

# Competent Practice

*Using the CLD Competences to reflect, develop and progress*



On behalf of the Standards Council, I am pleased to introduce this guide to the refreshed CLD Competences. The guide is part of the Competency Toolkit we have designed to support the innovative and creative CLD practice being developed across Scotland.

The impetus for refreshing the CLD Competences was the recognition of our changing sector, which has presented new challenges and opportunities, and therefore altered the needs of practitioners, organisations, learning providers and the communities that we all work with.

The Competences form a key part of the quality assurance process for CLD. They can be used by individuals to reflect on their own practice; by leaders to strengthen their organisations; by training providers to inform the design and delivery of future learning programmes, and with our partners to support effective partnership working.

So, wherever you work in the context of CLD, I trust you will find this guide helpful and thought-provoking – and I encourage you to check back regularly for the development of other resources at [www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk](http://www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk)

**Rory Macleod**  
Director



## **The Standards Council for CLD for Scotland**

---

The CLD Standards Council is the new professional body for everyone active in community learning and development in Scotland and was founded in March 2009.

We have over 50 practitioners from across the CLD sector involved in the work of the Council ensuring that a representative and diverse range of stakeholder interests are actively involved in developing and evaluating our work. Enthusiastic and committed members are channelling their energies into developing CLD practice through our four committees: Executive, Approval of Training Programmes, Continuing Professional Development and Registration Committees.

Further, in developing our work, we are committed to sustained discussion with fieldwork practitioners.

For more details of how you can get involved or learn more about the Council's work, current committee members and up to date news and events in the community learning and development sector please visit our website: [www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk](http://www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk)

---

## **Our Core Responsibilities**

---

The CLD Standards Council will work with the sector to establish and maintain high standards of practice in CLD across Scotland. Our aim is to work with all everyone in the sector to:

- Deliver a professional approvals structure for qualifications, courses and development opportunities for everyone involved in CLD
- Consider and establish a registration system available to practitioners delivering and active in CLD practice
- Develop and establish a model of supported induction, CPD and training opportunities

---

## **Continuing Professional Development**

---

We are committed to continuous learning and the transformative effect it has on individuals, organisations and communities. We believe in celebrating learning, relishing challenge and reflecting critically on our practice. We aim to embed a culture of learning in our sector.

## The Purpose of the Competences

The competences are not a checklist to be completed; they are a tool to help develop practice. They can be used to:

- build capacity for effective partnership working
- enable outcome focused practice
- link the academic and practice worlds effectively
- link development to learner aspirations

The framework brings together the knowledge, skills and organisational and personal characteristics that make up competence in CLD.



A PowerPoint presentation exploring the CLD Competency Framework in full, including descriptions of the **purpose, context and indicators** for each of the seven competences can be downloaded free from our website:

[www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk](http://www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk)

## Values of CLD

**Self-determination** - respecting the individual and valuing the right of people to make their own choices.

**Inclusion** - valuing equality of both opportunity and outcome, and challenging discriminatory practice.

**Empowerment** - increasing the ability of individuals and groups to influence issues that affect them and their communities through individual and/ or collective action.

**Working collaboratively** – maximising collaborative working relationships with the many agencies which contribute to CLD and/or which CLD contributes to, including collaborative work with participants, learners and communities.

**Promotion of learning as a lifelong activity** – ensuring that individuals are aware of a range of learning opportunities and are able to access relevant options at any stage of their life.

## **Competent CLD workers**

---

Competent CLD workers will ensure that their work supports social change and social justice and is based on the values of CLD. Their approach is collaborative, anti-discriminatory and equalities-focused and they work with diverse individuals, communities of place or interest and organisations to achieve change. They can influence or lead people, understanding when this is or is not appropriate.

Central to their practice is challenging discrimination and its consequences and working with individuals and communities to shape learning and development activities that enhance quality of life and sphere of influence. They have good interpersonal and listening skills and their practice demonstrates that they value and respect the knowledge, experience and aspirations of those involved. They will initiate, develop and maintain relationships with local people and groups and work with people using:

- non-formal contact;
- informal support; and
- informal and formal learning and development opportunities

Competent CLD workers will also have self-management skills that are appropriate to the level at which they are practising. While these are not detailed in the competences, they are covered through the SCQF framework and the National Occupational Standards.

