

Course Description



Practical Scheduling, Monitoring & Recovery for Modern Project Delivery

Developing Exceptional Project Schedule Control

Course Summary

In modern projects, schedule control is far more than producing a timetable. It is about creating a realistic, logic-driven schedule, monitoring progress intelligently, identifying emerging delay early, and giving leaders the insight they need to make timely decisions. Aligning with the APM's "Project Controls in the 21st Century", this course places scheduling within a broader control environment that links planning, monitoring, governance, and people capability.

This intensive five-day experiential programme develops practical capability in project schedule control for complex delivery environments. Delegates learn how to build credible schedules, manage dependencies, analyse progress, forecast outcomes, and intervene effectively when delivery starts to drift.

The programme focuses on real-world scheduling disciplines, and by using scenario-based workshops, live scheduling exercises, schedule recovery simulations, and governance role play, participants strengthen their ability to turn schedule information into effective action.

Why Delegates Should Attend

Many project schedules fail to support delivery because they are either unrealistic, have poor logic-linking, disconnected from execution reality, or used only for retrospective reporting. Modern project controls aim to convert project data into insight that supports action and protects delivery performance.

This programme enables participants to:

- Build robust, logic-based schedules that reflect how work will really be delivered
- Identify critical path and schedule risk more effectively
- Monitor progress in a disciplined and meaningful way
- Forecast likely completion outcomes earlier
- Diagnose slippage and its root causes
- Develop practical schedule recovery options
- Improve schedule communication to project teams and senior stakeholders

Delegates will gain the tools, judgement, and confidence needed to control time performance proactively rather than reactively.

Learning Outcomes

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By the end of this programme, delegates will be able to:

- Develop credible project schedules from scope, sequencing, and duration data
- Apply dependency logic, milestones, and critical path thinking effectively
- Monitor progress and update schedules using sound control principles
- Analyse variance, float movement, and emerging delay drivers
- Forecast likely completion dates and delivery scenarios
- Assess the schedule impact of change, risk, and disruption
- Propose and evaluate schedule recovery actions
- Communicate schedule status and implications clearly to stakeholders

Organisational Impact

Organisations benefit when schedule control moves beyond static reporting and becomes a practical decision-support capability. Stronger scheduling discipline improves visibility of delivery risk, supports better forecasting, and strengthens governance oversight. APM's project controls guidance also stresses that project controls should provide information and insight that acts as a catalyst for action.

This programme helps organisations to:

- Improve confidence in project timelines
- Strengthen early warning of delay and disruption
- Increase consistency in planning and schedule reporting
- Improve coordination across delivery teams and suppliers
- Support more effective governance decisions
- Reduce avoidable schedule overruns
- Build stronger scheduling and control capability across projects

Delegate Impact

Delegates completing this programme will:

- Strengthen their practical scheduling capability
- Improve their confidence in schedule analysis and forecasting
- Learn to identify weak schedules before they fail
- Become more effective at diagnosing delay causes
- Improve their ability to brief project leaders and boards on schedule status
- Gain practical techniques for schedule recovery and intervention
- Develop a more integrated project controls mindset

Participants leave with practical approaches they can use immediately on live projects and programmes.

Methodology

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This programme uses experiential learning and realistic delivery scenarios to develop applied schedule control capability.

Delegates work through an evolving project case study in which the schedule is progressively developed, challenged, updated, and recovered as new constraints, risks, and delivery events emerge.

Learning methods include:

- Schedule development workshops
- Logic and dependency exercises
- Critical path analysis activities
- Progress update simulations
- Delay analysis and recovery planning exercises
- Governance reporting role play
- Facilitated discussion and peer review

Participants rotate roles such as:

- Project Planner / Scheduler
- Project Controls Lead
- Project Manager
- Work Package Manager
- Sponsor / Governance Board Member
- Contractor / Supplier Representative

Who Should Attend

This programme is designed for professionals involved in planning, monitoring, and controlling project timelines.

Suitable participants include:

- Project Planners and Schedulers
- Project Controls Engineers and Managers
- Project Managers
- Programme Office and PMO professionals
- Risk and performance analysts
- Delivery leads responsible for milestone performance
- Professionals moving into planning or controls roles

Delegates will benefit most if they have some experience of project delivery, planning, or reporting environments.

Day-by-Day Course Outline

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Day 1 – Foundations of Effective Schedule Control

The first day introduces the role of schedule control in modern project delivery and why good scheduling is essential to effective project controls. APM defines scheduling as the development and presentation of schedules showing when work will be performed, and positions it within the wider discipline of planning, monitoring, and control.

Topics include:

- The role of schedule control in project success
- Characteristics of a credible and usable schedule
- Scope, deliverables, and the basis for scheduling
- Work breakdown structures and activity definition
- Milestones, sequencing, and dependency logic
- The difference between schedule creation and schedule control

Delegates participate in an initial planning simulation, translating a project brief into a structured schedule framework.

Day 2 – Building Robust Schedules

The second day focuses on schedule construction and the practical disciplines needed to create robust and maintainable schedules.

Topics include:

- Activity definition and decomposition
- Dependency types and logic quality
- Constraints and assumptions
- Critical path method
- Float and schedule sensitivity
- Resource and interface considerations in scheduling

Delegates take part in schedule build workshops, creating a logic-linked project schedule and testing it for realism and control quality.

Day 3 – Monitoring Progress and Forecasting Completion

Day three focuses on how schedules are updated, analysed, and used to forecast outcomes.

Topics include:

- Progress measurement principles
- Updating actuals and remaining durations
- Tracking milestones and critical activities

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- Variance analysis and trend recognition
- Float erosion and emerging delay indicators
- Forecasting likely completion dates

Delegates engage in live update simulations, where project events are introduced and teams must assess the impact on the delivery timeline.

Day 4 – Delay Analysis and Schedule Recovery

The fourth day develops practical skill in analysing slippage and recovering control when delivery performance deteriorates.

Topics include:

- Diagnosing schedule slippage and root causes
- Delay drivers and disruption analysis
- Assessing the effect of change and risk on the schedule
- Recovery strategies and trade-off decisions
- Resequencing, acceleration, and reforecasting
- Escalation thresholds and intervention planning

Delegates participate in schedule recovery workshops, responding to deteriorating performance and presenting recovery options to project leadership.

Day 5 – Schedule Governance, Reporting & Decision Support

The final day focuses on how schedule control supports decision-making, assurance, and governance. This reflects APM's wider position that project controls should convert data into insight for management action, not merely produce reports. ([apm.org.uk][2])

Topics include:

- Schedule reporting that supports decisions
- Milestone reporting and dashboard design
- Communicating schedule confidence and uncertainty
- Integrating schedule insight with risk and cost perspectives
- Schedule assurance and governance review
- Lessons learned and continuous improvement in schedule control

Delegates participate in a governance board simulation, presenting schedule status, delay implications, and recommended actions under executive scrutiny.

The programme concludes with reflection on how to strengthen schedule control maturity within delegates' own organisations.