



# The TPS Professional Development Scheme and the TPP Qualification

Developing and Recognising Professional Competence in Transport Planning

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**Transport planners** play a key role in society - identifying needs and opportunities for improving travel by individuals and the transport of goods. They work across modal boundaries, co-operate with many different disciplines, and make use of the latest technology and behavioural thinking. They provide advice on how best to achieve local objectives, and ensure that projects are delivered efficiently and cost effectively. They present their case to stakeholders, the public, and Government, and at Public Inquiries and Examinations in Public.

Given the role transport planners play within both the public and private sectors, their employers need to ensure they have highly competent, professional staff, who have a breadth of vision together with a depth of knowledge to meet the demands placed on them.

*The Transport Planning Society is committed to the development and maintenance of transport planning skills together with recognition of professional transport planners and the work that they do.*

### **The TPS Professional Development Scheme**

The TPS Professional Development Scheme (PDS) is a structured training scheme, which supports employers and employees in guiding transport planners through the early stages of their career. It has been designed to equip staff with most of the range of knowledge and experience required to become a truly professional Transport Planner, and fulfils the first stage requirements of the Transport Planning Professional (TPP) qualification. The TPP is awarded jointly by the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) and TPS.

Individuals with an interest in transport planning, whether recent graduates, career changers or those with an established career can follow the PDS, which opens up a pathway to the TPP itself, to Chartered membership of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, and (for those with a civil engineering degree) Chartered Engineer. While the TPS PDS fully supports the TPP, it also has significant value in its own right, helping maintain and develop transport planning skills of the participants.

*“One of the advantages of a structured training scheme is that it encourages the acquisition of a breadth of experience. We need up-and-coming staff with this breadth of experience to take on the responsibility of project management. In our profession, even relatively small projects often tend to be multi-faceted. By adopting the TPS Professional Development Scheme, we can set our graduates on a path that will lead towards the TPP qualification and they know that it's recognised across the profession. It's also a great advantage, in these difficult economic times with so much uncertainty in employment, to have a scheme that is common throughout the profession”.*

Andy Southern TPP

Business Development Director, Highways and Transportation, Atkins

*“Transport planning is a long term investment. Leicestershire County Council has adopted the TPS Professional Development Scheme to ensure that Leicestershire has the best skills for the long term. The world in which we work becomes more complex year on year and we must ensure that we develop highly skilled transport planners now, so they can tackle these issues well in the future”.*

Ian Drummond,

Assistant Director Transportation, Leicestershire County Council

### **The TPP Qualification**

The Transport Planning Professional, TPP, qualification provides professional recognition for transport planners in the same way that membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute recognises professional town planners and being a Chartered Engineer identifies professional engineers. It is managed and awarded jointly by the TPS and CHIT.



Award of the TPP requires candidates to demonstrate, through documents and a professional review interview, that they have a combination of a broad range and a depth of competence, covering both technical and generic skills. That competence covers knowledge, experience and an ability to manage others. An increasing number of employers are making award of the TPP or another professional qualification a condition of career progress, and it is recognised as of particular benefit to those giving expert evidence in Public Inquiries and Examinations in Public.

*“As Project Coordinator for Transport for South Hampshire I am involved in a wide range of projects including developing a Large Project Package Business Case to the LSTF, client managing the Sub-Regional Transport Model, and providing transport advice to the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership. All of this requires a wide skill set and those that we advise need to be confident in our competence. The TPP - more than any other qualification - demonstrates a high level of competence in transport planning and an ability to embrace and lead on a wide range of transport projects.”*

Stuart Baker TPP  
Project Coordinator, Transport for South Hampshire

*“We encourage our staff to seek professional qualifications, including the TPP. Progress through the hierarchy depends on them achieving an appropriate professional status. Of course, the value is not in the letters after your name, but in what you have learned during the process! In the current market, it has been much easier to redeploy those with a wider understanding of transport planning than the single specialist 'one trick ponies’.”*

Tom van Vuren TPP  
Divisional Director, Mott MacDonald

#### **Who can provide the TPS Professional Development Scheme?**

Any Stakeholder member of TPS, any Local Authority that is a Corporate member of TPS and any organisation employing no more than a total of 20 staff that is a Corporate member of TPS, and has signed a PDS licence agreement

#### **Who can participate in the TPS Professional Development Scheme?**

Anyone pursuing a career as a professional transport planner. Although most of those just starting their career are likely to be graduates, having a degree is not essential. Indeed, those joining as career changers, as well as those with several years experience using the PDS to provide a framework to obtain the full set of competences required for the TPP qualification might not be graduates. There is no charge to individual PDS participants.

