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2024 - 2025

Candidate Guide

Level 4 Diploma in Life Coaching (LC-L4)

This RQF qualification is regulated by Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland.

Qualification/learning aim number: 601/2608/5

Counselling & Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body (CPCAB)

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Please note:

This document, along with candidate support materials, can be downloaded from the [CPCAB Website](#). These provide you with the information needed to enable you to maximise your learning on this course and to complete the qualification successfully. If you need help with the accessibility of this document, please email contact@cpcab.co.uk with your request.

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1. Introduction for Candidates

You are undertaking a course that leads to a nationally regulated qualification awarded by the Counselling and Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body (CPCAB) – the only nationally regulated awarding body to specialise in the field of counselling and supervision.

This qualification is for candidates who want to train to become an independent life coach. Successful completion of this course means that you would be able to work as an independent life coach, or to seek employment as a life coach in a range of related sectors such as health and social care, advice and advocacy, mentoring and public services.

The qualification includes training on how to:

- » Work within an ethical framework for independent life coaching practice.
- » Support clients to develop their health, wealth and happiness.
- » Support clients to flourish.
- » Integrate a range of life coaching knowledge, skills and techniques in life coaching work.
- » Incorporate philosophy, theory and research in life coaching work.
- » Work as a reflective and self-aware practitioner.

Tip:

Know your limits: You will need clinical supervision as an independent life coach and be able to work within your personal and professional limits of competence.

2. Qualification Structure

This qualification is made up of 7 learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria. This structure is based on the 7 processes of the [CPCAB's Model](#) and [CPCAB's Life Coaching Practitioner Model](#).

Tip:

Think of the assessment criteria as learning tasks which you complete and then record so that your tutor can see you have achieved the task.

To achieve the qualification, you **MUST** be internally assessed by your tutor as **Proficient** in all seven learning outcomes#.

Tip:

Remember you can gain a great deal from the course without necessarily gaining the qualification. The journey is as important as the destination.

This qualification is eligible for fully in-person, or blended delivery. Up to 25% of the Guided Learning Hours (GLH) of this qualification can be delivered online. This qualification is not suitable for full online delivery.

3. Internal Assessment

Art students keep a portfolio of their coursework which they use to show other people what they, as artists, have learnt. In a similar way you need to keep a portfolio of your coursework, which you can use to show your tutor what you have learnt. Keeping a portfolio of your coursework will not only provide your tutor with evidence of your learning, but also really help you with the learning process itself.

You also need to complete your (Candidate Learning Record (CLR)), which should be placed at the front of your portfolio to signpost the evidence for each assessment criterion. The CLR has brief notes beside each assessment criterion to help you understand what is being asked for and guidelines on how to record your learning.

You must give **two** pieces of evidence for each criterion. In addition, the CLR (when complete) must include references to the following three types of course work¹:

1. **Documents** – You must include a learning and life change journal², a self-review (see section below on the tutor-assessed self-review), a case study, a client record (minimum of 30 one to one hours), a supervision record and a personal life coaching record (minimum of 6 hours by the end of the course). You must also include a review of a 15-minute transcript of life coaching work. You might also include tutorial records (when written by you) notes on your personal development.³
2. **Tutor observation** – You must include records of tutor feedback on (a) your life coaching practice sessions (can be via audio or video recording⁴) and (b) a case presentation. You might also include tutorial records (when written by your tutor), and tutor feedback on group discussions (including contributions to seminars, group-work and group training supervision).
3. **Testimony** – You must include records of peer feedback on your life coaching practice sessions and one supervisor report. You might also include, for example, peer feedback on case presentations and group discussions (including contributions to seminars, group-work and group training supervision), and client evaluation/feedback.
 - See LC-L4 Specification for a summary of minimum assessment requirements.
 - See the CPCAB film on How to build a student portfolio.

¹ Please note that if it's appropriate you can reference the same section of your portfolio, or the same piece of work, a number of times.

² This is an ongoing review of learning during the course.

³ Your personal development may result from insights gained from the course, other personal development work, tutorial records or from personal counselling.

⁴ In the case of the tutor observation of life coaching skills, the tutor may choose to listen to (or watch) the recording, rather than observe you directly.

Tip:

It is a good idea to outline possible sections in your portfolio, for example:

- Document: learning reviews
- Document: self-review
- Tutor observation: tutor feedback on counselling practice
- Testimony: peer feedback on counselling practice

An example reference in your CLR might read: *Learning and life journal p 21, para 3, lines 3-6 (document)*
Peer feedback sheet No 6, line 29 (testimony)

CPCAB recommends that you attach Criteria Assessment Sheet (CAS) to any work you hand in to your tutor for assessment. Your tutor can use the CAS to tell you which criteria you have met and to give you helpful feedback throughout the course. In this way you can gradually collect evidence as you go along and keep track of what evidence you still need to look out for.

