

Transport Planning Society

July 2017

TPS Professional Development Scheme (PDS) – Changes to completion requirements

The PDS is based on the two key elements of learning, which consists of Awareness (A) and Knowledge (K), together with experience, which consists of Experience (E) and Proficiency (P). This basic structure is the same as the Transport Planning Professional (TPP) qualification. The learning aspects of the PDS are not being revised, and will continue to meet the requirements for technical knowledge of the TPP. However, we are aware that meeting the experience requirements of the PDS is taking considerably longer than most graduate training schemes and this has implications for continuity and consistency which we have been considering.

The process of revising the PDS completion requirements, which started with the user survey last summer, has now reached its final stage with the latest draft proposals. It has been discussed at the TPS Skills Committee a number of TPS Board meetings, and the TPP Professional Standards Committee. They have expressed a clear view that there should be more of a gap between completing the PDS and gaining TPP. This is particularly relevant to the PDS Proficiency requirements.

Our aim has been to bear this latter point in mind but stay focussed on the needs of the PDS users and what will maintain the key strengths of breadth and depth while encouraging reasonable rates of retention and completion.

In broad terms we intend to adopt a three part process as follows:-

- revise Table 2 and relevant Appendices of the PDS main document for adoption by September 2017;
- develop a support process for those who complete the revised PDS which will address the gap between PDS and TPP; and
- review the existing PDS objectives and where possible simplify the structure within the National Occupational Standards for Transport Planning. It is expected that this will be completed late 2018.

The revisions have evolved in light of discussions at the PDS Managers' meeting where there was a broad consensus that the Proficiency requirements should be removed altogether or retained only for data, or one option from any of the technical units. The changes to Experience requirements flow from this change and have produced a greater variety of comments. There was a desire to maintain some breadth of experience in the scheme and thus it is **not** proposed to simply reduce all Mandatory E competences to K, with optional E's replacing the P's.

In the attached proposal represented by a revised Table 2, P is still mandatory for Data (TT1) with a requirement of E from 5 Units in the technical areas of PR, TT(excluding TT1), PD and O of which a maximum of 2 Units can be from PD or O. It is considered that this requirement will give completion options more suited to the trainees skills attainable in the first 2-3 years of their work experience (as evidenced from PDS reviews) but will retain all the breadth of Knowledge and to a lesser extent Experience upon which to build their on-going professional development and attain the necessary Proficiency competencies required for TPP. These remain unchanged.

In setting these completion requirements we have been mindful of

- better accommodating those trainees who quickly gain knowledge and expertise in some but not all areas of PDS skills but who need and deserve recognition of an initial professional development before developing further to a full professional level
- ensuring a breadth of Knowledge so that the level of learning is comparable with a PTK and hence an alternative to an MSc in demonstrating an academic base.
- ensuring that the underlying core skill areas represented by the old mandatory units, are still well covered (at least 4 out of 6 at or above the Experience level)

The completion options that this proposal would lead to are shown in Table 3.

In considering the Management Units we are aware that many feel, including trainees at their first PDS Reviews, that it is not always possible for trainees to get Experience in all these units in the first 2-3 years of their professional life, so we propose that some of these now only be at the Knowledge level for PDS completion. It is only the competency level which trainees must achieve that is being lowered. The definitions and expectations for competency levels A, K, E and P (now Data only) remain as before.

Thus we want to stress that it is the level of competence required in the “doing” objectives which has changed, not the assessment of the individual objectives. Existing record sheets are therefore completely transferrable although some requirements may be exceeded.

As a consequence of these changes the PDS documentation will need to be fully updated but we intend to undertake this task when the documentation is reviewed and updated next year. The final changes will be defined in an Advice Note to be issued in September 2017 that will include advice on its interpretation.

The second action we wish to take is to develop a new way of supporting candidates who complete PDS to meet the requirements for TPP using the existing PDS structure. This would require some additional support for TPS mentors and recognise the differences between the PDS objective record sheets and the TPP pro forma, although the Units would stay the same. We intend to work closely on this with the TPP Professional Standards Committee (PSC) which the TPS Skills Director has now joined.

The final action will be to review the PDS objectives themselves to see if they can be simplified or reduced within the National Occupational Standards for Transport Planning. This will eventually lead to a new version (v4) of the 2013 main document, hopefully later next year. We will aim to start this process in the Autumn, but are happy to receive any comments or suggestions before then. There will already be a slight reduction in the number of management objectives as a consequence of the proposed changes.

Final comments are being sought by the 21st of August 2017, please contact:

skills@tps.org.uk

The new draft Table for completion requirements is set out below.

Draft Option for PDS Completion

This option removes the need for Proficiency requirements apart from Data and is intended to still include a large degree of structured application of learning as a step toward the levels required for TPP Review. The minimum learning requirements of this option are exactly as now and are set to meet the PTK standards. However, it remains a significant step beyond the PTK requirements.

Completion Requirements

5 Units from the technical areas of PR, TT, PD & O at E level of which a maximum of 2 Units can be from PD or O, plus TT1 Data as a mandatory P. If all 5 Unit options are from PR and TT Units then Knowledge must be demonstrated in 2 Units from PD or O Units.

Table 2 Summary of Completion Requirements

Area	Unit	Title	Minimum Level	Possible Completion Level
Policies and Regulations Tools and Techniques	PR1	Policies	Knowledge	Experience
	PR2	Regulations	Knowledge	Experience
	TT1	Data	Proficiency	
	TT2	Transport Modelling and Analysis	Knowledge	Experience
		Transport Appraisal & Evaluation ¹	Knowledge	Experience
	TT3	Transport Appraisal & Evaluation ¹	Knowledge	Experience
	TT4	Public Engagement	Knowledge	Experience
Management	M1	Personal and Inter-Personal Management	Experience	
	M2	Leading and Managing Teams	Knowledge	
	M3	Planning ²	Experience	
		Projects	Experience	
	M4	Procuring Projects <i>Alternative to M5</i>	Knowledge	
M5	Project Proposals <i>Alternative to M4</i>	Knowledge		
Communication Commitment and Ethics	CCE1	Communication	Experience	
	CCE2	Commitment	Experience	
	CCE3	Ethics and Values	Experience	
Planning and Design				
	PD1	Strategic and Master Plans for Transport	*	Experience
	PD2	Transport Scheme Design	*	Experience
Operations				
	O1	Travel Planning	*	Experience
	O2	Commercial and Operational Management	*	Experience

¹ Amended to be in line with Advice Note 16/2, existing PDS guidance and TPP revised title

² Experience in "Managing" removed

Table 2A Completion Options

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

In addition TT1 Data is Mandatory as E.

M & CCE Units are Mandatory at the Minimum Levels given i