



# The TPS Professional Development Scheme

## An Overview

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**Transport Planning Society**



# The TPS Professional Development Scheme

## Professional Knowledge and Skill - a Key to Smart Working

Whether employed in the private or public sector, the demands placed on transport planners are such that they must be knowledgeable and highly skilled, so they can work efficiently and win the confidence of those they work for and with.

While academic education can provide much of the knowledge transport planners need, only a minority have the opportunity to study for a transport Masters, and professional skills can only be developed through experience.

The Transport Planning Society's Professional Development Scheme, PDS, provides a structured framework to enable transport planners to become true professionals, setting out the breadth and depth of competence required for them to excel in their work.

Based on National Occupational Standards, the TPS PDS was launched in 2008. Since then, it has become the industry standard training scheme for new entrants, as well as providing a framework for more experienced transport planners to review and if necessary broaden their skill set. From 2019 those who successfully complete the PDS can use the title Incorporated Transport Planner: IncTP.

The PDS provides a well defined path to obtaining many of the competences required for the Transport Planning Professional, TPP, qualification, awarded by the Society together with the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation. From 2019 an additional Chartered title is also available for TPP holders alone, CTPP, on payment of a small fee. Those completing the PDS will also have satisfied the experience requirements for Chartered Membership of the Chartered Institution of Logistics and Transport.

This document provides an overview of the PDS, to help inform those for whom the PDS might be relevant, whether a potential trainee, an employer or an education or training provider.

*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

TfL, now Managing Director, Crossrail 2

## The TPS PDS: Some Core Principles

Professional transport planners need to:

- have a thorough understanding of the procedures and techniques of transport planning.
- be numerate
- be analytical
- be competent in all aspects of management, particularly in oral and written communications, personal skills and project management
- be able to negotiate with interested parties in the projects they are working on, and facilitate their progress.

They also need to be able to:

- take account of the social, economic and environmental context of their work and appreciate the wider context
- understand the legal, regulatory, policy and resource framework within which they work
- understand and create transport policies, strategies and plans that contribute to satisfying social, economic and environmental needs
- design appropriate transport policies, plans, projects, systems and services
- understand the commercial aspects of operating transport systems and services
- apply the procedures and techniques of transport planning.

Use of the TPS PDS, which is built around these core principles, involves three key players:

- the employer, who is responsible for encouraging participation by their younger transport planners, as well as providing the PDS management
- the trainee, committed to the development of their career as a true professional
- the PDS mentor, guiding, advising and encouraging their trainees.

*In transport planning, with our staff resources our main asset, training and development are critical to releasing their real potential. The PDS is a framework within which both the graduate and the employer sign up to a joint objective - training up to a professional standard. As an employer it gives us a commitment from our staff to Continuous Professional Development. As a graduate, the PDS ensures that your employer is signed up to the development of your career, and that the training you receive is relevant, comparable between employers and hence valuable. It is a win-win situation.*

Tom van Vuren TPP  
Divisional Director, Mott MacDonald

## The PDS Structure

The PDS is based on six Areas covering the range of competences expected of a professional transport planner. These are:

- Policies and Regulations
- Tools and Techniques
- Planning and Design
- Operations
- Management
- Communication, Commitment and Ethics.

Each of these Areas is divided into Units, 18 in total:

Each Unit consists of a series of Objectives, 75 in total. So, for example, the Policies Unit has 8 Objectives:

- National, regional and local policies
- Transport in the wider world
- Transport governance
- Planning procedures
- Finance for transport
- Planning transport projects in line with policies
- Financing transport schemes
- Monitoring the performance of transport projects in a policy context

PDS Area	PDS Unit
Policies and Regulations	Policies
	Regulations
	Data
	Transport Modelling and Analysis
Tools and Techniques	Transport Assessment
	Public Engagement
	Strategic and Master Plans for Transport
Planning and Design	Transport Scheme Design
	Travel Planning
Operations	Commercial and Operational Management
	Personal and Inter-Personal Management
Management	Leading and Managing Teams
	Planning and Managing Projects
	Procuring Projects <i>Alternative to Project Proposals</i>
	Project Proposals <i>Alternative to Procuring Projects</i>
	Communication
Communication, Commitment and Ethics	Commitment
	Ethics and Values

## The PDS Structure - continued

For each Objective, there is an associated level of competence,

- **Awareness**, which requires a general understanding of the Objective, including an appreciation of its relevance to a transport planner's work.
- **Knowledge**, which requires sufficient knowledge and understanding of the principles underlying the Objective, and how they relate to practical applications, to be able to undertake tasks competently.
- **Experience**, which requires a consistent ability to carry out standard work within the Objective competently when under supervision.
- **Proficiency**, which requires a consistent ability to carry out work within the Objective competently without supervision, and to supervise others. This only applies to the PDS "Data" Unit.

