MSP® Sample Papers

The Official MSP Accreditor Sample Examination Papers

Terms of use

Please note that by downloading and/or using this document, you agree to comply with the terms of use outlined below:

1. All sample papers (in electronic or paper format) are for personal use only.

2. The sample papers are intended for the following use only:

- As a study aid for candidates who wish to sit an MSP examination, or
- For reference purposes.

3. By downloading a complimentary digital copy of any of the MSP sample papers, you agree not to:

- Print or reproduce it (unless it is for your own personal use);
- Forward or share it to/with any third party;
- Sell the document.

4. If you wish to use the whole, or part, of this sample paper for any purpose other than for your own study or reference, please contact the AXELOS Accreditation Team (accreditation@axelos.com).

The MSP® Foundation Examination

Sample Paper 1

Question Booklet

Multiple Choice

Examination Duration: 1 hour

Instructions

1. **You should attempt all 60 questions. Each question is worth one mark.**

2. **There is only one correct answer per question.**

3. **You need to answer 36 questions correctly to pass the exam.**

4. **Mark your answers on the answer sheet provided. Use a pencil (NOT pen).**

5. **You have 1 hour to complete this exam.**

6. **This is a 'closed book' exam. No material other than the exam paper is allowed.**

1) What is a programme?

    A. A temporary structure designed to lead interrelated projects to achieve outcomes of benefit

    B. A detailed description of the future state of the investing organization

    C. A control point, following delivery of a step-change in capability and benefits realization

    D. A delivery mode that combines a linear project lifecycle with an iterative project lifecycle

2) Which is a purpose of the programme strategy?

    A. To agree and specify the end state of the programme

    B. To define the specific arrangements for directing the work of the team

    C. To agree and specify the future organizational structure

    D. To ensure that MSP principles are applied throughout the lifecycle

3) Which process quickly develops the initial thought behind the programme into a workable proposal?

    A. Design the outcomes

    B. Identify the programme

    C. Embed the outcomes

    D. Plan progressive delivery

4) Which action contributes MOST to achieving the 'lead with purpose' principle?

    A. Reporting both historic performance and emerging trends

    B. Focusing assurance on risks that will affect outcomes of benefit over time

    C. Justifying and communicating the financial viability over time in the business case

    D. Making knowledge as clear and as accessible as possible

5) What is the purpose of programme governance?

    A. To provide the framework of authority and accountability to control the work delivered by interrelated projects

    B. To maintain the internal controls that ensure effective organization-wide management systems

    C. To define the specific arrangements to implement the work of the interrelated projects

    D. To provide confidence that the programme will meet its objectives by performing review activities

6) In which process is the gap between how the organization currently operates and how it will operate after programme delivery documented?

    A. Design the outcomes

    B. Plan progressive delivery

    C. Identify the programme

    D. Deliver the capabilities

7) What term is defined as an essential aspect of programme governance which ensures that a programme aligns with the principles?

    A. Capability

    B. Theme

    C. Process

    D. Assurance

8) During which phase of the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle would the results from the previous phase be validated?

    A. The 'plan' phase

    B. The 'do' phase

    C. The 'check' phase

    D. The 'act' phase

9) During which process are projects and other work structured into tranches in order to realize benefits?

    A. Identify the programme

    B. Deliver the capabilities

    C. Design the outcomes

    D. Plan progressive delivery

10) What does applying the 'collaborate across boundaries' principle ensure?

    A. That cooperation between different organizational entities creates effective, shared governance

    B. That the programme is adjusted as new information becomes available to improve decision-making

    C. That the right mix of resources and expertise are assigned to match the changing needs of the programme

    D. That the desired outcomes are envisioned and communicated to focus stakeholders on what is important

11) Which theme ensures that information is reported to those affected by a programme?

    A. Design

    B. Structure

    C. Organization

    D. Assurance

12) In which process would a project be overseen to ensure it is being carried out appropriately?

    A. Evaluate new information

    B. Close the programme

    C. Deliver the capabilities

    D. Plan progressive delivery

13) Which statement about programmes is CORRECT?

    A. Programmes progressively realize outcomes of benefit through fixed timeboxes

    B. Programmes require projects to deliver outputs iteratively by using agile ways of working

    C. Programmes design multiple landing points of capability and benefits realization

    D. Programmes require the projects to adopt the same mode of delivery

14) Which question does the governance approach answer?

