



Guidance for Writing a Professional Development Learning Course

Version 1



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Version History

The following table summarises the changes made to the document since the publication of the previous version.

Version number	Summary of changes
Version 1	New document

Introduction

This guidance has been designed to assist you in developing a TQUK Professional Development Learning Course (PDLC).

Overview

A TQUK Professional Development Learning Course (PDLC) is a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) style course which contains overarching learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Here are some broad examples of why you would want to develop a PDLC:

- Company-specific training gaps which are not covered in the regulated provision.
- Team building.
- Principles of management and team leading.
- Company-specific technology platforms, apps and computer systems – generic titles only unless express permission is granted from the software or technology company itself.
- Policy and process building.
- Customer and client relationship building.
- Product and service knowledge.
- Recruitment specific to the industry.

Again, this list is not exhaustive, and companies, colleges, and training providers may submit other PDLCs as part of the application. We reserve the right to refuse any course which does not meet the criteria or overlaps with one of our other endorsed course provisions.

Factors to consider when developing your course

When developing a PDLC, there are a number of factors to consider:

- Course level.
- Aims and objectives of the course.
- Language used.
- Diversity and inclusion.
- Equipment, software or technology list.

- The person delivering the course must hold a more senior job role than those undertaking the course and must have the experience or qualifications which outline their competence and knowledge in the subject matter.

Course Level

The levels of a PDLC are as follows:

Level	Description	Preferred Command Verbs
Essential/Foundation	Introduction to the knowledge and skills needed to understand basic concepts of sales, marketing, advertising, teamwork, company practices, use of software and technology in its most fundamental format. The underpinning ethics, principles and practices of the industry. Undertaken with supervision.	Define, explain, give positive and negative points, identify, plan, list, discuss, differentiate, demonstrate, show, and reflect.
Proficient/Skilled	For those wishing to progress within the company and add to their skillset. Deeper understanding of company-specific technology, relationship and client building, as well as management of people, services and products	Explain, collate, compare, consider, diagnose, differentiate, discuss, evaluate, interpret, judge, plan, provide, and summarise.
Advanced/Expert	Fluency in company-specific practices, technology, and software. A full and comprehensive understanding of client and customer relationship building, as well as scope to develop products and build on a portfolio. Management and team leading skills are mastered at this level.	Critically analyse, critically evaluate, consider, discuss, demonstrate, evaluate, implement, justify, review and revise.

It is the responsibility of the centre to provide justification as to why the chosen level is appropriate to the content.

Developing the Course

A PDLC is not a regulated qualification and, therefore, is not approved by a Sector Skills Council or accredited by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual).

We advise that if you are developing a PDLC, you think about the following questions:

- Is it mandatory training? If so, why isn't it part of the standard induction process of the role?
- Is it a day-long course for all staff or a half-day?
- Does it require additional work after or before contracted hours? If so, how many hours? Can you justify social hours for work-related training?
- Is there the appropriate number of staff, with the correct level of competency, to support the learners?
- Do staff have ample opportunity to complete some of the course hours during work time? If so, have you considered the impact of this on the workday and staff productivity, and how it may exacerbate potential stress factors in the current workload?
- What is the impact of learners not completing the PDLC? Is it part of their trial period in the role?

Developing the course's structure

Units

A unit specifies what learners need to know and understand or be able to do, and the standards of performance that will be assessed.

Your PDLC should have a minimum of one unit. There is no maximum number of units or Total Qualification Time (TQT), but it should not take more than a year to complete.

Learning Outcomes

When developing units for your PDLC, you will need to write the content in terms of learning outcomes (what the learner should be able to do) and assessment criteria (how this will be judged).

Hours

TQT is the estimated number of hours a learner is expected to spend completing all learning outcomes in the PDLC. There is no maximum number of hours; however, a maximum of one year is allowed for the approval of a PDLC.

When creating your content, it is important to consider the number of hours you would expect a learner to spend on each learning outcome. Consider whether learners have prior knowledge of the topic or if they are being introduced to anything new or complex.

Developing the course's assessment

What is assessment?

Assessment confirms whether learners understand the essential knowledge and/or competencies required for their courses. It also gives learners the opportunity to demonstrate their progress and what they have learned.

The assessment process must not compromise the learner's health and safety. Appropriate methods must always be used to make a reliable decision about whether the learner has met the expectations. It is crucial to confirm that learners' work is original and not plagiarised. All learners should have equal opportunities for successful assessments, and specific learning needs must be considered.

Types of assessment

A PDLC must have a summative assessment which demonstrates knowledge and skills. They are the type of assessment used to evaluate a learner's overall achievement at the end of a unit.

It measures how well the learner has met the learning outcomes and assessment criteria after all teaching and learning activities have been completed. Here are some examples of summative assessments:

- Essays.
- Examinations.
- Presentations.
- Observations.
- Professional discussions.

Principles of assessment

It is imperative that learners are assessed correctly and appropriately, depending on their course, to ensure they meet the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

VARCS are useful principles to follow to ensure the assessment is appropriate:

- **Valid** – the learners' work is relevant and is at the expected level.
- **Authentic** – the work is provided by the learner and not plagiarised.
- **Reliable** – the work is consistent and shows improvement.

- **Current** – the work is relevant and appropriate.
- **Sufficient** – the work meets the expected learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

Setting SMART targets for learners can enable them to plan to overcome any obstacles which could prevent them from meeting assessment criteria. SMART targets must be:

- **Specific** – clear and simple
- **Measurable** – clearly able to view whether it has been achieved or not
- **Achievable** – does not set learners up to fail
- **Relevant** – appropriate to the course and level
- **Time-bound** – has specific target dates and/or times.

We hope you've found this guidance useful. If you need any help or advice, please contact us at endorsed.courses@tquk.org.

Appendix – Examples of a PDLC Unit

Example 1

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will:	The learner can:
1. Understand the features and functions of the company's CRM and communication platforms.	1.1. Identify the core functions of the CRM system and its role in client management. 1.2. Explain how the communication platform integrates with daily operations. 1.3. Discuss common user tasks in both systems.
2. Be able to plan and conduct an induction session on the company's CRM and communication platforms.	2.1. Create a user guide covering essential CRM and communication platform functionalities. 2.2. Demonstrate the process for setting up user accounts and basic operations. 2.3. Conduct a live induction session tailored to new user needs.
3. Understand the induction process for the CRM and communication platforms.	3.1. Collect user feedback on the effectiveness of the induction session. 3.2. Analyse user performance in completing tasks post-induction. 3.3. Propose enhancements to the induction content based on user feedback.

Example 2

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	Assessment Methods
1. Be able to critically analyse the definition of critical thinking and link this to the classroom.	1.1. Critically evaluate what critical thinking is, referencing the BQA framework. 1.2. Analyse why critical thinking is an important part of the 21st-century skills suite and how it benefits students.	Short Quiz Course Completion Assessment
2. Be able to evaluate why critical thinking is important as a 21st-century skill.	2.1. Design and implement a lesson in which developing students' critical thinking is the main focus,	Practical assignment Reflection and Evaluation Course Completion Assessment