Self-review

Towards the end of your course your tutor will support you to complete a self-review of your learning. A template document is available on the [CPCAB website](#). This will allow you to reflect on what you have learnt and show your understanding of life coaching work. Your tutor will assess your self-review and provide you with feedback on how you are progressing towards competence in all 7 areas. If you need to undertake any specific activities to address areas for development your tutor's feedback will explain how to do so.

Tip:

Meeting criteria is important, but the experience of learning about being an independent life coach should be much richer than criteria. Try to keep a balance.

After you have completed your portfolio your tutor will look at the evidence you have referenced in your Candidate Learning Record (CLR) and assess whether or not you have completed the assessment criteria, achieved the learning outcomes and met all the other qualification requirements. They may well decide that you are not yet Proficient – and will identify what you still need to complete/achieve and how you might work towards doing this.

- Your tutor will give you further guidance on developing your portfolio, the three types of coursework and filling in the Candidate Learning Record.

The final assessment of your work is recorded on the Completion Statement at the end of your Candidate Learning Record.

Tip:

It is important to realise that simply presenting evidence to meet criteria may not be sufficient to meet the overall learning outcomes and/or the qualification requirements. Your tutor may have observed substantive evidence which indicates that a specific assessment criterion or learning outcome has not been met despite evidence you have submitted. If that is the case, they may record a final result of Not Proficient on the basis of contraindications.

Please note that all the work you include in your portfolio is *assessable material*, so it may be seen not just by your tutor but also by all those involved in your training centre's internal assessment process or any associated appeal or complaint. Such people will include the internal moderator and verifier as part of internal quality assurance (IQA) as well as the CPCAB external verifier.

4. Equal Opportunities and Reasonable Adjustments

In order to make sure that assessment is fair to all candidates, CPCAB requires all recognised centres to have an effective candidate support system in place and to make appropriate arrangements to meet individual assessment needs. You can ensure that your own learning and assessment needs are being met by discussing your own needs/difficulties with your tutor, who can ensure that you receive the appropriate support at your centre. Please talk to your centre prior to your enrolment and about any additional support that you may need regarding learning and assessment.

Please see CPCAB's [Reasonable Adjustment Guidance for Centres](#).

Both CPCAB and centres are required to recognise and comply with both the spirit and the word of equal opportunities legislation. Previous Acts were amalgamated into the [Equality Act 2010](#).

See [CPCAB's Equal Opportunities Policy](#).

5. Appeals and Complaints

CPCAB are committed to maintaining standards across our recognised centres so that the public can have confidence in us and our qualifications. We provide our own complaints and appeals policies for the benefit of centres and candidates.

Please view our policies on Complaints, Appeals and Whistleblowing on the [CPCAB website](#).

All CPCAB approved centres are required to have a complaints and appeals procedure which is available to candidates. Candidates must address all appeals about internal assessment or complaints about any aspect of their learning experience on the course via the centre's own internal complaints and appeals procedures. It is the centre's responsibility to make these procedures available to candidates.

Candidates who contact CPCAB directly on these issues will normally be directed back to their centre.

6. Additional Qualification Requirements

In addition to meeting the assessment criteria and learning outcomes you need to meet the following additional course requirements.

Client work as an independent life coach

You are required to complete 30 hours minimum of one-to-one, **formally contracted** life coaching as an independent practitioner; by 'independent' CPCAB means that you must exercise autonomy in your role as life coach. This could be, for example, a life coach working for an external organisation (e.g. human resources), a life coach working for an Employee Assistance Programme, or a life coach in private practice. As an independent practitioner you would usually be expected to carry responsibility for client assessment. Your clients must not be close friends or family. The life coaching sessions need to last for 1 hour and take place in a safe space.

Up to 49% of these life coaching placement hours can be conducted through online/telephone work and a minimum of 51% must be in-person coaching hours. Work with your centre to ensure you only undertake work in a format where you are well prepared, competent and appropriately supported. You should maintain records of the type of session in your client log.

Life coaching supervision

You are expected to have arrangements in place for your own external supervision which meet professional body requirements. The training centre holds responsibility for ensuring that appropriate supervision is taking place with regard to your work. You need to keep a log of their supervision hours. The supervisor is required to complete a report evidencing that you are working appropriately. The supervisor needs to be a coach/counsellor with appropriate coaching training and at least 2 years' experience of coaching as part of their practice.

