

Procurement Certification Guide

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Contact us

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Disclaimer

This document is intended as a guide only for the internal use and benefit of government agencies. It may not be relied on by any other party. It should be read in conjunction with the Queensland Procurement Policy, your agency's procurement policies and procedures, and any other relevant documents.

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Purpose

The Queensland Government Procurement Certification Guide, and supporting Quick Reference Guide, has been developed to assist Accountable Officers to establish and monitor procurement certification targets, as required under Rule 40 of the [Queensland Procurement Policy](#) (QPP).

This document provides guidance on aligning certification levels with roles, responsibilities, and delegation thresholds by outlining information on:

- The four levels of certification offered through the Queensland Procurement Certification Program (PCP)
- Integrating certification into agency recruitment processes, position descriptions, and staff learning and development plans.
- Recognising relevant experience or equivalent qualifications through defined equivalencies.

By adopting this guidance and investing in the procurement capability of their staff, agencies can enhance their procurement function, drive further workforce professionalism, and be better positioned to deliver on the objectives, targets, and commitments of the QPP.

Scope

This guide is intended for Accountable Officers (as defined in the QPP), and for agency procurement teams and staff, who undertake planning, sourcing, purchasing, contract management, and/or governance related activities.

Please read this guide in conjunction with your agency's procurement policies and procedures, whole-of-government procurement guides and the QPP.

The Procurement Certification Program (PCP)

The Procurement Certification Program (PCP) provides a comprehensive four-level pathway for developing procurement and contracting skills and expertise.

Table 1: PCP Certification Levels

PCP Level	Purpose	Suitable For	More Information
<u>PCP Level 1¹ – Fundamentals</u>	Provides foundational knowledge of procurement principles, processes and the QPP.	Staff undertaking purchasing (under \$50K).	<u>Learn more about Level 1</u>
<u>PCP Level 2 – Intermediate</u>	Builds on foundational knowledge to develop practical skills for managing more complex procurement processes and contracts.	Staff managing low to medium value and low risk procurements	<u>Learn more about Level 2</u>
<u>PCP Level 3 – Advanced (Diploma of Procurement and Contracting PSP50616)</u>	Advanced training to develop strategic procurement capabilities and leadership skills.	Staff undertaking medium-to-high significant procurements (above \$500K).	<u>Learn more about Level 3 – Diploma</u>
<u>PCP Level 4 – Strategic (Advanced Diploma of Procurement and Contracting PSP60616)</u>	Equips participants with the skills and knowledge to lead and influence procurement strategy, drive organisational change, and deliver value through strategic procurement initiatives.	Staff undertaking significant and strategic procurements (above \$500K).	<u>Learn more about Level 4 – Advanced Diploma</u>

Note:

- *Completing all four PCP levels may take a minimum of three years, depending on course timing, enrolment and participant availability.*
- *Agencies are responsible for funding PCP registrations and approving employee participation in the program.*

¹ *Staff are encouraged to complete the following 4 free e-learning courses prior to undertaking PCP Level 1 (Procurement Basics, Contract Management Basics, Social Procurement Basics, and Queensland Procurement Policy Awareness).*

Application

When applying this guidance, departments reporting against certification targets, and agencies choosing to establish targets, should consider the following factors when establishing appropriate certification requirements:

- size and structure of the procurement team
- complexity, risk profile and range of procurement methods used by the agency
- existing skills, experience and qualifications of staff
- whether the team's existing certification levels are sufficient to meet current and future procurement needs
- agency's overall procurement expenditure
- learning and development budget
- existing delegations and certification alignment.

Note: While PCP is encouraged due to its government-specific context, it is not a mandated program. Alternative programs such as [CIPS](#) or [World Commerce & Contracting](#) may also be considered.

Certification level overview

Table 2: PCP responsibilities and approximate delegation levels

Element	Level 1 – Fundamentals	Level 2 – Intermediate	Level 3 – Advanced (Diploma)	Level 4 – Strategic (Advanced Diploma)
Job classification (indicative)	AO2–AO4	AO4–AO6	AO6–AO8	AO6-AO8, SO, SES
Demonstrated experience (recommended)	3 months	6 months	3 years	5 years

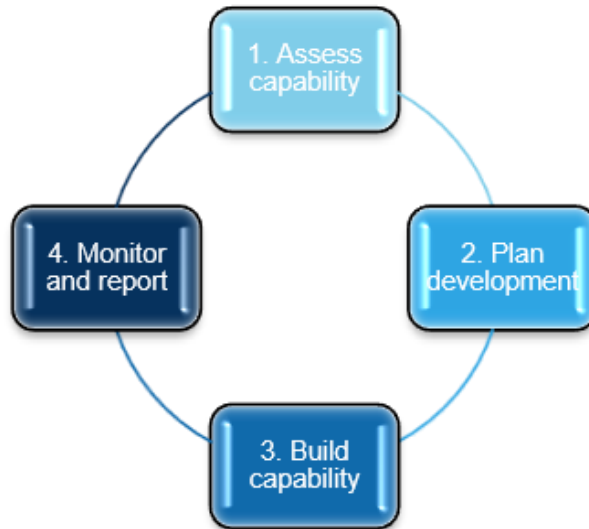
Element	Level 1 – Fundamentals	Level 2 – Intermediate	Level 3 – Advanced (Diploma)	Level 4 – Strategic (Advanced Diploma)
Procurement Method	Purchasing (under \$50K)	Routine	Significant	Significant and strategic procurement
Typical role examples	• Procurement Support Officer • Administrative Officer • Occasional procurer	• Procurement Officer • Senior Procurement Officer	• Principal Procurement Officer • Procurement Manager • Specialist advisor	• Procurement Manager • Procurement Director • Chief Procurement Officer
Core responsibility focus	Low-value, low-risk purchasing under supervision	End-to-end routine procurement with minimal supervision	Leads significant procurement and complex contract management	Sets strategy, oversees significant procurement and governance
Supervision level	Direct supervision	Minimal supervision	Independent practice and supervision of others	Strategic leadership and team management

Note: Table 2: PCP Responsibilities and Approximate Delegation Levels is a guide only.

Please refer to your agency processes and procedures to inform the appropriate level of training for the delegation required.

Plan your Learning

This Guide supports agencies to plan, implement and monitor procurement certification under the Procurement Certification Program (PCP).



1. **Assess capability** – Assess procurement and contract management roles against appropriate PCP levels and delegation thresholds, review the existing skills, experience and qualifications of staff, identify capability gaps and workforce development priorities, and reference relevant PCP levels in position descriptions where appropriate.
2. **Plan development** - For departments, set procurement certification targets and determine and budget for the training, certification, mentoring, CPD and on-the-job experience needed to address identified gaps. Incorporate agreed development priorities into performance and development plans.
3. **Build capability** - Deliver planned learning and development activities and provide opportunities for staff to apply and strengthen their skills in practice. Where appropriate, use Direct Entry, recognition of prior learning and equivalence pathways to recognise and account for existing capability.
4. **Monitor and report** - Maintain visibility of certifications and equivalent qualifications held by staff and, for departments, monitor progress against procurement certification targets, identify high-risk gaps where delegated authority is not supported by sufficient capability, and report relevant capability, training and certification plans and outcomes through the Agency Procurement Plan to inform future workforce and capability planning.

Performance and Development Plans

It is recommended that PCP certification be integrated into staff performance and development plans to support structured professional growth and alignment with role requirements.

Agencies are encouraged to:

- **Assess current certification and experience:** Review the employee's current PCP level, relevant qualifications and procurement experience to identify any gaps relative to their role and delegation responsibilities.
- **Set certification objectives,** if relevant: Where certification aligns with the employee's role and procurement responsibilities, agree on an appropriate PCP level for the employee to work towards, taking into account role complexity, career progression and agency priorities.
- **Plan and resource completion of certification:** Allocate time and funding for enrolment, assessment and associated training costs within annual professional development budgets, where certification is identified as appropriate.

Workforce and Succession Planning

Agencies may use this Guide to support workforce and succession planning by aligning PCP certification to procurement roles and responsibilities.

- **Conduct a capability audit:** Review the current certification levels, prior learning, skills, knowledge and relevant experience of procurement staff to assess alignment with the complexity, value and risk of procurement activities undertaken.
- **Map workforce needs:** Identify roles where defined PCP certification levels would support delegation requirements, procurement responsibilities and procurement methods undertaken.
- **Identify capability gaps:** Highlight functions or roles where additional certification or other professional development opportunities would strengthen capability to undertake more complex or higher-risk procurements.
- **Plan for workforce changes:** Anticipate retirements, promotions and staff turnover, and prepare successors for key procurement roles by recognising existing capability and implementing targeted development plans.

Position Descriptions

Agencies can use this guidance to identify and include relevant certification levels as highly desirable in position descriptions.

For example:

PCP Level 1 – Fundamentals certification under the Queensland Government Procurement Certification Program, or a willingness to obtain it, is highly desirable.

Alternative Certification Pathways

Queensland Government Procurement (QGP) acknowledges that staff may already hold relevant experience, qualifications, or certifications.

The PCP offers pathways for recognising prior learning (RPL) and external qualifications, allowing employees to meet certification requirements without duplicating studies or training previously undertaken.

Direct Entry for PCP

Agencies may apply for their staff to have Direct Entry to bypass PCP Level 1 and/or Level 2. This enables participants to demonstrate relevant work experience or prior learning that meets program outcomes and commence training at a higher level.

While completing all PCP levels is recommended for a comprehensive understanding of procurement practices, this pathway offers flexibility for those professionals with the relevant experience.

To apply for Direct Entry, participants must:

- Complete the Direct Entry form (available by emailing Skills2Procure).
- Obtain endorsement from your line manager, confirming that your skills, knowledge and experience align with the relevant PCP learning outcomes.
- Obtain approval from your Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) or equivalent authority, who must assess and accept any risks potentially associated with not undertaking the Level 1 and/or 2 courses.
- Submit the completed and approved Direct Entry form to Skills2Procure to review your application and to provide you with instructions for sharing the required supporting documentation with UQ Skills.

Recognition of Prior Learning for Levels 3 and 4

UQ Skills, under the standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO), offers a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process to acknowledge that a participant has equivalent knowledge and skills to PCP Levels 3 and 4.

The RPL process involves systematically gathering and presenting evidence to demonstrate your existing knowledge and skills. The timeframe can vary, often taking several months, depending on the evidence available and how quickly it can be collected.

This allows participants to demonstrate competency through other formal learning qualifications, non-formal learning such as in-house professional development programs, and informal learning such as current or previous work experience.

While RPL provides a streamlined pathway to recognise prior learning and experience, it does incur a financial cost per subject, outlined in the UQ Skills RPL Candidate Information Booklet.

UQ Skills ensures the process is thorough, fair, and aligned with national training standards, enabling career progression while minimising unnecessary training or time investment.

To evaluate whether RPL is a suitable option for furthering your studies, visit [Recognition of Prior Learning, UQ Skills](#).

Equivalence for PCP Levels 3 and 4 via higher qualifications

Where students have undertaken study at a higher level in the field of Procurement and/or Supply Chain and Logistics, they can apply to have their studies recognised as equivalent to either PCP Level 3 or Level 4.

Note: An equivalence assessment is different from Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and does not lead to the award of a Diploma or Advanced Diploma. If approved, it confirms that your qualifications, skills and experience are equivalent to the requirements of PCP Level 3 or Level 4 certification.

For further information about PCP Equivalence, email: Skills2Procure@hpw.qld.gov.au.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

CPD is encouraged for all procurement staff, regardless of certification level, to support professional growth, enhance skills, and address emerging challenges in procurement.

Activities may include workshops, training, industry events, mentoring, secondments, or community of practice events.

Practical Work Experience

Certification provides foundational knowledge, but practical experience is essential for applying skills effectively.

Managers should provide opportunities for staff to apply their skills and continue developing their professional practice.

Procurement capability and certification reporting

Rule 37 of the QPP requires QGP to coordinate whole-of-government procurement capability building and training initiatives, including coordinating certification reporting by agencies.

What departments are expected to do

Departments are expected to identify and actively manage procurement capability development, including relevant training, qualifications and certification.

Departments should capture this through the Procurement Capability and Improvement Plan within their Agency Procurement Plan (APP), including:

- identified capability or workforce gaps;
- planned improvement actions, including training and certification where relevant;
- timeframes; and
- measurable targets or outcomes.

Reporting to QGP

Departments are required to provide QGP with relevant procurement capability and certification information annually by 30 September.

Where this information is adequately captured in the department's APP, no separate submission is required.

Where the required information is not captured in the APP, the department will need to provide the information separately to QGP by 30 September by emailing Skills2Procure@hpw.qld.gov.au.

Support and Resources

To support agencies and staff with procurement training and certification requirements, the following resources are available:

- **Agency Learning and Development (L&D) Teams:** Work with your internal L&D teams to access training, identify CPD opportunities, coordinate PCP or eLearn module enrolments, and to track participation and completion.
- **Skills2Procure Inbox:** For queries on procurement capability, PCP, direct entry, mandatory training, or general support, contact the Queensland Government Procurement Capability and Accreditation Team at skills2procure@hpw.qld.gov.au.
- **UQ Skills Support:** For assistance with PCP content, scheduling, enrolments, or RPL, contact UQ Skills at uqskills@uq.edu.gov.au.
- **ForGov Website:** The ForGov [website](#) is a key resource for accessing up-to-date information on Queensland Government procurement policies, including:
 - Procurement Certification Quick Reference Guide
 - [Queensland Procurement Policy](#)

- [Procurement Certification Program](#)
- [Procurement Certification Program \(PCP\) Training Services \(GGS001-PCP-2025\)](#)
- [Procurement and contract management eLearning](#)