COURSE SYLLABUS

Performance Work Statements Course

Learn how to write effective performance-based statements of work (PWS) and quality assurance plans to ensure contract clarity, compliance, and performance accountability.

Group classes (Live Online) and onsite training are available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://sdfm.graduateschool.edu/courses/performance-work-statements



CustomerRelations@graduateschool.edu • (888) 744-4723

Course Outline

Module 1: Introduction to Statements of Work (SOWs)

- Explain the services acquisition process and why clear, complete SOWs matter.
- Differentiate specification types and requirement documents, including SOW, PWS, and SOO.
- Apply FAR principles such as promoting competition and reflecting only the government's minimum needs.
- Use the order of precedence for requirements documents to select the right approach.
- Recognize how requirement wording affects competition, interpretation, and performance risk.

Module 2: Service Contracts

- Define service contracts and review common examples across federal missions.
- Trace the evolution of service contracting and diagnose frequent problem areas like poor planning and oversight.
- Distinguish personal from non-personal services and identify legal boundaries for personal services.
- Mitigate vulnerabilities with on-site contractor personnel through management controls in the PWS.
- Explain why services are difficult to describe and how to express outcomes for intangible deliverables.

Module 3: Performance-Based Acquisition (PBA)

- Summarize the Seven Steps to Service Acquisition and related DoD "Complete Guide" steps.
- Identify PBA's core elements: PWS written to outcomes, measurable standards, QASP, and incentives.
- Use market research resources and tools to inform requirements and strategy.
- State PBA objectives such as maximizing performance, competition, commercial practices, and savings.
- Develop performance indicators and standards that enable objective assessment.

Module 4: Requirements Analysis

- Perform a job analysis that produces inputs, work, outputs, workload, and resource needs.
- Develop performance indicators, performance standards, and acceptable quality levels (AQLs).
- Build an Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE) using historical data, workload, and resource analyses.
- Select and structure incentive arrangements and deductions aligned to measurable performance.
- Compile the Performance Requirements Summary (PRS) matrix to bridge analysis into the PWS.

Module 5: Writing the Performance Work Statement (PWS)

- Organize the PWS with scope, tasks, deliverables, schedules, performance standards, quality control, and special requirements.
- Write clearly using plain language, active voice, and unambiguous terms that focus on “what,” not “how.”
- Encourage innovation by avoiding prescriptive labor categories and excessive “how-to” requirements.
- Understand when to use a Statement of Objectives (SOO) and how it shifts solutioning to offerors.
- Align the PWS with the PRS so monitoring and acceptance are traceable to defined outcomes.

Module 6: Quality Assurance

- Describe the purpose and key elements of a Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP).
- Select monitoring methods that map to indicators, standards, and AQLs in the PRS/PWS.
- Identify remedies for substandard performance, including deductions when reperformance is not feasible.
- Clarify surveillance roles and responsibilities to ensure consistent, documented oversight.