



# MODERN APPRENTICESHIP IN PROVIDING FINANCIAL SERVICES

## Overview

This apprenticeship is designed to support the development of apprentices working in financial services provision, in roles such as insurance underwriting administrator, claims handling administrator, pension administrator, banking cashier, banking call centre adviser, investment information administrator, trainee underwriter, trainee claims official, trainee broker or sales representative, customer adviser, foreign currency adviser or debt collector. The goal of the apprenticeship is to enable apprentices to effectively provide the required financial services relevant to their area of work within a financial services organisation.

## Duration

We expect this apprenticeship to last for around 18 months.

## Level

SCQF Level 6. Find out more about SCQF [here!](#)

## Qualification(s) Achieved

- Certificate for Customer Service in the Financial Services Sector at SCQF Level 6 (GT3E 46) and
- a professional qualification relevant to the apprentice's employment, or a Professional Development Award

**Apprenticeships aim to provide a mixture of on-the-job (in the workplace) and off-the-job (through day or block release) learning to enable people to develop the knowledge, skills and expertise required by businesses today.**

Designed by employers to attract new talent, tackle critical skills shortages and develop existing workforces, apprenticeships can both help people to enter the world of work and develop the skills of those already in work

## About Scottish Apprenticeships

Scottish Apprenticeships are funded by the Scottish Government and reflect the Government's commitment to promoting a world-class, inclusive, work-based learning system; they are administered by Skills Development Scotland, the National Skills Agency. Skills Development Scotland has a remit to contribute to the nation's economic growth and it does this by supporting individuals and businesses alike to develop and apply their skills in the workplace.

The Scottish Apprenticeships system focuses on three key elements:

- the **learning outcomes** aligned to the specific functions of an apprentice's job;
- the **knowledge, skills and behaviours** that will be developed by apprentices, enabling them to work competently and confidently; and
- the **meta-skills** that will be developed by apprentices to help them to manage themselves, collaborate with others and interact with change.

Throughout their apprenticeship, apprentices will be supported and guided by their employer, mentor and learning provider, and will have their growing competence measured by an assessor to ensure they can perform their job to the standard required. On successful completion, apprentices will be awarded nationally recognised competence-based and/or professional qualifications in their chosen field.

**Find further information on funding and eligibility of Scottish Apprenticeships [here](#).**

## About this apprenticeship

Working in partnership with businesses and stakeholders, this apprenticeship document has been written to provide apprentices and employers with an overview of this apprenticeship. Please read this alongside the Occupation Profile for Providing Financial Services at SCQF Level 6.

**Find further information on apprenticeships [here](#)!**

# THE ROLE OF THE APPRENTICE

**This apprenticeship is designed to support entry level roles across the financial services sector, including in banks, building societies and insurance organisations.**

There are a number of entry level roles available, such as insurance underwriting administrator, claims handling administrator, pension administrator, banking cashier, banking call centre adviser, investment information administrator, trainee underwriter, trainee claims official, trainee broker or sales representative, customer adviser, foreign currency adviser or debt collector. All of these roles require employees to deal with customers (both internal and external), apply technical knowledge and skills across a range of products and services, and demonstrate a clear understanding of regulatory frameworks as well as the requirements of their own role and the goals of the organisation.

Apprentices will be expected to achieve the following **learning outcomes** by the end of their apprenticeship.

- Provide effective customer service
  - Identify and process customer complaints to achieve fair customer outcomes
  - Issue appropriate business documentation
  - Comply with all relevant financial regulations and codes of conduct
  - Use and promote technology to meet customer and business needs
  - Build and maintain effective relationships with customers, colleagues and other stakeholders
- Reflect on current business practices and contribute to continuous improvement
  - Work collaboratively in a team
  - Develop meta-skills through a process of regular reflection, coaching, feedback and personal development

# DEFINING KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND BEHAVIOURS

**This apprenticeship is designed to develop apprentices' careers by developing their knowledge and understanding of their role, by increasing their skills and by enhancing their behaviours.**

Employers from a variety of sectors have helped to identify the key knowledge, skills and behaviours that apprentices working in financial services need to develop. Throughout their apprenticeship, apprentices should be regularly assessed to ensure they can demonstrate both know-how and ability in each of these areas; a high-level summary is provided below. A full list of the knowledge, skills and behaviours can be found in the associated Occupation Profile for Providing Financial Services at SCQF Level 6.

