

Knowledge
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PRINCE2[®] (PRojects IN Controlled Environments)

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About the author



Simon Buehring is Knowledge Train's owner and founder. Simon has worked on projects since 1989 in the UK, Southeast Asia, New Zealand and Japan.

Since graduating in 1988 with a Masters' degree in Information Technology from Kingston Polytechnic, Simon has gained a wealth of real-world experience. His work on projects has spanned over 30 years and includes working as a software engineer, team leader, consultant, technical director, and project manager including time working for the BBC, HSBC and IBM.

In 2005, Simon set up Knowledge Train with a passion to help others learn the best ways of managing projects. Since then, he has established Knowledge Train as a highly reputable PRINCE2 project management training company with a focus on delivering the very best in training and customer service.



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Introduction



Projects in Controlled Environments (PRINCE2) is the world's most popular project management methodology. More people are qualified in PRINCE2 than any other project management qualification.

PRINCE2 is used by some of the world's largest companies and governments. It provides management control to ensure a project remains a worthwhile investment.

PRINCE2 is the most popular project management methodology in the world and is the default standard for project management in the UK public sector and the United Nations. PRINCE2 is especially popular in the UK, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

PRINCE2 stands for **P**rojects **I**N **C**ontrolled **E**nvironments. PRINCE2 is used by private, public, and 3rd sector organisations to help them deliver better outcomes from projects.

History of PRINCE2

PRINCE evolved from an early project management method called PROMPT II (Project Resource Organisation Management Planning Techniques).

In 1989, a UK government body, the Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency (CCTA), adopted a version of PROMPT to manage government IT projects.

This method was named 'PRINCE', standing for 'PROMPT II IN the CCTA Environment', but was later re-named to 'P**R**ojects **I**N **C**ontrolled **E**nvironments.

In 1996, the 2nd version of PRINCE was released – PRINCE2 – which was a generic project management approach suitable for any type of project. PRINCE2 was owned by HM Government in the UK until it was sold to AXELOS in 2013.

PRINCE2 latest version

In September 2023 the latest version of [PRINCE2](#) – the 7th edition – was released. [PRINCE2 7th edition](#) includes an important element missing from earlier versions, that of people. It also included additional guidance about commercial management, sustainability management, and digital and data management. It is expected that further revisions of PRINCE2 will be made in the future to reflect changing trends in project management.

What is the PRINCE2 certification body?

PeopleCert is the awarding body for PRINCE2 and provides examinations and certification in a range of global best practice methodologies. These include PRINCE2, ITIL, MSP, Scrum, and others.

In June 2021, PeopleCert bought AXELOS, thereby acquiring the intellectual property to these best practice methodologies, including PRINCE2.

PRINCE2 methodology



A methodology outlines the practices, techniques, and rules for a specific discipline. For project management, a methodology is a model for planning, executing, and delivering projects. **PRINCE2 is such a methodology**, offering a process-based approach with **principles**, **practices**, and **processes** guiding projects from start to finish. PRINCE2 also includes a people aspect of project management.

PRINCE2's comprehensive framework can be adapted to any project, epitomising a true methodology.

PRINCE2 manual

In September 2023, the latest edition of the PRINCE2 manual – ***Managing Successful Projects with PRINCE2®*** – was released. The manual forms a comprehensive guide to the application of the **PRINCE2 methodology** and forms the basis for the PRINCE2 examinations.

The PRINCE2 manual is published by PeopleCert, the owners of PRINCE2.

PRINCE2 principles

The seven **PRINCE2 principles** are the guiding obligations that determine whether the project is genuinely being managed using PRINCE2 and ensure effective application and tailoring of PRINCE2 to any project.

The seven principles are: ensure continued business justification, learn from experience, define roles, responsibilities, and relationships, manage by stages, manage by exception, focus on products, and tailor to suit the project.

People in PRINCE2

Since PRINCE2 7th edition was released in 2023, **People** have been at the heart of PRINCE2. Projects require individuals, both participants and the people

impacted by projects. Understanding their needs, skills, motivations, and interrelationships is vital to how the project is established and managed.

PRINCE2 practices

The seven [PRINCE2 practices](#) outline essential project management elements that need consistent application throughout the project. They explain the specific treatment required of each aspect to ensure that the PRINCE2 processes are effective.

The seven practices are: business case, organising, plans, quality, risk, issues, and progress.

PRINCE2 processes

The seven [PRINCE2 processes](#) cover the entire project lifecycle, from initiation to closure, as well as one pre-project process. Each process provides a list of suggested activities and their associated responsibilities to be performed both before the project starts, and during each of the [PRINCE2 stages](#).

The seven processes are: starting up a project, directing a project, initiating a project, controlling a stage, managing product delivery, managing a stage boundary, and closing a project.

Project context

The project context, alongside the principles, people, practices, and processes, is the fifth element of PRINCE2. The [project context](#) refers to the unique environment, both internal to the business organisation funding the project, and its external environment. It is within this unique project context that the project manager must tailor the method to suit the project's needs. This covers the steps taken by the people involved in the project to apply the principles, practices, processes, roles, and management products to ensure that they are fit for the project context.

PRINCE2 roles

In addition to the five main elements of PRINCE2, the manual defines seven [project management team roles](#) with associated responsibilities.