Thus, for example, the Data Objective "Data collection methods" requires Knowledge while "Analysing, interpreting and reporting transport survey data" requires Experience and Proficiency.

Associated with each Objective is a set of Guidance, describing the knowledge and or skills the trainee can be expected to have on completing the Objective. The Guidance for the "Finance for Transport" Objective, which is within the "Policies" Unit, is given opposite.

All the objectives are set out in their units in the scheme documentation, which also contains summaries of the competences required.

## Guidance for the Policy Objective "Finance for Transport"

### *A Knowledge Objective*

This Objective covers the financing of transport schemes, whether public or private.

As a professional transport planner, you should understand the key elements of financing for transport. These include:

- the principal public sources of capital and operating (revenue) finance for transport schemes, together with the key factors affecting their availability
- the principal private sources of capital and operating finance for transport schemes, including developer contributions, together with the types of transport scheme for which they may be available, as well as other key factors affecting their availability
- the principles of the Private Finance Initiative and Public Private Partnership arrangements for funding transport schemes
- current relevant statutory and regulatory requirements and formal guidance as well as best practice relating to the financing of transport schemes.

You should also understand the financing of those schemes with which you have been directly involved.

## Completing the PDS

Although breadth of technical competence is central to being a professional transport planner, it is neither feasible nor necessary for someone completing the PDS to have the full range of skills the Scheme covers.

However, some knowledge and skills are essential, and completion of the Units covering these is Mandatory. These are:

- Policies and Regulations
  - Policies
  - Regulations
- Tools and Techniques
  - Data
  - Transport Modelling and Analysis
  - Transport Assessment
  - Public Engagement
- Management
  - Personal and Inter-Personal Management
  - Leading and Managing Teams
  - Planning and Managing Projects
  - *either* Procuring Projects *or* Project Proposals
- Communication, Commitment and Ethics
  - Communication
  - Commitment
  - Ethics and Values

*The process to achieve PDS has meant that I gained a lot of experience and knowledge in the wide spectrum of transport planning and all it entails.*

*The achievement of PDS has highlighted a broad depth of my knowledge and experience, which I use on a daily basis throughout project delivery. This is particularly helpful for future career aspirations as well as for my TPP completion.*

*Hannah Tweddell, Senior Transport Planner, WSP. Completed PDS in 2018.*

## Completing the PDS – continued

Knowledge is required for all of the Mandatory Units, and for

- Data, Proficiency is also required.

Experience is required for

- Communication
- Commitment
- Ethics and Values

In addition, trainees need to complete five other Units at the Experience level from the six technical Areas as set out below.

	Completion Possibility 1	Completion Possibility 2	Completion Possibility 3
From the PR and TT Units (5)	5 Es	4 Es	3 Es
From the PD and O Units (4)	2 Ks	1 E 1 K	2 Es

In addition TT1 data is Mandatory as P.

Each trainee is assigned a PDS mentor by their employer, to guide them through the Scheme, to assess their achievements and to sign-off completed Objectives. The Society provides PDS mentor training, which all PDS mentors are required to have completed - and to keep up to date thereafter.

To complete a Unit, all the Objectives within that Unit must be completed to the appropriate level.

## Completion and review

The Society operates a Review Process to ensure the maintenance and consistency of standards both between and within licensed users.

A TPS Reviewer meets with each trainee and their mentor at least twice during their PDS training. The first review meeting is usually after the trainee has been on the Scheme for between 12 and 18 months and is relatively informal.

The final meeting is when their mentor considers they have completed the PDS and is undertaken with their mentor present. It includes a presentation by the trainee and a series of questions on the presentation and on their objective record sheets.

Once the Reviewer is satisfied that the trainee has satisfied the Scheme completion requirements, they are awarded a TPS Certificate of PDS Completion.

This meets the Knowledge requirements for the TPP for those who do not have an approved MSc in Transport Planning and avoids the need for them to submit a Portfolio of Technical Knowledge (PTK).



## Recording Progress Through the PDS

Central to the PDS is the Objective Record Sheet, one for each of the 75 Objectives; a typical sheet is shown on the next page.