    A. How will the vision for the programme be agreed and approved?

    B. What are the individual accountabilities and responsibilities for each role?

    C. How will the benefits for the programme be agreed and approved?

    D. What are the key objectives and metrics for measuring stakeholder engagement?

15) Identify the missing words in the following sentence.

    A benefit is defined as the measurable improvement resulting from [?] perceived as an advantage by the investing organization(s) and which contributes towards one or more organizational objectives.

    A. an output

    B. a capability

    C. a dis-benefit

    D. an outcome

16) What should be considered when validating the business case?

    A. How the vision for the programme will be agreed and approved

    B. How the benefits, and the associated risks, will be captured and prioritized

    C. How the target operating model will be defined and approved

    D. How much financial contingency has been set aside for knowable risks

17) Which document describes how dependencies between the projects will be defined and managed?

    A. Programme strategy: delivery approach

    B. Programme strategy: design approach

    C. Benefits realization plan

    D. Programme strategy: resourcing approach

18) Which is a learning network of people who share a skill and who improve as they interact and learn from each other on a regular basis?

    A. Organizational ability

    B. Community of practice

    C. Resources

    D. Programme office

19) Which document defines the information that should be reported from one governance board to another?

    A. Programme strategy: issue resolution approach

    B. Programme strategy: risk response approach

    C. Programme strategy: decision-making approach

    D. Programme strategy: design approach

20) Which is a purpose of the 'embed the outcomes' process?

    A. To ensure that the investing organization(s) makes the required changes to adopt new ways of working and realize the benefits

    B. To analyse the drivers and justification for the programme, ensuring that it is consistent with the overall strategy for the investing organization

    C. To ensure that the investing organization(s) are ready to maximize the benefits to be realized from the programme

    D. To monitor progress and take corrective action to keep programme delivery on track, as defined in the target operating model

21) Which TWO are objectives of the 'identify the programme' process?

    1.   To ensure that the design approach has been decided upon and documented.

    2.   To ensure the programme has a clear business justification which warrants further investigation.

    3.   To ensure that the outline vision and high-level benefits are understood.

    4.   To ensure the benefits and dis-benefits are understood and documented.

    A. 1 and 2

    B. 2 and 3

    C. 3 and 4

    D. 1 and 4

22) What does applying the 'deal with ambiguity' principle ensure?

    A. That decisions requiring approval from multiple organizations are possible

    B. That the investment in programme management is justified to stakeholders

    C. That coherent organizational capabilities are designed and delivered

    D. That the risks associated with decisions, and their impact, are understood

23) Who is responsible for setting the programme's overall direction and priorities?

    A. Sponsoring group

    B. Programme board

    C. Senior responsible owner

    D. Programme manager

24) Which type of benefit is MOST LIKELY to reduce an organization's operating costs?

    A. Effectiveness

    B. Efficiency

    C. Compliance

    D. Financial

25) Which is a driver for assurance that should be used to assure portfolio and capacity management?

    A. A community of practice
    B. A risk appetite assessment
    C. A capability assessment
    D. A dependency assessment

26) Which document balances the total costs, value, benefits and risks to ensure that the programme is viable?

    A. Financial plan
    B. Programme strategy: funding approach
    C. Benefits realization plan
    D. Business case

27) Which is a reason why dependencies are shown on a dependency network diagram?

    A. To show how changes in legislation might affect the programme
    B. To show how lessons will be used to improve the programme
    C. To show which risk responses have been chosen
    D. To show the assurance activities required for each line of defence

28) Which document describes how the programme will encourage a culture of embedding continual improvement into ways of working?

    A. Programme strategy: assurance approach
    B. Programme strategy: decision-making approach
    C. Programme strategy: information approach
    D. Programme strategy: knowledge and learning approach

29) Which is a purpose of the assurance approach?

    A. To define how resources required to deliver the capabilities will be acquired

    B. To define how funds will be obtained and made available to the programme

    C. To define how activities will be monitored for each of the three lines of defence

    D. To define how stakeholders will be engaged over the programme lifecycle

30) Which principle is being applied in the 'decisions' theme when the reasons that explain a decision are communicated?