You need to be clear about the intention of any intervention you undertake and how this will support social change and how it relates to the outcomes you want to achieve.

## **Critically reflective CLD workers**

---

CLD practitioners are aware of their values and principles and critically reflect on their practice and experience so that they integrate their knowledge, skills, values and attitudes and use these effectively in their work. They use self-assessment, participative processes and evidence of the impact of their work to plan and manage their activities.

As a reflective practitioner you take responsibility for your own learning and seek to develop your skills, knowledge and key attributes. You are able to choose the practice role that is suitable to the situation.

## The Five Key Attributes

---

- **Knowledge and understanding**

Training, theory and practice provide the basis of acquiring new knowledge and growing understanding

- **CLD values and principles**

The values and principles of CLD are fundamental in ensuring both the social justice outcomes of CLD and the skills needed and the processes chosen. These are:

- Self-determination
- Inclusion
- Empowerment
- Working collaboratively
- Promotion of learning as a lifelong activity

- **Attitude and behaviour**

Personal development in the form of the focus, self management, effective communication and presentation, responsibility and accountability, the ability to influence and to deal with complexity, change and diversity and self development of practitioners in a range of relationships and partnerships

- **Skills and processes**

Interpersonal and listening skills and the ability to negotiate with and influence people where appropriate are essential. As is the ability to initiate, develop and maintain relationships with other professionals and with local people and groups and work with people using:

- non-formal contact;
- informal support, and
- informal and formal learning and development opportunities

- **Reflection and action**

So that you integrate your knowledge, skills, values and attitudes with your experience and use self assessment, participative processes and evidence of the impact of your work to plan and manage your activities and identify your learning and development needs.

**Competence: Know and understand the community in which we work**

**Purpose:** so that practitioners can work with individuals and communities to identify and plan action based on knowledge of some of the internal and external influences at work.

**Context:** understanding the context within which our work takes place will be based upon our knowledge of social, political and wider environmental influences on communities. Competent CLD practitioners are aware of the relevant global and local factors that impact on the community with which they work.

As a competent practitioner with an understanding of the community/ environment in which you work, you will be able to demonstrate that you can:

- conduct an external community/ environment assessment, considering the political, economic and social context of the community;
- investigate internal views and information relating to the area within which you work;
- critically analyse internal and external factors impacting on individuals and communities;
- identify needs, assets and opportunities using relevant information and evidence;
- involve other stakeholders in identifying and agreeing needs and local priorities;
- evidence an awareness of challenges relating to barriers to participation within the local community/environment;
- ascertain conflicting needs and demands.

**Competence: Build and maintain relationships with individuals and groups**

**Purpose:** so that people's ability and opportunities to work together are enhanced.

**Context:** CLD is built upon the interactions between people, be these community members, activists or those working with organisations offering support. These relationships provide the basis to support learning and engage people in action to support change within their communities.

As a competent practitioner able to build and maintain relationships with individuals and groups you will be able to demonstrate that you can:

- seek out and engage with individuals, groups and communities;
- practise in different roles, such as facilitating, supporting, leading, advocating, that are appropriate to the work in which you are involved;
- use informal dialogue in individual relationships and within groups;
- handle challenges and opportunities constructively;
- understand and deal with the underlying dynamics at work within relationships and groups;
- work towards the resolution of conflict;
- recognise the power dynamic and action needed to equalise power relationships in decision making;
- facilitate endings for individual and group relationships where appropriate.

**Competence: Provide learning and development opportunities in a range of contexts**

**Purpose:** so that people can identify and achieve their individual and collective goals.

**Context:** CLD is based on providing learning and development opportunities that are accessible and responsive to individual and community priorities. These opportunities create personal and community benefits such as improving self-confidence and skills and enhancing employment opportunities, as well as supporting health and well-being, community regeneration and individual and community activity.

As a competent practitioner able to provide learning and development opportunities in a range of contexts you will be able to demonstrate that you can:

- provide education and development opportunities that are developed in dialogue with individuals and communities;
- generate learning opportunities that will stimulate personal and community change;
- tackle barriers to participation;
- develop, design and deliver learner-centred programmes;
- take advantage of learning and development opportunities in everyday situations;
- use appropriate methods and techniques;
- support progression and transition;
- use appropriately targeted methods to promote learning and development opportunities.

