



TLM Level 4 Certificate in Applied Learning Design

The Level 4 Certificate in Applied Learning Design advances educators' professional skills and deepens their understanding of effective teaching and learning. It provides a flexible and transferable framework that integrates advanced theory with applied practice, enabling participants to align their professional development with their teaching context and goals. The qualification supports educators to design, deliver, and evaluate purposeful learning experiences that promote creativity, critical thinking, and learner independence, while strengthening reflective and evidence-informed practice.

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The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) was designed by the UK government's Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency now replaced by Ofqual. The RQF is referenced to the European Qualifications Framework devised by the European Union

The assessment model for the qualifications presented in this publication was designed by TLM in consultation with Peembeck, an international organisation with over 35 years of experience in delivering high-quality music education. Peembeck brings a deep understanding of pedagogy, psychology, andragogy, didactics and methodology in education, placing a strong emphasis on creativity, innovation, and learner engagement.

The logo for Peembeck, featuring the word "peembeck" in a lowercase, sans-serif font, followed by a small yellow dot.

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1. For those in a hurry!

Please read the rest of the book later as the details are important!

- 1.1 TLM's assessment model is common to most of its qualifications. It is based on competence-based assessment of coursework using a portfolio of evidence and supported by a free optional cloud-based evidence management system.
- 1.2 Learners must demonstrate competence against the assessment criteria from their day-to-day work and the tutor assessor must verify that they are competent in relation to the general level descriptor using indicative assessment criteria. TLM's external moderator will check the judgements and the quality of the evidence and provide feedback. This process is not graded, the intention is that it is a flexible way of checking basic practical competence in the subject at the qualification's framework level.

Procedures

- 1.3 The first thing to do is to arrange assessor training with TLM. TLM trains at least one assessor as Principal Assessor who must accept responsibility for standards within the Centre. The Principal Assessor can train and appoint assessors within the Centre as long as they are competent to take on the work and are willing to sign an agreement on the web site to uphold standards.
- 1.4 TLM will provide initial training in the pedagogical model, and using the supporting technologies to provide the evidence needed. The purpose is to get you started and then we provide on-going support to ensure you are confident and we can work as a professional partnership. We advise new Centres to do some coursework assessment early so that they can receive feedback and quickly become confident in doing routine coursework assessment. Our aim is to make this no more onerous than normal routine assessment that anyone would do as a normal part of the teaching job. This gives more time to focus on teaching and therefore to support raising attainment.

2. Introduction

The Level 4 qualification in Applied Learning Design aims to advance educators' skills and deepen their understanding of effective teaching and learning. It provides a transferable framework that supports high-level pedagogical practice across a range of educational and training contexts. The programme blends advanced theory with applied practice, enabling participants to align their professional development with specific goals and settings. It equips educators with the tools to design, deliver, and evaluate purposeful learning experiences that promote creativity, critical thinking, and learner independence. Learners are encouraged to extend their professional practice, demonstrate reflective capability, and apply innovative approaches within their own educational environments.

- engage in learning that is relevant to them and that will provide opportunities to develop a range of skills and techniques, personal skills and attributes essential for successful performance in life
- achieve a nationally-recognised Level 4 Qualification
- develop their own personal growth and engagement in learning.

2.1 Level 4 Certificate in Applied Learning Design

The objective of the qualification is to prepare learners with the knowledge and confidence to develop their own skills.

optional

Unit 1 – Essentials of Learning (5 credits).

Unit 2 – Essentials of Neuroscience for Learning (5 credits).

Unit 3 – Essentials of Teaching and Learning Design (5 credits).

Unit 4 – Essentials of Student Engagement (5 credits).

Unit 5 – Essentials of Communication and Feedback (5 credits).

3. Summary of Qualification Specification

3.1 Level 4 Certificate (Annexe A)

The Level 4 Certificate is a qualification designed to enhance and develop learners' life skills and build their confidence with an engaging learning journey.

Qualification Title: Level 4 Certificate in Applied Learning Design

Qualification Number: XXX/XXXX/X

Qualification Level: Level 4

Total Credits: 25

Guided Learning Hours: 175

Total Qualification Time: 250

Assessment Methods: Coursework, E-assessment, Portfolio of Evidence

Assessment

Learners must demonstrate competence against the assessment criteria from their communication and involvement with the training materials and the trainer assessor must verify that they are competent in relation to the general level descriptor using indicative assessment criteria. TLM's external moderator will check the judgements and the quality of the evidence and provide feedback. This process is not graded, the intention is that it is a flexible way of checking basic practical competence in the subject at the qualification's framework level.