    A. Lead with purpose

    B. Deal with ambiguity

    C. Align with priorities

    D. Collaborate across boundaries

31) Which TWO are objectives of the 'plan progressive delivery' process?

    1. To ensure that capabilities are being delivered through the completion of projects, as defined in the delivery plan.

    2. To ensure that the delivery approach and ways of working are defined.

    3. To ensure that the path to realizing benefits is planned.

    4. To ensure that the risks to the programme have been captured in a risk register and analysed.

    A. 1 and 2

    B. 2 and 3

    C. 3 and 4

    D. 1 and 4

32) Which is a reason for an organization to use programme management?

    A. To prioritize how it uses scarce, shared resources across multiple projects to achieve value for money

    B. To recruit skilled resources into its business as usual activities to achieve operational objectives

    C. To eliminate the need for it to manage the interrelated project-based and process-based work

    D. To protect its existing arrangements for managing operational resources and knowledge

33) What is the 'align with priorities' principle MOST LIKELY to ensure?

    A. That a balance is maintained between the delivery of outcomes and business as usual performance

    B. That the desired outcomes are captured in the vision to keep stakeholders focused on what is important

    C. That the programme is adjusted to reflect new information and improve decision-making

    D. That capabilities are devised and implemented leading to new, beneficial ways of working

34) Which role has overall accountability for delivering outcomes which enable benefit realization across the programme?

    A. Programme office lead

    B. Business change manager

    C. Programme manager

    D. Senior responsible owner

35) What is the purpose of the design approach?

    A. To define how the vision, benefits, and target operating model will be defined and approved

    B. To document the future state in a way that enables motivation and alignment of stakeholders

    C. To visualize the path to benefits ensuring that outputs are aligned to organizational objectives

    D. To provide a description of how a single benefit will be realized and measured

36) Which theme ensures that the programme expenditure remains worthwhile?

    A. Structure

    B. Decision

    C. Justification

    D. Design

37) Which term BEST describes the project delivery mode that repeats aspects of the design or delivery with the objective of managing any uncertainty of scope?

    A. Linear project lifecycle

    B. Hybrid project lifecycle

    C. Continual improvement

    D. Iterative project lifecycle

38) Which is a result of the 'knowledge' theme applying the 'align with priorities' principle?

    A. Greater understanding of how programme management enables the learning of lessons

    B. Reduction in re-work because people are working with up-to-date information as the situation changes

    C. More efficient working between teams with different skills from different organizations

    D. Stakeholders become more focused on realizing the benefits required from the programme

39) Identify the missing word in the following sentence.

There are [?] levels of delegated authority that define the associated 'lines of defence'.

    A. two

    B. three

    C. four

    D. five

40) Why should the SRO be accountable for building a culture of realistic reporting?

    A. Because there are many ways that a programme team can present information

    B. Because the 'issue register' is used to record events that require management action

    C. Because PESTLE can be used as a prompt list for horizon scanning and risk identification

    D. Because providing false information on historic performance destroys value

41) Which process ensures that the sponsoring group is supported with high quality, up-to-date and decision-ready knowledge?

    A. Plan progressive delivery

    B. Deliver the capability

    C. Evaluate new information

    D. Embed the outcomes

42) Which TWO are objectives of the 'deliver the capabilities' process?

    1. To ensure that the approaches to managing different aspects of the programme, defined in the programme strategy, are implemented.

    2. To ensure that the programme's progress is monitored and reported.

    3. To ensure that capabilities are transitioned effectively.

    4. To ensure that the pace of delivery is aligned with the rate of change that operational areas can support.

    A. 1 and 2

    B. 2 and 3

    C. 3 and 4

    D. 1 and 4

43) Which is a common challenge specifically addressed by MSP?

    A. Inconsistent organizational risk management practices

    B. Unclear direction and goals in the investing organization

    C. Poor team-working by existing operational teams

    D. Reduced stakeholder focus on outcomes and benefits over time

44) What is the 'deploy diverse skills' principle MOST LIKELY to ensure?

