

Skills
Development
Scotland

Foundation Apprenticeships Schools toolkit

Information and resources to support those working in schools such as teachers, careers advisors and Developing the Young Workforce co-ordinators to understand and promote Foundation Apprenticeships to key influencers and pupils.



What are Foundation Apprenticeships?

A Foundation Apprenticeship qualification (SCQF L4/5/6) provides a unique balance of academic, and employer led work-based learning experiences for pupils in the senior phase.

They are designed to align to Curriculum for Excellence and develop skills for learning, life, and work and provide school pupils with:

- **Industry recognised qualification.** Industry experience and a recognised qualification at the same level as a Scottish Higher (SCQF Level 6)
- **Meaningful skills and experience** of the world of work to support progression into a wider range of positive post-school destinations.
- Industry skills and experience in **sectors with projected future jobs growth**
- **Development of meta skills** important to employers such as communication, team working, creative thinking and problem solving

There are twelve available Foundation Apprenticeship subjects to choose from at SCQF Level 6 which are available across all parts of Scotland. Further detail can be found at: [Foundation Apprenticeships](#).

As part of the development to extend the reach of work-based learning in schools. There are also three frameworks available at SCQF Level 4 and 5 in some local authority areas with plans to expand this further. For more information visit the [Foundation Apprenticeships Subjects](#) area of our website or e-mail newapprenticeships@sds.co.uk to find out what is available in your school.



Meta-skills

By 'meta-skills', we mean those uniquely human skills which enable individuals to be adaptive and be responsive to the changing requirements of the workplace, regardless of context. Meta-skills are behavioural/cognitive skills, rather than competency-based skills and are developed through experience.

70% of employers surveyed via the [Scottish Employer Perspective Survey 2021](#) highlighted meta-skills as the attribute most sought by employers recruiting staff.

A newly created work-based challenge unit with integrated meta-skills development is being piloted in some of the Foundation Apprenticeship frameworks.

Foundation Apprenticeships give young people the opportunity to develop meta-skills important to employers such as collaborating, communicating and creativity.

['Skills 4.0 – A skills model to drive Scotland's future'](#) illustrates the meta-skills model and outlines why developing these will provide a strong foundation on which humans can prepare themselves for a future that is rapidly changing and increasingly unpredictable.



What do Foundation Apprenticeships involve?

Foundation Apprenticeships (SCQF Level 6) are **chosen as a subject** in S5 or S6 as part of the school timetable.

- Pupils **work towards a qualification** over one or two years:
 - attendance on a two-year model is normally two afternoons a week out of school at a learning provider, such as a college, and then time with an employer.
 - One year models' attendance can be up to two full days per week, depending on delivery model.
 - Employer placement can also be in block periods to meet employer needs.
- Apprentices **spend time at school, with a learning provider** (such as a college) **and with an employer**.
- The Foundation Apprenticeship qualification consists of a **knowledge based and work-based** component. Knowledge is delivered and assessed at the school/learning provider. The work-based element is delivered and assessed during the placement.
- **Employers are engaged** at various stages throughout the apprenticeship, such as: site visits, industry projects, work placements undertaken on-line and in person and providing mentoring support.
- The Foundation Apprenticeship at **SCQF Level 4 and 5 is a project-based qualification** usually delivered over 1 year as opposed to SCQF Level 6, which is longer term and involves multiple projects to meet the learning criteria and deeper engagement with employers.



Benefits to schools

Being involved in Foundation Apprenticeships supports the schools' ambitions and contribution towards delivery of national education and skills policy initiatives as detailed below:

Education Policy and Guidance

Embedding Foundation Apprenticeships in the school curriculum supports delivery of the [Career Education Standard](#) entitlements for learners, correlating with the thinking practices of [Getting it Right for Every Child](#).

The [National Improvement Framework](#), particularly the priorities to raise attainment, close the attainment gap and improve employability skills and sustained positive destinations.

Quality Indicators within [HGIOS 4](#) can reflect school activity within Foundation Apprenticeships.

[Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence: Into the Future Review](#) recommends identifying different assessment methods for senior phase such as continuous assessment.

[Putting Learners at the Centre - Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education](#) highlights changes required around access to a wider range of alternative pathways for learners entering the Senior Phase.

Recommendations within [The Careers Review: Careers by Design](#) identify there should be dedicated curriculum time for experiential work-related learning in all settings.

Raising Attainment and Closing the Gap

Foundation Apprenticeships have a positive impact on the whole school attainment with typically 340-580 Insight tariff points, depending on the framework, in comparison to Higher Grades i.e. 204 Insight tariff points for Grade A.

