

Certification Regulations IPMA Level A, B, C and D

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KEY ABBREVIATIONS

IPMA	International Project Management Association
ICB4	Individual Competence Baseline
ICB4agile	IPMA Reference Guide ICB4 in an Agile World
VZPM	Association for the Certification of Persons in Management

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

The present document governs the operating conditions for certification using the 4-level-system of IPMA.

Based on ...

- the present Certification Regulations IPMA Level A, B, C and D,
- the associated guidelines,
- the Individual Competence Baseline (ICB4)
- the IPMA Reference Guide ICB4 in an Agile World (ICB4agile) and
- the European standard ISO/IEC 17024 governing bodies operating certification of persons,

VZPM certifies persons in Switzerland who are active in the fields of project management, programme management, portfolio management as well as in Agile Leadership. This certification is internationally recognised.

2. CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

On the basis of the universal IPMA system, VZPM certifies persons in the fields of project management, programme management, portfolio management as well as in Agile Leadership. The below-listed certificates may be awarded:

		Domains		
		Project / Agile Leadership	Programme	Portfolio
Level	A	Certified Project Director Certified Agile Organisational Leader	Certified Programme Director	Certified Portfolio Director
	B	Certified Senior Project Manager Certified Agile Senior Leader	Certified Senior Programme Manager	Certified Senior Portfolio Manager
	C	Certified Project Manager Certified Agile Leader		
	D	Certified Project Management Associate Certified Agile Associate		

Fig. 1: IPMA 4-level-system certificates

3. CERTIFICATION BODY

The managing board of VZPM is ultimately responsible for the certification. The chairman of the certification body, with the involvement of the management, is responsible for organising and coordinating the certification. The assessors and the office are responsible for conducting the assessments.

3.1. INDEPENDENCE AND IMPARTIALITY

As an independent legal entity and accredited certification body, VZPM supports the principles of independence and impartiality. In particular, VZPM does not offer any preparatory services and does not conduct any training. By contrast, interested parties and VZPM clients are provided with general information about the certification procedures as well as the corresponding documents. VZPM periodically analyses the potential risks that could jeopardise its independence and impartiality.

3.2. CONFIDENTIALITY

All information and documents that the candidates make or submit are handled in a confidential manner by all persons involved in the certification process. The documents of the candidates and the assessments are made available only to authorised persons of the certification body, the appointed assessors, and in the case of appeals to the appeal bodies and candidates.

4. CONDUCTING THE CERTIFICATION

All certification steps may be completed in the German, French or English language. The necessary documents are available in the corresponding languages.

Apart from the candidate and the assessors, only in-house VZPM personnel may take part in the interview, in particular for quality assurance purposes. The interview is not conducted in public.

All certification documents are archived for at least 6 years, either in electronic or printed form.

4.1. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

During the certification process, the candidate has the rights and obligations set out below.

RIGHTS

The candidate may ...

- reject the assigned assessors, setting out the reasons in writing.
- appeal against a negative decision by the certification body after each stage of the certification process.
- complain at any time against the administrative settlement of the certification process by the certification body.

OBLIGATIONS

The candidate ...

- confirms with his signature that all details have been provided truthfully and that he agrees to the general terms and conditions, in particular those contained in these regulations.
- behaves correctly at all times, writes the documents independently and adheres to the orders in the guidelines and the declarations of consent.
- does not record exams or interviews and does not give any material to third parties.
- authorises the certification body or the assessors to obtain additional information from the specified reference persons, without first being asked to provide consent.
- is personally responsible in respect of his or her work results as well as the utilised documents for all utilisation rights, publication rights and copyrights.

4.2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

A candidate can apply for compensation if he can prove that he has a disability. The application must be submitted together with the certification application at the latest. This must contain understandable requests for each certification step concerned, such as time supplements or breaks. The application must be accompanied by an attestation from a doctor or an authority describing the disability and the impairment caused by the disability (impairment of perception, motor skills, etc.) and, if possible, what measures are to be taken to compensate for disadvantages in the certification process.

4.3. ADHERENCE TO DEADLINES

The candidate shall be informed in good time about the submission, examination and interview deadlines. If the candidate is unable to comply with the dates specified by the VZPM office for the submission of documents, then he must ask the office for an extension of the deadlines.

If the candidate does not adhere to deadlines, without good cause, fails to appear for the examination or interview, and does not send an excuse to the VZPM office within 30 days, then the certification shall be deemed to have been abandoned.

4.4. INTERRUPTION OF THE CERTIFICATION

Requests to interrupt the certification process must be submitted to the VZPM office. In accordance with IPMA® regulations, the certification process must be completed within 18 months of the date of the acceptance of the certification application. If this is not the case, then the certification may be recommenced at a later date by submitting a new certification application. Fees for the certification stages shall be incurred anew.

4.5. EVALUATION OF THE PERFORMANCES

Two assessors shall in each case be assigned to the candidate in order to evaluate the performances of the candidate in the certification stages 'Report' and 'Interview' (IPMA Level A, B and C). One assessor shall assume the role of the lead assessor. The lead assessor must be certified to at least the same level as the candidate who is being assessed. The two assessors have equal evaluation authority.

Neither assessor may be linked to the candidate in a manner that could influence their judgement, for example as line manager or subordinate in the permanent organisation or project organisation of the candidate or as coach or trainer of the candidate in the field of project, programme, portfolio management or in Agile Leadership. Like the assessors, the candidate must report any possible conflicts of interest to the VZPM office without delay. It may reject an assigned assessor, providing written reasons for this.