These seven roles are: project executive, senior user, senior supplier, project manager, team manager, project assurance, and project support role.

PRINCE2 management products

PRINCE2 recommends a set of [management products](#) which can help the project management team plan, manage, and control a project. The PRINCE2 manual provides a set of [templates](#) for the management products and these can be adapted to the needs of any project, and to fit in with existing organisational processes.

Embedding PRINCE2

For effective PRINCE2-based project management, everyone in the organisation must understand and apply it consistently. It's not just about introducing the method but ensuring it's uniformly adopted and pragmatically used. "[Embedding PRINCE2](#)" refers to consistently implementing a customised project management method across all organisational projects.

Case studies

To understand how various organisations have integrated PRINCE2, reviewing some [PRINCE2 case studies](#) which describe how they adopted PRINCE2 can be useful.

PRINCE2 certification



PRINCE2 is the world's most popular project management certification. Earning a PRINCE2 certification can enhance one's project management career prospects. While it requires time and effort, the potential career growth and increased job opportunities make it a worthwhile investment.

PRINCE2 offers two certification levels: Foundation and Practitioner. The choice depends on the individual's situation and career objectives.

PRINCE2 Foundation

Those who achieve the PRINCE2 Foundation certification are equipped to work effectively in a project management team within a PRINCE2 environment. Most candidates prepare for this through classroom or online courses. To earn the certification, they must pass the 1-hour PRINCE2 Foundation exam, typically included in accredited training.

PRINCE2 Practitioner

Individuals with the PRINCE2 Practitioner certification are trained to apply the PRINCE2 method to real projects, though not always for every scenario. Their success in applying the method depends on their personal experience, project complexity, and the support received.

Most earn this certification by attending a classroom course or online course. They must pass the 2.5-hour PRINCE2 Practitioner exam, usually included in accredited training. Many opt for a combined Foundation and Practitioner course to achieve this qualification.

PRINCE2 Agile

PRINCE2 Agile is based upon the core PRINCE2 method but is only suitable for agile project environments, guiding practitioners when adapting the PRINCE2 method to agile projects.

PRINCE2 Agile has two certification levels: [PRINCE2 Agile Foundation](#) and [PRINCE2 Agile Practitioner](#). Most students gain their certificate by taking exams as part of an [accredited PRINCE2 Agile course](#). Or [PRINCE2 Agile online course](#).

PRINCE2 exams

Both Foundation and Practitioner certifications have their own [PRINCE2 exam](#). The Foundation exam, being shorter and simpler, has a 95% first-time pass rate in the UK. The 2.5-hour Practitioner exam sees a 73% first-time pass rate.

For students seeking the PRINCE2 Agile certificate, [PRINCE2 Agile examinations](#) are also available at both Foundation and Practitioner levels.

Typically, these exams are part of accredited [PRINCE2 training programs](#).

PRINCE2 training courses




Most individuals seeking certification enrol in an accredited classroom [PRINCE2 training course](#). Or self-paced [online PRINCE2 course](#). Only PRINCE2 Accredited Training Organisations (ATO) offer this training, having undergone a stringent accreditation process to ensure high-quality course delivery.

PeopleCert provides a complete list of all PRINCE2 ATOs but it is worth reading about [how to choose a good PRINCE2 training provider](#) and ensure you choose a provider with [good PRINCE2 reviews](#).

Choosing the right [PRINCE2 study format](#) requires some care because some people might be better suited to [learn PRINCE2 with self-paced online courses](#), rather than [instructor-led classroom PRINCE2 training](#). Choosing a [PRINCE2 course at the best price](#) is also important.

Benefits of PRINCE2



PRINCE2 offers numerous [benefits for organisations and individuals](#). Many organisations choose to use PRINCE2 within their project management processes so they can achieve a repeatable, documented process. These benefits can enable an organisation to gain a competitive advantage over others in their industry or sector because it helps to achieve better decision-making over investment decisions.

For individuals, many people choose to gain their PRINCE2 certification to help them achieve their career goals, but it is important they choose the [best PRINCE2 qualification](#) for their goals.

PRINCE2 resources



PRINCE2 articles

For students interested in learning more about PRINCE2 this [PRINCE2 glossary](#) might be useful. For students interested in PRINCE2 Agile this [PRINCE2 Agile glossary](#) can also be useful.

Here is a useful list of articles about PRINCE2.

Comparing PRINCE2

[PMP vs PRINCE2](#)

[PRINCE2 vs the PMBOK® Guide: A comparison](#)

Learning resources

[PRINCE2 podcasts](#)

[PRINCE2 project management game](#)

[Introduction to PRINCE2 \(course\)](#)

PRINCE2 exam tips

[PRINCE2 Foundation exam tips](#)

[PRINCE2 Foundation exam mock questions](#)

[How to pass the PRINCE2 Practitioner exam](#)

[PRINCE2 exam pass rates](#)

Training and certification

[Is it worth doing a project management course?](#)

[What is the best project management certification?](#)

[Which project management qualification?](#)

[PRINCE2 renewal and AXELOS membership](#)

Project management careers

[Starting a project management career: Free ebook](#)

[What soft skills do project managers need?](#)



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