

Parallel Project Training Wins APM Developmental Programme of the Year 2026

Award-winning graduate programme delivers 80% APM PMQ pass rate, increased professional confidence and progression into project management leadership roles

READING, BERKSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM, August 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Parallel Project Training](#), in partnership with Network Rail, has been named Developmental Programme of the Year at the 2026 APM Education & Research Awards, recognising an innovative approach to developing the next generation of project management professionals in the UK rail industry.

The award recognises the impact of Network Rail's Project Management Graduate Scheme and the 15-week Project Management Development Programme developed with Parallel Project Training. The programme combines professional project management education with practical application in one of the UK's most complex operational environments.

Since partnering with Network Rail in 2023, Parallel Project Training has helped redesign the way project management capability is developed within the graduate scheme, creating an integrated programme aligned with the APM Competence Framework and incorporating the APM Project Management Qualification (PMQ).

The programme combines competency-based learning, PMQ preparation, Network Rail-specific application modules, mentoring and engagement with senior leaders. Rather than focusing on achieving a qualification alone, it is designed to help graduates develop the confidence and practical capability to apply project management principles to real projects.

Paul Naybour, Managing Director, Parallel Project Training, remarked:

"This programme was never intended to be simply about helping graduates pass an exam. From the outset, our aim with Network Rail was to develop project professionals who could take what they learned and apply it confidently in a complex working environment. The progression and application figures show that this is happening, which makes this award particularly meaningful."

During the two-year graduate scheme, participants rotate through placements across Network Rail, gaining practical experience on significant rail projects while developing their professional project management capabilities.

Parallel's development programme supports this experience through formal [project management courses](#), structured workshops, practical case studies, examination preparation and application modules tailored specifically to the rail environment.

Jeff Davies, Director, Rail Investment Centre of Excellence, said:

"The Network Rail Project Management Graduate Programme represents continuous learning in action, reinventing itself to be relevant to the industry and the challenges presented."

The programme has delivered measurable outcomes across professional development, qualification success and career progression. Participants recorded an overall programme satisfaction score of 8.8 out of 10, while the [APM PMQ](#) pass rate reached 80% – at least 10% above the national average.

All graduates surveyed reported increased confidence and professional identity, while 100% said they apply methods and tools from the programme within their roles. Most significantly, 83% of graduates progressed into project manager leadership roles, demonstrating how the programme is translating professional development into career progression and increased project management capability within Network Rail.

The programme was also recognised for its inclusive approach to developing the future talent pipeline. Women represent 41.7% of participants, compared with 18.9% across the wider rail sector, while 25.2% of participants are from an Ethnic Minority Group, exceeding both rail industry and UK workforce benchmarks.

Graduates are encouraged to contribute to the wider profession through APM membership and activities including STEM outreach, Women in Rail initiatives and early careers engagement.

The programme also provides a foundation for longer-term professional development, with graduates able to progress through APM membership and ultimately towards Chartered Project Professional (ChPP) status.

Christina Guo
Parallel Project Training
+44 118 321 5030
withyoualltheway@paralleprojecttraining.com
Visit us on social media:
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