Skills Development Scotland

Foundation Apprenticeship in Business Skills at SCQF level 6

Learning Provider Guide to Support Employers

SQA

Milo
Foundation Apprentice

Aims

The aim of this guide is to support Learning Providers to identify and discuss with employers' appropriate activities for learners during a Foundation Apprenticeship work placement.

It provides the following information:

- **What are Foundation Apprenticeships?**
- **The definition of work-based learning in the context of Foundation Apprenticeships**
- **How a Foundation Apprenticeship is delivered**
- **How employers can support learners**
- **An understanding of the Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) units within Foundation Apprenticeship qualifications**
- **Practical examples of work-based activities and evidence for the SVQ units within the Foundation Apprenticeship in Business Skills at SCQF Level 6**
- **Links to useful resources**

"The Foundation Apprenticeship was an eye-opening experience - it's a very proactive way to learn and gave me a clear direction."

Milo, Foundation Apprentice

Milo
Foundation Apprentice

What are Foundation Apprenticeships?

Foundation Apprenticeships are designed to provide school pupils with industry experience whilst gaining a work-based learning qualification at the same level as a Scottish Higher (SCQF Level 6).

A Foundation Apprenticeship is an industry-recognised qualification, designed to offer valuable insight and experience of the world of work. Delivered by learning providers in partnership with employers, knowledge gained is supported through a series of practical activities including industry projects or placements undertaken virtually and/or in person.

Foundation Apprenticeships at SCQF Level 6 are available in a wide range of subjects that are linked to the growth sectors of the Scottish economy:

- **Accountancy**
- **Business Skills**
- **Civil Engineering**
- **Creative and Digital Media**
- **Engineering**
- **Financial Services**
- **Food and Drink Technologies**
- **Hardware and System Support**
- **Scientific Technologies**
- **Social Services and Healthcare**
- **Social Services Children and Young People**
- **Software Development**

What is work-based learning and how does it apply to Foundation Apprenticeships?

For the purposes of this guide, work-based learning means learning that is directly linked to skills and knowledge required to operate competently in a workplace. A major component of a Foundation Apprenticeship is the sector specific work-based learning. In this context, work-based learning relates directly to the activities undertaken by learners whilst they are on a work-placement.

This provides the first-hand experience for learners to acquire sector specific skills, apply knowledge and reflect on their learning. These activities count towards the overall learning and assessment of the units from the Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) within each Foundation Apprenticeship.

How is a Foundation Apprenticeship delivered?

Foundation Apprenticeships are chosen as a subject choice in S5 or S6 and taken alongside other National and Higher qualifications. Pupils work towards the Foundation Apprenticeship qualification over either one or two years.

Learning providers work alongside employers to develop the knowledge and skills learners need to meet all the outcomes of the Foundation Apprenticeship qualification. This includes the classroom-based teaching of knowledge and understanding elements of the Foundation Apprenticeship undertaken with the Learning Provider. This is combined with work-based learning opportunities with an employer to provide learners with the experiential learning they need to apply their learning directly in the workplace, ultimately to meet the requirements of the SVQ units of the Foundation Apprenticeship qualification.

Learners attendance depends on whether they take part in a 1 year or a 2-year programme.

- 1 year = 1 day with employer and 1 day or 2 half days at college or training centre
- 2 years = 1st year – 1 day a week at college or training centre with some employer input = 2nd year = 1 day a week at work placement.

Attendance on the programme will be a mix of classroom-based activity and employer placement. The placement element is typically one day per week but can be flexible to meet the needs of the sector and employer for example, block intake.

1 The term 'learners' is used in this guide to refer to pupils.

Employer involvement

The involvement of employers is a critical aspect of Foundation Apprenticeships and includes:

- Providing learners with a work placement to enable them to gain valuable experience in the workplace

- Providing learners with appropriate work-based opportunities to enable them to develop their learning and skills

- Ensuring all work-based learning provided is based on current expertise, equipment, practices and processes

- Setting employer led projects industry challenge projects

Employers may also be involved in other activities, for example, the recruitment and selection process, guest speaking, coaching and mentoring, and in the assessment of practice of learners.

