

# Security Industry Qualifications.

## A Good First Step..

### The “Associate Protection Professional” Course. (APP)

by Mike Hurst

The **APP Certification** from ASIS International fills a gap in the market that has existed for some time. For many people at their start of their security careers, or those transitioning from law enforcement and military there was not a suitable certification that they could undertake.

**CPP**, which is regarded as the Gold Standard in security certifications with over 6,000 holders and growing by around 50 per month, requires 9 years’ experience (less with a Masters’ Degree) with three years in ‘responsible charge’. This represented a barrier to many, similar criteria exist for the PSP and PCI certifications.

Requiring between 1 and 4 years’ experience and the body of material covering 4 domains rather than the 7 for CPP, **APP** provides a much needed route into the security profession.

What also adds value to the certifications, is that the process is run and audited to an international standard, ISO 17024, the recertification (every three years) which requires earning **CPE (Continuing Professional Education)** is also run according to this standard.

Anyway, enough from me, here are the stories of three ASIS UK members who have sat and passed APP.

#### #1. Peter Klein.



The Associate Protection Professional (APP) appeared last year as a new first step for security professionals to begin gaining progress towards a mature certification that is globally recognised. I had been contemplating my position as an end of military career service-person for some time when I first caught sight of the APP, and I had been considering my options that would work with my transition courses and university work that is focused on a new career as a professional within the security sector.

CPP was on my bucket list of achievements to attain on that journey, but I had some reservations on true credibility of achieving the CPP level of certification with no real time spent in the corporate world beyond the military, and much of my security experience required to be put through some adaptation and enhanced with professional qualifications and experience over the next couple of years post-military transition.

APP appeared with perfect timing for me, and I jumped on the beta testing programme with the intention of:

1. Gaining a recognisable certification.
2. Proving to myself that I genuinely held transferable skills.
3. Grow an understanding of where I am in relation to gaining CPP.

I signed up mid-November and sat the APP test in the first week of January, so my preparation time was condensed, and ran alongside my university work and some project management courses. The first hurdle was acquiring the required reading, which after reaching out to the UK chapter was quickly rectified (thank you to the members who passed on loans of these assets); the second was attempting to measure what will be required for the testing – I was one of the first to attempt the exam, so no reflective work had been produced and practice tests were none existent, but members I contacted (thank you again) were happy to point out where help and information could be sourced, and there was plenty of CCP and PSP material out there to provide question examples and focuses learning in addition to the required reading.

Young professionals and new security sector arrivals will benefit from hugely from the APP, the pathway to CPP and PSP is clear from here, and personally, this experience has shown that my next step is probably closer than I thought, and plus the material and information sources are now held and used regularly in my daily work and studies, and so the depth of required knowledge for certification progress is building alongside recognisable professional credibility, both of which are necessary for the next step.

Proud to be one of the first, happy to have helped ASIS in the development, looking forward to assisting others to get on the ladder, and excited about my next steps.

## #2. Amy Clark.



Whilst the APP covers fewer modules than the more advanced qualifications, there was still much to learn and revise – perhaps choosing to take my exam right after the Christmas break was not the best idea! The topics were really interesting and I could either link them to past experiences in work, or immediately apply the new concepts I was learning in the workplace. There was also a great community feel from all the APP candidates, with many ASIS members contributing to online revision materials we could all benefit from. It was great to see the ASIS community pulling together!

For me, the ASIS APP certification has been a great way of making my CV more credible. I've worked in the security industry for several years now and have been very eager to further my career by enhancing my knowledge via a professional qualification. Being several years away from the eligibility for the CPP certification, I was delighted when ASIS created the APP - not only did the selected topics provide me in depth knowledge of areas I had not come into contact with yet, it meant I could also aspire to an ASIS qualification, which has made me more knowledgeable and improved my confidence within the security space!

Now I have the APP under my belt, I am excited to start progressing towards my next ASIS qualification, which I am now able to sit with fewer years' experience. It's a great initiative from ASIS and I wish all future candidates the best of luck in achieving their APP qualification!

Amy is part of PwC's Corporate Security Consulting team.

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### #3. Sarah Hayward-Turton.



Having been an active member of the ASIS Young Professionals committee since its inception in 2016, it has been an ongoing point of frustration and opportunity that, until very recently, there was no available ASIS certification that catered towards those who haven't been in their security role for a long period of time.

With the various levels of eligibility criteria applied to many accreditations, there seems to be a shadow of suggestion that to have a strategic approach to security, and to be able to apply common sense to a role, one must have been doing 'the job' for a set length of time. I don't believe this always to be the case.

The introduction of the ASIS APP – Associate Protection Professional – was set to address the gap for security professionals who weren't as experienced in their career to meet the eligibility criteria of other accreditations. Aimed to provide the first "rung" on the security manager's career ladder, the APP is intended for those with one to four years of security management experience.

My role as Director of Sales and Marketing at the Linx International Group is varied. Aside from managing the sales and marketing teams, I provide a consultative approach to clients and their security training requirements. To do this, I must of course understand the principles of security, the importance of a cohesive and collaborative approach, and the difference between the theory and the ability to apply demonstrable execution.

Studying for the APP exam was less of a challenge than I imagined, although the quantity of books required to study was a surprise. The books are ordered from ASIS International HQ in the USA, but they arrived within a week.. There are 7 books to read. Each book addresses a different subject and covers the usual ASIS Standards and Guidelines as per CPP.

It's been a while since I studied, and I enjoyed preparing for the actual reading. With a notepad, highlighter and pencil, I skimmed each book to begin with and then went back over the areas that were listed on the APP study guide as being a core topic within the exam.

This took me a week or two of an hour a day; learning the terminology of core principles was interesting and I enjoyed applying my existing security knowledge from previous training courses, and the experience gained within my role, to the 'language' of ASIS.

I took the exam at the Prometric test centre at Cannon Street. Getting through security there was more daunting than the pile of books I had read! A piece of advice for those taking any exam at Prometric centre – make sure your credit cards are signed with black pen...

I needed the full 2 hours in the exam, just to go back over and check all the 'flagged' questions. This was a really useful tool, as there were many questions I just needed to think harder over. The result is then emailed within a couple of hours and I was incredibly surprised to see I had not only passed but gained 780 out of a possible 800.

The APP accreditation is one I am proud to hold. It shows my clients and my peers that I have met the criteria as stipulated by ASIS, and that my knowledge and experience is backed up with a credible and well-regarded certification.

## APP Eligibility

Security Experience*	Education
One Year	Master's degree (or international equivalent) in Security Management
Two years	Bachelor's degree (or international equivalent) in Security Management
Three years	Bachelor's degree (or international equivalent) in any discipline
Four years	No higher education degree required.

\*Security experience is defined as the individual having been personally engaged in security or loss prevention on a full-time basis, or as a primary duty. Full details here:

<https://www.asisonline.org/certification/associate-protection-professional-app/>

