Guidance for Writing a Professional Development Learning Course

Version 2

Summary of changes

The following table provides a summary of the changes that have been made to the Endorsed Onboarding Guide since the publication of the previous version.

Version number	Summary of changes
1	New document

Professional Development Learning Courses

What is a Professional Development Learning Course?

This guide is designed to help you develop a Professional Development Learning Course.
Professional Development Learning Courses (PDLC) is a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) style course which contains overarching learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

A PDLC may cover areas such as:

- 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.

This list is not exhaustive, and companies, colleges and training providers may submit other PDLCs as part of the application.

Not every subject area can be covered by endorsement and we reserve the right to withhold the approval of an endorsed course in some specialist vocational areas. These areas include but are not limited to:

- Regulated professions (as defined in the Professional Qualifications Act).
- Qualifications that imply high-risk skills-based competency. For example, dentistry, nursing, medicine, chemical and waste management.
- Content that overlaps or competes with regulated qualifications.
- Qualifications that involve the development of techniques that aim to semi-permanently or permanently change an individual's appearance. This includes, but is not limited to: tattooing and microblading, cosmetic and aesthetic procedures, and any form of body modification (such as piercing or implants).

Could be endorsed	Why?
Leadership and Management Skills for Supervisors	This would be a good PDLC as it supports individuals already working in, or progressing towards, supervisory roles to develop their leadership, communication and team management skills.
Supporting Children with SEND in Early Years Settings	This would make a good PDLC as it enables existing early years practitioners to enhance their knowledge and skills in supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities within their professional role.
Effective Communication in the Workplace	This would be a suitable Foundation-level PDLC as it develops the essential communication skills needed to work effectively with colleagues,

	customers and other stakeholders. It supports learners who are new to the workplace or a professional role in building confidence in verbal, non-verbal and written communication, providing a foundation for further professional development.
Unable to endorse	**Why?**
First Aid at Work – Initial Certification	Where the course is intended to meet statutory workplace first-aid training requirements, it must meet the relevant HSE requirements. A general PDLC endorsement would not, by itself, demonstrate compliance or establish occupational competence.
Gas Installation and Maintenance	Practical gas work requires appropriate competence and, where applicable, Gas Safe registration. A PDLC cannot replace the required training, assessment and registration arrangements.
Clinical Procedures and Administration of Medication	Where the course is intended to authorise individuals to undertake clinical procedures, additional practical assessment, supervision and professional or employer requirements may apply. PDLC endorsement alone would not establish competence to practise.

Professional Development Learning Courses (PDLCs) require a clear structure with units, learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Your learners will also have to demonstrate their knowledge and skills by completing assessments during or at the end of the course.

Once you have decided that a PDLC is right for your learners, follow the rest of this document to help you design your learning programme ready to submit to us for approval.

Creating your Professional Development Learning Course Document

Naming and levelling your course

Start by giving your course a name that helps learners understand what they will be learning. Make sure that there is no reference to being regulated or TQUK anywhere in the title.

Titling conventions for Professional Development Learning Courses (PDLCs) are below including some examples. Levelling choices must be reflected in the course content and assessment criteria. PDLCs have a tiered approach to levels.

Your title can include a reference to how many hours long the course is, but does not have to.

Level **Professional Development Learning Course** **in/for specific work or community-based skills and knowledge gap** **(course hours)**

e.g. *Foundation Professional Development Learning Course in Supporting Retail Floor Staff*
Proficient Professional Development Learning Course in Delivering IT Systems Induction to Clients and Colleagues (15 hours)
Advanced Professional Development Learning Course in Leading Account Presentations for New Clients

We recommend the three stages of levelling listed in the table below and their associated command verbs for PDLCs.

Level	Description	Suggested 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 important to note that any PDLC approved by TQUK does not earn any unit credit and is not recognised as a national qualification. A PDLC is not a regulated qualification and, consequently, is not approved by a Sector Skills Council or accredited by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual).