The Association for Coaching guidelines on supervision state that 'best practice would be no less than quarterly and ideally monthly. If you have lower case load you may consider attending group rather than one-to-one supervision'. As a student we would recommend that you have monthly supervision whilst training. (Students can gain membership of this organisation which has its own ethical framework).

Group training supervision

You are required to take part in group training supervision as part of your course. You will be expected to present your work, receive supervisory support and challenge from tutors and peers, and learn from and challenge other candidates in the group. The emphasis here is on reflecting on all issues relating to your work as an independent life coach. Group training supervision relates to "real" clients and should not be used to focus on "peer" practice sessions.

Personal life coaching for trainees

You need to have completed a minimum of 6 hours of personal life coaching during the course with an appropriately qualified life coach. You need to keep a record of your personal life coaching hours.

Personal tutorials

You will be offered tutorials throughout your course to support your learning, develop your life coaching practice and help you identify learning goals. Your tutors will also take the opportunity of tutorials to raise any concerns likely to affect the outcome of your assessment. You need to keep a record of your tutorials in your portfolio.

7. Candidate Feedback

Your feedback is vital to CPCAB to ensure the ongoing quality of our qualifications. Feedback enables us to meet our requirements as a regulated Awarding Organisation and contributes towards our annual qualification review process. Please ensure that you complete the online feedback survey at the conclusion of your course.

Please click on this link to access the survey - [Candidate feedback](#).

Appendix 1: Candidate Learning Record

Level 4 Diploma in Life Coaching (LC-L4)

Instruction:

Print out (or otherwise detach) this Candidate Learning Record (CLR) and the Completion Statement which follows it. Then insert both documents in the front of your portfolio.

Please confirm that your portfolio contains the following items (which are required in order to complete the qualification) by ticking each box below:

- A client record (30 hours minimum)
- Supervision record
- 1 supervisor report
- A personal life coaching record (6 hours minimum during course)

When you have completed your Candidate Learning Record please tick the following box to confirm that you have provided evidence all three types of coursework (i.e. documents, tutor observation and testimony):

LC-L4		
LEARNING OUTCOME:	1. Work within an ethical framework for independent life coaching practice	
Assessment criteria	Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio reference
1.1 Apply a legal, ethical, and professional framework to life coaching work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore ethical/legal/professional issues relating to life coaching work. • Recognise responsibilities to clients, employers, the coaching profession and wider society. • Show awareness of relevant legislation in all aspects of life coaching work including respect for human rights. • Apply an ethical framework to managing ethical dilemmas in life coaching work. 	
1.2 Work within personal and professional limits of competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss meaning of limits of competence and fitness to practice. • Differentiate between personal and professional limits. • Communicate the personal and professional limitations of your practice. • Show that you understand how to protect clients physically and emotionally and manage risk in an independent life coaching practice. • Communicate to clients the limits of life coaching. 	

1.3 Assess clients and refer where appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess clients' suitability for life coaching and how they might benefit from it. • Demonstrate ability to develop and make use of referral routes/other sources of help and/or work collaboratively with other professionals for clients as appropriate. • Support clients sensitively through the referral process. 	
1.4 Show understanding of issues related to establishing and managing a life coaching practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore issues relating to setting up an independent life coaching practice. Consider practical aspects including premises, advertising/marketing, insurance, costs/fees, processes for client contact / appointments, record keeping and related systems. • Show that you understand how independent practice differs from other settings. • Prepare a life coaching publicity plan including, leaflet poster and advertising options and mailing list of potential business/client opportunities. 	
LEARNING OUTCOME:	2. Apply a relational approach to life coaching practice	
Assessment criteria	Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio references
2.1 Understand how the life coaching relationship contributes to the client's process of change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how a life coach forms and maintains a relationship conducive to change. • Explore how the life coaching relationship can help or hinder the life coaching work. • Reflect on what elements of the relationship support client change. • Explore the differences between a relationship that hinders/harms and a relationship that helps/heals. 	
2.2 Establish, develop and end the life coaching relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the life coaching relationship. • Negotiate an agreement with the client that includes confidentiality and its limits, ethical framework, time and number of sessions, costs etc. • Discuss the nature and quality of the life coaching relationship with your client. • Use life coaching skills, techniques and interventions to manage the stages of the life coaching work. • Review the progress of the life coaching work with your client. • End the life coaching work sensitively and collaboratively. 	
2.3 Work with breaks, difficulties and conflicts in the life coaching relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and consider a range of difficulties and conflicts that might arise in a life coaching relationship. • Demonstrate your ability to respond appropriately to challenges and conflicts relating to boundaries and ethics in life coaching work e.g. fees, gifts, becoming friendly with client, client impinging on time between sessions, confidentiality etc. • Understand the impact of interruptions and breaks on the life coaching work and relationship. • Make an inventory of personal challenges within the life coaching relationship e.g. maintaining certain boundaries, being too directive, being drawn into issues outside of life coaching remit. 	

