CERTIFICATION VIA APPROVED PRIOR LEARNING & EXPERIENCE

LCS LEVEL 2: APPLICATION GUIDANCE NOTES

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Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

Certification by Approved Prior Learning & Experience (APLE) is how senior experienced practitioners gain the LCS Level 2 award through:

- Recognition of their continuous improvement (CI) knowledge gained from learning which has taken place in the past; this can be in two forms:

  o Formal learning – gained from training by an educational institution or training provider, which may have been assessed or certified.

  o Experiential learning – gained through other activities, including casual courses, self-directed on-the-job study, implementations or through other pursuits.

- Recognition of relevant CI implementation experience and achievements gained through roles in employment.

2. THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

STAGE A: APPLICATION & CASES

1. Complete the online Level 2 APLE Application Form. This captures information on roles in employment (including CI implementation achievements) and training/education undertaken. It also requires you to make a statement summarising how your CI knowledge and practical experience meets the Level 2 criteria and asks for the names of two references that may be contacted to corroborate your application.

2. Upload to the application form certificates of related qualifications.

3. Submit the application form to the LCS.

4. Once your application is submitted, please submit two case studies via the online case study templates. These are likely to be already referenced in the application form.

   a. Please submit your case studies straight after your application.

STAGE B: APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

1. The application and case studies are assessed and the outcome communicated to the applicant. The possible outcomes are:

   a. Application and case studies fully accepted; proceed to certification.

   b. Application and case studies accepted, though insufficient/no evidence provided of formal knowledge testing; proceed to the test

    c. Revisions required to the application and/or case studies (specified in the evaluation report); make amendments and resubmit.

    d. Application and/or case studies rejected due to insufficient experience or evidence of knowledge.

2. Take the knowledge test if required.

3. Application approved.

4. Applicant invoiced and payment made

5. LCS Certificate issued & application assessment report sent

3. KNOWLEDGE TEST REQUIREMENT

Where an applicant has insufficient or no formal CI related training/education awards, he/she will be required to take a test to confirm the appropriate knowledge is held. This is an open book, timed, multiple choice test (50 questions), based on LCS level 2 topics and themes.

It will be taken online via the LCS Assessment Centre and be available to take in a one week test window, opened at a mutually convenient date. A revision guide will be available beforehand to enable the applicant to prepare.

4. LEVEL 2A & 2B

The application evaluation report will state whether the applicant will be certified at Level 2a or 2b.

Level 2b competency differs from 2a competency in that a 2b will have had:

- Higher levels of responsibility in implementation projects, for example, having sole responsibility, as opposed to being part of a leadership team.
- Greater experience through holding a variety of CI roles in organisations typically gained over at least five years.
- Involvement in implementation projects or programmes with a significant scope, for example with inter-organisational dimensions, high strategic impact, or encompassing the extended enterprise or supply chain.
- The development of a mature and deep understanding of CI thinking and associated schools of thought.

5. FEES

The fee for LCS Level 2 certification is £500.00 + VAT when no test has to be taken, or £560+ VAT when the test has to be taken. This is payable when the application has been successful.

Payment can be by bank transfer or by card.

6. CASE STUDIES GUIDANCE

INTRODUCTION

The case studies provide evidence of the effective implementation of CI knowledge in the workplace, with the applicant playing a leadership role in the project.

CASE CHARACTERISTICS

A suitable case will typically be characterised by the following:

- The applicant should have been involved in the project's design or development and have had implementation responsibility.

- The project should focus on the implementation and sustaining of appropriate internal/external value stream improvements.

- The applicant should have played a leadership role in the project, undertaking typical leadership activities, for example:

  o managing people/teams, communicating, planning, controlling, facilitating, mentoring, training, change management, strategy formation/deployment, establishing focus/setting direction and developing others.

- The project should have strategic relevance and linkage – that is, aligned to organisational purpose, objectives and strategy.

- Note that the word 'lean' does not necessarily have to feature explicitly in the case and alternative terms such as continuous improvement, operational excellence, systems thinking etc. may feature. If a project aimed to achieve the following (not necessarily all), then it can be considered suitable:

  o Release/create capacity
  o Enhance, add value for customers/stakeholders
  o Reduce waste
  o Improve throughput, flow; compress lead time
  o Improve product or service quality
  o Manage demand more effectively
  o Generate positive CI behavioural change in staff

WHICH PROJECT?

The case should have been delivered within around five years. It could relate to a current project, though clearly it will need to be completed before it can be written up and submitted, otherwise the ability to report on any meaningful results and evidence of sustainability may be limited.

