Contract Strategy and Project Delivery Training Course: Routes, Payment, Change and Control

14 – 18 December 2026
Rome

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Programme Summary

Contract strategy and project delivery, covering procurement routes, payment, change and control, is the subject of this one-week training course for project managers, contract managers and commercial leads, ending in a contract control plan for one live project. Many projects are won or lost by the route chosen before tender and by how change is handled after award. The programme moves from route selection to risk allocation, payment mechanisms, change control and cost and schedule control, using prepared project cases. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme on contract strategy and project delivery to mixed-organisation cohorts.

The Business Case

Construction, energy, technology and public service projects all depend on a signed contract that fixes who carries risk, how money moves and how change is priced. Managers who choose the route with care and then run the contract with discipline can limit cost growth and avoid disputes that stall delivery. Weak control is usually seen late, when options are few.

- Cost Growth: Falls when change is priced and approved before work proceeds.
- Payment Delay: Is reduced when payment mechanisms and evidence requirements are agreed at the outset.
- Dispute Frequency: Declines when risk is allocated clearly and records are kept from the first event.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Procurement Route Models: Lump sum, remeasurement, cost-reimbursable and design-and-build routes, applied in Session 1 to match a route to project certainty.
- Risk Allocation Principle: The idea that risk sits best with the party able to control or insure it, applied in Session 2 to test contract terms.
- Change Control: A structured process for requesting, pricing and approving variations, applied in Sessions 3 and 4 to protect budget and schedule.

Intended Participants

- Project managers who run delivery against a signed contract and answer for cost and time.
- Contract managers who administer payment, variations and notices.
- Commercial leads who choose procurement routes and negotiate terms before award.
- Programme and operations directors who approve change and need to read its financial effect.

Typical settings include construction, energy, infrastructure, technology delivery and public sector bodies.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to compare procurement routes by risk, cost certainty and speed.
2. Participants will be able to evaluate contract terms for gaps in risk allocation and payment.
3. Participants will be able to construct a payment mechanism with clear evidence and timing rules.
4. Participants will be able to diagnose the cost and time effect of a proposed variation.
5. Participants will be able to prioritise control actions by exposure and ownership.
6. Participants will be able to justify a contract control plan to a project board.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Contract Strategy and Project Delivery Foundations

Which procurement route fits this project's scope and uncertainty?

- Project Certainty Assessment
- Procurement Route Comparison
- Lump Sum Route Review
- Cost-Reimbursable Route Review
- Route Selection Matrix

Day 2: Risk Allocation and Contract Terms

Who carries each risk, and do the terms say so?

- Risk Register Allocation Map
- Scope and Interface Clause Review
- Delay and Damages Terms Reading
- Contractor Default Provisions
- Contract Gap Log

Day 3: Payment and Change Control

How are payment and variations priced and approved?

- Payment Mechanism Design
- Interim Valuation Template
- Variation Request Workflow
- Change Pricing Sheet
- Notice and Record Calendar

Day 4: Cost, Schedule and Performance Control

What do the figures show about delivery against the contract?

- Cost-to-Complete Forecast
- Schedule Delay Reading
- Earned Value Dashboard
- Supplier Performance Review
- Early Warning Register

Day 5: Contract Control Plan for One Live Project

Do the findings join into a plan a project board can approve?

- Applying the Session 1 Route Selection Matrix
- Testing the Session 2 Contract Gap Log
- Checking the Session 3 Change Pricing Sheet
- Reviewing the Session 4 Early Warning Register
- Completing the Contract Control Plan

Methodology

The programme is a structured exercise built on prepared project cases from a building programme, an energy facility and a technology rollout. Participants compare routes, mark up terms, price variations and read cost reports in small groups, then defend their plan to peers acting as a project board and as the counterparty.

- Suggested activity: Scoring three procurement routes against a prepared project brief.
- Suggested activity: Pricing a late design change and drafting the approval request.
- Suggested activity: Reading a cost report and listing the early warnings it contains.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a contract control plan for one live project. It holds the route selection matrix, a contract gap log, a payment and change workflow, a notice calendar and an early warning register. At work it goes to the project board for approval and becomes the routine for managing the contract through to completion.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is contract strategy and project delivery training suitable for project managers without commercial experience?

Yes. Contract strategy and project delivery are taught through prepared cases and templates. You need responsibility for delivering or administering a contracted project, but no commercial or legal background.

Which models does contract strategy rest on in this training?

Contract strategy here rests on procurement route models, the risk allocation principle and change control, each applied to a decision about route, terms or variations.

How is the control plan from contract strategy and project delivery training used at work?

You take the contract control plan to your project board, use its change workflow to price and approve variations, and keep its notice calendar and early warning register as the routine for the contract.

How does contract strategy and project delivery differ from a programme on project planning?

Contract strategy and project delivery concentrate on routes, terms, payment and change under a signed contract, while a programme on project planning concentrates on scope, scheduling tools and resource plans.