Mandatory Units –

Unit 1 – Essentials of Learning (5 credits).

Unit 2 – Essentials of Neuroscience for Learning (5 credits).

Unit 3 – Essentials of Teaching and Learning Design (5 credits).

Unit 4 – Essentials of Student Engagement (5 credits).

Unit 5 – Essentials of Communication and Feedback (5 credits).

3.5 Assessment

The internally assessed, externally moderated coursework for all qualifications is pass/fail but by submitting the evidence for external moderation, feedback can be given to the tutor on areas to improve for resubmission.

Evidence must be provided against the unit assessment criteria from practical tasks related to the learners' everyday work supported by tutor observations, portfolio completed, and or activities inline with the learning materials

The way evidence is gathered is up to the assessor, the only requirement is that it clearly supports the judgements against the assessment criteria and the relevant learning outcomes.

If on formative assessment the account manager finds gaps in evidence relating to a particular candidate, they will request more evidence before approving the award or the unit certificate. Assessors must then adjust their work to ensure all their learners are providing the appropriate level and breadth of evidence.

We encourage early submission of at least some evidence so that assessors are confident from the feedback that what they are providing is sufficient. In this way we can maintain standards while supporting improved efficiency.

Centres will be subject to the TLM Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) and further details of this, including our centre guidance, is freely available on the TLM website in our Policy Download Centre. <https://tlm.org.uk/policy-download-centre/>

4. Qualification Content



Mandatory	Optional (for reference)
X CREDITS	
Unit 1 – Essentials of Learning (5 credits). Unit 2 – Essentials of Neuroscience for Learning (5 credits). Unit 3 - Essentials of Teaching and Learning Design (5 credits). Unit 4 – Essentials of Student Engagement (5 credits). Unit 5 – Essentials of Communication and Feedback (5 credits).	

5. Support

Guidance and Assistance

- 5.1** There is further guidance for coursework assessment on the TLM web site. All centres have an assigned Account Manager who will be pleased to help at any time. Our aim is to give professional assessors, most of whom are qualified tutors, the confidence to make judgements with a minimum of bureaucracy so that they can focus their time on maintaining their professional knowledge, skills and supporting learning through effective teaching rather than “chasing paper”.

There is often a confusion between bureaucracy and rigour, since unnecessarily complex bureaucracy can actually detract from rigour by obscuring the importance of the outcomes.

- 5.2 Web sites** - TLM provides support through cloud-based systems. Providing assessment grades and the management of certification through the TLM Centre management system is mandatory and all assessors are provided with training in its use.

It is simply a matter of recording learner competence against the unit criteria as the evidence is collected and claiming a certificate on behalf of the learner when a unit has been fully assessed.

- 5.3** Use of the online community learning site is entirely optional. It offers a streamlined way for learners to submit evidence and for assessors and verifiers to manage feedback and tracking, reducing administrative workload for centres that choose to use it.
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- 5.4 Telephone** and e-mail support are available to all Centres. There is a general convention of `firstname.secondname@tlm.org.uk` for e-mail addresses.
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6. Registration & Procedures

Registration

- 6.1** TLM's registration model allows centres to enter learners at times convenient to them. There are no late entry fees and no additional fees should a learner fail to produce evidence at a level but can meet the criteria at a lower level. This can reduce costs to the centres when compared to other qualifications.

There are no fees for replacement certificates or verification of certificates because all certificates can be directly authenticated against TLM's secure database.

Internal standardisation

- 6.2** The Principal Assessor has the ultimate responsibility for consistency in assessment standards within a centre. All assessors have signed a contract agreeing to uphold standards and should therefore co-operate with the Principal Assessor and Account Manager at TLM to ensure that standards across the centre are consistent.

It is advisable to send work samples to TLM early to check that evidence is at the right standard so that there is time to make any adjustments necessary to the course and learner expectations.

TLM will generally check a higher quantity of work from new assessors and feedback to ensure that they are confident to make appropriate judgements over time. This reduces risk and improves efficiency in the longer term.

Authentication

- 6.3** All assessors must take reasonable steps to ensure that any coursework evidence submitted by candidates is a true reflection of the candidates' competence. This is in keeping with the assessor undertaking to uphold and maintain standards in the contract with TLM.

