

PMP Exam Performance – Winter 2011 Classes

This is an update to an earlier report issued May 11, 2011. Since that date, delayed information on exam performance has been provided by PMI, several more candidates have written the computer based test, and several have re-written the exam. Also, the internet links have been corrected.

Paper Based Test

This report presents and analyzes the performance of the members of two classes who wrote the PMP exam in the Spring of 2011. These are the results for the first attempt of the paper-based test by 41 candidates who attended the Certification Preparation Seminar in Regina (N = 24) and Vancouver (N = 18). Many of those who did not succeed on the first attempt are planning to re-write, but no re-write results are included here.

The data on exam performance presented here comes principally from the PMI website. The PMP status of any individual can be checked at <https://certification.pmi.org/Registry.aspx>

I know who was registered in each class and which candidates wrote the paper based test. I was also advised by those who had booked the computer based test up to the date of this report; and thus I can determine who passed the exam

On April 16, 2011, 19 class members wrote the paper-based PMP exam in Regina. On April 26, 2011, 18 class members wrote the paper-based exam in Vancouver. The candidates in each case wrote either version 4551 (white booklet) version 4370 (purple booklet), or a Chinese language version of the exam. It is common practice for PMI to administer two English language versions of the paper exam in a single examination room. In the past, the two versions apparently contained virtually the same set of questions, but in different order. However, in both April 2010 and April 2011, the two versions were apparently quite different.

In the past, there were no substantial differences in exam performance on the two English language booklets administered on the same date. This year there appears to be a notable difference, as shown in the following table:

Paper Based Exams – Winter 2011 Classes

Booklet	Number Passed	Number Failed	Apparent Percent Passed
White – 4551	15	5	75%
Purple – 4448	8	8	50%
Chinese	1	0	100%
Aggregate	24	13	65%

Aggregate: Paper and Computer Based

The table below displays the pass-fail performance of all 43 candidate who have written the exam to June 20, 2011 from the two PMP Exam Preparation classes.

Paper and Computer Based Exams – Winter 2011 Classes

Class	Number Passed	Number Failed	Apparent Percent Passed
Regina - Computer	4	1	80%
Regina – Paper	13	6	68%
Vancouver -Computer	2	0	100%
Vancouver – Paper	11	7	61%
Aggregate	30	14	68%

The 68% aggregate pass rate is almost identical to the 69% reported for the Winter 2010 classes, but is well below the historical norm for performance on the PMP exam by alumni of the Certification Preparation Seminar.

Prior to Fall 2008 the historical pass rates established over a period of approximately 8 years were roughly 95% for Vancouver and 80% for Regina. The differences in performance between the two cities were attributed to demographic factors such as secondary education, age, and project work experience. Four classes that wrote the exam in December 2008 displayed a substantially lower aggregate pass rates: 66% on the paper based test and about the same for the small number who wrote the computer based test at the time. The factors which appeared to contribute to the disappointing over-all performance were describe in a separate report [Fall 2008 Exam Performance.pdf].

For the Winter 2009 exams, the pass rates rebounded to near the historical levels: 89% overall, with Vancouver again higher than Regina.

In Winter 2011, the Vancouver class had an exceptionally high average score on the final mock exam administered in the course, and should have done correspondingly well on the PMP exam. but in fact fell below the historical norm.

The results for Winter 2010 and Winter 2011 are the first for the current versions of the PMP exam, using the *Fourth Edition of the Guide to the PMBOK* as a reference. Based on the results for the paper-based test at least , it appears that these exams are more difficult than those administered in previous years.

Reports on PMP exam performance for alumni of the Certification Preparation Seminar in previous years are available. Go to my website <http://www.walter-wawruck.com/prepsem.html#EXAM> to download the following files:

Winter 2010 Exam Performance.PDF

Winter 2009 Exam Performance.PDF

Fall 2008 Exam Performance.PDF

Performance on Re-writes

Five of the candidates who failed their first attempts, re-wrote the exam, and all five passed the re-write. In each case, the re-write was a computer based exam. This 100% pass-rate on re-writes is consistent with the experience of previous years, wherein the pass rate for re-writes has been better than 95%. It appears that once having seen an exam, candidates have a good idea on where to focus their study efforts.

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