

How to become an
lcs accredited organisation



About **Lean** Competency System

The Lean Competency System (LCS) is a continuous improvement (CI) qualifications framework and community network for organisations, practitioners and employees.

What the LCS offers...

- ✓ A qualifications framework with seven levels of competency.
- ✓ Organisations a structure around which a lean training system or programme can be developed in order to improve skills and foster the creation of a CI culture.
- ✓ Employees and practitioners a clear pathway for the development of their lean thinking capability, and for their professional development.
- ✓ A collaboration, networking and peer-to-peer learning resource for a community of continuous improvement practitioners.



What is LCS accreditation?

LCS accreditation is an independent endorsement of an organisation's CI training system, indicating it is well organised, effectively managed, professionally delivered and technically robust.

An organisation is accredited when it has demonstrated its CI training is fit for purpose and aligned with the LCS levels. It signifies a commitment to high standards and continuous improvement, being able to award **Certificates of Lean Competency** to those it trains. The LCS accreditation philosophy is to empower the organisation to define the standard and quality that it considers is appropriate to its environment and context. Indeed, the LCS accrediting approach accommodates the needs of the organisation's training system, as much as the training system accommodates the needs of the LCS.



Benefits of accreditation

LCS accreditation plays an important role in developing employee **lean capability** and shaping a **continuous improvement culture**.

Here are some of the **key benefits** of having an organisation's CI training system LCS accredited.

- 1 The qualifications underpin employee motivation to engage in Lean/CI
- 2 The accrediting process helps improve the design, integration and professionalism of your training system.
- 3 Your training system receives external endorsement from a recognised institution.
- 4 The structure helps promote employees' professional development.
- 5 It links your training with practical application to directly benefit business performance.
- 6 It gives you a standard that you can apply throughout the organisation.
- 7 It provides you with a flexible framework that can be adapted to suit the organisation's CI approach
- 8 LCS Certificates provide reward and recognition to employees



The seven levels of lean competency

The LCS framework has **seven levels** of competency covering the spectrum of lean knowledge and application. An organisation can initially become accredited to any number of levels; for example, it could start with just Level 1a, or Levels 1a, 1b and 1c or even all levels from 1a to 2b; also, it can easily change levels at any point during its accreditation.

A detailed description for each level will be provided, to make it clear what knowledge and practical capability is required.

Fundamental	
Level 1A	Awareness

Level 1B	Diagnosis & Analysis

Level 1C	Improvement & Implementation
Technical	
Level 2A	Implementation & Design

Level 2B	Implementation & Leadership
Strategic	
Level 3A	Strategic Enterprise

Level 3B	Strategic Supply Chain

Which organisations can become accredited?

The LCS is used by a wide variety of organisations across many countries and in many sectors including: banking, insurance and financial services, manufacturing, logistics and distribution, education, media, healthcare, local and central government, energy and utilities and professional services. Accreditation is also suitable for consultancies with a lean or continuous improvement training capability, which is used to train their clients' staff.

There are two versions of accreditation for organisations, [SME](#) and [Standard](#). The first is for small companies or start-ups, and the latter for larger companies and organisations.

Key points about accreditation fees

- ✓ They are based on the forecast number of certificates issued over the two-year period
- ✓ There are six fee bands, ranging from up to 100 certificates to 1,000 certificates per annum.
- ✓ Additional Level 1a certificates may be purchased on a per unit basis if high volumes are to be issued.
- ✓ There is a special rate for public sector organisations.
- ✓ Re-accreditation fees are lower than the initial accreditation fee.
- ✓ Fees can be amended at any point should certificate volumes be greater than forecast.