**Competence: Facilitate and promote community empowerment**

**Purpose:** so that people can take individual and collective action to bring about change.

**Context:** CLD practice is built on critical analysis of internal and external factors that influence individual and community priorities and has a distinctive role in working with people to take action to identify and influence decisions that impact on the quality of individual and community life.

As a competent practitioner able to facilitate and promote community empowerment you will be able to demonstrate that you can support individuals, groups and communities to:

- analyse and understand power dynamics and decision-making processes;
- use community action as a means to achieve change;
- be inclusive and involve the wider community;
- interact within and across communities;
- participate in decision-making structures and processes;
- campaign for change;
- identify and manage community assets.

**Competence: Organise and manage resources**

**Purpose:** so that individuals, communities and organisations can achieve effective management of community assets and resources, services and organisations.

**Context:** CLD practitioners need to understand the culture of organisations, the responsibilities of those involved and how organisation and management styles, practices and governance relate to sustainable organisations.

As a competent practitioner with an understanding of planning, organising and managing resources you will be able to demonstrate that you can:

- develop and plan programmes and project activities;
- manage and monitor programmes and project activities;
- promote and manage a culture based on equality;
- organise, deploy and monitor resources effectively;
- recruit, manage and support people (staff, volunteers);
- identify and access funding/ resources;
- understand and manage risk;
- interpret and apply relevant legislation (e.g. equalities, Child Protection, Health and Safety).

**Competence: Develop and support collaborative working**

**Purpose:** so that people can enhance decision making and collaborative activities that impact on the quality of life of individuals and communities.

**Context:** CLD practitioners need to understand, recognise and value the benefits of collaboration and build appropriate and effective alliances, networks and other forms of working together.

As a competent practitioner able to develop and support collaborative working you will be able to demonstrate that you can:

- develop and support collaborative working within your own organisation;
- initiate collaborative working with relevant organisations;
- participate in partnership and collaborative working;
- support community participation in partnership and collaborative working;
- clarify and articulate the role of your own organisation and that of others;
- negotiate and agree roles in collaborative and joint work, taking a leadership role where appropriate;
- identify, put in place or provide appropriate training and development opportunities for collaborative working;
- challenge and be challenged on issues undermining effective partnership working being aware of tensions and conflicts;
- manage the ending of collaborative and joint relationships.

**Competence: Evaluate and inform practice**

**Purpose:** so that robust evidence can sustain, inform, influence and change policy and practice.

**Context:** Competent CLD practitioners require to build evidence-based practice based on an appreciation of the value of research and evaluation. They need knowledge of the methods and techniques commonly used and an understanding of the current issues and challenges in evaluation, quality assurance and performance measurement in CLD.

As a competent practitioner with an ability to evaluate and inform practice you will be able to demonstrate that you can:

- understand the differences between research, evaluation and associated concepts;
- employ appropriate tools, frameworks and methodologies in the evaluation of practice;
- draw on evaluation findings to inform your own practice;
- use participative evaluative processes;
- promote and support community led research and evaluation;
- analyse policy, research and evaluation evidence;
- learn from other perspectives and challenge your own assumptions;
- interpret and use evidence related to outcomes and impact;
- present evidence to a range of audiences using appropriate tools and technologies.

## How can I use the Competences?

---

The Standards Council in conjunction with Linked Work and Training Trust has produced a series of Competence *How to Guides* for the following groups:

- **Practitioners**
- **Leaders**
- **Employers**
- **Learning Providers**
- **In Partnership**

The Guides are available to download from the Competence section of our website:  
[www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk](http://www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk)

---

## How can I find out more?

---

For more information on the Standards Council and our activities, please contact Kirsty Horne, our External Relations Development Officer:

The CLD Standards Council  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
The Optima  
58 Robertson Street  
Glasgow  
G2 8DU

Phone: 0141 282 5263

Email: [khorne@ltsotland.org.uk](mailto:khorne@ltsotland.org.uk)

