

**Community of Practice for Modern Apprenticeship Providers**

**Meta-skills delivery in Modern Apprenticeships**

**A Community of Practice meeting for Modern Apprenticeship**

**Workshop summary - 5 December 2024**

**February 2025of Practice meeting for Modern**

Insert date



**Introduction**

The purpose of this Community of Practice was to share approaches to delivering and evidencing meta-skills to maximise the impact of the overall apprenticeship

experience for our apprentices

**The Objectives were for providers to have:**

* improved clarity on the expectations for delivery, assessment and

evidencing of meta-skills

* benefitted from opportunities to share practices, tips and challenges
* reflected on the insights gained and considered improvement actions or enhancements they may wish to take forward as a result

The event was targeted at Providers where meta-skills is a mandatory requirement in the apprenticeship qualification. 68 delegates attended representing employers,

colleges and independent training providers delivering apprenticeships in sectors

including engineering, digital, retail, customer service and travel, financial services and project management.

Following [presentations](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/bd2d4dhm/meta-skills-community-of-practice-december-2024-powerpoint-slides.pptx?_gl=1*165wmvd*_up*MQ..*_ga*NTQ2NTY5NjYwLjE3Mzc1NjY5OTc.*_ga_2CRJE0HKFQ*MTczNzU2Njk5NC4xLjEuMTczNzU2NzA0NS4wLjAuMA..) from SDS, Education Scotland and SQA, Providers took part in a workshop discussion, covering 4 questions:

1. **How do you help apprentices to buy in to meta-skills and understand their relevance?**
2. **How and where do meta-skills fit most naturally in your apprenticeship**

**delivery?**

1. **What are you doing to generate assessment evidence for meta-skills?**
2. **What are your top tips and challenges?**

A summary of the workshop feedback follows. Providers also gave us useful feedback on the event. 75% of Providers shared their feedback. The mean score for rating the usefulness of the event was 7.8 from a possible maximum score of 10. We have included a summary of the survey feedback at the end of the report. SDS will liaise with colleagues at Education Scotland and SQA to consider how we may respond to the areas for improvement suggested.

**Meta-skills workshop discussion**

**Introducing and understanding meta-skills**

**How do you help apprentices to buy in to meta-skills and understand their relevance?**

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| **Provider feedback - Approaches** | **Provider feedback - Challenges** |
| Provider feedback includes input from providers currently delivering meta-skills and those who have limited experience and are either just getting started or at the early stages of meta-skills delivery.  Some are focussing initially on introducing meta-skills to apprentices who started before the new standard to comply with SDS’ Apprentice Progress Review requirements.  Some providers are adopting existing SDS resources including the Profiling tool and have adapted the format to MS Forms to make it accessible to apprentices who tend to use mobile devices.  One provider makes the link between the apprentices’ meta-skills to their strengths profile on My World of Work  One provider finds voice recordings useful (as its very difficult to get some apprentices to write)  Providers introduce meta-skills at various points in the apprentice journey, from initial assessment, Induction, training plans to progress reviews.  Consistent approach to induction being used by some providers that includes:   * the role and understanding of meta-skills within life/the workplace * baselining exercise * development of training plan including how meta-skills will be reviewed * review of the self-assessment tools   Some providers found the SDS and SQA paperwork helpful | * PDF format of SDS meta-skills resources mean most apprentices can’t access them. * Apprentices confused between core skills and meta-skills particularly those aged over 25 * Apprentices, including European   candidates, unaware of their level of core skills and meta-skills   * ‘Meta-skills’ language isn’t user friendly and needs to be more accessible for apprentices. * General point about getting employer buy-in and find it even more difficult to introduce meta-skills with smaller employers. * Role of college workplace assessors important and they need CPD to introduce meta-skills well. * Resources available to promote   understanding of meta-skills are focused on younger learners   * Small providers have less resources to support implementation * Understanding of Education   Scotland’s requirements could be clearer |

**Developing meta-skills**

**How and where do meta-skills fit most naturally in your apprenticeship delivery?**

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| --- | --- |
| **Provider Feedback – approaches** | **Provider Feedback - challenges** |
| Discussion highlighted:   * Importance of getting employer   understanding of, and contribution to,  development of these skills as part of wider apprenticeship. Suggestion to  include meta-skills as part of any  employer events   * Being able to link meta-skills easily to workplace tasks – using naturally   occurring evidence and talking about them/reflecting on them at every  opportunity - keep the  language informal   * The setting of smart targets is helpful for apprentices – indicating when they reach an achievement point and when they are ahead of expectations * End point surveys on meta-skills against initial baseline is helpful to   demonstrate development   * The benefits of apprentice networks where they can share information with other apprentices * One large employer expects their   apprentices to model the business  values of the company which have been mapped to SDS’ meta-skills framework.   * Some employers are using their own   competency framework to support meta-skills reviews   * 1-2-1 reviews including employer input, alongside witness testimonies and   observation reports are used to  consolidate meta-skills application   * Use existing processes and build on these to capture meta-skills evidence, e.g.:   Apprentice Progress Reviews  E-Portfolio systems, apprentice Logbook/reflective journals | * Mixed response from employers – some more supportive than others * Most employers see it as the role of the provider to drive delivery against the apprenticeship   qualification   * Feel smaller employers will   struggle to contribute due to  capacity   * More support and training is   required for assessors. The  assessor must be comfortable and confident of mapping of meta-skills   * Getting into schools to promote   apprenticeships can be  challenging for providers and  linking the language from schools to providers on meta-skills – make sure using the same terminology   * Meta-skills resources need to   relate more closely to work based  situations |

**Generating assessment evidence**

**What are you doing to generate assessment evidence for meta-skills?**

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| Provider feedback - approaches | Provider feedback - challenges |
| * One college has developed   resources for use across the  departments and for apprentices and employers, including:   * In house meta-skills videos * On campus tutorials * Meta-skills Flash Cards * One employer plans to evidence meta-skills via an outward bound   activity and “virtual welding” activity.     * One provider highlighted that having the development/learning plan linked to the progress review and using these as live and working   documents is helpful  Examples of evidence sources cited:   * Self-reflection log * Adaptation to E-portfolio system to capture evidence. * Apprentice Progress Reviews * Job Reports * Logbook Documentation * Observation Reports * Voice notes/videos * Employer sign up induction booklet * Witness testimonies from employers | * Apprentices’ understanding and awareness and their reflection skills * Some providers felt that the SDS meta-skills assessment tool is too wordy and generic and feel an   alternative using different options would be beneficial   * Generating assessment evidence can be challenging if you don’t   involve the employer at the very beginning |

**Top tips** **and challenges**

**What are your top tips and challenges?**

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| Provider feedback - approaches | Provider feedback - challenges |
| * Selling the benefits, understanding these and articulating these to the   apprentices and employers   * Ensure staff are trained and have the necessary support and development to effectively plan for meta-skills into   programme delivery   * Don’t treat as a tick box exercise. Bring it to life for apprentices, employers and assessors and stress their importance - see it as a continuum of development * Needs to be an individualised approach to choosing the meta-skills that are   appropriate to each apprentice   * Holistic approach needs more   emphasis   * Use Microsoft Forms for profiling tools, self-assessment * Setting SMART objectives to integrate meta-skills * Make better use of technology including videos to gather evidence and to show the apprentice how they are   progressing and developing meta-skills   * Make the language relatable, for   example by linking to tasks   * Link meta-skills to the development of the full qualification * Producing better definitions of meta-skills from the apprentices themselves based on their experiences * Use continuous reviews to address   areas for Improvement   * Having a unit provides clarity on the   requirements for meta-skills | * Need to find better ways to   articulate the benefits of meta-skills   * Providers looking for ideas/best ways to record evidence and   preferably using digital solutions (e.g. E-portfolio systems)   * Quality and strong relationships with employers needed for successful implementation (especially dealing with resistance and smaller   employers).   * Perceptions that meta-skills create more work for the qualification * Employers need to build in time   during the learner’s working day to allow them to reflect on their meta-skills and core skill development   * Some apprentices need help with reflection tasks * How to deliver meta-skills for   apprentices with additional support needs   * Some staff feeling apprehensive – there is a lot of planning to do. * Embedding meta-skills in schools properly to support wider system |

**Event Survey Feedback**

Providers highlighted the positive aspects of the event, such as the focused topic, networking opportunities, and informative sessions that provided a foundation for future work. Participants appreciated the excellent facilitation, venue, and the chance to meet representatives from Education Scotland, SQA, SDS, and other providers.

Recommendations for improvement include more training on Meta-skills, sharing resources and examples, and providing a clear timeline for qualification transition. There is also a call for a standardised approach to meta-skills, clearer guidelines, better alignment of Core Skills and Meta-skills, and support for employers.

Event improvements suggested including smaller group discussions, more practical workshops, and regular events to continue sharing best practices.

**Specific areas for improvement suggested by providers**

* More support to help providers embed meta-skills into their apprenticeship

delivery

* Keen to see examples of effective practice in other sectors
* Consensus that it would be good to do another session a year from now when providers have more experience
* Case studies for older learners about meta-skills development – upskilling what that looks like?
* Helpful to have resources developed that are targeted at apprentices
* Language / terminology need consistency across networks/schools and

employers

* Improve employer awareness/visibility of meta-skills as a requirement in

apprenticeships and explain how employers can support apprentice and provider to deliver these skills