LCS SME Accreditation	LCS Standard Accreditation
Fees from... £1,750 2 Year licence	Fees from... £4,250 2 Year licence
Designed for the needs and operating conditions of start up or smaller enterprises.	For organisations with their own lean training capability for staff (or planning one).
The accredited company delivers training aligned to the LCS framework, though does not administer knowledge tests.	For consultancies or training companies with a lean training system capability for clients' staff or for public programmes.
The LCS organisation organises assessments via its on-line testing facility and issues Certificates to successful candidates.	Provides independent endorsement of lean training, indicating it is well managed, professionally delivered and technically robust.
Accredited companies pay a comparatively smaller accreditation fee, plus a fee per certificate issued to learners.	For practitioners, the LCS offers a qualification which has high perceived value and external credibility.
Accredited organisations are licenced for two years and can promote and market their accredited status.	Accredited organisations are licenced for two years and can issue Certificates of Lean Competency to learners.
Learners who receive LCS certificates are eligible to register as Practitioner Members of the LCS community free of charge .	Learners who receive LCS certificates are eligible to register as Practitioner Members of the LCS community free of charge .

How does an organisation become accredited?

To become LCS accredited for the first time, an organisation must have an existing CI training system or be in the process of implementing one.

A submission portfolio needs to be assembled to enable a thorough evaluation of the key components of the system. This is then scrutinised to ensure that it has the capability to deliver effective learning and practical capability, whilst maintaining LCS standards over the two-year licence period.



Accreditation process

1 LCS lean accreditation guides and forms are sent to applicant

The Portfolio Submission Form is used to capture training system information.

2 Registration form is submitted

The applicant submits its Registration Form, thereby committing to the accreditation process.

3 Planning: gap analysis & timetable developed (applicant)

An optional Gap Analysis helps scale the submission task and a timetable with a target completion date is agreed, along with a review approach.

4 Portfolio assembled (applicant)

The applicant builds the submission that describes its system and provides supporting evidence, such as training material and assessments.

5 Ongoing review (LCS/applicant)

The portfolio can be submitted in draft or by section and feedback is provided via a Progress Checklist. The number of drafts submitted will vary according to the review approach, and indeed, there may only be one submission.

6 Final submission (applicant)

When all the elements in the Progress Checklist are shown as 100%, the submission is considered complete.

7 Sign off meeting (LCS/applicant)

The Sign Off meeting confirms accreditation and prepares the applicant for the period ahead. Ongoing responsibilities are discussed, certificate branding is agreed and the latest LCS developments and collaboration opportunities are highlighted.

8 Welcome pack sent (LCS)

The Welcome Pack contains the accreditation confirmation letter, general terms, the organisation's certificate and personal certificate template, plus a range of supporting communication material.

Re-accrediting

An organisation can renew its accreditation every two years. The LCS will contact the organisation six weeks before accreditation expiry asking if it wishes to re-accredit. Re-accreditation is a simpler process than the initial accreditation and essentially requires a description of LCS activity over the past two years, capturing any changes made and outlining future plans.

How **long** does the process take?

The first time accreditation process typically takes between two and four months to complete, during this time a thorough understanding of the lean training system will be gained, including its alignment with the LCS framework.

In some cases, the accreditation process can be completed in under a month. The time taken varies considerably depending on the size of the organisation, the existing system in place and how quickly resources can be allocated to prepare the submission.



Customer testimonials

"The LCS framework provides the company with flexibility to deploy lean knowledge in its own business language. It also gives us flexibility to adapt the training content and method to actual business needs. As a result of this, employee engagement increases as participants can relate the concepts to their everyday lives - and official certification provides an additional motivation for all."

Global Head of Continuous Improvement & Lean
Leading provider of worldwide supply chain & logistics solutions

"I've just put my whole team through 1c accreditation and many of our front line colleagues through 1b and you can feel the step change".

Business Excellence Director
Major UK support services provider

"LCS Accreditation helps to make staff the architects of their own success. It gives them the key to work more efficiently."

Director of Learning
Lean training consultancy

"LCS accreditation allows us to reward and recognise all our leaders, managers and associates for their continuous improvement knowledge and practical application, ensures our training, facilitation and coaching methods, materials and activities are robust and meet a universal standard and provides a legacy system that will help ensure our desired future state".

Business Excellence Manager
UK food manufacturer

Created by the LERC and licenced by Cardiff University

The LCS was created in 2005 by the Lean Enterprise Research Centre, Cardiff Business School, as a mechanism to promote and develop lean understanding and application in organisations. In 2014 a new company was launched to hold the Cardiff University LCS licence, with a remit to develop and promote the LCS.



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