Progression and Employment

Achievement of a Foundation Apprenticeship can support young people to enter a positive destination upon leaving school in the following ways:

- Earning and learning: Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships pathways are supported via the achievement of the SCQF Level 6 Foundation Apprenticeship qualification
- Earning: direct to employment with the meta skills employers are looking for
- Learning: all Scottish colleges and universities recognise the Foundation Apprenticeship SCQF Level 6 qualification as [equivalent to a Scottish Higher entry qualification](#).

Benefits to pupils

- **Develop meta-skills** employers look for like problem solving, communication and creativity
- Build confidence by gaining new skills and an **industry recognised qualification (SCQF Level 6 FA)**
- **Supports progression** on to further learning and employment
- **Widens horizons** through exploration of different sectors
- **Connect with industry** and employers in a fast-changing world
- **Support applications** for Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships
- Work in a real job with professionals and **find out what an industry or sector is all about**
- Get **hands-on skills** that you can't learn from a textbook, putting learning into practice
- Discover what kind of work you like doing and give yourself **confidence in your future choices**
- **Get a higher qualification (SCQF Level 6 FA)** that will help your university, college, and job applications



Foundation Apprenticeship comparators

The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) compares apprenticeships with more traditional qualifications and highlights that although they are very different types of learning, in many cases they sit at the same SCQF level, example of Foundation Apprenticeships (SCQF Level 6) below demonstrates.

SCQF Levels	SQA Qualifications		Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	Apprenticeships & SVQs	
12		Professional Development Award	Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship	
11		Professional Development Award	Masters Degree, Integrate Masters Degree, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship, Professional Apprenticeship, SVQ	
10		Professional Development Award	Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship, Professional Apprenticeship, SVQ	
9		Professional Development Award	Bachelors / Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship, Professional Apprenticeship, SVQ	
8		High National Diploma, Advance Diploma	Professional Development Award	Diploma of Higher Education	Higher Apprenticeship, Technical Apprenticeship, SVQ
7	Advanced Higher, Awards, Scottish Baccalaureate	High National Certificate, Advanced Diploma	Professional Development Award	Certificate of Higher Education	Modern Apprenticeship, SVQ
6	Higher, Awards, Skills for Work Higher	National Certificate	Professional Development Award		Modern Apprenticeship, Foundation Apprenticeship, SVQ
			National Progression Award		
5	National 5, Awards, Skills for Work National 5	National Certificate	National Progression Award		Modern Apprenticeship, SVQ
4	National 4, Awards, Skills for Work National 4	National Certificate	National Progression Award		SVQ
3	National 3, Awards, Skills for Work National 3	National Certificate	National Progression Award		
2	National 2, Awards	National Certificate	National Progression Award		
1	National 1, Awards				

Foundation Apprenticeship comparators

SCQF and UCAS

SCQF Credits are an indicative guide to the length of time it takes to complete a course's learning outcomes. One SCQF credit represents a notional/average ten hours of learning. UCAS tariff points relate to the grade at which a qualification has been achieved.

Qualification	Grade	SCQF Level	SCQF Credits	UCAS points
Higher				
All Higher Subjects	A	6	24	33
	B	6	24	27
	C	6	24	21
	D	6	24	2
Accountancy	Pass	6	64	42
Business Skills	Pass	6	51	42
Civil Engineering	Pass	6	84	56
Creative & Digital Media	Pass	6	64	42
Engineering	Pass	6	87	56
Financial Services	Pass	6	52	42
Food & Drink Technologies	Pass	6	53	42
ICT Hardware	Pass	6	59	42
ICT Software	Pass	6	59	42
Scientific Technologies	Pass	6	51	42
Social Services: Children & Young People	Pass	6	61	42
Social Services: Healthcare	Pass	6	61	42

Foundation Apprenticeships comparators

Insight tariffs

Foundation Apprenticeships are included as recognised awards within the Insight Benchmarking Tool.

Qualification	Insight Tariff Points
Accountancy	427
Business Skills	340
Children & Young People	407
Civil Engineering	560
Creative & Digital Media	427
Engineering	580
Financial Services	347
Food & Drink Technologies	353
Health & Social Care	407
ICT Hardware/Systems Support	393
ICT Software Development	393
Scientific Technologies	340
Qualification	Insight Tariff Points
Higher at Grade A	204
Higher at Grade B	182
Higher at Grade C	160
Higher at Grade D	149

Raising awareness

Make use of school communication channels to help spread the message of Foundation Apprenticeships in a timely and efficient manner. Here are some hints and tips on how to maximise impact:

Raise awareness: School website, social media channels, newsletters and options information.

