

Accreditation for  
Consultancies



# About the Lean Competency System

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

A consultant with a CI training capability can become an [Accredited Certifier of Lean Competency](#) enabling it to issue LCS [Certificates of Lean Competency](#) to learners who progress through its training. It's a valuable addition to the consultant's service, as building staff CI capability is a critical part of the journey towards a sustainable CI culture.

## What the LCS offers consultants...

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- ✓ Added value to the core training offering that can improve margins and create competitive advantage.
- ✓ A solution to the need of companies and practitioners for accredited training and qualifications with strong market presence and high perceived value.
- ✓ Independent endorsement of the consultant's CI training credentials and capability.
- ✓ A professional development and CI learning progression structure for its own or clients' staff.
- ✓ A means to link training with workplace implementation thus improving training effectiveness and also offering additional business opportunities with the client.
- ✓ A flexible CI framework with an holistic underpinning CI philosophy that ensures the LCS can be adapted to the differing needs and circumstances of clients.
- ✓ Opportunities to engage with senior client management that can enhance the overall business relationship.



# About Accreditation

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

A consultant is accredited when it has demonstrated its CI training is fit for purpose and aligned with the LCS levels. Accreditation signifies a commitment to high standards and ongoing improvement and the right to award Certificates of Lean Competency to those it trains. The LCS accreditation method is to empower the consultant to define the standard and quality that it considers is appropriate to its client's environment and context. Indeed, the accrediting approach ensures that the design of the training system can be accommodated by the LCS.



The LCS promotes an holistic, systems approach to lean thinking, acknowledging that lean is much more than simply improving processes through the application of tools and prescriptive principles. The LCS accepts that there are many different CI methodologies and maintains that organisations require their own, bespoke implementation solutions for sustained, cultural change – thus adopting a [contingent](#) approach. It contends that successful lean organisations employ lean strategies, lean leadership and understand the need for an engaged, empowered workforce.

## Benefits of Accreditation

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- ✓ Adds value and income to the core training offering.
- ✓ Offers the potential for research and collaboration opportunities.
- ✓ Can help broaden and strengthen the client relationship.
- ✓ The LCS international dimension facilitates cross-border training.
- ✓ Provides a market differentiator and competitive advantage.
- ✓ Greater assurance through external endorsement by a respected body.
- ✓ Boosts your brand's lean training credentials.

# The seven levels of lean competency

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The LCS framework has **seven levels** of competency covering the spectrum of CI knowledge. A consultant can initially become accredited to any number of levels; and easily change levels at any point during its accreditation.

The LCS takes an **outcomes** approach: the focus is on training delivering the right outcomes for learners and less concern with the precise means to achieve the outcomes.

Note that detailed descriptors for each level are available.

## Fundamental

Level 1A	Awareness
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Level 1B	Diagnosis & Analysis
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Level 1C	Improvement & Implementation

## Technical

Level 2A	Implementation & Design
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Level 2B	Implementation & Leadership

## Strategic

Level 3A	Strategic Enterprise
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Level 3B	Strategic Supply Chain

# Suitability & Accreditation Types

LCS accreditation is suitable for consultancies of all sizes and there are two options from which to select: Standard and SME.

Standard accreditation is for larger companies and gives full control over all elements of the LCS operation - including the management of assessments and the issuing of LCS certificates. SME accreditation is for small companies or start-ups that may have limited delivery resources, which prefer a lower up front investment and appreciate the benefits that independent testing can offer.

The main difference between the two is that with the SME version, knowledge testing is undertaken by the LCS Assessment Centre and LCS certificates are issued by the LCS, rather than the accredited consultancy. Also, the up front accreditation fee is significantly lower and there is a charge for each certificate issued.

## Key points about Standard Accreditation fees

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- ✓ They are based on the forecast number of certificates to be 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.
- ✓ Fees can be amended at any point should certificate volumes be greater than forecast.
- ✓ There are no other fees payable other than the initial accreditation fee.
- ✓ Re-accreditation fees are lower than the initial accreditation fee.
- ✓ 50% of the accreditation fee is due on Registration, with the remainder due on completion of the accrediting process.
- ✓ View the accreditation fee ready reckoner on the LCS website to see fee levels for different scenarios.

## LCS SME Accreditation

## LCS Standard Accreditation

Fees from...  
**£1,750**  
2 Year licence

Fees from...  
**£4,950**  
2 Year licence

For start-ups or smaller consultants with a CI training capability for their clients' staff or the general public.

For larger consultants with a CI training capability for their own staff, their clients' staff or for the general public.

The consultant delivers training aligned to the LCS framework, though does not administer knowledge tests.

The consultant delivers training aligned to the LCS framework, is responsible for all testing and issues LCS certificates.

The consultant pays a low initial accreditation fee, and then a fee per certificate issued to learners.

The accreditation fee is based on the number of certificates to be issued over two years, based on six fee bands.

Consultants are licenced for two years and can re-accredit thereafter.

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Consultants can promote their accredited status using LCS branding. Each LCS certificate has the Cardiff University logo along with that of the accredited consultant.

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Learners who receive LCS certificates are eligible to register as Practitioner Members of the LCS community **free of charge**.

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# How Does a Consultant Become Accredited?

To become LCS accredited for the first time, a consultant should have an established CI training programme or system.

A submission portfolio is assembled describing the key components of the training programme or system. This is assessed by the LCS to ensure that it has the capability to deliver effective learning and practical capability, whilst maintaining LCS standards over the two-year licence period.

The first time accrediting process typically takes between one and three months to complete.

## Submission portfolio contents:

- ✔ Organisation & background
- ✔ CI training system/programme overview
- ✔ Course information: aims, learning outcomes
- ✔ Training material & delivery
- ✔ Assessment
- ✔ Course teaching
- ✔ e-Learning
- ✔ Quality assurance & continuous improvement
- ✔ Training support & administration



# The accrediting process

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## 1 LCS lean accreditation guides and forms downloaded (applicant)

The Portfolio Submission Form is used to capture training information.

## 2 Registration form is submitted (applicant)

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

## 3 Planning & timetable developed (applicant)

A timetable with a target completion date is agreed, along with a review approach.

## 4 Portfolio assembled (applicant)

The applicant develops its online submission that describes its programme 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 consultant's certificate and personal certificate template, plus a range of supporting communication material.

## Re-accrediting

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A consultant can renew its accreditation every two years. The LCS contacts 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 report of LCS activity over the past two years, capturing any changes made and outlining future plans.

# LCS Continuing Professional Development

LCS CPD is a unique facility for “Professional Practitioners” that complements the LCS framework and offers opportunities to support CI managers as they continually enhance their CI capabilities.

Based on the PDCA model, the annual cycle starts with the creation of an A3 personal development plan. Ongoing learning, application and communication activities that address development gaps are recorded, with periodic self-assessment and reflection that provide clear evidence of progress.



## Customer testimonials

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*"The yellow and greenbelts are going very well. My company is growing [and] the LCS is very important - that is a reason companies want to work with me. Organisations are really making big steps during and after the training."*

**Owner**

*European Improvement Consultant*

*"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 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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