CASE STRUCTURE & CONTENTS

The case report should contain the following sections:

1. Introduction
2. Method & Approach
3. Analysis & Results
4. Conclusions & Sustainability
5. Critical Reflection Summary

The case should be endorsed by an appropriate stakeholder.

The contents of each section is as follows:

INTRODUCTION

- Background and overall context of the case: eg business need, aims
- Timeframe
- Applicant's role and responsibilities → in particular in relation to leadership

METHOD & APPROACH

- The overall approach taken and methodology adopted – such as specific models, tools and techniques employed
- Data gathering and analysis undertaken
- Resources and project organisation

ANALYSIS & RESULTS

- Description of the results, outcomes, proposed 'future state'.
- Analysis and interpretation of results
- Solution options identified, implementation actions, countermeasures.
- Implementation actions taken.

CONCLUSIONS & SUSTAINABILITY

- Summary and the degree to which the original aims were met
- Impact and benefits (intended or not intended)
- Outline of the lessons learned (positive and negative)
- Sustainability, follow up actions or issues

CRITICAL REFLECTION

- Describe your critical reflection of the overall case experience
- Critical reflection:
    - A reasoning process to make meaning of an experience.
    - The process of looking back on what has been done and pondering on it and learning lessons from what did or did not work.

ENDORSEMENT

- A statement that the case provides an accurate account of what took place and resulted, eg by a line manager, customer or project sponsor

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

You can supply supplementary information to support your case, which can be uploaded to the case study report form. This could include an A3 report on the case, images, charts, presentations, maps, data tables, etc

CASES SUBMISSION

The online case study report form must be used for your case submissions. There are two forms - one for each case. A case study should be no longer than 2,500 words and each section in the online form has its own word limit.

At the end of each case there is a checklist, which asks the applicant to confirm a number of statements about the case:

- The case is strategic or transformational in nature
- The case scope encompassed a value stream, key processMy role involved planning and design activity.
- I had a leadership role and implementation responsibility.
- I demonstrated the use of improvement methods and techniques.
- I discussed the case results and its impact.
- I discussed the sustainability of the improvements made.
- I critically reflected on the case.
- The case has an endorsement from a stakeholder.

You should ensure that your case narrative enables you to check the boxes for each of these.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any confidentiality issues should be noted. The LCS policy is for projects to remain confidential and not communicated externally.

APPLICATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

Successful applicants are sent a summary report of the assessment of their application with their certificate.

7. LEVEL 2 COMPETENCE DESCRIPTION

See the Descriptor for Level 2 >>>

1. Fundamental	Level 1a	Awareness	
	Level 1b	Diagnosis & Analysis	
	Level 1c	Implementation & Improvement	
2. Technical	Level 2a	Implementation & Design	
	Level 2b	Implementation & Leadership	
3. Leadership	Level 3a	Strategic Enterprise	
	Level 3b	Strategic Supply Chain	

OVERALL LEVEL 2 COMPETENCE

- In-depth knowledge and understanding of the CI techniques and associated approaches required to develop a CI implementation programme to achieve business improvement objectives.
- Insight into the business implications of CI thinking to the wider enterprise and supply chain.
- Ability to lead CI programmes and projects with support and guidance.
- Ability to design and communicate strategically integrated CI programmes and projects.

KNOWLEDGE

LCS 2 knowledge competency focuses on:
- Strategy formation and policy deployment techniques
- Design and deployment of effective and relevant performance measures.
- Leadership skills for effective CI team management
- Advanced CI thinking knowledge and techniques
- Sustainable change and continuous improvement.
- Project management, implementation and control.
- Supply chain management (where sectorally relevant)
- Complementary philosophies, approaches and thinkers.

PRACTICE & APPLICATION

LCS 2 practice and application competency focuses on:

- Playing a leadership role in workplace implementation

- Facilitating workplace change and improvement (guiding, mentoring)

- Identifying the appropriate CI approach required to meet the organisational improvement need or objective.

- Effective planning and control

- Designing strategically aligned CI programmes

- Deploying and communicating effectively

- The ability to engage with people at all levels

- Ability to apply in the workplace a broad range of CI tools and techniques.

LCS LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

The competency at Levels 2 and 3 are primarily focused on being an effective CI leader and the overarching competencies for these levels are as follows:

1. The ability to think in terms of processes, value streams and systems; knowing how to lead systems.

2. The ability to problem solve, understand variability and waste.

3. Understanding how we learn, develop and improve; leading learning & improvement.

4. Understanding the behaviour of people.

5. Giving vision, focus and direction to the organisation.

See the Descriptor for Level 2 >>>