Promote: celebrate pupil achievements at recognition awards events, pupil case studies, competitions, employer-led events.

Support: get involved in apprenticeships campaigns. [Scottish Apprenticeship Week](#) takes place annually on the first full week of March from Monday to Friday, generating local and national media coverage. Include promotion of Foundation Apprenticeships when subject choices are being considered.

Follow SDS social media channels to like and share our own promotional activity, including any upcoming national campaigns.

[@apprentice_scot](#)

[\ScottishApprenticeships](#)

[@apprentice_scot](#)

Use the hashtag [#FoundationApprenticeships](#)

Signpost to www.apprenticeships.scot

Key messages

Please use the following key messages within your school communication channels to raise awareness of Foundation Apprenticeships at SCQF Level 6.

- Visit apprenticeships.scot/foundation to find out more about Foundation Apprenticeships.
- Get an industry recognised qualification equivalent to a Scottish Higher
- A Foundation Apprenticeship provides industry experience and a qualification
- Get a head-start in some of Scotland's fastest growing industries
- Get experience in industries where there's rising demand for a skilled workforce
- Helps support applications for Modern or Graduate apprenticeships and other jobs in some of Scotland's fastest growing industries
- Strengthen your CV and boost your college or university application.

Raising awareness

Marketing and social media

Access SDS digital assets and key messaging from the [resources area of apprenticeships.scot](#) to support promotion of Foundation Apprenticeships across communication and marketing activity in your school to your colleagues, pupils and parents/carers.

Find and download animations on:

- Technology, Science, Engineering, Accountancy and Finance.
- [Scottish Apprenticeships animation](#) – provides an engaging overview of Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships.
- [Foundation Apprenticeships work for pupils](#)
- [Modern Apprenticeships work for individuals](#)
- [Graduate Apprenticeships work for individuals](#)