The learning provider meets regularly with employers to provide on-going support and ensure learners are being supported and are working on the right types of activities.

Scottish Vocational Qualification units

It is important that employers understand the SVQ units within a Foundation Apprenticeship, as this will help them to provide learners with access to work-based activities that are relevant to the SVQ units they need to complete.

Within every Foundation Apprenticeship there are a number of SVQ units which relate to a particular occupational function, and which provide the standards upon which competence is assessed in the workplace.

SVQ units are derived directly from National Occupational Standards (NOS) which describe what an individual needs to do (performance criteria), know and understand (knowledge and understanding criteria) to demonstrate competence in the unit. Evidence (assessment) requirements specify the type and

amount of evidence required for the unit and are developed by an Awarding Body to complete the unit development when it is used to form part of a qualification structure.

Learners must provide evidence they are competent across all criteria to meet the requirements of all SVQ units within the Foundation Apprenticeship. All evidence is assessed against the standards and leads to an overall judgment being made by an assessor on whether the learner is competent or not yet competent. Where a learner is found to be not yet competent in any part of the standards, they will be given the opportunity for further training and to provide further evidence for assessment at a later date.

Acceptable performance in a unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in the SVQ unit specification. Every SVQ unit has knowledge statements which underpin competence.

About the assessment of SVQ units

Assessment is the process of evaluating an individual's attainment of knowledge, understanding and skills. Assessment of the SVQ units involves generating and collecting evidence of a learner's attainment of knowledge, understanding and skills and judging that evidence against defined standards.

The Guide to Assessment covers a wide range of assessment methods in unit assessments for school, college and workplace qualifications as well as external assessment for National Qualifications. There are three essential forms of assessment: observation, product evaluation and questioning. Assessment can also use a combination of some or all of the three forms. All assessment methods, such as a project or performance, can be classified under one or more of these forms.

SVQ units are assessed internally by centres, this means that work-place assessors are responsible for deciding whether evidence meets the standards for SVQ units. The assessors are identified by the centre, they are occupationally competent in the role and professionally competent in conducting work-based assessment (or working towards this). The internal assessment decisions

are externally verified by the Awarding Organisation who offers the units.

Evidence must meet the following requirements:

Valid	The assessment method chosen will be appropriate to the standards being assessed. It will produce evidence relevant to the standards.
Authentic	The evidence will be the learner's own work.
Current	The evidence will exemplify the current level of the learner's performance.
Reliable	The assessment decision is comparable and consistent with other assessors within the centre.
Sufficient	The evidence will demonstrate competence over time (e.g. not just a single occasion).

Work Based Challenge Unit

The Work-based challenge unit (J4YL 04) has been included as a mandatory unit within the Business Skills SCQF Level 6 Foundation Apprenticeship framework.

The aim of this unit is to give learners the opportunity to work with a local employer to design, develop and deliver a project as part of the Foundation Apprenticeship.

This helps develop the learner's meta skills such as: creativity, team-working and self-management, which can contribute to work readiness alongside the technical skills required for the project.

Learners' participation in project-based learning activity, which builds on the knowledge and skills gained in other component parts of the Foundation Apprenticeship. Learners work through the three stages of a plan, do, review process to generate a portfolio of evidence from the tasks, activities, and self-reflections that have been completed. Project based learning has proven to be an attractive method for learners and employers to work together to solve authentic workplace issues in a collaborative manner.

The Work-based Challenge project builds on the National Progression Award (NPA) and other units in the relevant Foundation Apprenticeship. It requires learners to undertake a work-based challenge project to develop, apply and reflect on the development of their meta-skills. There are a broad range of opportunities in the Foundation Apprenticeship to inform the Work-based Challenge. Drawing on the National Progression Award (NPA) in Business Skills (GR3P 46) the following concepts, theories or applications could be used:

- Knowledge of Workforce Planning — skills analysis of current staff, staffing forecasts

- Importance of good Employee Relations

- Use of Motivation Theories — Maslow, Herzberg, and McGregor

- Knowledge of Financial Statements — Income Statement and Balance Sheet

- Create a Ratio Analysis of the Financial Statements

- Knowledge of Organisation Sector and Structure of Organisations

- Corporate Social Responsibility

- Impact of Internal and External factors (SWOT; PESTC/PESTEL)

Links to useful resources

Foundation Apprenticeship Guidance Note:

Business Skills Framework

This document provides all the information needed to deliver the Foundation Apprenticeship in Business Skills at SCQF Level 6

Developing the Young Workforce

Work Placements Standard: This document sets out the expectations for a young person, school, employer, local authority and parent/carer, before, during and after work placements. Refer to this document for information to help improve the quality of learning in the workplace.

SQA Guide to Assessment

This guide is designed to provide support for everyone who assesses SQA qualifications. It covers the full range of SQA qualifications and is based around the principles of assessment, that all qualifications must be valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair. Refer to this document for information on unit content and standards, methods of assessment and acceptable evidence.

FA Placement Options

Meta skills support documentation

Employer Welcome Pack

This guidance has been developed to share best practice and support employers to get the best experience from their involvement in Foundation Apprenticeships.

Practical Examples

Examples of activities and evidence for the SVQ units: A Foundation Apprenticeship in Business Skills at SCQF level 6 (GV1M 46).

These examples support employers with identifying suitable work-based activities to develop the practical skills of S5 and S6 pupils during the work placement component of the Foundation Apprenticeship in Business Skills at SCQF level 6 (GV1M 46).

The Foundation Apprenticeship in Business Skills at SCQF level 6 includes four units from the SVQ in Business and Administration at SCQF level 6. The SVQ units are delivered and assessed while on placement in the workplace.

- J6WV 04 Develop Self and Improve Own Performance in a Business Environment
- J6WX 04 Communicate in a Business Environment
- J6X0 04 Design and Produce Documents in a Business Environment
- J6X4 04 Collaborate and Provide Support in a Business Environment

The table below provides generic examples of typical work-based activities and examples of possible evidence which may support the development of the practical skills

for each of the four SVQ units. Please note, these are examples and are not intended to be prescriptive. Some examples of activities and evidence are holistic in nature therefore may cover several performance criteria (and knowledge and understanding) within a unit and/or across units, as opposed to aligning with a single performance criteria. This supports good practice in the holistic approach to assessment, which in turn reduces the volume of evidence required by leaners and reduces bureaucracy in assessment.

It is important to note not all work-based activities may be suitable for a pupil to undertake (e.g. not an employee). For example, there may be a legislative reason a pupil/non-employee cannot conduct a particular activity within a workplace.

J6WX 04 Communicate In A Business Environment

Performance Criteria What the learner needs to be able to do to demonstrate competence within the unit	Examples of work-based activities which may support learners to develop the required practical skills in the unit	Examples of evidence which may support learners to demonstrate the practical skills in the unit (product evaluation, observation and questioning)
Plan communication **P1** Identify the purpose of the communication, the audience and the outcomes to be achieved **P2** Decide which method of communication to use **Communicate in writing** **P3** Identify sources of information that support the purpose of the communication **P4** Select information that supports the purpose of the communication ▶ Continues on next page	- Responding to internal and/or external requests for information relating to products or services in line with organisational requirements - Preparing a PowerPoint presentation (e.g. to induct new employees into the organisation) - Referring to products/services/price lists and providing the appropriate information requested by customer(s) - Checking final documents through proofreading, spellchecking and grammar checks (e.g. letters, emails, presentation) ▶ Continues on next page	- Witness testimony and/or personal statement providing details of the activities carried out - Personal statement detailing the purpose of the communication (e.g. to announce, to update, to ask for something, who its meant for and any action taken in response to the communication) - Copies of team meeting agendas and minutes of meetings you have contributed to - Records of own involvement in project activity - Records of completing work in line with requirements ▶ Continues on next page

Performance Criteria	Examples of work-based activities	Examples of evidence
P5 Present the information using a format, layout, style and house style that is appropriate to the subject matter, work situation and communication channel **P6** Use language that is appropriate to the audience and the purpose of the communication **P7** Organise, structure and present information to suit different audiences **P8** Select and read written material that contains information that is needed **P9** Identify and extract the main points needed from written material **P10** Use accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling to make sure that meaning is clear **P11** Proofread or check work and make any necessary amendments **P12** Evaluate written material to identify how well it met its purpose **P13** Produce the communication to meet deadlines recognising the difference between what is important and what is urgent **P14** Keep a file copy of all communication **Communicate verbally** **P15** Present information and ideas clearly to others **P16** Make contributions to discussions that help to move the discussion forward **P17** Use appropriate body language and voice tone **P18** Listen actively to information that other people are communicating and respond appropriately ▶ Continues on next page	■ Locating and filing documentation in line with organisational requirements ■ Contributing to agenda items and discussions at meetings ■ Delivering a presentation e.g. findings from the learner's own research or project work ■ Responding to questions during meetings or presentations ■ Providing a summary of key points from a meeting or presentation ■ Taking into account different types of communication including advantages/disadvantage and why the chosen communication was selected ■ Following organisational processes and guidelines for communications ■ Demonstrating compliance with information security, confidentiality policy and procedures in everyday activities	■ Copies of correspondence, emails final documents, reports, presentation etc. annotated, where relevant, to indicate deadlines have been met ■ Screen prints showing file copy is appropriately stored ■ Records of verbal, written or face to face communication prepared by the learner indicating use of appropriate language, tone, capital letters, signature structure, cc, bcc, greeting and closure ■ Screen prints of file locations ■ Record of observation of the learner contributing to a discussion at a meeting or delivering a presentation ■ Record of professional discussion relating to the learner's completed work activities ■ Personal statement identifying what worked or did not work and how to improve

Performance Criteria	Examples of work-based activities	Examples of evidence
P19 P19 Ask relevant questions to clarify anything not understood **P20** Summarise the communication with the person/people being communicated with to make sure the correct meaning has been understood **After communication** **P21** Seek feedback on whether the communication achieved its purpose **P22** Reflect on outcomes of communication and identify ways to develop communication skills further	◄ See previous page	◄ See previous page

Notes

A holistic approach has been taken to provide examples of activities and evidence which cover performance criteria within and across units. This promotes efficient and effective gathering of evidence.

Guidance on simulation can be found in the Assessment Strategy. Where permitted, simulation should only be undertaken in a minority of situations, for example where there is a potential risk to the learner or others. To be effective, simulation must succeed in recreating the atmosphere, conditions and pressures of the real situation.

J6WV 04 Develop Self and Improve Own Performance in a Business Environment

Performance Criteria What the learner needs to be able to do to demonstrate competence within the unit	Examples of work-based activities which may support learners to develop the required practical skills in the unit	Examples of evidence which may support learners to demonstrate the practical skills in the unit (product evaluation, observation and questioning)
Plan and be accountable for own work **P1** Identify and agree the performance targets and the timescales for achievement **P2** plan how to make the best use of time and identify the required resources **P3** confirm the working methods and practices with your line management **P4** keep your line management informed about the progress of your performance **P5** follow the agreed procedures for dealing with problems or issues **P6** Take responsibility for your own work and accept responsibility for any mistakes **P7** Seek support and assistance from your colleagues or team members where required **P8** meet your deadlines or renegotiate targets and plans **P9** Reflect on your performance and review it in accordance with lessons learnt **P10** Follow agreed guidelines, procedures and, where appropriate, codes of practice **Support the working practices** **P11** Set the targets for own performance and demonstrate commitment to meet them **P12** Cope with pressure and overcome difficulties and setbacks ▶ Continues on next page	■ Working with line manager to agree objectives based around team activity and personal development ■ Developing a plan of how you are going to undertake the agreed work activities ■ Prioritising targets and agreeing timescales ■ Preparing a to do list showing how you are going to effectively use your time ■ Outlining the impact of tasks and activities on other roles in the team and on own workload if not completed on time ■ Providing regular updates on progress to line manager and others ■ Re-negotiating deadlines or targets, when required and updating the original plans and highlighting the changes ■ Keeping a record of any problems or mistakes in carrying out the work activities ■ Following company guidelines, processes and procedures ■ Reviewing and evaluating the work activities carried out ■ Presenting your work to colleagues and asking for feedback ■ Accepting and taking forward feedback to improve ■ Identifying and acknowledging what went wrong ▶ Continues on next page	■ Witness testimonies by those who worked with the learner providing details of the work completed ■ Records of own involvement in work activities ■ Records of completing work in line with organisational requirements ■ Copies of correspondence, emails, documents etc ■ Copies of appraisals, progress reviews, learning plans, to do lists, memos, work plans ■ Details of relevant written and verbal communications ■ Record of professional discussion with assessor ■ Record of observation of the learner following procedures and working to the expected standard

Performance Criteria	Examples of work-based activities	Examples of evidence

P13 Seek new challenges and take the initiative on them

P14 Adapt to change and support colleagues and team members during the process

P15 Treat colleagues and team members with honesty, respect and consideration

P16 Support colleagues and team members with work tasks

Develop Self

P17 Seek the feedback from your colleagues and team members

P18 Collate the feedback received for evaluation of your own work

P19 Identify methods to improve your work and test their effectiveness with working practice

P20 Update your plans for learning and improvement

P21 Review your progress with line management on a regular basis

P22 Identify your learning and development needs for your performance improvement

P23 Develop and follow a learning plan that meets your needs

P24 Review your performance through self-reflection when working towards achievement of your objectives

P25 Use emotional intelligence to recognise and evaluate your own and your colleagues' strengths and weaknesses, feelings, opinions and judgements

Examples of work-based activities

■ Conducting a self-evaluation of the work

■ Identifying how the work could have been improved

■ Developing, maintaining and revising own learning plan

■ Maintaining record of own progress including highlighting any difficulties and how you assert yourself to keep things on track

■ Identifying any instances where you had to change your approach

■ Identifying the types of support required and providing support and feedback

Examples of evidence

Performance Criteria	Examples of work-based activities	Examples of evidence
P26 Seek new sources of support and feedback, when necessary **P27** take actions to maintain your well-being, mental health, balance between your professional and personal life, when required	◄ See previous page	◄ See previous page

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J6X0 04 **Design And Produce Documents In A Business Environment**

Performance Criteria What the learner needs to be able to do to demonstrate competence within the unit	Examples of work-based activities which may support learners to develop the required practical skills in the unit	Examples of evidence which may support learners to demonstrate the practical skills in the unit (product evaluation, observation and questioning)
P1 Agree the purpose, content, style, quality standards for the documents **P2** Confirm the deadlines for completion of the documents **P3** Allocate and prepare the required resources for the documents' production **P4** Research and prepare the required content **P5** Use the relevant technology for the documents' production **P6** Draft the documents in accordance with agreed specifications and format **P7** Review the drafts and incorporate review comments **P8** Check the documents for accuracy and amend as required **P9** Design and produce the documents in the agreed style **P10** Integrate non-text objects in the agreed layout **P11** Save and store the document safely and securely in relevant locations **P12** Adhere to the relevant data protection and confidentiality legislation **P13** Clarify document requirements, when necessary. **P14** Use the relevant methods for the documents' version control **P15** Review, edit and update the documents on a regular basis	■ Identifying and agreeing the purpose, content and timescales for the document - examples of documents include a training manual, a work instruction, a procedure, a process flowchart, a presentation ■ Developing a plan on how you are going to undertake the work including the required resources ■ Producing a quality document using Word/Excel/PowerPoint/Outlook in line with organisational requirements and within agreed timescales ■ Producing an initial draft of the document using required house style and standard template ■ Comparing the final document with the initial plan to ensure it meets requirements ■ Checking the final document for accuracy through proofreading, spellchecking and grammar checks ■ Presenting the completed document to line manager and/or others for feedback ■ Making any changes required to the document	■ Witness testimonies and/or personal statement detailing work completed ■ Copies of own detailed plan ■ Copy of the draft and final document ■ Records of completing work in line with organisational requirements (e.g. email acknowledgement from line manager) ■ Copies of any correspondence relating to the work, emails etc ■ Records of relevant verbal, written or face to face communication

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It is important the purpose, content and style of the document is not overly simple or basic and reflects the degree of difficulty for the level of the Unit.

J6X4 04 Collaborate and Provide Support in a Business Environment

Performance Criteria What the learner needs to be able to do to demonstrate competence within the unit	Examples of work-based activities which may support learners to develop the required practical skills in the unit	Examples of evidence which may support learners to demonstrate the practical skills in the unit (product evaluation, observation and questioning)
P1 Work in a way that supports your organisation's mission and your team's objectives **P2** Put your organisation's values into your working practices **P3** FWelcome opportunities to work with other colleagues to achieve set outcomes **P4** Follow organisational policies and procedures relevant to your job **P5** Work with your colleagues and other members of staff to maintain a professional image of your organisation **P6** Share work goals and plan work objectives with your colleagues and other members of staff **P7** Seek guidance from colleagues and other members of staff, when required **P8** Contribute to improving organisational objectives, policies, procedures and values **P9** Work with external organisations and stakeholders in a way that promotes a professional image of your organisation **P10** Provide support to other team **P11** Work in a way that recognises the strengths or weaknesses of your colleagues and members of staff **P12** Communicate with colleagues, other members of staff and stakeholders **P13** Refer problems and disagreements to an appropriate member of staff ▶ Continues on next page	■ Relating tasks/activities to corporate goals and team objectives via a plan or schedule that demonstrates how own output feeds into goals and objectives ■ Taking part in working groups, focus groups, team meetings ■ Using meeting agenda's and action plans ■ Demonstrating compliance with health and safety policies, information security, confidentiality policy and procedures in your day to day activity (e.g. sending emails confidentially, maintaining a records management or filing system, undertaking a workstation assessment) ■ Supporting improvements in processes or procedures ■ Participating in organisational reviews, working groups or contributing ideas to team meetings ■ Obtaining guidance from an assigned buddy, mentor or line manager ■ Asking for help when needed ■ Communicating with others by email, call, face to face in an appropriate tone, language and body language that is open, warm, and approachable ■ Dealing with requests in a timely manner ■ Checking own understanding with others ■ Following processes to solve or escalate problems when required ▶ Continues on next page	■ Witness testimonies and/or personal statement detailing work completed ■ Records of achieving behavioural objectives based on values ■ Records of attending 121s, meeting invites, emails etc ■ Copies of team meeting agendas and minutes you have contributed to ■ Records of involvement in project activity ■ Records of completing work in line with organisational requirements ■ Copies of correspondence, emails etc ■ Records of verbal, written or face to face communication ■ Record of professional discussion relating to the learner's completed work activities ■ Personal statement identifying what worked or did not work and how to improve

Performance Criteria	Examples of work-based activities	Examples of evidence
P14 Recognise when a business problem exists **P15** Analyse the business problem, collating additional information as necessary **P16** Discuss the business problem with colleagues or senior members of staff **P17** Agree an approach to solve the business problem **P18** Seek feedback from colleagues and other members of staff to improve own work **P19** Share feedback for identification of improvements or on the achievement of objectives	■ Delivering what is asked and updating line manager when not achievable ■ Meeting the required standards as checked with by your line manager ■ Communicating with others by email, telephone, face to face in an appropriate tone, language and body language that is open, warm, and approachable	◄ See previous page

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