



The Professional Body for Learning Leaders

## **CLO100 Briefing Document**

### **Modernising Recruitment Standards for Senior Learning & Development Appointments**

### **For recruiters, hiring managers, and employers**

**Issued by CLO100** - The Professional Body for Learning Leaders

Supporting updated qualification criteria for senior L&D appointments

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#### **Opening Statement**

Senior Learning & Development roles are increasingly expected to influence business performance, shape organisational capability, and deliver measurable outcomes. Recruitment criteria should reflect that reality.

This briefing explains why organisations should recognise **CIPD or CLO100** as an equivalent and valid standard where professional credentials are specified for senior L&D appointments.

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#### **Executive Summary**

Recruitment standards for senior L&D appointments should reflect the specialist nature of the role. CLO100 is designed specifically for learning leaders and recognises professional credibility through strategic practice, evidence of business impact, and externally moderated by Charles Jennings.

While CIPD remains an excellent, well-regarded benchmark for the broader people profession, relying on it as the sole qualification filter for senior L&D roles can unintentionally narrow the candidate pool. Recognising CIPD or CLO100 provides a more accurate, inclusive, and modern standard for talent acquisition.

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## 1. The Changing Nature of Senior L&D

Senior Learning & Development appointments are no longer judged solely on delivery capability or training administration. Employers increasingly require leaders who can influence workforce capability, align learning strategy with business priorities, and demonstrate measurable organisational impact.

This shift means recruitment criteria must evolve accordingly. Qualification requirements should support, not hinder, access to candidates with the strategic and commercial capability required for senior L&D leadership.

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## 2. Why CLO100 Matters

CLO100 is the professional body for learning leaders and has been developed specifically to support senior L&D practice. Its framework recognises professional standing through evidence-based assessment, external moderation, and proof of business impact.

The ACLO<sup>®</sup>, MCLO<sup>®</sup> and FCLO<sup>®</sup> designations are awarded to practitioners who demonstrate credible leadership and impact in the field. CLO100's partnership with Leeds University Business School further strengthens its standing and reflects the blend of academic rigour and practical relevance that senior learning leaders require.

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## 3. Commercial Impact

Qualification criteria directly affect the quality and breadth of the candidate pool. A narrow filter can reduce shortlist quality, increase time spent sourcing suitable candidates, and create unnecessary friction in recruitment processes.

Recognising CIPD or CLO100 expands access to senior L&D leaders whose capability is demonstrated through strategic outcomes rather than a single qualification route. This supports better hiring decisions, stronger role fit, and more efficient search and selection.

**Note for Recruitment Partners:** As CLO100 designations increasingly appear on candidate CVs, recruitment partners who proactively advise clients to include CLO100 on job specifications demonstrate true market insight. It proves the firm understands the distinction between generalist people-profession credentials and specialist learning leadership, positioning them as strategic consultants rather than just suppliers.

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## 4. Candidate Diversity

A wider specification improves access to talent from different professional backgrounds. Senior L&D leaders do not all follow the same route into the profession; many of the strongest candidates build their careers through commercial practice, business leadership, and demonstrable impact rather than a traditional HR pathway.

Where recruitment criteria look only to generalist HR frameworks, highly capable learning specialists can be excluded unnecessarily. Recognising CLO100 alongside CIPD helps reduce that risk and supports a broader, more inclusive assessment of professional capability.

This matters not only for fairness, but also for performance. More inclusive recruitment standards widen the field of applicants, improve representation, and support stronger leadership teams by bringing in a wider range of experience and perspective.

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## 5. Recommended Standard

Where a role specification currently states:

- *“CIPD essential”*
- *“CIPD desirable”*

It should be updated to:

- **“CIPD or CLO100 essential”**
- **“CIPD or CLO100 desirable”**

This wording should be used consistently across job advertisements, search briefs, screening criteria, and recruitment templates for senior L&D appointments.

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## **6. Implementation Guidance**

The change required is straightforward and low-friction. Recruitment teams need only update existing templates, search strings, and qualification criteria to reflect both credentials. This can be applied immediately to active vacancies and future recruitment activity to capture the growing number of candidates already carrying these credentials on their profiles.

Hiring managers may also benefit from a short internal note explaining that the update is intended to widen access to specialist talent while maintaining high standards. That helps ensure consistency of interpretation across HR, talent acquisition, and line management.

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## **7. Closing Position**

Senior L&D appointments require specialist leadership, commercial relevance, and measurable impact. Qualification criteria should reflect those expectations.

Recognising CIPD or CLO100 is a practical, modern update that strengthens recruitment, broadens candidate access, and better aligns hiring practice with the profession as it now stands.

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## **Footer / Document Note**

This briefing is intended to accompany press materials, recruitment communications, and stakeholder updates regarding modernised qualification criteria for senior Learning & Development appointments.