

## CERTIFICATION VIA APPROVED PRIOR LEARNING & EXPERIENCE

# LCS LEVEL 2: GUIDANCE NOTES

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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Certification of Approved Prior Learning & Experience (APLE) is the process for senior practitioners gain the LCS Level 2 award through:

- Recognition of their lean/continuous improvement knowledge gained from learning which has taken place in the past; this can be in two forms:
  - Formal learning – gained from training by an educational institution or training provider, which may have been assessed or certified.
  - Experiential learning – gained through other activities, including casual courses, self-directed on-the-job study, implementations or through other pursuits.
- Recognition of relevant lean/continuous improvement workplace based implementation experience and achievements gained through roles in employment.

## 2. THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

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1. Complete the online [LEVEL 2 APLE APPLICATION FORM](#). The form captures information on roles in employment (including lean implementation achievements) and training/education undertaken. It also requires you to make a statement summarising how your lean knowledge and practical experience meets the Level 2 criteria and the names of two references that may be contacted to corroborate your application.
2. Attach copies/images of any relevant training course or academic certificates to the application form.
3. Provide two implementation case studies. These are likely to be already referenced in the application form. See **section 6** below for more information.
4. Submit to the LCS organisation (click Submit at the end of the form)
5. The application will be assessed and the outcome communicated to the applicant. The possible outcomes are:
  - a. Application fully accepted; proceed to certification.
  - b. Application accepted, though insufficient/no evidence provided of formal knowledge testing; proceed to the test (see **section 3** below).

- c. Revisions required to the application (specified in the evaluation report); make amendments and resubmit.
  - d. Application rejected due to insufficient experience or evidence of knowledge.
6. If the evaluation outcome is b) above, take the knowledge test.
  7. Application approved.
  8. Applicant invoiced.
  9. LCS Certificate presented.

### **3. KNOWLEDGE TEST REQUIREMENT**

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Where an applicant has insufficient or no formal lean 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**

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

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 lean roles in organisations typically gained over at least five years.
- Involvement in implementation projects with a significant scope, for example with inter-organisational dimensions, high strategic impact, or encompassing the extended lean enterprise or supply chain.
- The development of a mature and deep understanding of lean thinking and associated schools of thought.

### **5. FEES**

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The fee payable for LCS Level 2 certification is £395 + VAT where no test has to be taken or £445 + VAT where the knowledge test has to be taken. This is paid when the evaluation of the submission has been successful.

Payment by card is available via a standard invoice or via the [LCS Shop](#).

## 6. CASE STUDIES GUIDANCE

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### INTRODUCTION

For LCS level 2 certification evidence of the effective implementation of lean knowledge in the workplace is demonstrated through the submission of a case study which should clearly document how the applicant has implemented a lean initiative.

The case should demonstrate the effective application of continuous improvement principles and tools to produce an organisational benefit at an appropriate scale/level and the applicant should have played a central role in inception, implementation, leadership and management.

### CASE CHARACTERISTICS

The case will typically be characterised by the following:

- The applicant should have been involved in the project's design and/or development
- The project should focus on the implementation and sustaining of appropriate internal/external value stream improvements.
- The applicant's role should have involved elements of management and leadership (eg managing people or team, communication, engagement, planning, control etc).
- The applicant should have had significant levels of implementation responsibility.
- The project should have 'strategic 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:
  - Release/create capacity
  - Enhance, add value for customers/stakeholders
  - Reduce waste
  - Improve throughput, flow; compress lead time
  - Improve product or service quality
  - Manage demand more effectively
  - Generate positive CI behavioural change

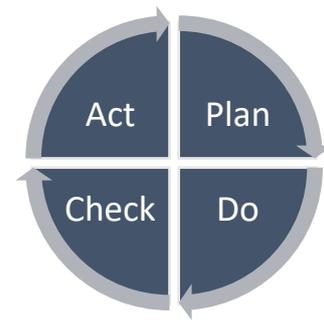
### WHICH PROJECT?

The case can relate to roles undertaken within c. 5 years. It could relate to a current project, though clearly, it will need to be completed before it can be written up and submitted and the ability to report on any meaningful results and evidence of sustainability may be limited.

## CASE STRUCTURE

The case structure should ideally reference an improvement model the provided guidance or a framework, such as PDCA or DMAIC and should typically contain the following sections:

1. Aims & Background
2. Description, Method & Role
3. Results & Analysis
4. Conclusions & Sustainability



The case should be endorsed by an appropriate stakeholder.

## DETAILED STRUCTURE & CONTENTS

The indicative content of each section is shown below; note that this is not prescriptive and alternatives may be used.

### AIMS & BACKGROUND

- Overall context of the case: eg business need, objectives, purpose, timing.
- Problem statement, if appropriate: an articulation of the 'current state' problem that the project is supposed to solve, eg areas with issues that need to be addressed.

### DESCRIPTION, METHOD & ROLE

- Case or project title and overall description.
- The role of the applicant
- Outline the overall approach taken and methodology adopted – such as specific models, tools and techniques employed
- Describe data gathering and analysis undertaken
- Resources and project organisation

### RESULTS & ANALYSIS

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

### CONCLUSIONS & SUSTAINABILITY

- Summary and critical evaluation of the overall case experience
- Impact and benefits (intended or not intended)
- Outline of the lessons learned (positive and negative)
- Sustainability, follow up actions or issues

### 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

## LENGTH & FORMAT

The case can be presented as a standard written report using the structure above or as an A3 report (plus supporting documents, information where appropriate).

An example of an A3 report template is shown in Appendix I, though there are several alternatives and the applicant may wish to his/her own version.

Note that confidentiality issues should be stated, though the norm is for all projects to remain confidential and not communicated externally or beyond LCS assessors.

## 7. LEVEL 2 COMPETENCE DESCRIPTION

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

## OVERALL LEVEL 2 COMPETENCE

- In-depth knowledge and understanding of the lean techniques and associated approaches required to develop a lean implementation programme to achieve business improvement objectives.
- Insight into the business implications of lean thinking to the wider enterprise and supply chain.
- Ability to lead lean programmes and projects with support and guidance.
- Ability to design and communicate strategically integrated lean 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 lean team management
- Advanced lean 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 lean approach required to meet the organisational improvement need or objective.
- Effective planning and control
- Designing strategically aligned lean programmes
- Deploying and communicating effectively
- The ability to engage with people at all levels
- Ability to apply in the workplace a broad range of lean tools and techniques.

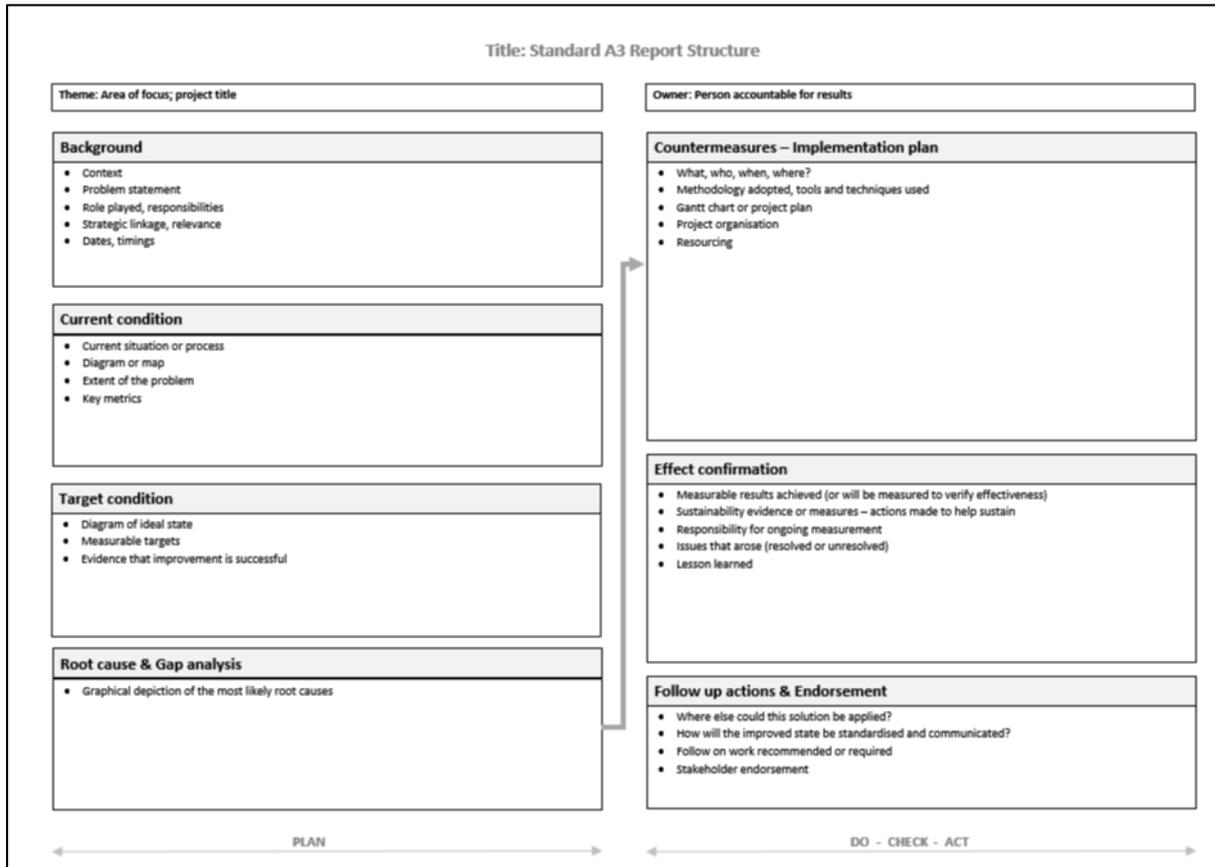
## **LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES**

The competency at Levels 2 and 3 are primarily focused on being an effective lean 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.

## APPENDIX I - A3 TEMPLATE

An A3 report template can be used to record the implementation activity and an example is shown below. Note that it does not have to be followed by the letter and can be adjusted to meet specific requirements.



This template can be downloaded as a Word document and should be available as an attachment in this PDF document.