- 6.4** Certificates can be easily authenticated online by entering the certificate number or scanning the QR code printed on the certificate.

This service is free of charge and encourages routine verification, which helps strengthen overall security.

When authentication is not quick and accessible, the risk of certificate fraud increases significantly.

With the growing sophistication of technologies—especially AI-powered image generation—creating highly convincing forgeries is becoming easier and more common, making robust authentication methods more important than ever.

7. Other Considerations

Access arrangements and special requirements

- 7.1** All TLM's qualifications are intended to be accessible, as widely as possible.

Please refer to the Annex for further information.

Centres should contact TLM if they have any questions related to accessibility issues

Language

- 7.2** The language for provision of this qualification is English only. This will only change if we have a significant demand in another language that is sufficient to cover the additional costs involved.

Malpractice

- 7.3** TLM has comprehensive policies and procedures for dealing with malpractice. These are documented with links on the web site at <https://tlm.org.uk/policy-download-centre/>

Assessors should be familiar with these policies and make them clear to candidates. Assessors should inform their account manager if they suspect any instance of malpractice that could have a material effect on the outcome of any assessments, either for themselves or colleagues.

This is part of the upholding of standards that is part of the contract with TLM.

Equality of opportunity

- 7.4** TLM promotes equality of opportunity through policies and procedures. These are again documented in detail on the web site.

Resources, Support and Training

- 7.5** A clear goal is to enable learners to support all their IT user needs using resources freely and legally available from the internet. This is related directly to national policies for inclusion and equality of opportunity.

- 7.6** TLM does not require centres to use free and open-source software (FOSS), but it actively encourages its use, particularly in the context of embedded systems development and operations.

Most of the essential tools required to support the practical elements of this qualification, such as Linux distributions, code editors, compilers, network analysis tools, and system monitoring utilities, are freely available and widely used across industry.

By equipping learners with the skills and confidence to work with open-source technologies, we not only promote independence and digital resilience but also support the growing demand for professionals who can operate effectively in open, collaborative development environments.

The use of open-source resources also provides a cost-effective solution for schools, training providers, and learners, aligning with sustainable and inclusive approaches to digital education.

Annexe A

Level 4 Certificate in Applied Learning Design - Unit assessment - coursework guidance

The **Level 4 learner** has practical, theoretical, and/or technical knowledge and understanding of their occupational area to address well-defined but complex and non-routine problems. They can analyse, interpret, and evaluate relevant information and ideas. The holder is aware of the nature and approximate scope of their area of work or study, and has an informed awareness of different perspectives or approaches within it.

AND/OR

The learner can identify, adapt, and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills to complete work activities, inform actions, and address problems that are complex and non-routine, though normally well-defined. They can review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions, and results.

Moderation/verification: The assessor should keep a record of assessment judgements made for each candidate and make notes of any significant issues for any candidate. They must be prepared to enter into dialogue with their Account Manager and provide their assessment records to the Account Manager through the on-line mark book. They should be prepared to provide evidence as a basis for their judgements should it be required by the Principal Assessor or their Account Manager/external moderator. Before authorising certification, the Account Manager must be satisfied that the assessor's judgements are sound.

General Information

The Level 4 qualification has the following characteristics for learners:

- Apply detailed theoretical and practical knowledge to complex, non-routine problems.
- Demonstrate autonomy, initiative, and sound judgement in managing activities or projects.
- Take responsibility for decision-making and, where appropriate, for guiding others or allocating resources.
- Evaluate and refine approaches to teaching, learning, and assessment using evidence-informed practice.
- Operate with independence and accountability, adapting methods to meet varied professional and educational needs.

Requirements

- Assessors must, as a minimum, record assessment judgements within the online mark book on the TLM certification site.
- Evidence supporting assessment outcomes should be drawn from the learner's professional practice and may include teaching materials, lesson plans, schemes of work, and evaluative commentary.
- Learning approaches should be adapted to meet diverse learner needs, including those requiring additional support.
- A unit certificate will be awarded once the learner demonstrates secure achievement of all assessment criteria at Level 4 standard, evidencing independent analysis and application.
- The Certificate normally requires around 175 guided learning hours, with recognition of prior learning permitted where appropriate. Certification is based on outcomes.
- The learner must securely meet all Level 4 criteria to achieve.

Mandatory Unit – Level 4, Unit 1 – Essentials of Learning

1. 1. Principles of Effective Learning	2. Navigating Learning Approaches
1.1 I can explain the concepts of spaced repetition and retrieval practice and their application in improving long-term memory retention.	2.1 I can differentiate between visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, and multimodal learning preferences and discuss their practical application in teaching.
1.2 I can identify active engagement strategies and discuss their effectiveness in enhancing student participation.	2.2 I can analyse the controversies around learning styles and propose evidence-based strategies to address diverse learner needs.
1.3 I can explain evidence-based concentration techniques to enhance student focus, reduce distractions, and improve learning retention.	2.3 I can discuss the role of reflexive learning in developing self-awareness and fostering continuous improvement in students and educators.
	2.4 I can describe strategies for implementing self-regulated learning, including goal-setting and self-assessment, to promote independent learning.

Mandatory Unit – Level 4, Unit 2 – Essentials of Neuroscience for Learning

1. Understanding the Biological Foundations of Learning	2. Cognitive Processes and Their Impact on Learning	3. Enhancing Learning Through Neuroscience Principles	4. Practical Applications of Neuroscience in Education
1.1 I can describe the basic structure and functions of key brain regions involved in learning.	2.1 I can explain the role of memory formation processes, including encoding, storage, and retrieval, in enhancing learning outcomes.	3.1 I can integrate the principles of educational kinesiology, such as brain gym and cross-lateral movements, to support diverse learner needs.	4.1 I can apply knowledge of brain chemistry to create effective teaching strategies that enhance student motivation and learning.
1.2 I can describe the influence of myelination on neural efficiency and expertise development.	2.2 I can discuss the concept of cognitive dissonance and its implications for fostering critical thinking and deeper understanding.	3.2 I can explain how physical movement can enhance cognitive processes and overall learning outcomes.	4.2 I can discuss the significance of the “plasticity and canalisation” framework in designing adaptive learning experiences.
1.3 I can identify how sleep impacts memory consolidation and cognitive function in the learning process.	.		4.3 I can develop teaching approaches that leverage neuroscience principles to accommodate individual learner differences and needs.

Mandatory Unit – Level 4, Unit 3 - Essentials of Teaching and Learning Design

1. Foundations of Pedagogical Techniques	2. Assessment and Feedback in Teaching	3. Differentiating Instruction for Diverse Learners	4. Effective Classroom Management
1.1 I can describe the principles of student-centred and experiential learning approaches.	2.1 I can principles of effective student assessment.	3.1 I can explain how learning environments can optimise learner potential.	4.1 I can describe strategies for managing classroom dynamics to create a positive learning environment.
1.2 I can explain scaffolding and evaluate when to apply direct vs indirect instructional methods.	2.2 I can describe Constructive Feedback Strategies	3.2 I can apply principles of differentiated instruction to support independence, personality development, and SMART goal-setting	4.2 I can explain the role of body language and classroom layout in influencing behaviour and learning outcomes.
1.3 I can explain how concepts such as <i>ignition</i> and <i>deep practice</i> support learner mastery.			4.3 I can the impact of effective classroom management on learner engagement and achievement

Mandatory Unit – Level 4, Unit 4 – Essentials of Student Engagement

1. Facilitating Group Learning	2. Active & Experiential Learning	3. Independent & Play-Based Learning	4. 4. Motivation & Engagement Strategies
1.1 I can explain strategies for promoting group cohesion and collaboration in project-based learning	2.1 I can explain the concept of flow and its significance in enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes.	3.1 I can incorporate different play-based learning concepts to enhance engagement, creativity, and skill development in students.	4.1 I can recognise how habitual behaviours influence learning and guide students in initiating positive habit changes for long-term success
1.2 I can apply cooperative learning models and discuss how mirror neurons may influence collaborative experiences.	2.2 I can compare and apply different models of Project-Based, Inquiry-Based, and Flipped Learning to support student-led discovery.	3.2 I can compare the benefits of structured vs. free play and apply appropriate strategies for different age groups	4.2 I understand different types of motivation and how they impact student engagement.
			4.3. I can apply practical engagement strategies, including gamification, goal-setting, and autonomy-based approaches, to increase participation