    A. The ability to respond to the volatile, uncertain, and complex nature of programmes

    B. Cooperation between multiple organizations to create effective, shared governance

    C. That the right mix of disciplines and expertise are available to meet the changing needs of the programme

    D. That a balance is maintained between the delivery of outcomes and involving business as usual staff

45) Identify the missing word(s) in the following sentence.

A [?] is defined as any individual, group, or organization that can affect, be affected by, or perceives itself to be affected by, a programme.

    A. change recipient

    B. stakeholder

    C. business change manager

    D. resource

46) How does the 'design' theme apply the 'deal with ambiguity' principle?

    A. By providing a clear view of the current thinking against which emerging risks can be evaluated

    B. By clearly defining the skills necessary for the target operating model to work as designed

    C. By keeping the target operating model up-to-date and aligned with the compelling vision

    D. By clearly defining the benefits and target operating model, aligned with the programme's priorities

47) During which process would you ensure that the benefits realized by the organization are subject to minimal erosion?

    A. Evaluate new information

    B. Deliver the capabilities

    C. Embed the outcomes

    D. Close the programme

48) What is the 'realize measurable benefits' principle MOST LIKELY to ensure?

    A. That capabilities are delivered coherently to achieve verifiably improved ways of working

    B. That the right type of expertise is available to match the changing needs of the programme

    C. That the timing of outcomes is balanced with the need to maintain business as usual performance

    D. That the programme is able to adapt to the volatile, uncertain, and complex nature of the environment

49) What is the trigger to begin the 'identify the programme' process?

    A. The programme mandate

    B. The programme brief

    C. The programme strategy

    D. The programme vision

50) Identify the missing word(s) in the following sentence.

A [?] is defined as the sum of the estimates of income and expenditure for the programme that are delegated to the roles in the programme organization.

    A. resource

    B. budget

    C. cash flow

    D. financial contingency

51) Which theme ensures delivery is planned so that operations can transition effectively, enabling benefits to be realized?

    A. Design

    B. Assurance

    C. Organization

    D. Structure

52) Which statement BEST describes tacit knowledge?

    A. It is easy to capture and write down

    B. It is readily accessible to stakeholders

    C. It is often not consciously identified

    D. It is stored in a structured repository

53) Which theme defines the roles and responsibilities of the three lines of defence?

    A. Organization

    B. Decisions

    C. Assurance

    D. Design

54) Which is an example of an issue?

    A. An audit

    B. An assumption

    C. The aggregated risk

    D. A change request

55) What does applying the 'bring pace and value' principle ensure?

    A. That coherent organizational capabilities are designed and embedded into operations

    B. That the changing resources required to deliver the programme of work are available

    C. That the desired outcomes are captured in a clear vision, and communicated to stakeholders

    D. That the investment in programme management is justified by the coordinated delivery of outcomes

56) Which TWO are objectives of the 'evaluate new information' process?

   1. To provide insight into the current state of the programme and predictions of what is to come in the future.
   2. To ensure that the programme design and next tranche are appropriately informed.
   3. To ensure that the resources, timeframes, and costs needed to design the programme in more detail have been planned.
   4. To conduct a final assessment of the programme to capture achievements of the programme relative to those expected and any gaps.

   A. 1 and 2
   B. 2 and 3
   C. 3 and 4
   D. 1 and 4

57) Which factors should be considered when conducting an investment appraisal?

   A. Costs and resources associated with the programme
   B. Outcomes and risks associated with the programme
   C. Costs, benefits, and risks associated with the programme
   D. Outputs, outcomes, and benefits associated with the programme

58) Which process ensures that the programme will supply capability at an appropriate pace?

   A. Design the outcomes
   B. Plan progressive delivery
   C. Embed the outcomes
   D. Evaluate new information

59) Why does providing a range of options support good decision-making?

   A. Because decisions on changes need to be made at the appropriate governance level
   B. Because understanding the wider context helps to challenge existing perspectives
   C. Because access to privileged information needs to be restricted to the right people
   D. Because gap analysis identifies what activities are needed to deliver the future state

60) Why is evaluating new information beneficial for an organization?

    A. It supports stakeholders in the business to adopt the capabilities into new ways of working

    B. It shows when the outcome expectations are deemed to have been sufficiently achieved

    C. It directly supports decision-makers in the governance structures

    D. It shows when resources are deemed to be better used elsewhere

END OF EXAMINATION