

CIPS Level 4 Diploma in Procurement and Supply

The Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) Level 4 Diploma in Procurement and Supply is a vocationally related qualification. It is recognised by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual), CCEA Regulation and Qualifications Wales in the UK and appears on the Register of Regulated Qualifications.

The qualification accreditation number is 603/3924/X

Introduction

The CIPS Level 4 Diploma in Procurement and Supply is developed as a step up from that in the CIPS Level 3 Advanced Certificate in Procurement and Supply Operations but also as a stepping stone to study on the CIPS Level 5 Advanced Diploma in Procurement and Supply. The CIPS Level 4 Diploma in procurement and supply offers the most common entry route to the profession and should be used by learners to develop a professional “tool box” which learners can apply in the practical environment and further develop at levels 5 and 6. In this way successful learners will possess transferable workplace skills, developing their operational and tactical abilities as they strive for managerial roles and responsibilities.

Developed in close collaboration with practitioners, employers and academic specialists in Procurement and Supply, and with the providers who will be delivering the qualifications, the CIPS Level 4 Diploma in Procurement and Supply is designed to develop transferable workplace skills, such as good communication and the ability to work in a team and planning and completing tasks to high standards all of which enable the learner to add value to the organisation. It is aimed at those members of the profession who have procurement and supply activity at the heart of their role.

Background and Aims

It is designed as a follow on from the CIPS Level 3 Advanced Certificate in Procurement and Supply Operations as learners are expected to develop, use and apply the professional language and skill sets introduced at Level 3. Individuals will be working at the Operational, but moving towards the Managerial level of the CIPS Global Standard for Procurement and Supply Competency Framework and will develop skills and knowledge in key areas of procurement and supply including defining the needs of their business, commercial contracting and negotiation, and managing supplier relationships.

The CIPS approach to learning is based around that which bring together knowledge and understanding (the cognitive domain) with practical and technical skills (the psychomotor domain). In essence, CIPS qualifications are designed to facilitate a level of learning rigour and balance that promotes the skills to contextually apply knowledge and learning to enhance organisational and personal performance.

In keeping with regulatory requirements¹ the holder of the qualification will demonstrate the following knowledge within procurement and supply:

Knowledge Descriptor (the holder....)	Skills Descriptor (the holder will....)
<p>Has practical, theoretical or technical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas.</p> <p>Is aware of the nature of approximate scope of the area of study or work.</p> <p>Has an informed awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.</p>	<p>Identify, adapt and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills to inform actions and address problems that are complex and non-routine while normally fairly well-defined.</p> <p>Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions and results.</p>

The CIPS Level 4 Diploma in Procurement and Supply was developed through direct collaboration and consultation with employers, to ensure that the content of the qualification and associated award meet with their needs and expectations and are relevant to the procurement and supply function both now and in the future. Employers require recruits with the appropriate technical knowledge, and transferable skills essential for employment at the operational level of the procurement and supply function and this Diploma meets these requirements through:

- Coverage of a range of topics, each with a clear purpose, ensuring that the learner develops the skills required to recognise and describe the key processes in procurement and supply, building professional knowledge, competence and confidence.
- Providing up-to-date content which is closely aligned with employers' needs and required skill sets.
- Providing content that has as its base the CIPS Global Standard for Procurement and Supply, thereby ensuring an understanding of the intrinsic value that good practice will bring to enhance organisational and personal performance.
- Using assessments that have been developed and identified to enable learners to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding at the required level.
- Providing an extensive range of support, both resources and people, to ensure that learners have the best possible and most rounded learning to prepare them for the workplace.

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Ofqual Handbook: General Conditions of Recognition, Section E – Design and development of qualifications:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook>

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- Developing and adopting an approach that is learner focussed and that is facilitated and administered to ensure achievement of full potential.

The content of the qualification is based on the CIPS Global Standard for Procurement and Supply – a comprehensive competency framework to enhance an individual’s procurement performance leading to excellent organisational performance. Further information on the global standard can be found [here](#)

Both the global standard and qualification are kept under regular review and updated when necessary to ensure relevance is maintained.

Entry requirements

A minimum of at least two A-Levels (or international equivalent) or a CIPS Level 3 Advanced Certificate in Procurement and Supply Operations is required. Alternatively, you will need a minimum of two years’ relevant experience in a business environment. Some unit exemptions may be applicable under the CIPS Exemption Policy. Further information on the Exemption Policy and possible exemptions can be found [here](#). This is the only entry point onto our Diploma qualifications.

Structure

In order to achieve the award of the CIPS Level 4 Diploma in Procurement and Supply learners are required to successfully complete the eight core modules. The mandated modules will ensure an appropriate balance of breadth and depth across the final award. All learners will develop the technical and practical skills required in the occupational area and will be given the opportunity to develop a range of transferable skills and attributes required by employers. It is expected that learners will apply their learning to relevant employment and sector contexts during delivery and that they will be able to apply knowledge and learning meaningfully within the workplace.