LEARNING OUTCOME:	3. Apply understanding of diversity to life coaching practice	
Assessment criteria	Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio references
3.1 Explore and respond appropriately to the social and cultural contexts of individual clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the impact of client diversity on the life coaching process. Increase knowledge base about different dimensions of diversity in different social and cultural contexts. Apply theory to understand the social and cultural contexts of individual clients. Apply insights (from understanding of client diversity) to enhance work with individual clients. Explore own resistance/reluctance to engage with client diversity. 	
3.2 Use understanding of diversity to enhance empathic practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect on the relationship between developing empathy and understanding client diversity. Critically reflect how similarity and difference can both help and hinder empathic understanding in life coaching work. Evidence how challenging yourself and working with your own inner conflicts has increased your ability to work empathically. 	
3.3 Reflect on issues related to widening access to life coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a range of issues which may prevent clients accessing life coaching e.g. finance, lack of availability, distance, time constraints, language, culture, disability. Review own life coaching practice in relation to individual client needs. Use life coaching skills and techniques to problem solve the above blocks to accessing life coaching. Explore the pros and cons of alternative methods of offering life coaching e/g. internet, telephone. 	
LEARNING OUTCOME:	4. Support clients to cope with life's challenges and engage with opportunities to flourish	
Assessment criteria	Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio references
4.1 Support clients to reflect on themselves and their life goals together with the motivation to achieve those goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the positive psychology concept of flourishing. Explore the value of reflecting on self and life goals prior to defining goals. Use a range of life coaching questions and exercises to support the reflection process. Understand extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and use life coaching exercises to explore client motivation. 	
4.2 Support clients to develop their health, happiness and well being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore concept of 'well-being' as being more than the absence of ill-health. Jointly identify positive lifestyle goals and support clients to make and maintain changes. Use a range of life coaching exercises to support different clients to explore and develop their happiness and well-being. 	

4.3 Support clients to cope with personal, relational and life stage challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show understanding of common challenges that people may face in themselves (e.g. developing self-confidence and self-esteem), in their relationships (e.g. recovering from the loss of a significant other) and at different life stages (e.g. parenting teenage children). • Use a range of life coaching skills and exercises to support clients to cope with personal, relational and life stage challenges. • Support clients to develop both their coping skills and their resilience in the face of life's challenges. 	
4.4 Support clients to flourish as persons in relationships at particular life stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show understanding of common ways in which people may flourish within themselves (e.g. being true to themselves and "following their heart"), in their relationships (e.g. developing a stable, loving, mutually-supportive partnership) and at different life stages (e.g. finding meaning and satisfaction in their career). • Use a range of life coaching skills and exercises to support clients to engage with personal, relational and life stage opportunities to flourish. • Support clients to make positive choices and changes and engage with the opportunities to flourish. 	
4.5 Support clients to develop self-help skills and use appropriate self-help resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the value of self-help and the variety of available resources. • Explore clients' experiences of self- help. • Recommend appropriate self-help resources and evaluate usefulness with clients. 	
LEARNING OUTCOME:	5. Apply learning from self- development to enhance life coaching practice	
Assessment criteria	Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio references
5.1 Reflect on self and life goals together with the motivation to achieve these goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use life coaching techniques to reflect on self, prior to defining goals. • Use life coaching questions and exercises to reflect on and develop own intrinsic motivation. 	
5.2 Use mindfulness, creative approaches and self-development activities to cope with life's challenges and engage with opportunities to flourish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a regular mindfulness practice. • Explore a range of creative approaches to life change. • Use for example a range of positive psychology self -development activities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop own health, happiness and wellbeing • Develop own relationships • Meet the challenges and opportunities of own life stage. 	