TQUK will consider a PDLC application up to and including Advanced/Expert. Any courses submitted at Advanced/Expert could be reviewed by a Subject Matter Expert (SME) due to their complexity and the depth of the level and assessment. This will incur additional costs as outlined in the Fees document. We reserve the right to have an SME review courses at Advanced/Expert if they are in a highly specific or niche area.

Course Purpose

Provide an outline around the aims of the course and what is it trying to achieve. This helps learners understand the reason they will take the course and the knowledge and skills they should gain.

The course is designed to develop learners' knowledge, understanding and practical skills in planning, delivering and evaluating effective IT systems induction sessions. The course is designed for individuals who are responsible for supporting clients and colleagues in using workplace IT systems, including customer relationship management (CRM) and communication platforms. Learners will develop the skills to explain system functions, produce appropriate guidance materials, deliver induction sessions tailored to user needs and evaluate their effectiveness. The course aims to enhance learners' professional competence, build confidence in supporting others and promote the effective use of IT systems within the workplace. . Areas covered include:

- *[Bullet pointed topics]*

Entry Requirements

Do the learners need any to hold any specific pre-requisites or have any knowledge in any area before attending the course? What is the minimum age of learner? This information helps to make sure that learners who register for your course are eligible to attend.

Learners should have prior experience of using workplace IT systems, including customer relationship management (CRM) and communication platforms, and possess a basic understanding of their functions and applications. Learners should also have sufficient digital literacy and communication skills to support others in using IT systems. It is recommended that learners have some experience of supporting colleagues or clients in a workplace environment, although previous experience of delivering formal induction sessions is not essential.

Progression

Where relevant, identify potential progression routes available to learners following completion of the course. These may include further professional development courses, qualifications or employment opportunities.

Successful learners may progress to other courses, qualifications or employment opportunities, such as:

- Course Name
- Qualification Name
- Employment Role

Structure

What is the structure of the course? If the course has multiple units, then list them. Does the learner have a choice of units to make up the course – mandatory and optional?

Guided Learning Hours and Total Course Time

Guided Learning Hours (GLH) - These hours are made up of all contact time, guidance or supervision of a learner by a lecturer, supervisor, tutor, trainer or other appropriate provider of education or training.

Total Course Time - This is an estimate of the total length of time it is expected that a learner will typically take to achieve and demonstrate the level of attainment necessary for the award of the course i.e. to achieve all learning outcomes. Total Course Time is comprised of GLH and an estimate of the number of hours a learner is likely to spend in preparation, study or any other learning including assessment which takes place as directed by, but not under the supervision of, a lecturer, supervisor or tutor.

Once you have designed your course you need to total up the time you think an average learner would take to complete the course. Each separate unit might have it's own GLH.

Tutor / Assessor Requirements

All members of staff involved with the course should be occupationally competent in the subject area being delivered. This could be evidenced by a combination of:

- A higher level qualification in the same subject area
- Experience of the delivery/assessment of a course in the same subject area
- Work experience in the subject area of the course

Staff members will also be expected to have a working knowledge of the requirements of the course and a thorough knowledge and understanding of the role of tutors/assessors. They are also expected to undertake continuous professional development (CPD) to ensure they remain

up to date with work practices and developments associated with the courses they teach and assess.

List any required courses or qualifications that your Tutors and Assessors require to deliver the course.

Course Units

You are now ready to write your course content. Topics for a course are usually organised into Units so that a learner can logically progress through their learning journey. Units contain learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Units should ideally be developed to focus on one area, such as 'communication skills' or 'equality and diversity'.

Glossary of terms:

Unit Title - Should clearly indicate the content of the unit with a simple statement. Your course needs to have at least one unit. The more units your course has, the greater the total course time.

Learning outcomes - Broad statements that describe the results of a learning process. Learning outcomes should clearly indicate what a learner is expected to know, and/or understand and/or be able to do and not the learning activities. Each unit needs at least one learning outcome, usually more.

Assessment criteria - Statements which specify learner achievements and are associated with a specific learning outcome. These indicate the standards by which a judgement can be made about whether the learner has achieved or not yet achieved. The criteria should be observable, measurable and indicate the standard expected when the learner is assessed. Verbs used within the assessment criteria should link to the level of the course. Each learning outcome needs to have at least one assessment criterion.