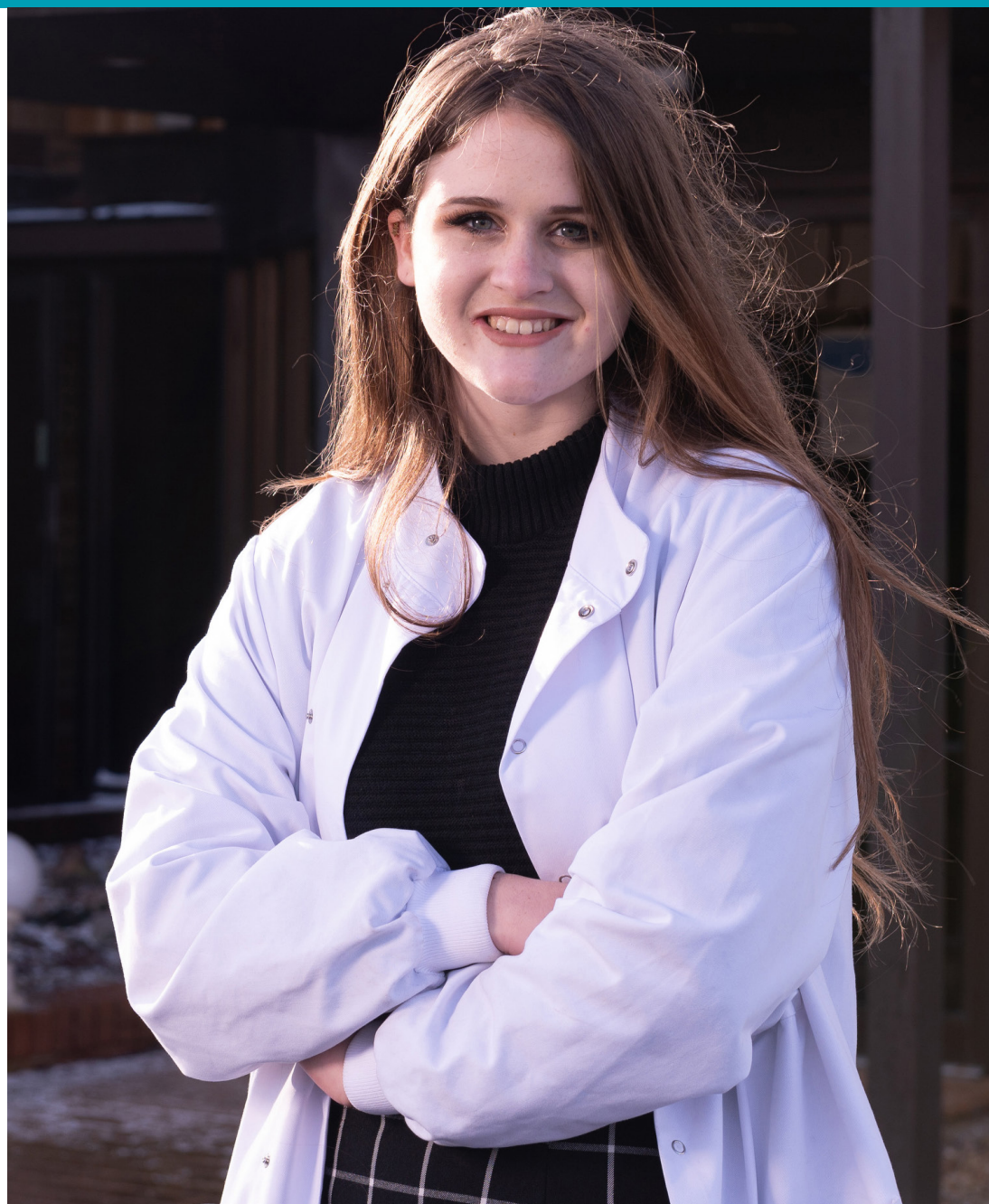
Case Studies

There's loads of inspirational Foundation Apprentice stories on the [apprenticeships.scot youtube](#) channel that can be shared, including the examples below:

[A parent's perspective](#)

[Lara's Foundation Apprenticeship](#)

Find more [apprentice stories on apprenticeships.scot](#)



Useful tools and resources

There are a range of tools and resources to help teachers and practitioners communicate apprenticeship pathways for young people. These are just a few examples, you may also be aware of local partner resources.

Websites

Skills Development Scotland websites are a great resource to gather additional information on Foundation Apprenticeship qualification content, support for option choice, links to jobs and labour market information and how apprenticeships support skills required for [A Human Future](#).

[My World of Work](#) provides teaching resources to support individuals understanding of apprenticeships, what's involved and what they can gain from one.

[Apprenticeships.scot](#) provides information on all Scottish Apprenticeships, including what Foundation Apprenticeship subjects are available in your school and 'live' vacancies for Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships.

Presentations

A [presentation on Scottish Apprenticeships](#) provides more detail on:

- The 3 apprenticeships available: Foundation, Modern and Graduate
- What they are, how they work
- Subjects available and how to find out more information.

Teacher tools

[Scottish Apprenticeship e-module](#) – one hour information module for teachers/practitioners to explain Scottish Apprenticeships.

[S1-3 lesson plan](#) - Help pupils understand what an apprenticeship is, what's involved and what they can gain from doing one.

[Options choices tool](#) can help young pupils discover jobs suited to their options choices which includes the Foundation Apprenticeship.

[An Interactive Tool](#) has been developed to provide information on progression options from a Foundation Apprenticeship qualification. This includes pathways to the world of work, college, and university.

[A meta-skills toolkit](#) has been developed to create a suite of resources that will support practitioners to develop their own approach to embedding meta-skills across the curriculum. Further guidance is also detailed in [A guide to meta-skills across the curriculum](#).

Parent/carer resources

The National Parent Forum of Scotland [Apprenticeships in a nutshell guide](#) contains supporting information for parent/carer discussions.

The SCQF [Guide for Parents and carers](#) helps understanding of current day education landscape and where apprenticeships feature.

SDS has developed a parents and carers communications toolkit that includes information on Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships. Contact your school SDS careers adviser for the latest version.

[Parents and carers webinar](#) on Scottish Apprenticeships.

Next steps to raising awareness

This section provides some practical ideas for schools to plan how and when to utilise these resources.

Working with Young People

School Option Choices and support for learning

- Use these resources to help pupils understand where Foundation Apprenticeships can support their future pathways as part of their **option choice discussions**
- Staff delivering PSE classes and other relevant subject areas can use these resources to **support pupils at key stages of their planning** for choices including transition from school to post school learning and work
- Subject teachers can use these resources to help pupils understand the connection between their subject area and the Foundation Apprenticeship in the **context of the world of work**. They may also be exploring their own skillset to deliver the teaching element of the FA
- Some pupils will have **self-study periods** which can be utilised to monitor their performance and provide any necessary support with their Foundation Apprenticeship learning
- Foundation Apprenticeships can feature within a **school handbook or option choices information** as an example of the diversity of courses on offer within the senior phase curriculum

- Input from current or past apprentices is an effective way for pupils **to hear from their peers** and support their decision making at options time
- Skills Development Scotland is further developing [Scotland's Apprentice Network](#). This will provide future opportunities for schools to access former apprentices from across all programmes to support peer to peer activity and help young people see the value of apprenticeships.

Pupil Assemblies

- Assemblies are an opportunity to deliver **consistent messaging** to pupils and raise awareness of the opportunities available at a school level
- **PowerPoint presentations and case study videos** are a great resource to show case learner journeys and benefits of Foundation Apprenticeships
- To find what opportunities are available for your school pupils can visit [Foundation Apprenticeships](#)

Next steps to raising awareness

Engaging with Parents/Carers and Teachers

Parental/carers engagement

- Whilst engaging with parents/carers at information evenings schools can use these resources to better **inform targeted cohorts**. Schools can utilise some of the key messages, social media assets and case studies to maximise the use of parental engagement channels such as: school website parent section, parent/carers newsletter, social media platforms, parent councils etc.
- Feedback on pupil's progress can be included in **reviews of pupil progress**, by obtaining updates from learning providers at regular intervals during the school year.
- Foundation Apprenticeship representatives, including colleges, learning providers, learners, SDS colleagues and associated teachers can deliver inputs to your **Parent Council Meetings** at regular intervals throughout the school year.

Teacher CPD

- By using these resources internally in your school, you can **help raise awareness with colleagues** i.e.: senior management team, year group leads, pastoral staff, heads of departments, subject teachers, DYW co-ordinators, newly qualified teachers, and new staff members.
- **The Skills Development Scotland [Scottish Apprenticeships e-module](#)** can provide **support to career influencers** to gain a better understanding of Scottish Apprenticeships and help advise others on how they work.

Supporting learners

There are key stages during the learner journey that schools can adopt to support learners to access the correct course for them and maximise their potential to complete the qualification. These are key to maximising retention and attainment for all learners undertaking a Foundation Apprenticeship.

Current delivery of FAs shows that a school approach where a clear point of contact has been identified for providers and learners can impact positively on attainment.

Communication with Learning Providers will support pupils' achievement and prevent them becoming at risk of having difficulties. Teachers having an overview of pupil's progress is part of the school's obligation for monitoring and tracking pupil's performance, attainment and wellbeing.

Induction and programme start dates have been aligned by some Learning Providers to when school timetables change e.g. in June. Communication with Learning Providers will support this transition, providing further course information such as transport arrangements and help manage expectations. The process also needs to be taken into account for -year 2 returners whose timetabling requirements may follow different attendance patterns.

Pupils should discuss their FA application and offer with their guidance teacher, ensuring they meet entry criteria and make an informed choice aligning to their chosen pathway.

Timetabling should support participation throughout the entirety of the FA and minimise clashes with other subjects i.e., either 1-year or 2-year programmes and the transition into new academic years.

Key pressure points for pupils are around prelims and SQA Exam times, where learning on the FA can be impacted upon as pressure to study increases. Planning support around these times needs considered to prevent drop out i.e. communicating with Learning Providers around flexible approaches to support both study leave and FA learning, considering self-study periods and how pupils' performance can be monitored, and necessary support given.

The FA requires the same level of commitment as other subjects, pupils are expected to maintain attendance and achievement of the FA during exam time and study leave.

As with other subjects, additional work and personalised support may be required for pupils to achieve at the end of a 1-year programme or for those moving into year 2. Support for aspects of on-line/ virtual delivery may be needed. SDS has also developed guidance to support apprentices own mental health and well-being.

Pupils often travel out with the school day to attend work placements or training centres. Travel arrangements and FA start, and end times need to be factored into the school day.

Key contacts

The Skills Development Scotland careers advisor in your school can support pupils who have expressed an interest in Foundation Apprenticeships. All learners who wish to apply for and undertake a Foundation Apprenticeship can access one to one engagement throughout their course.

Skills Development Scotland has a team of Partnership and Delivery Managers who support the development of Foundation Apprenticeships with key partners in your local area. You can contact them directly to support localised discussions around learning provider networks, programme delivery, sharing effective practice and working in partnerships with key stakeholders.

For further help and support regarding the delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships get in touch with your local contact by e-mailing: newapprenticeships@sds.co.uk

