About TLM

Handbook home page **[1]**

The TLM Team **[2]**

The Learning Machine provides qualifications based on the INGOT assessment model

- IT User, Computing, Building Information Modelling, Enterprise, Business Management, Food Safety, Additive Manufacture, Advanced Manufacturing (Rockets and Robots), Cyber Security and more to follow....
- Teacher assessors with flexibility to assess directly to broad criteria.
- Judgements about competence throughout a course with feedback and recognition for learners.
- End of course exam designed for grading - only available to those that prove competence through the course.
- Scope for self-and peer assessment with free optional cloud based tools to manage it.
- Teacher assessor decides the methods, we are only interested in evidence of outcomes.
- Optional progress tracking and reporting using coursework evidence.

The portfolio is broadening all the time. If you have a specific interest in nationally accredited qualifications that are referenced to the EQF [3] and potentially compatible with the ECVET [4] credit transfer system please use the contact [5] links to get in touch. We have also demonstrated how the system can be used to support the National Curriculum and PScales.

1.What customers say

"By adopting TLM Qualifications, not only have we reduced our admin overheads using the excellent on-line Markbook, but attainment for all learners has improved. This is made possible by the clear framework for assessment which TLM provides and support for real time tracking of progress. Pupils are motivated to succeed."

Rob Riley,

Head of ICT Mill Chase Community Technology College

2. Who are we? Some more details

We are The Learning Machine Ltd (TLM). TLM is an Awarding Organisation regulated by Ofqual [6] and Qualification Wales, the regulators for qualifications in England and Wales. TLM is endorsed by eskills [7], the Sector Skills Council for Business and IT that ensures qualifications meet the needs of industry and employers. Other supporters include Mott MacDonald, RICS, Seddon Construction, Open Source Consortium, NAACE, Mirandanet, Cisco, UKFast and the European Commission.
TLM is responsible for developing and managing a new and innovative family of qualifications called The INGOTs. Members of the INGOTs family provide the UK National Vocational Qualification for IT Users, the ITQ, developed by e-skills, as well as new Computing and Building Information Modelling qualifications that provide headline points in the KS4 performance figures. They are referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and INGOTs are supported by the EU Lifelong Learning

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Programme through a Leonardo Da Vinci Transfer of Innovation grant. We will produce further qualifications with other subject contexts as resources allow and over time we will provide free on-line courses to support the qualifications for all, in the style of Open Education Resources. The TLM business model is based on freeing up exam fees to provide the resources to create useful learning support systems that are free to use. The INGOTs Learning site is the first of these and provides free monitored blogging, e-portfolio and qualification evidence management for coursework, progress tracking and reporting. There are some links to on-line games and puzzles and ideas for supporting coursework. This will always be a work in progress as we develop over time.

3. Philosophy

The INGOTs philosophy is to provide clear progression routes for learners, from the most basic levels of competence, including supporting those with special needs. This includes support for progress to being more independent learners with the capacity to exploit the massive and growing body of free software and information available freely from the internet. **We do not dictate to teachers, we just provide free optional tools and flexible systems so that they can decide the best way to motivate their learners to get the best outcomes. We do this within the nationally recognised qualifications systems.**

This progression is recognised and rewarded through certificates at each level of achievement. The assessment details are based on the UK Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) that is referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). It has the flexibility to link to nationally accredited frameworks, for example, the National Curriculum and GCSE in the UK and more generally other national frameworks especially those referenced to the EQF. The INGOTs criteria are competence based, designed to enable self and peer assessment to support personalised learning and greater self-sufficiency in learning. Trained independent assessors accredited by The Learning Machine must verify the assessments before accredited awards can be made and the assessors have flexibility to tailor learning contexts to local and individual needs. We encourage the use of mobile technologies and web based applications, liberally licensed software and content.
Improving value and enabling more people to participate in formal qualifications are key aspects of the strategy. INGOTs certification lowers costs compared to traditional qualifications and the learning associated with the INGOTs IT qualifications enables learners to lower their IT operating costs. This is because we can provide increasing capability in exploiting Open Systems, making maximum use of information and software applications that are freely and legally available from the Internet. Having said this, we don't force anyone to use any particular technologies, we simply highlight issues where savings can be made and generally use free and open source resources when illustrating examples. This enables transition to better ways of working from current positions. The management systems and IT resources used by The Learning Machine are all built on Open Source software. For the assessment, matching the assessment criteria with the applications used in the local working context is all that is needed.

Reducing dependency and increasing technological self-sufficiency opens up very low cost learning for all with the longer term potential to reduce costs for businesses making them more competitive. INGOTs combine the best aspects of academic learning with the practical applications associated with vocational training. It can be applied equally to academic or vocational learning. Staff development is built into the model through feedback to assessors through the moderation process that is fully supported by web based tools with the flexibility for schools to use their own systems if they want to. We are not selling software so we don't feel any pressure to sell you our support systems; what you use is up to you. We are a qualifications provider that where possible provides free supporting resources for learning funded by our qualifications model. We want to make learners and their teachers ready for change and free them from dependency on specific commercial interests so they can make better quality decisions about the technologies they use in the future. This means providing opportunities for higher level learning as well as basic operating skills. We want to empower learners to make choices that can improve the quality of their lives and the competitiveness of their employers. Our long term strategy is to enable economically disenfranchised people to get Internet access and eventually provide a full and free on-line curriculum for schools (and adults who missed out on school) sustained financially by the quality assurance service of certification and community participation.

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Links
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