4.6. REPEATING FAILED CERTIFICATION STAGES

A candidate who has failed to pass a certification stage may repeat this certification stage. In this conjunction, certification stages that have already been successfully passed do not have to be repeated. This applies to the executive summary report, the written examination, the report as well as the interview. Each of the aforementioned certification stages may be repeated only once. In the event of repeated certification stages, it remains the case that the certification process must also be completed within 18 months. The cost of the repeat shall be borne by the candidate.

If the candidate fails a repeated certification stage, then the candidate, if he wishes, may submit a new application for initial certification or approach certification at a lower level. In both cases, the certification process starts all over again.

4.7. CHANGE OF CERTIFICATION LEVEL OR DOMAIN

If a candidate wishes to continue his certification at a lower certification level or in another domain, this is basically possible. The relevant procedure is described in detail in the guidelines for the individual certification levels.

5. FEES

The payable fees are published in the fee schedule. The candidate shall be invoiced the fees for the individual certification stages, and these must be paid within the period printed on the invoice.

If a candidate withdraws before or during the certification, then he may apply for the reimbursement of the paid fees in writing, stating the grounds for this. In this event, VZPM shall retain a processing fee. If the request is rejected, then the candidate shall not be entitled to the reimbursement of the fees.

The fees for candidates who repeat individual certification stages are set out in the fee schedule.

Incurred travel, accommodation and catering costs associated with the certification process shall be borne by the candidate.

6. CERTIFICATE AND RECERTIFICATION

The certificate shall be issued by the VZPM office.

6.1. VALIDITY OF THE CERTIFICATE

The certificate is internationally recognised and is valid for 5 years. The holder of the certificate is entitled to use the acquired title throughout the period of validity of the certificate. If the validity of the certificate has expired, the holder may not use the title until the certificate has been renewed within the framework of a recertification. Whosoever uses the title without being in possession of a valid certificate shall be liable to criminal proceedings.

The holder shall be responsible for arranging for the certificate to be recertified for a further five years. The VZPM office shall inform the certificate holder about the expiry of the validity of the certificate, insofar as the certified person informs the VZPM office about his contact details.

6.2. MISUSE OF CERTIFICATES

Certificates may not be misused by providing false or misleading information about the content, the person, the scope of validity, the duration of validity or the certification body. Serious complaints and misuse shall lead to the immediate withdrawal of the certificate. Certificates that have not been properly awarded may be annulled. In these cases, the original certificate must be returned to the VZPM or the corresponding file deleted.

Each certified person may be asked by the certification body to undergo an extraordinary recertification procedure at any time, if well-founded complaints make this necessary.

Complaints that are directed against a certified person and concern the certified specialist field must be reported to the certification body without delay and in written form as well as together with a personal statement.

7. APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

Following each certification stage, the candidate may appeal against a negative decision of the certification body. The negative decision may be contested only using the appeal procedure. Complaints about the personnel of the certification body and the assessors may be submitted to the VZPM office in writing at any time.

7.1. APPEALS

Before submitting the appeal, the candidate may inspect the certification dossier. This is normally required in order to establish grounds for the appeal. The request for inspection of certification records must be received by the VZPM office no later than 30 days after the opening of the decision. This can be done in writing or verbally. Documents may not be copied or photographed during the inspection. Only the candidate himself is entitled to inspect. Accompaniment by another person is excluded.

The candidate may appeal to the VZPM office against a negative decision made by the certification body - non-admission to the next certification stage or failure to be awarded the certificate - as well as against the withdrawal, the annulment or non-certification within 30 days of the announcement of the decision. The appeal must be made in writing and must contain the proposals of the appellant as well as his grounds. The appeal may be submitted only by the candidate in person.

Following receipt of the appeal, the operating management of the office shall attempt to identify mutually satisfactory solutions, before escalating the matter to the appeals committee. If no solutions are found, then the appeal shall be forwarded to the appeals committee together with all certification documents. The appeal shall be considered by the appeals committee only if the appellant has paid the deposit fee pursuant to the fee schedule. If the deposit is not paid on time, then the appeal shall be rejected and shall not be considered further.

Consideration of the appeal shall be completed by the appeals committee within approximately 45 days. The decision of the appeals committee shall be final.

If the appeal is rejected by the appeals committee, the cost of the procedure (deposit fee) shall be imposed upon the appellant. The appellant may not make any financial claims against the certification body. If the appeal is approved, the deposit fee shall be returned to the appellant.

DEADLINE EXTENSION

The deadlines imposed by the VZPM within the context of an appeal may be extended in exceptional cases if there are special grounds for this. The requested deadline extension must be submitted in writing before the deadline expires. This must contain precise grounds why a deadline extension is being requested. This rule applies to all of the parties involved in an appeal. The deadline extension request shall be assessed and approved or rejected by the office.

7.2. COMPLAINTS

Complaints about the personnel of the certification body and the assessors may be submitted to the VZPM office in writing. Following receipt of the complaint, the operating management of the office shall attempt to identify mutually satisfactory solutions, before escalating the matter to the appeals committee. If no solutions are found, then the complaint shall be forwarded to the appeals committee for de-escalation purposes.

Complaints against certified persons may be submitted to the VZPM office in writing. The operating management of the office shall consider the complaint, and shall resolve and implement suitable measures.

VZPM cannot be held liable in any way for the work and behaviour of the persons it has certified.

7.3. JURISDICTION

The place of jurisdiction is the domicile of the certification office.

ADMINISTRATIVE METHODOLOGY

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