#### **Who uses the TPS Professional Development Scheme?**

Since it was launched in 2008, the TPS PDS has become the standard scheme for transport planners across much of the industry, providing a clear pathway towards the TPP qualification.

Organisations using the PDS include Arup, Atkins, Halcrow, Hampshire CC, Hyder Consulting, Integrated Transport Planning, Jacobs Consultancy, JMP Consulting, Leicestershire CC, Mayer Brown, Mott MacDonald, Mouchel, MVA Consultancy, Parsons Brinckerhoff, Peter Brett Associates, PFA Consulting, Ramboll, SKM-CBP, Transport for London, URS and WSP.

*“There had been an absence of anything that sought to professionalise transport planning in the same way that Chartered status does for other professions. TfL has adopted the TPS Professional Development Scheme to enable our transport planners to gain access to a development framework directly relevant to their skill set and one that offers a route to become professionally recognised.”*

Michèle Dix TPP  
Managing Director, Planning, Transport for London



## How is the TPS Professional Development Scheme structured?

The PDS consists of a set of 18 Units, some of which are mandatory, while others are used to provide a set of choices. Eight of the 18 Units are concerned with management and generic skills (such as communications and inter-personal relations), two are concerned with policies, laws and regulations, and eight with transport planning techniques, such as data collection, assessment, public consultation, plan development and travel planning. Each Unit consists of a set of Objectives.

The PDS is based on four levels of competence – Awareness, Knowledge, Experience and Proficiency - with Proficiency requiring an ability to work unsupervised or to supervise others. Completion requires demonstration of competence Objective by Objective, with Proficiency required for some Units and Experience for others. Depending on the choices made, completion can require demonstration of either Experience or Proficiency in at least seven or all ten of the technical, policy and legal Units.

## What is needed to manage the TPS Professional Development Scheme?

**First**, a PDS licence – that requires timely payment of the annual TPS subscription!

**Second**, a set of documents provided by TPS, in digital format (and a hard Master copy):

- *The TPS Professional Standards for Transport Planners*, a document designed mainly to inform PDS Managers and Mentors about the Scheme requirements
- *The TPS Professional Development Scheme for Transport Planners*, a document that provides an overview of the PDS and contains a record sheet for each Objective, to be completed by the Scheme participant and their Mentor as they progress through the PDS, Objective by Objective.
- *The TPS Professional Development Scheme: Guidance for Mentors*, a document providing information for PDS Mentors.

**Third**, initial training for the PDS manager and Mentors, so they have a good understanding of the Scheme. TPS provides information leaflets for Managers and Mentors

**Fourth**, a set of committed scheme participants.

## What assistance does TPS provide?

All TPS PDS Managers are invited to participate in twice yearly PDS Workshops, at which they share experience and discuss issues relating to the PDS and its management, as well as the relationship between the TPP and other professional qualifications. The TPS also provides Mentor training sessions, whenever there is sufficient demand. In addition, TPS will provide a reasonable amount of advice to those getting going with a new PDS, and is always available to answer questions and to provide support.

## What is needed for the TPP qualification?

For most candidates, there are three key stages to satisfying the TPP requirements.

- The first is learning, obtaining the technical knowledge that underpins a professional career. This can be achieved by one of four routes - completion of the TPS PDS, an approved transport Masters, a Portfolio of Technical Knowledge (for graduates) or a Technical Report (for those without a degree).
- The second is obtaining the breadth and depth of experience required to work as a professional transport planner and to supervise other transport planners.
- The third is demonstrating professional competence across a broad range of modes and contexts through a professional review interview.

There is a special route - the Senior Route - for transport planners in a senior management position within transport planning and who also have very extensive experience.

## For further information

For information on the TPS PDS go to [www.tps.org.uk/main/professionaldevelopment/](http://www.tps.org.uk/main/professionaldevelopment/) where some documents, including a TPS PDS overview, can be downloaded, or it can be obtained by e-mailing [info@tps.org.uk](mailto:info@tps.org.uk). Further information can also be obtained by e-mailing [info@tps.org.uk](mailto:info@tps.org.uk).

Further information on the TPP qualification is at [www.tpprofessional.org](http://www.tpprofessional.org) or e-mail [info@tps.org.uk](mailto:info@tps.org.uk) or [education@ciht.org.uk](mailto:education@ciht.org.uk).

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