5.3 Use mindfulness, self-awareness and insights from self- development to enhance practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore examples of when you enhanced the life coaching process by intentionally applying awareness of self. • Commit to an ongoing personal development plan to enhance and increase self- awareness. • Apply insights and understanding to life coaching work. • Work self reflectively and mindfully. 	
LEARNING OUTCOME:	6. Apply a coherent body of knowledge and skills to enhance life coaching practice	
Assessment criteria	Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio references
6.1 Reflect on the philosophical foundations of life coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on philosophical approaches to understanding “the good life”. • Reflect on Aristotle’s concepts of “hedonia”, “eudaimonia” and “practical wisdom”. • Reflect on a philosophical approach to understanding the human condition e.g. existential. 	
6.2 Use psychological theories and research findings to understand the person and their relationships across the life course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use for example positive psychology theories and research findings to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-esteem, human strengths, resilience, hope, happiness and well being. • attachment, friendship, intimate relationships, trust, gratitude, forgiveness and love. • life stages and transitions. 	
6.3 Use theories of learning and change to inform life coaching work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on the nature of learning and change. • Appreciate the roles of learning and change in life coaching work. • Explore a range of learning and change theories. • Explore the role of motivation in learning and change. • Demonstrate how understanding of these theories has enhanced life coaching work. 	
6.4 Integrate knowledge, skills and techniques in life coaching work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study and practise life coaching skills and techniques. • Demonstrate how understanding of life coaching informs use of skills and techniques for the benefit of the client. • Evaluate the effectiveness of your choice of skills and techniques in life coaching work. • Reflect on feedback from peers to enhance life coaching work. 	
6.5 Describe and evaluate own life coaching approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulate a coherent life coaching approach. • Provide a rationale for choice of approach. • Evaluate the effectiveness of own life coaching approach across a range of life coaching client outcomes. • Review own approach against competence frameworks such as the BACP Coaching Competence Framework to evaluate own progress. 	

LEARNING OUTCOME:	7. Use reflective practice to develop and inform life coaching work	
Assessment criteria	Candidate guidance to criteria	Portfolio references
7.1 Reflect on life coaching sessions and apply insights to subsequent work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critically reflect on life coaching sessions. • Identify areas for personal and professional development. • Apply insights into life coaching work to enhance practice. • Critically evaluate feedback from others. 	
7.2 Use life coaching supervision to inform, support and enhance practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on role/importance of supervision to you as a life coach. • Identify what you need from supervision. • Integrate learning and insights from supervision to develop life coaching practice. • Show how you have evaluated your use of supervision in order to meet your developing needs as an independent life coach. 	
7.3 Use client feedback, personal life coaching and CPD to develop and support practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use feedback from a range of sources to inform life coaching work. • Reflect on the role/importance of CPD in professional development as a life coach. • Identify own development needs with reference to experience as an independent life coach. • Develop a plan for meeting own CPD needs. 	

Appendix 2: Completion Statement for LC-L4

Completion statement for Candidate Learning Record Level 4 Diploma in Life Coaching (LC-L4)			
Learning outcome		Contra-indications present Y/N	Tutor signature if learning outcome has been achieved
1	Work within an ethical framework for independent life coaching practice		
2	Apply a relational approach to life coaching practice		
3	Apply understanding of diversity to life coaching practice		
4	Support clients to cope with life's challenges and engage with opportunities to flourish		
5	Apply learning from self-development to enhance life coaching practice		
6	Apply a coherent body of knowledge and skills to enhance life coaching practice		
7	Use reflective practice to develop and inform life coaching work		

To be completed by tutor:

Where the learning outcome has not been achieved please:

- (a) State clearly which learning outcome this relates to.
- (b) Give specific and relevant reasons why the learning outcome has not been achieved.
- (c) Record proposed course of action agreed between tutor and candidate to address/remedy concerns.

Learning outcome	Details of relevant contra-indications	Proposed course of action

I declare this Candidate Learning Record to be a true and authentic record of evidence submitted in my portfolio:

Candidate name: Candidate signature: Date:

I declare that this Completion Statement is a true record of the candidate's achievement:

I declare that this candidate has achieved all the above qualification requirements for LC-L4

Tutor name: Tutor signature: Date:

Appendix 3: Criteria Assessment Sheet (CAS)

Candidate:

Group:

Qualification:

Coursework:

Candidates: In the table below, identify the criteria evidenced in the assignment concerned and cross-reference these in the relevant page margin of your assignment.

Assessors: Grade the robustness of the evidence identified by the candidate against the Assessment Criteria: YES (achieved) or NO (not yet achieved).

For completion by the candidate: Candidate reference to coursework			For completion by the tutor: Tutor assessment	
Unit (CAST-L3 and TC-L4 only)	Criteria number	Page number	YES/NO	Tutor feedback

General comments:

Tutor name:

Date: