urgency of the request.

Present the authorised decision maker with options: include the change now, defer it to a later release or meet the immediate need through another controlled process. Explain the implications for benefits, timing, resources and risk. Once a decision is made, update the relevant baseline, requirements and communication records. Tell affected colleagues what has changed and what has not. This discipline makes flexibility workable. It also provides a strong scenario discussion: choosing to defer a useful idea can be good project management when the evidence shows that the first release needs a narrower commitment to succeed.

- Trace the reminder request through development, testing and support.
- Prepare a recommendation that explicitly addresses the project purpose.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Make difficult conversations constructive

The fictional Harbour Services supplier reports that its work is complete, while operational colleagues say the system is not ready. Repeating each side's position will not resolve the disagreement. Start by establishing which deliverables and acceptance criteria are being discussed. Ask each party to describe the evidence behind its judgement and listen for differences in assumptions. The supplier may mean that the software has been configured; colleagues may mean that exception handling and staff training remain unfinished. Naming that distinction allows the conversation to move from frustration towards a shared description of the outstanding work.

Prepare a discussion that protects working relationships while keeping the decision clear. Summarise the common ground, list the unresolved points and agree who can validate each one. Avoid making commitments outside your authority or assigning blame before the facts are understood. If the disagreement requires a contractual or senior management decision, escalate a concise account with supporting evidence. Afterwards, record the actions and confirm that the people responsible have accepted them. A useful reflection considers how your questioning, listening and language affected the discussion, alongside the technical correctness of the proposed solution.

- Turn two opposing statements into a shared acceptance question.

- Record an action with an owner, date and completion evidence.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Test the service people will actually experience

In the fictional pilot, ordinary bookings work well, yet a customer who changes their appointment receives two conflicting messages. A test plan that checks only the simplest journey would miss a problem people are likely to encounter. Start from the agreed requirements and examine the complete experience, including exceptions, accessibility and operational handovers. Identify who will test each scenario and what evidence demonstrates success. Where customers cannot participate directly, use carefully designed representative scenarios and acknowledge their limits. Technical checks and user acceptance contribute different perspectives; one does not automatically provide the assurance supplied by the other.

When a defect is found, record its effect rather than relying on an emotive label. Explain who is affected, the circumstances in which it occurs and any workable temporary measure. The accountable owner can then weigh the consequences of correction, delay or controlled acceptance. Retest the fix and consider whether related functions might have been affected. Keep the evidence concise enough to review but complete enough to support the release decision. Your professional contribution is to make readiness understandable, including the uncertainty that remains, so the organisation can choose a responsible course of action.

- Design an exception test for a changed or cancelled appointment.
- Explain the release consequence of one unresolved defect.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Close the project and support the change

The fictional Harbour Services portal has launched, but the project's responsibilities do not end with a successful demonstration. Operational colleagues need ownership of the service, access to support, a process for unresolved issues and a clear understanding of recurring tasks. Prepare the handover early enough for the receiving team to test these arrangements. Confirm who can change the system, who monitors performance and how a serious incident reaches the right person. A signed handover is useful evidence only when the people receiving responsibility understand and can perform the work it describes.

Return to the original purpose and agree how benefits will be reviewed after the project team disperses. For example, fewer repeated enquiries may be a useful measure, but changes in demand or staffing could also influence it. Record a baseline, a review period and an accountable benefit owner without promising that every observed improvement was caused by the project. Capture lessons as specific actions that another team can use: a better data check, an earlier accessibility conversation or a clearer acceptance rule. Closing well protects the investment and converts experience into practical knowledge for the next project.

- Build a handover checklist around operational responsibility.
- Convert one lesson into a change to a future project process.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Explain your own contribution with confidence

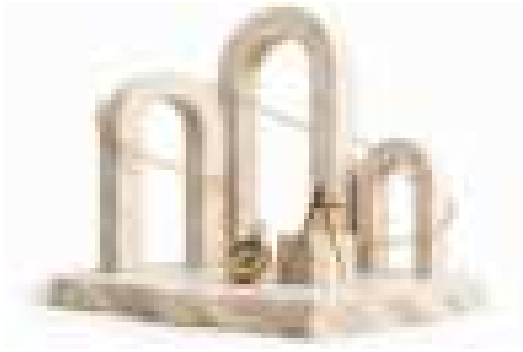
Connect the situation, your responsibility, your action and the evidence of what followed. In the fictional Harbour Services case, “we improved the schedule” reveals little about your capability. Explain how you identified a resource conflict, tested alternatives and prepared a recommendation. Recognise colleagues’ work and distinguish decisions you supported from those you were authorised to make.

Test your reasoning in learning conversations. What information was missing and what would you change? In PMP-style scenarios, consider authority, context and the people affected. Follow assessment rules when selecting evidence. Obtain permission before using workplace documents and remove unnecessary information. A clear account of authentic work demonstrates development more effectively than disconnected files.

- Describe one personal contribution without claiming the team’s work.
- Explain why a plausible alternative action was less suitable.

CHAPTER 10

AI with professional judgement



Use a fictional reporting and action-management challenge to connect AI capability with sound project practice. Start with the problem, establish trustworthy information and build in human authority.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

What would have to be true for your organisation to trust and sustain the workflow you propose?

YOUR PROGRAMME

Choose an AI problem worth solving

After the fictional Harbour Services pilot, the project team spends considerable time turning meeting notes into draft action lists. This looks like an opportunity for AI, but the first question is whether the process itself is clear. Examine how actions are agreed, where they are recorded and who confirms their accuracy. If the meeting rarely identifies an owner, an automated summary will not reliably repair that weakness. Define the task narrowly: produce a draft list from authorised notes, preserve links to supporting passages and flag statements that may require clarification. Keep the decision to accept an action with a person.

Compare the proposed workflow with a simpler template or rule-based improvement. Estimate the effort of checking outputs, handling exceptions and maintaining the process, alongside any possible time saving. Agree a small trial using synthetic or appropriately authorised information. State the success criteria before testing: completeness, accuracy, traceability and the effort required to correct mistakes may all matter. A valuable AI project makes an existing decision or workflow more dependable. It should be possible to explain the intended benefit in ordinary language, without relying on the novelty of the technology as the justification for investment.

- Define an AI task with a clear human acceptance decision.
- Compare the trial with a simpler non-AI process improvement.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Build the data foundation first

In the fictional reporting workflow, the schedule calls a work package “Customer Launch”, the cost file calls it “Portal Release” and the action log uses an internal number. An AI assistant may write a fluent summary while connecting the wrong records. Establish a shared set of identifiers before combining the information. Define the reporting date, the meaning of each field and the source considered authoritative for each measure. Record missing values and inconsistent units explicitly. A dependable data foundation helps both people and software interpret the same project situation without silently filling gaps with assumptions.

Create a small controlled sample and trace several records from source to report. Check that a change in the original file appears correctly and that an older version cannot overwrite the current position unnoticed. Where access is restricted, design the workflow so that users see only information they are authorised to use. The project practitioner does not need to claim expertise in every technical component. They do need to ask precise questions, work with the responsible specialists and explain the limits of the resulting output. Good reporting begins with a trustworthy meaning for the numbers and statements it contains.

- Create a short data dictionary for five reporting fields.
- Trace one record through the workflow and document its source.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Write prompts that invite checking

A fictional colleague asks the AI assistant to "tell us whether the project is healthy". The request is broad, the evidence is uneven and the word healthy has no agreed meaning. A stronger prompt defines the task, the permitted sources and the expected output. Ask for a draft comparison against named milestones, with references to the supporting records and a separate list of missing information. Instruct the system to distinguish evidence from interpretation and to avoid inventing an explanation when the source does not contain one. These instructions improve the basis for review, but they do not remove the need to check.

Test the prompt against cases that could expose weakness: contradictory dates, an empty cost field, a superseded plan and a note that contains an instruction unrelated to the task. Compare the response with an agreed reference answer and record the errors that matter. A polished paragraph is not proof of factual reliability. Revise the prompt or workflow when the same failure recurs, and keep a version history so that changes can be evaluated. The useful output is a reviewable draft that supports professional judgement, with its sources and uncertainty visible to the person deciding whether to use it.

- Write a prompt that requires sources and identifies missing evidence.
- Test it with one deliberately contradictory reporting record.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Design automation with a safe stopping point

In the fictional action workflow, a draft reminder could be prepared automatically, but sending it to a supplier creates a real communication and may imply a commitment. Map the workflow as a series of actions and identify where authority is required. Reading an authorised record, drafting a message and issuing that message are different operations. Give the system only the access necessary for its agreed task. Require a person to confirm the recipient, content and timing before an external message is sent, particularly where the material concerns cost, contractual obligations or sensitive project information.

Plan for failure as deliberately as for the normal route. What happens if a file is unavailable, a recipient cannot be matched or a run produces duplicate actions? The workflow should stop clearly, preserve the relevant record and direct the exception to an accountable person. Keep an audit trail that explains what was read, proposed, approved and executed. Practise switching the automation off and returning to a workable manual process. This turns governance into a practical design feature: people can understand and control the workflow instead of discovering its boundaries only after an unintended action has occurred.

- Mark the approval point before a draft becomes an external action.
- Run a missing-source test and demonstrate the manual fallback.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Evaluate value beyond an impressive demonstration

The fictional AI assistant produces an attractive weekly report in seconds, but the project team spends half an hour correcting misclassified actions. A demonstration therefore tells only part of the story. Evaluate the whole workflow, including preparation, checking, correction and exception handling. Compare it with the existing process using similar tasks and an agreed measure of quality. Keep records of both successful and unsuccessful cases. A smaller improvement that colleagues can use confidently may be more valuable than a broad automation whose outputs require unpredictable amounts of repair or create additional uncertainty.

Ask the people who use the report whether it helps them make a clearer decision. A shorter document can still omit an important risk; a longer one can bury the action that matters. Review whether the sources are accessible, the language is understandable and the limitations are obvious at the point of use. Present the findings honestly, including circumstances in which the workflow should not be used. Recommend adoption, revision or retirement based on the evidence. This evaluation shows the connection between technology and project management: value depends on a useful, sustainable change in practice, not simply on producing an output quickly.

- Compare total checking time across AI and existing workflows.
- Identify a case in which the AI workflow should be withheld.

YOUR PROGRAMME

Bring the learning together in a capstone

The fictional Harbour Services journey ends with an integrated improvement proposal: a reporting workflow that supports decisions about the next service release. Bring together the problem, stakeholder needs, scope, schedule, costs, risks and governed AI design. Choose a manageable question to investigate properly. Explain your responsibilities and the help needed from specialists. Show how the elements influence one another, rather than collecting unrelated templates under the same project title.

Prepare a concise demonstration and an accompanying evidence trail. Show the normal workflow, a significant exception and the point at which a person exercises judgement. Explain the testing, feedback and changes that shaped the final recommendation. Include a handover plan with ownership, maintenance and a workable fallback. Close by considering what the experience has changed in your professional practice: perhaps you now test assumptions earlier, ask clearer acceptance questions or challenge an unsupported forecast. That reflection provides a purposeful bridge from completing a learning activity to taking on greater responsibility with care, curiosity and credible evidence.

- Demonstrate one successful run and one controlled exception.
- Explain the next development goal supported by your capstone.

REFERENCE LIBRARY

Sources and further reading

A1 Skills England: Associate project manager, ST0310 v1.5

Current version, occupational knowledge, minimum compliance hours, funding band and typical durations; accessed 13 September 2026. Full text retrieved from the site's public occupational-tab endpoint. Crown copyright; Open Government Licence v3.0.

skillsengland.education.gov.uk/apprenticeships/st0310-v1-5?view=standard

A2 Skills England: ST0310 v1.5 end-point assessment plan

Gateway, report, presentation, professional discussion and grading. Full text retrieved from the site's public EPA-tab endpoint; checked 13 September 2026. Crown copyright; Open Government Licence v3.0.

skillsengland.education.gov.uk/apprenticeships/st0310-v1-5?view=epa

A3 PMI: PMP Examination Content Outline, July 2026

Eligibility and examination format; checked 13 September 2026. Programme module descriptions are original KBC catalogue proposals, not reproductions of PMI courseware.

www.pmi.org/-/media/pmi/documents/public/pdf/certifications/new-pmp-examination-content-outline-2026.pdf?rev=af7ae1c6006f43009fee4f613a350f9b

Sources consulted September 2026. Apply published standards and funding rules to the learner's start date. The written offer confirms delivery, fees, support and the professional awards included.

REFERENCE LIBRARY

Sources and further reading continued

A4 PMI: Updated PMP examination

July 2026 examination changes; live training requirements change again on 1 December 2026. Check arrangements against the actual booking date.

www.pmi.org/certifications/project-management-pmp/new-exam

A5 GOV.UK: Apprenticeship funding

Policy updated 29 July 2026 for starts from 1 August 2026; includes the distinction between non-levy and exhausted-levy co-investment. Crown copyright; Open Government Licence v3.0.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding/apprenticeship-funding

A6 KBC: Apprenticeship orientation day PCP New – Copy

KBC programme orientation materials covering the twelve-month route, PMP preparation, applied AI and professional development support. Apply the current funding guidance referenced in this catalogue.

Sources consulted September 2026. Apply published standards and funding rules to the learner's start date. The written offer confirms delivery, fees, support and the professional awards included.

REFERENCE LIBRARY

Sources and further reading continued

A7 KBC: AI in Project Controls Certificate Catalogue

KBC programme catalogue, version 1.0, June 2026: seven modules, fourteen sessions, twenty-eight live hours, a four-month learning pattern, practical outputs and certificate assessment.

A8 PMI: The Standard for Artificial Intelligence in Portfolio, Program and Project Management

Public overview of responsible AI and human oversight. Alignment is not a claim of PMI accreditation for the KBC AI certificate.

www.pmi.org/standards/artificial-intelligence

A9 Skills England occupational map: Associate project manager

Cross-check of skills and behaviour codes; accessed 13 September 2026. Catalogue tables are condensed navigation summaries.

occupational-maps.skillsengland.education.gov.uk/maps/occupation/OCC0310

Sources consulted September 2026. Apply published standards and funding rules to the learner's start date. The written offer confirms delivery, fees, support and the professional awards included.

REFERENCE LIBRARY

Sources and further reading continued

A10 Highfield: Associate Project Manager v1.5 EPA Kit, version 3.0

Independent EPAO cross-check of portfolio authenticity, AI use, adjustments and reassessment. Highfield is a reference source, not a confirmed KBC EPAO appointment.

assets-eu-01.kc-usercontent.com/c87d3310-963d-0197-1aa9-85c8c23ffbaf/a40e2a5a-69f5-4bfa-8f43-c9de57ff2f09/L4%20Associate%20Project%20Manager%20EPA%20Kit%20v3.0.pdf

A11 Highfield: Associate Project Manager v1.5 factsheet

Independent cross-check of assessment methods, timings and grading; checked 13 September 2026.

assets-eu-01.kc-usercontent.com/c87d3310-963d-0197-1aa9-85c8c23ffbaf/520f5536-8554-4d0f-94ac-619aa3249410/L4%20Associate%20Project%20Manager%20v1.5%20Factsheet.pdf

A12 KBC: Associate Project Manager Level 4 Employer Commitment Charter

KBC programme-specific employer guide, September 2026, version 1.0. Page 3 describes two PMP preparation credits over eight months and one applied-AI credit over four months.

kentbusinesscollege.com/downloads/employers/associate-project-manager-level-4-employer-guide.pdf

Sources consulted September 2026. Apply published standards and funding rules to the learner's start date. The written offer confirms delivery, fees, support and the professional awards included.

REFERENCE LIBRARY

Sources and further reading continued

C1 KBC learner charter and learning journey

KBC public charter, consulted in September 2026.

kentbusinesscollege.com/learners/apprentice-charter/

C2 KBC employer and line manager charter

Shared commitments and programme guide downloads.

kentbusinesscollege.com/employers/employer-charter/

C3 Kent Business College vision mission and values

Institutional identity, mission, vision and horse and ibis symbolism.

kentbusinesscollege.com/who-we-are/

Sources consulted September 2026. Apply published standards and funding rules to the learner's start date. The written offer confirms delivery, fees, support and the professional awards included.

REFERENCE LIBRARY

Sources and further reading continued

C4 Government apprenticeship funding policy

Updated 29 July 2026; new starts from 1 August 2026.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding/apprenticeship-funding

C5 Funding rules for apprenticeships

Current start-date rules; responsibility moved to DWP on 1 April 2026.

www.gov.uk/government/collections/funding-rules-for-apprenticeships

C6 KBC programme enrolment

Programme selection and next steps; online reading is not contractual acceptance.

kentbusinesscollege.com/enrol/

Sources consulted September 2026. Apply published standards and funding rules to the learner's start date. The written offer confirms delivery, fees, support and the professional awards included.

REFERENCE LIBRARY

Sources and further reading continued

C7 Kent Business College programme and funding information

KBC programme information, including the seven-module Level 7 offer, tuition fees and discretionary scholarship terms.

C8 English and maths requirements in apprenticeships

Government guidance reviewed for this edition; age at training start, equivalent qualifications and employer agreement.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-and-maths-requirements-in-apprenticeship-standards-at-level-2-and-above/english-and-maths-requirements-in-apprenticeships-guidance

Sources consulted September 2026. Apply published standards and funding rules to the learner's start date. The written offer confirms delivery, fees, support and the professional awards included.

LEARNER EXPERIENCES

Learner voices

Learners describe their experience of teaching, support and professional development. Each quotation identifies the programme they were studying when they shared their feedback.

> "I have been learning about the many methods used throughout Agile and Waterfall project lifecycles, as we already have many of these in practice. We currently have daily stand ups, retrospectives, backlog prioritisation meetings, CCN requests, user stories and more. It has been beneficial to learn more about what we do, but also about why we do it.
>
> I'm continuing to develop my knowledge and skills throughout the course, learning something new each week."

Chloe Howell

Associate Project Manager Level 4 · April 2026

> "I enjoy the course and it is aligning well with my current job"

Roy Blagg

Associate Project Manager Level 4 · August 2026

LEARNING THROUGH WORK

Employers in this programme

These employers have approved the use of their logos and are linked to this programme in the college's records. They help connect learning with the decisions and relationships of working life.

Royal Mail

Transport & logistics

Tilbury Douglas

Employer partner

Practice Plus Group

Employer partner

COLLEGE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Your next step

Bring your experience, ambitions and questions into a conversation with Kent Business College. We will help you consider how this programme fits your role and the professional contribution you want to make.

Read the programme, assessment and funding sections together. Your personal learning plan and written offer confirm the route, support and commitments agreed for you.

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