Assessment requirements - Each unit should provide assessment requirements that specify how your assessment will be conducted. This information helps your tutors and assessors to standardise delivery and assessment. These may relate to the unit as a whole or individual LOs or ACs depending on the evidence needed.

The table below is a common structure for laying out course information clearly as it shows how assessment criteria link to individual learning outcomes.

Unit Title:	*Delivering and Evaluating CRM and Communication Platform Inductions*
Guided learning hours:	12 hours
Learning outcomes The learner will:	Assessment criteria 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	*Be able to evaluate the effectiveness of an induction session on 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.*

Assessment Requirements:

This unit must be assessed through a combination of multiple-choice questions, written responses and practical activities.

Learning Outcome 1: Multiple-choice questions assessing knowledge and understanding of CRM and communication platforms.

Learning Outcome 2: Practical assessment requiring learners to produce a user guide, demonstrate system functions and deliver an induction session.

Learning Outcome 3: Two written questions supported by evidence of feedback collection, evaluation and recommendations for improvement.

Assessment may take place in the workplace or through realistic, simulated activities.

Learners must provide sufficient, authentic evidence to demonstrate achievement of all assessment criteria.

Assessment Methods

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.

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.

Learners need to be assessed correctly and appropriately 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.

Make sure to include a copy of your assessments when submitting your course application. We check to see if the assessments meet the assessment criteria set out in your Course Unit detail.

Endorsing your course

Once you have completed your programme of learning, submit your application for endorsement by filling in this form.

The form gathers information TQUK needs to review for endorsement. You will need to attach your course content document and your assessments as supporting documents for the application.

What happens next?

Once we have received your application, we will review the application and the course to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Our strict 2 step review process supports high quality learning provision. As part of this process, we will ensure that:

- all requested documents are present and completed in full
- the correct Subject Sector Area has been selected
- the course objectives are clear and stated in full
- the course does not overlap or conflict with a regulated qualification
- the centre fully understands the assessment expectations of their chosen course type
- the titling meets TQUK guidelines
- the centre has provided details of what will be taught and assessed
- the individual delivering the course is appropriately qualified.

You will receive feedback about your course following review. There are three possible outcomes:

1) Your course application is approved
2) Your course application requires amendments – Sometimes your course might need amendments to wording, titles, assessment methods. We will always provide guidance on how changes can be made. You resubmit the required information for approval.
3) Your course application is rejected - In very rare cases, we may have to reject an application. Typically, this is because the course clashes with, or is in an area of regulated provision.

Once your course is approved, we will provide you with a formal letter of confirmation and you are ready to deliver!

Advertising your course

Now your course is ready to be advertised, it's important to understand how to advertise your course. As a regulated awarding organisation, TQUK is subject to the Conditions of Recognition as set out by Ofqual. These Conditions don't just extend to us; all our centres must adhere to them as well.

All advertising must be clear and accurate, and state that the course is endorsed and not a regulated qualification. Any marketing of the course must avoid making any misleading claims about outcomes, progression, or recognition, and any use of TQUK's logo must follow our brand guidelines. You can find out more information about our advertising regulations here.

Claiming certificates

When your learners have completed your course, you can claim their certificates with TQUK Endorsement. Submit your Endorsed Course Certificate Request along with the learner

certification spreadsheet that was issued to your centre on course approval. Your e-certificates will be sent to you following processing by our Operations team.

If you or your learners would prefer a physical copy of their certificate, additional charges apply for this service.

Annual Quality Assurance Review

Each year we will work with you to review your course and ensure it is still fit for purpose. It's your course, so you are the expert in what is working and what needs to be changed!

We will contact you when your review is due, asking a series of questions that focus on the practical application of your course. We will ask you to consider learner feedback you have received and what successes and challenges you have encountered in the last year. Once complete, we can then support in making changes to ensure that your course and the staff delivering it are keeping up to date with the latest developments in your sector.

We hope you'll find this guidance useful, but if you do need any help or advice, you can contact us at endorsed.courses@tquk.org and we can offer additional guidance and support.