City & Guilds

Inclusive Curriculum Framework

Inclusive Curriculum Framework

An inclusive curriculum is one that allows for diversity of content, material, ideas and methods of assessment.

City & Guilds is aware of the range of factors that have the potential to cause inequality in the way that learners access, participate and are assessed in their education. This, in turn, can impact their broader life experiences.

There are, for instance, persistent gaps in educational achievement between learners from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and disadvantaged backgrounds. Such attainment gaps start early in life and continue through school and into later education and employment.

Implementing inclusive design into our products has always been an important part of our product development. We want to build on the regulatory consideration of accessibility and barriers to include leading trends in inclusive design.

City & Guilds wants to bring about a systemic change in staff attitudes and practices in order to shape a common commitment to representation, social justice and equality of opportunity across all of our products and services. We want to build upon our social purpose to remove barriers to skills development and to create a commitment to ethical practice, so that we might better promote transformational change across the business.

What is it?

Inclusive curriculum design involves consideration in all aspects of course structure – including content, delivery and assessment – to ensure that all learners are provided with an equitable and supportive learning and assessment experience that offers the opportunity to succeed, regardless of personal background or circumstance. We aim to provide learners with opportunities to engage with a variety of viewpoints and to equip them to work in an environment that is both global and diverse.

What are the benefits?

- Research indicates that when learners are exposed to diversity, both in real-life situations and through texts, media and experiences, they are likely to exhibit less prejudice. (Rios & Wynn., 2016.)

- An inclusive curriculum provides staff and learners with opportunities to engage with a variety of viewpoints and equips them for a global and diverse working environment. (Hogan., 2007)

- Results have shown that when teaching institutions adopt inclusive curriculum design and delivery, they show significant improvement in attainment for all. Furthermore, there is qualitative evidence of improved staff awareness, and learner experiences. (Williams., 2021)

What are the guiding principles for achieving an inclusive curriculum?

We have reviewed many of the leading inclusive curriculum frameworks currently available and chosen to create an approach based on tried and tested practices. We will tailor our methodology in order to accommodate each of the types of qualifications and products that we offer.

We have used the Kingston ICF principles as the basis to guide our work, given the evidence of success this model has achieved in removing attainment gaps (McDuff, Hughes, Tatam, Morrow & Ross., 2020).

We are using the same three guiding principles: 1) representation, 2) developing diversity, equity and inclusion skill competencies and 3) removing barriers (which is referenced as 'inclusive curriculum' in the Kingston ICF).

Representation

- Incorporate insights from a diverse set of stakeholders, learners, educators, communities and employers. This is to ensure that learners can see themselves and their communities reflected in the learning.

- Broaden the scope of curriculum influences to incorporate more diverse ethnic, cultural and national perspectives. This includes embedding a wider spectrum of influences (e.g, themes of disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation and gender).

- Recognise the local and national needs in our products, including those developed for international use.

Develop diversity, equity and inclusion skill competencies

- Create products and services that impact learners' engagement with social justice.

- Build the skills to recognise the need to take action to challenge injustice, bias and intolerance, in order to become effective allies.

- Build the skills to establish positive learning relationships to enhance a sense of belonging for all learners.

Removing barriers

- Commit to embedding anti-racism and social equity in all learning.

- Ensure the Equality Act requirements are met and that accessibility is provided.

- Ensure staff expertise through teacher/ practitioner training, available to cover diversity, equity and inclusion in sector insights.
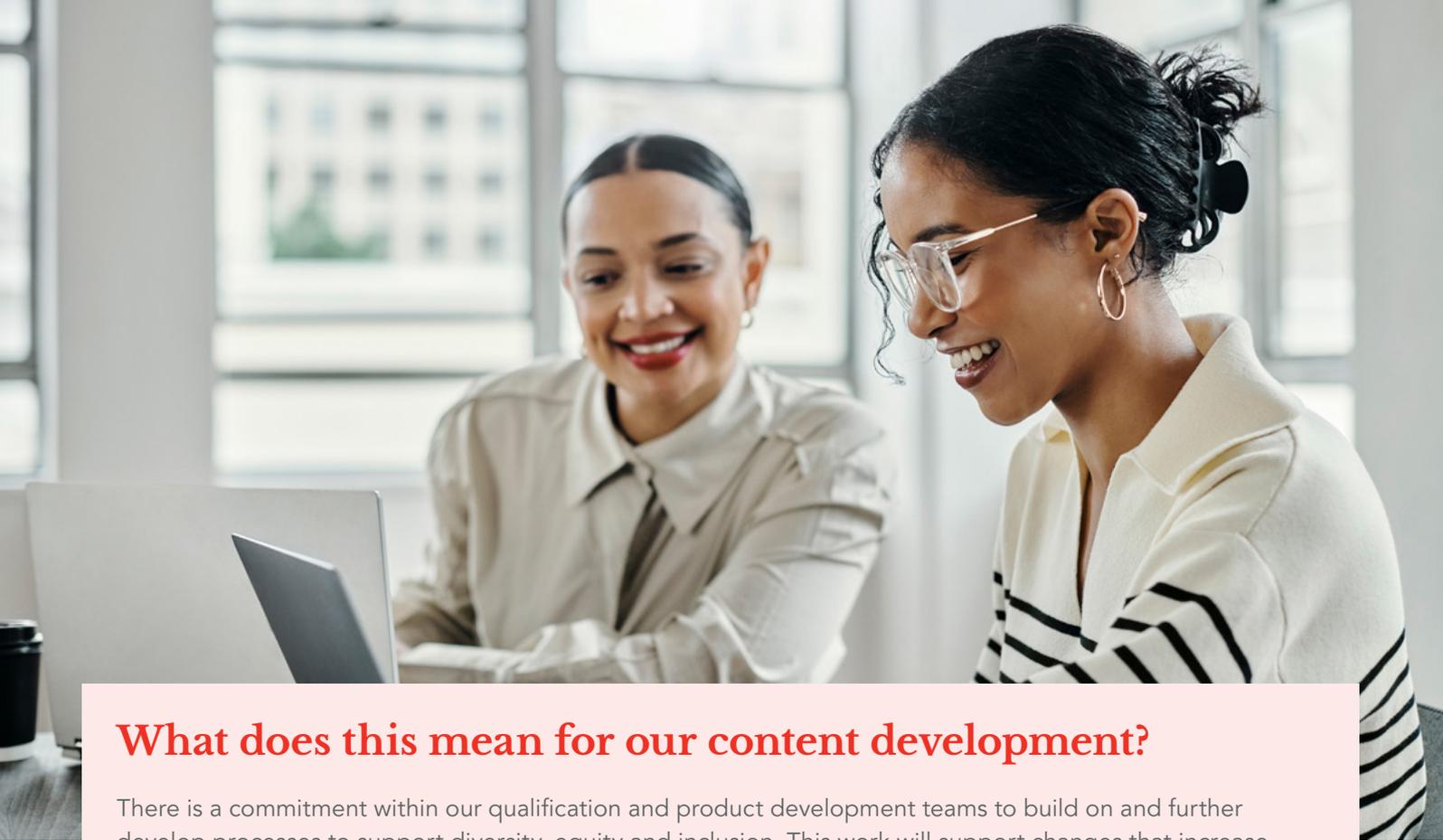
What does this mean for our content development?

There is a commitment within our qualification and product development teams to build on and further develop processes to support diversity, equity and inclusion. This work will support changes that increase representation, continue to remove barriers and develop allyship skill competencies.

Representation

- Allow learners to bring their own perspectives into the learning arena, through reflective questions and problem- or project-based learning.

- Provide opportunities to explore diverse perspectives, and provide role models in the content, assessment and classroom resources.

- Use partnerships within the sectors to provide real-life scenarios and case studies for representative content and views.

Develop diversity, equity and inclusion skill competencies

- Develop scenario-led/-based activities to develop DEI competencies.

- Recognise and understand discrimination within their individual skill sector and wider society.

- Encourage learners to outline their personal responses and to act as an ally to tackle injustice.

- Support learners to address and reflect on their own biases and the impact of bias.

- Provide a clear understanding of the benefits of respect, communication and teamwork

Removing barriers

- Ensure content is accessible to different groups of learners and that the materials adhere to best practice for SEND (special education needs and/or disabilities) learners.

- We ensure inclusive language and imagery through our content editors guide. (link)

- Address the hidden curriculum: how does the sector culture affect members of certain groups, i.e, women, ethnic minorities, LGBTQIA+, etc.

Example of this in practice:

Case Study, Gen 2

At our training centre, Gen 2, we will be building on core behaviours and knowledge to ensure that diversity, equity and inclusion is embedded in our products and delivered in a meaningful way.

As part of the curriculum, the learners will have additional sector-specific diversity and inclusion learning outcomes, such as:

Working with others:

Learn about the challenges that exist for women, ethnic minorities, engineers with disabilities and the LGBTQIA+ community, so that you can recognise bias, intolerance and injustice in the sector.

Working with others:

Learn the ways in which you can support other people on your team and be a reliable team member and ally.

Continuous professional development:

Find an engineering role model who you feel represents you and consider what steps they took in their career to reach their current position.

What does this mean for our assessment development?

This means a commitment by our assessment and development teams to further developing processes to support diversity, equity and inclusion by looking for opportunities in assessment. Where possible, in line with the parameters of our products, these opportunities touch on the following important elements.

Representation

- Allow learners to bring their own perspectives into the learning arena, through reflective questions and problem- or project-based learning.

- Provide opportunities to explore diverse perspectives, and provide role models in the content, assessment and classroom resources.

- Use partnerships within the sectors to provide real-life scenarios and case studies for representative content and views.

Develop diversity, equity and inclusion skill competencies

- Develop scenario-led/-based activities to develop DEI competencies.

- Recognise and understand discrimination within their individual skill sector and wider society.

- Encourage learners to outline their personal responses and to act as an ally to tackle injustice.

- Support learners to address and reflect on their own biases and the impact of bias.

- Provide a clear understanding of the benefits of respect, communication and teamwork.

Removing barriers

- Ensure that fit-for purpose assessments are developed that are inclusive to all, and which reflect different learning styles.

- Consider and use different types of assessment to best accommodate all learners so that they might demonstrate their ability.

- Ensure that all learners have equal opportunities to see their academic and professional skills recognised and awarded, including work-based learning where appropriate.

Inclusive teaching principles

Utilising different pedagogical approaches, where possible, for inclusive educational design with reflective practice, as well as problem- and project- based learning.

Traditionally, when discussing an inclusive curriculum or diversifying the curriculum, there has been an emphasis on content. Curriculum design has been about making the subject matter more diverse and inclusive. Inclusive pedagogy moves away from this model by adding 'how we teach' into the design.

To achieve this, were possible, we will embrace more inclusive pedagogy, such as reflective practice and problem- and project-based learning.

We have always included a lot of reflective practice in our products, but now we are expanding inclusive pedagogy to specifically highlight and promote problem- and project-based learning.

All City& Guilds assessments are developed in a way that reflects our Centre Assessment Standard Scrutiny (CASS). The CASS strategy applies to all assessments that are centre assessed. It also supports external scrutiny, providing a benchmark against which our activities as an awarding organisation can be measured.

Reflective practice principles

Reflective practice is a more mindful approach to learning that allows learners to give themselves the headspace to think about the impact of what they have learned or the implications of the task/activity that they've carried out. Often, information is taken in and stored away without much thought, which can lead to knowledge or skills not being fully embedded. Reflective practice is a powerful tool to ensure that consumed content has every opportunity to be fully absorbed and then later applied in a working environment. Developing critical skills was seen as one of the key benefits for learners when undertaking this practice.

In the context of developing diversity, equity and inclusion skills, the act of reflection enables learners to be more aware of bias and the impact this has on behaviour. In turn, this allows us to better conceptualise and understand how those behaviours impact others.

What?
Describe an
event or action

Now what?
Explain how you will
use that information to
inform future practice

So what?
Explain why that
action or event was
significant

Reflection can provide valuable lessons that help to shape how a person may behave in subsequent similar situations, or allow their knowledge from previous events to be transferred. It might inspire new ways of working and thinking and generate better ways to handle situations in the future. It encourages individuals and groups to develop empathy and awareness of others, in terms of considering both how they are thinking and what they are feeling.

Looking back encourages learners to 'hear' their own thoughts and to focus better on what they say and feel, which allows them to bring their unique perspectives into the learning environment.

The reflection model *Driscoll, 1994* (left)

Benefits to learners

- The reflection model provides the ability to gauge learner engagement, giving trainers/ tutorss the opportunity to support learners, should their reflective logs indicate signs of disengagement or struggle. This allows for early intervention and support where needed.

- It provides opportunities for learners to apply theory in practice.

- It fosters a sense of community through the sharing of reflective experiences within the wider cohort.

- It promotes higher levels of learner satisfaction, particularly when the best frequency/volume has been found.

- It helps overcome many challenges which arise with online/remote learning, such as learner isolation, lack of interactivity and community support.

Where to use reflections

- We offer digital learning resources which have topics/modules with reflective questions. This makes it easier to better encourage reflective practice, from the start to the completion of the course.

- In many of our courses we promote the use of a reflective log. Here, learners are encouraged to document their learning journey throughout.

- For example, the ILM 1:1 Coaching qualification has a requirement to write and submit reflective logs after each practice session.

- We will add reflecting learning questions into team working, communication and continuous professional development outcomes in our technical training centre, Gen 2.

Problem-based and project-based learning overview

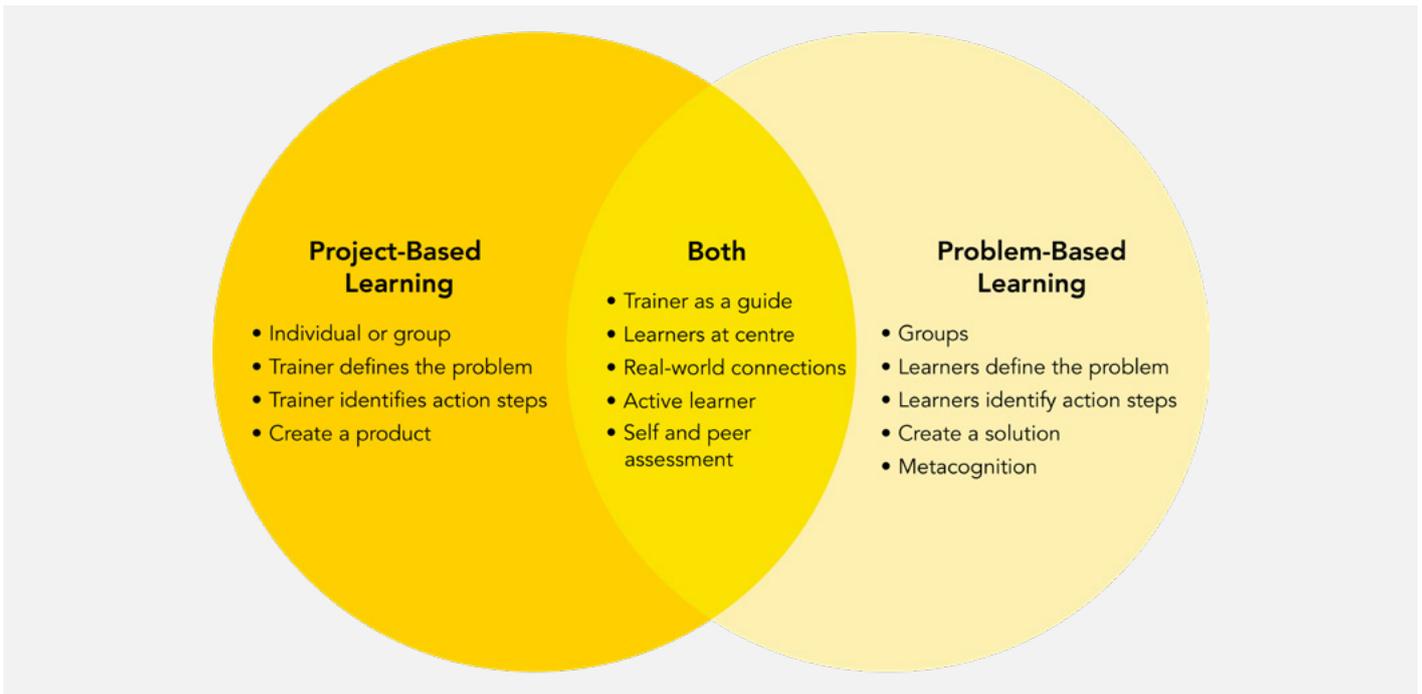## Problem-based learning (PBL) – what is it?

Problem-based learning (PBL) requires learners to engage in real-life problem solving, the aim of which is to foster the development of skills for lifelong learning. Ultimately, this helps to prepare learners for future employment. PBL requires critical thinking and encourages open-ended answers that can be tested and applied to problems.

One of the most important aspects of PBL is its impact on learning style: it offers a shift away from surface learning (memorising and reproducing material) towards deep learning (extending ideas, detecting patterns, applying knowledge and skills in new contexts or in creative ways). It is learner centred, self-directed and promotes the development of essential skills in critical thinking. The use of real-life examples provides an important grounding in work-related skills, such as teamwork, research and turning theory into practice.

Project-based learning (PjBL) – what is it?

Project-based learning (PjBL) is structured around an extended project or investigation, potentially involving several disciplines rather than a single subject. It is driven by a central question, utilising systematic teaching and learning methods, and culminates in a final product and presentation to an audience. Projects are focused on questions that drive learners to encounter and investigate the central concepts and principles of a discipline. Learning in this way is seen as an essential strategy for developing the kind of competences people need for success in the modern world, as well as for lifelong learning.

In PjBL, learners effectively cocreate the curriculum as they choose the topic and content to be investigated and reported upon. The assignments begin with a direction to carry out one or more tasks that lead to the production of a final product – a design, a model, or a new process. The final project output is normally a written and/or oral report, summarising the procedure used and presenting the outcome.

Project-Based Learning
- Individual or group
- Trainer defines the problem
- Trainer identifies action steps
- Create a product

Both
- Trainer as a guide
- Learners at centre
- Real-world connections
- Active learner
- Self and peer assessment

Problem-Based Learning
- Groups
- Learners define the problem
- Learners identify action steps
- Create a solution
- Metacognition

Bottom line: In Problem-Based Learning, students have more control over their own learning and the processes involved.

Benefits of problem-based learning

- Promotes deeper learning and therefore a greater understanding of the subject
- Promotes knowledge retention.
- Develops work-related skills, such as relationship building and collaboration
- Promotes self-directed learning, a skill desired by employers
- Evidence shows that learners and teachers alike find problem-based learning more enjoyable, challenging and motivating due to its learner-centric approach.

Benefits of project-based learning

- Connects learners to the real world and prepares them for the workplace
- Promotes deeper learning and therefore a greater understanding of the subject
- Builds intrinsic motivation in the learner as a result of the central question or problem and its meaningful outcome
- Promotes the development of work-related skills, such as relationship building and collaboration
- Improves and leverages digital competencies and uses of technology, key skills for the future of work
- Project-based learning can increase retention of content and improve learners' attitudes towards learning.

Where are we using problem-based learning in assessment?

In our occupational specialist assignment for our Engineering
T Level qualifications, there are peer review tasks that are set by the assessor, but are candidate led. The purpose of the tasks is to allow a learner to discuss, work with others, gain feedback on an aspect of their design and to respond accordingly. This reflects a real-world scenario, where they would be quality checking or innovating an existing product.

The following are examples of problems we present to learners.

- Analyse factors that affect mechanical designs, justifying recommendations as to how the designs can be improved or adapted.

- Evaluate designs and design processes against application requirements. Compare alternative design options and identify design improvements. Review the performance of individuals, teams and the organisation across the design process and manufacture and identify improvements.

- Work effectively with others to agree and complete tasks.

Where are we doing project-based learning?

We offer an apprenticeship challenge at our technical training centre. Usually held as part of the National Apprenticeship Week celebrations, the Gen2 apprentice challenge is entered by teams from across Gen2 and showcases the best of apprentice talent. Teams were judged for their skills and creativity across six categories:

- The **entrepreneurial challenge**, where apprentices were tasked with setting up a sustainable business using a £200 starting budget.

- The **carbon zero energy challenge**, where, with just £50, apprentices had had to create something powered by an alternative or zero carbon energy source.

- The **classroom resource challenge**, where apprentices were tasked with creating a story sack for their pupils.

- The **engineering sculpture challenge**, where apprentices created metal sculptures using welding skills

- The **robot wars challenge**, where apprentices had to build their own multi-functional remote-controlled robot to complete an obstacle course, to include target shooting and balloon popping.

- The **electrical skills test challenge**, where apprentices had to construct a two-way lighting circuit under timed conditions.

"It's days like this that really bring home the impact of what we do across City & Guilds."

"I feel privileged to see so many talented apprentices showcasing their skills and creativity and it's clear from speaking to their employers that all of the apprentices have extremely bright futures ahead of them. The relationship between Gen2, its apprentices and their employers is incredibly strong and it's great to be able to come here and see first-hand what true employer-responsive training looks like."

Kirstie Donnelly, City & Guilds CEO

Gen2
A City & Guilds Business

Click here to see our Gen2 Apprenticeship Challenge 2022 video

Sam Casson
Pipe Fitting Apprentice - CAMNS

References:

- Hogan, M. (2007) Four skills of cultural diversity competence: a process for understanding and practice (revised fourth edition). Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning.

- McDuff, N., Hughes, A., Tatam, J., Morrow, E. and Ross, F., 2020. Improving equality of opportunity in Higher Education through the adoption of an inclusive curriculum framework. Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning, 22(2), pp.83–121.

- Rios, K. and Wynn, A.N., 2016. Engaging with diversity: Framing multiculturalism as a learning opportunity reduces prejudice among high White American identifiers. European Journal of Social Psychology, 46(7), pp.854–865.

- Williams, N.A., 2021. Using an inclusive curriculum framework to address an awarding gap in a first-year chemistry module. Journal of Chemical Education, 99(1), pp.171–176.

About City & Guilds

Since 1878 we have worked with people, organisations and economies to help them identify and develop the skills they need to thrive. We understand the life changing link between skills development, social mobility, prosperity and success. Everything we do is focused on developing and delivering high-quality training, qualifications, assessments and credentials that lead to jobs and meet the changing needs of industry.

We work with governments, organisations and industry stakeholders to help shape future skills needs across industries. We are known for setting industry-wide standards for technical, behavioural and commercial skills to improve performance and productivity. We train teams, assure learning, assess cohorts and certify with digital credentials. Our solutions help to build skilled and compliant workforces.

Contact us

Giltspur House
5-6 Giltspur Street
London EC1A 9DE

customersupport@cityandguilds.com

01924 930 801

www.cityandguilds.com