Mandatory Unit – Level 4, Unit 5 – Essentials of Communication and Feedback

1. Foundations of Effective Communication	2. Building Rapport and Trust in the Learning Environment
1.1 I can explain communication as an interactive process, including the feedback loop and its importance in education.	2.1 I can describe strategies for fostering rapport and trust with learners to create a positive and supportive learning environment.
1.2 I can evaluate the impact of digital and analogue communication methods on learner engagement"	2.2 I can explain how values, underlying assumptions, cultural backgrounds, and expectations shape educator-learner relationships and contribute to creating a positive learning environment.
1.3 I can describe the key elements of verbal and non-verbal communication, such as tone, body language, and facial expressions, and their effects on learning.	2.3 I can utilise the principles of matching and mirroring to improve rapport and connection with learners.
1.4 I can analyse the principles of Watzlawick's communication theory and their relevance to teaching practices.	2.4 I can apply questioning techniques to facilitate deeper learner engagement and understanding.

Teacher Guidance

Please refer to the TLM webpages for the latest teacher guidance

Accessibility Policies

TLM firmly believes that every learner should have an equal chance to excel in their studies and assessments, regardless of any disabilities they may have. To achieve this goal, TLM has developed a comprehensive and well-structured reasonable adjustment policy that is specifically tailored to cater to the needs of learners with disabilities. This policy is not only an essential aspect of TLM's commitment to inclusivity but also an integral part of creating a diverse and accessible learning environment.

The reasonable adjustment policy is designed to support learners with disabilities in various ways. It encompasses a range of accommodations, such as providing additional time for examinations, offering alternative formats for study materials, permitting the use of assistive technology, arranging for sign language interpreters, and ensuring accessible physical facilities. The implementation of these reasonable adjustments is meticulously carried out to ensure that they meet the individual needs of each learner, acknowledging the unique challenges they may face.

TLM is dedicated to making the reasonable adjustment process transparent and easily accessible for all stakeholders. Thus, the details of the policy are made readily available to all, including learners, educators, and TLM Centres. These details can be found on TLM's official website, ensuring that everyone is well-informed about the support and accommodations available to learners with disabilities.

Additionally, TLM Centres play a crucial role in facilitating this process. They are empowered to submit requests for other reasonable adjustments on behalf of learners, based on their specific requirements and circumstances.

TLM firmly believes that promoting a culture of inclusivity and understanding is fundamental to fostering an environment where learners can thrive, irrespective of their abilities or disabilities. By continuously evaluating and refining its reasonable adjustment policy, TLM ensures that it remains up-to-date with the best practices in the field of inclusive education.

TLM Qualifications is deeply committed to its duty as an awarding organisation to provide reasonable adjustments for learners with disabilities in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. By adhering to its comprehensive reasonable adjustment policy and collaborating closely with TLM Centres, TLM strives to create a learning landscape that supports and empowers all learners, ensuring they can reach their full potential and achieve academic success

TLM Accessibility Policy: <https://tlm.org.uk/policies/general-requirements-for-regulated-qualifications/#3>

TLM reasonable adjustment policy: <https://tlm.org.uk/reasonable-adjustments-and-special-considerations-policy-2/>

TLM reasonable adjustments request form: <https://tlm.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TLM-RASC-form-1.docx>

TLM reasonable adjustments request form: <https://tlm.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TLM-RASC-form-1.docx>

Alignment with the CASLO Approach

This qualification has been designed in line with the principles of the CASLO approach, ensuring each unit is clearly defined in terms of learning outcomes and assessment criteria, with outcomes structured around observable knowledge, skills, and behaviours. In doing so, we embrace CASLO's strengths in transparency, clarity, and learner-centred planning for curriculum, teaching, and assessment.

While we recognise that CASLO qualifications are typically characterised by a mastery model, whereby all outcomes must be met to achieve a pass, we have chosen to adopt a holistic approach to evidence collection and assessment. This means learners may demonstrate their achievement of outcomes across multiple pieces of evidence, and assessors may consider a broader context of performance, rather than requiring separate, isolated confirmation for each criterion.

This approach supports:

- flexibility in delivery and learner pacing
- the integration of learning across units
- and better accommodates diverse learner journeys, particularly for adults returning to education or learners with mixed prior experience.

We are aware of the potential limitations of the CASLO model—such as the risk of learner failure due to narrowly missing a single outcome—and have mitigated this by embedding formative assessment opportunities and maintaining strong internal quality assurance to support valid, reliable, and fair judgements.

By doing so, this qualification respects the CASLO model's intent—to confirm specified learning outcomes—while avoiding overly rigid application of the mastery principle that could undermine learner success or the demonstration of real-world competence.