*Transport planning is a challenging career, combining technical skills such as forecasting, assessment, planning and design, with a clear appreciation of the legal and policy framework within which we work, all underpinned by the use of relevant evidence. We often work in broad multi-disciplinary teams and need to engage with a wide range of stakeholders. Many investment decisions are based on our work, and good advice is crucial to making the best use of scarce resources and providing the maximum support for economic growth and sustainability.*

*We see the PDS as providing our staff with a supportive framework within which they can gain the knowledge and experience that is crucial for good transport planning, for progression towards professional recognition through TPP, and for the long term development of their careers.*

Keith Mitchell TPP  
Chairman  
Peter Brett Associates (now part of Stantec)



## For who is the PDS Appropriate?

Although most PDS trainees are just starting their career in transport planning, or are only a few years into, it is also suited for career changers, as well as those with several years' experience who can use the PDS to provide a framework to obtain the full set of competences they require for the TPP qualification.

## How is completing the PDS recognised?

As well as their Certificate of Completion, from 2019, all those who complete the PDS successfully will be entitled to use the new post nominal IncTP (Incorporated Transport Planner).

## Managing the PDS

Management of the PDS is the responsibility of the organisation's PDS manager.

The Society provides guidance to the PDS managers whenever required, and holds a twice yearly Workshop, which they are expected to attend. The Workshops provide an opportunity for the Society to update PDS managers as well as for them to share experience and discuss concerns.

As already explained, the Society provides PDS mentor training sessions which are mandatory for all mentors and they are also required to attend biannual 'refresh' sessions to update their knowledge of the PDS.

The Society publishes an Advice Note series, providing detailed advice to PDS managers, mentors and trainees on particular topics, such as *Completing of PDS Objective Record Sheets* and *The Transfers of Trainees between Mentors and between Employers*

While users can add requirements to adapt the PDS for their specific requirements, they are not permitted to change any of the TPS content.

## The Transport Planning Professional Qualification

As part of the Society's commitment to the recognition of professional transport planners and the skilled work they do, it awards the Transport Planning Professional, TPP, qualification together with CIHT.

The PDS provides a well defined pathway to enable transport planners to work towards obtaining the skills they need for the award of this key qualification.

The TPP qualification is the only professional qualification dedicated to transport planning and its award marks out those with it as professionals in the field. Ensuring our transport planners can obtain the TPP is an important value-add to our clients, and it is something they will increasingly look for in the future.

The TPS PDS provides an excellent way of providing structured professional development for both new graduates and existing transport planners, which is particularly important in an increasingly competitive market place in which international consultancy will play an ever more significant part.

Kate Morris  
Director  
AECOM

## PDS Availability

The PDS is available under licence, to those organisations that are a Stakeholder member of the Society.

The Society provides a Consortium Licence, under which a group of smaller Local Authorities can work together in implementing and managing the PDS, sharing mentoring and management resources, as well as seconding staff between members to help them gain the breadth of experience required for Scheme completion – and the TPP qualification. Further information is available from the Director for Skills: [skills@tps.org.uk](mailto:skills@tps.org.uk)

## Further Information

Further information on the PDS is at  
[www.tps.org.uk/main/professionaldevelopment/](http://www.tps.org.uk/main/professionaldevelopment/)  
or can be obtained by e-mailing  
[info@tps.org.uk](mailto:info@tps.org.uk).

Information on the TPP is at:  
[www.tpprofessional.org](http://www.tpprofessional.org)  
and at:  
[www.tps.org.uk/main/transport\\_planning\\_qualifications/](http://www.tps.org.uk/main/transport_planning_qualifications/)

Information on Stakeholder membership of the Society is at:  
[www.tps.org.uk/main/membership/](http://www.tps.org.uk/main/membership/)

## 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.

Working with three of our licensees we are now piloting the PDS for their transport planners based in India.

Organisations with PDS licenses include:

AECOM, Amey, Arcadis, Arup, Atkins, Curtins, Hampshire CC, Highways England, i-Transport, Jacobs, Leicestershire CC, London Borough of Bexley, Mott MacDonald, Mayer Brown, Network Rail, Peter Brett Associates (now Stantec), PFA Consultants, SAJ Consultants, Steer, SWECO UK, Systra, TPA, Transport for Greater Manchester, Transport for London, VECTOS, Wood, WSP and WYG.

# Transport Planning Society

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