Examinations are available on timetabled dates throughout the year. Information on examination dates and administrative arrangements can be found [here](#).

The qualification is structured as follows:

CIPS Level 4 Diploma in Procurement and Supply

Ref	Module Title	Module type Core / Elective	Credit Value	Assessment Format	Number of Learning Outcomes	Question Format and Value	Exam Duration (Hours)	Pass Mark	GLH	Additional self-study	Module Learning Time
L4M1	Scope and Influence of Procurement and Supply	Core	12	Constructed response. Closed book under exam conditions	4	Essay style All questions are worth 25 marks	3:00	50%	50	67	120
L4M2	Defining Business Need	Core	6	Objective response. Closed-book under exam conditions.	3	Multiple Choice Multiple Response All questions are worth 1 mark	1:30	70%	25	33.5	60
L4M3	Commercial Contracting	Core	6	Objective response. Closed-book under exam conditions.	3	Multiple Choice Multiple Response All questions are worth 1 mark	1:30	70%	25	33.5	60

Ref	Module Title	Module type Core / Elective	Credit Value	Assessment Format	Number of Learning Outcomes	Question Format and Value	Exam Duration (Hours)	Pass Mark	GLH	Additional self-study	Module Learning Time
L4M4	Ethical and Responsible Sourcing	Core	6	Objective response. Closed-book under exam conditions.	4	Multiple Choice Multiple Response All questions are worth 1 mark	1:30	70%	25	33.5	60
L4M5	Commercial Negotiation	Core	6	Objective response. Closed-book under exam conditions.	3	Multiple Choice Multiple Response All questions are worth 1 mark	1:30	70%	25	33.5	60
L4M6	Supplier Relationships	Core	6	Objective response. Closed-book under exam conditions.	3	Multiple Choice Multiple Response All questions are worth 1 mark	1:30	70%	25	33.5	60
L4M7	Whole Life Asset Management	Core	6	Objective response. Closed-book under exam conditions.	3	Multiple Choice Multiple Response All questions are worth 1 mark	1:30	70%	25	33.5	60
L4M8	Procurement and Supply in Practice	Core	12	Constructed Response Closed book under exam conditions	4	Essay style All questions are worth 25 marks	3:00	50%	50	67	120

Pass criteria	Examination pass mark: For modules, L4M1 and L4M8 (Constructive Response), you must achieve 50%. The examination pass marks are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distinction 75 - 100%• Merit 60 - 74%• Pass 50 - 59%• Fail 0 - 49% And 70% for the remaining 6 modules (Objective Response) in order to achieve the qualification.
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Core modules:

L4M1

On completion of this module, learners will be able to identify the key stakeholders in the application of the sourcing process and analyse the procurement cycle, evaluating the influence that procurement and supply has as a source of added value for the organisation.

L4M2

On completion of this module, learners will be able to devise a business case for requirements to be externally sourced and will understand the role of market management and competitive forces as they specify goods and services in procurement and supply.

L4M3

On completion of this module, learners will be able to describe the key elements and legal aspects of formal commercial contracts, and analyse and interpret the fundamentals of specifications and key performance indicators that are included in contractual arrangements made with suppliers.

L4M4

On completion of this module, learners will be able to explain the options and associated processes available for sourcing with external suppliers. They will also examine the legal and ethical impact and the implications of corporate social responsibility, on the final sourcing decision.

L4M5

On completion of this module learners will be able to identify approaches to successfully achieving negotiated commercial agreements with external organisations.

L4M6

On completion of this module, learners will be able to analyse the dynamics of supplier relationships, examine the processes and procedures for working with stakeholders and appreciate the concept of partnering.

L4M7

On completion of this module, learners will be able to explain methods of inventory storage and control and analyse the concept of whole life cost from concept through to disposal.

L4M8

On completion of this module, learners will be able to demonstrate the practical application of the key elements of the procurement cycle in an integrated manner, within a workplace context.

Click [here](#) for the full syllabus content guide.

All modules within the CIPS qualifications are assessed by computer based examination. Sample examination questions for all modules can be found [here](#).

The CIPS assessments permit reasonable adjustments and special arrangements to be made while minimizing the need for them. For further information regarding the CIPS reasonable adjustment policy, click [here](#)

The number of hours assigned to the CIPS Level 4 Diploma in Procurement and Supply qualification for Total Qualification Time (TQT) is 600. TQT is the number of notional hours which represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected to be required in order for a learner to demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of the qualification. This means that an average learner would be expected to undertake 600 hours in terms of Total Qualification Time, which can consist of 250 guided learning hours and a recommended 335 hours of additional self-study which includes a wider reading of the subject areas and revision to give the learner the best preparation for successfully achieving the qualification, plus 15 hours of assessment time.

The CIPS Level 4 Diploma in Procurement and Supply forms part of the CIPS ladder of qualifications and supports progression within employment and also to further learning including to the CIPS Level 6 Professional Diploma level. The qualification also provides an opportunity to demonstrate continuing professional development (CPD).

For further information regarding the CIPS qualifications ladder, click [here](#)