## Knowledge

- Financial products and services
- Types of documentation
- Financial regulations and guidelines
- Processes for continual improvement
- Communication techniques
- Types of communication
- Complaints procedures
- Systems training
- Importance of meta-skills

## Skills

- Meeting customer needs
- Keeping commitments to customers
- Maintaining appropriate conduct in business
- Enhancing customer experiences
- Developing working relationships
- Making positive contributions
- Following complaint processes
- Using multiple systems
- Self-reflecting on own performance

## Behaviours

- Maintaining professionalism
- Maintaining confidentiality
- Acting ethically
- Taking ownership
- Respecting others
- Adapting to change
- Being honest and transparent
- Staying focused
- Taking a proactive approach to personal development

# DEFINING META-SKILLS

**Meta-skills sit alongside and complement technical knowledge, skills and behaviours. As technology, society and the way we work change at an ever-increasing pace, so meta-skills are the overarching and future-focused attributes that enable other skills to be developed through consideration, reflection and implementation.**

Meta-skills support improved performance and productivity, greater adaptability and resilience to change. For apprentices, meta-skills are a critical asset, supporting their ability to cope and excel in the face of change, to solve problems, to collaborate with others and to create successful futures. There are three categories, each with four meta-skills.

**Managing yourself** – focus, integrity, adaptability and initiative

**Connecting with others** – communication, feeling, collaboration and leadership

**Interacting with change** – curiosity, creativity, sense-making and critical thinking



## Developing 12 Meta-skills in providing financial services

Supported by their employer, mentor and learning provider, apprentices will consider, practise and reflect on their use of meta-skills during their apprenticeship, building those skills to enhance their personal effectiveness in their present role and their future careers.



### Managing yourself

A clear **focus** is required to prioritise workloads or attend to the task in hand; **integrity** is essential when ensuring that customers are treated fairly and supported to do what is right for them; **adaptability** is key to working in a sector where new systems and processes are introduced regularly; and using **initiative** is critical to managing personal workload, responding to feedback and improving processes.



### Connecting with others

Clear and effective **communication** with customers and other stakeholders, whether verbally or in writing, is one of the most significant aspects of this type of role; **feeling** is needed to fully understand customer needs, to respond effectively to others and, particularly, to convey difficult information; skills in **collaboration** are vital when working with colleagues in other departments or across different product lines; and **leadership** skills are developed through sharing experience and best practice, or when managing projects.



### Interacting with change

A keen sense of **curiosity** is a critical asset when supporting personal development, continual learning and ongoing improvement; **creativity** is fundamental to producing improvements to processes; **sense-making** comes into play when analysing data to find solutions and interpreting customer requests and/or complaints; and **critical thinking** is key when reviewing risk and undertaking informed decision making.

# KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**A number of different parties will be involved in the delivery, management and assessment of a successful apprenticeship. As well as the apprentice, key roles include employer, mentor, learning provider and assessor. Each has a specific set of responsibilities during the apprenticeship.**

## **Apprentice Responsibilities**

In their day-to-day roles, apprentices have the same responsibilities to their employer as any other employee but they have additional and specific responsibilities for their own learning and development too.

- Agreeing a learning and development plan with all parties involved and following it through
- Committing to learning throughout the duration of apprenticeship
- Participating in progress meetings with employer and learning provider
- Participating in off-the-job learning where required
- Reflecting on performance and on development of the skills, knowledge and behaviours required of the role
- Agreeing new goals to progress learning with all parties involved

## **Employer Responsibilities**

- Providing apprentices with a contract of employment, a job description and an induction programme
- Paying apprentices in line with company policy, current legislation, fair work principles, and equality and diversity expectations
- Ensuring a working environment that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment
- Agreeing learning needs and a learning and development plan with the learning provider and apprentices including:
  - agreeing when off-the-job learning will be required and releasing apprentices for this as required
  - making on-the-job learning arrangements
  - identifying additional support requirements and agreeing actions to implement these
- Providing a quality work-based learning environment for apprentices, including the facilities and training necessary to demonstrate competence and succeed in the apprenticeship
- Providing the support of a mentor, who has relevant industry experience and is familiar with the employer's business, to support apprentices' development
- Contributing to the ongoing assessment of occupational competence, including observing performance, verifying evidence and profiling meta-skills
- Meeting with apprentices and learning providers to review apprentices' progress and set future goals
- Providing an environment that supports apprentices to take responsibility for their own learning and development
- Supporting and encouraging apprentices during their apprenticeship
- Recognising the achievements of apprentices in career management and progression
- Providing constructive feedback to the learning provider on the quality of their service delivery to inform continuous improvement of both the Scottish Apprenticeships system and apprentices themselves

# KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



## Mentor Responsibilities

- Helping new apprentices orientate into the workplace
- Providing information, advice and guidance relating to the learning and assessment aspects of the apprenticeship
- Supporting apprentices to define meta-skills in their shared work context
- Working with apprentices, employers and learning providers to ensure problems are resolved quickly
- Acting as an expert witness for apprentices
- Providing support to apprentices as they adjust to the workplace and progress in their career



## Learning Provider Responsibilities

- Providing an appropriate apprenticeship programme for apprentices and employers
- Agreeing the learning needs of the apprentices with both the apprentice and the employer
- Agreeing when off-the-job learning will be required and defining roles and responsibilities for this with relevant parties
- Ensuring apprentices have access to the best quality learning opportunities available
- Ensuring apprentices and employers fully understand the principles and processes of competence-based assessment
- Registering apprentices through MA Online and with relevant awarding bodies, sector skills organisations and Skills Development Scotland as appropriate

- Compiling and agreeing learning and development plans and assessment plans with apprentices and employers
- Completing assessment records and submitting records and evidence for verification/moderation
- Reviewing apprentices' progress at regular intervals with the employer
- Supporting apprentices to develop their reflective practice
- Advising apprentices who to approach for support, advice and encouragement both within and outwith the workplace
- Seeking and providing feedback from and to employers and apprentices to inform continuous improvement of the Scottish Apprenticeships system and apprentices themselves



## Assessor Responsibilities

- Meeting with apprentices, mentors and employers to plan learning and review progress
- Monitoring apprentices' progress against learning and development plans
- Observing and assessing apprentices in the workplace and judging whether their work meets the competence requirements set by the qualification awarding body
- Assessing different types of evidence from apprentices
- Providing constructive feedback on performance and offering suggestions for improvement
- Maintaining current knowledge of industry standards and seeking innovative new methods of work-based learning delivery

# BEFORE THE APPRENTICESHIP STARTS

The recruitment of apprentices is primarily the responsibility of the employer and, before an apprenticeship starts, consideration should be given to entry requirements and also to ensuring that the workplace adheres to fair work, inclusion and diversity principles.

The recommended entry requirements for this apprenticeship are:

- apprentices should be able to demonstrate a high standard of literacy and numeracy.

However, employers can also consider existing workplace skills and experiences, where apprentices are either changing careers or upskilling. Being open to alternative assessment methods and relevant experience, instead of qualifications, can help to broaden the pool of potential applicants.

## Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Individuals applying for an apprenticeship will undergo a selection process based on the employer's existing HR practices. Learning providers should take account of this and also liaise with employers to provide advice and guidance on any RPL and experience that will be accepted for entry onto the apprenticeship.

It is recommended that a flexible approach to RPL is adopted, on a case-by-case basis, with all relevant experience as well as any previous qualifications taken into account. In particular, learning providers should always consider how they can best recognise apprentices' prior learning in order to minimise repetition of content. You can find more information on RPL [here](#).



## Fair Work, inclusion and diversity

The Scottish Apprenticeships system aims to embed fair work principles. Fair Work First is the Scottish Government's flagship policy for driving high quality and fair work across the labour market in Scotland by applying fair work criteria to grants, other funding and contracts being awarded by and across the public sector, where it is relevant to do so. Through this approach the Scottish Government is asking employers to adopt fair working practices, specifically:

- appropriate channels for effective voice, such as trade union recognition;
- investment in workforce development;
- no inappropriate use of zero hours contracts;
- action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace; and
- payment of the real Living Wage.

Further guidance on Fair Work First is available from <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-work-first-guidance-support-implementation/>

The design and development of Scottish Apprenticeships aims to embed these principles in practical ways by including opportunities for feedback from apprentices as well as the availability of clear pathways into future opportunities beyond the apprenticeship itself.



# BEFORE THE APPRENTICESHIP STARTS

## Protected characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 includes nine protected characteristics, which are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex and sexual orientation. It is against the law to discriminate based on these protected characteristics. Skills Development Scotland is a Corporate Parent and, to that end, includes 'care experienced' in a similar way to protected characteristics in all our funded programmes and services.

Attracting the best people into apprenticeships involves ensuring that barriers are removed. Receiving the right support at the right time unlocks the potential of people who could otherwise be denied the opportunity to go on and become valued employees. Supporting people to feel confident about disclosing their protected characteristics in a safe and respectful way allows employers and learning providers to put the right conditions in place to unlock that potential; the right time for this is often at the start of an apprenticeship or even at the recruitment stage. In practice, it might involve ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate apprentices, where that is possible and in order to help them make the most of their apprenticeship journey. Examples might include (but are not limited to) supporting people with sensory impairments, supporting people for whom English is not their first language and supporting people who are care experienced (for example, through fostering, adoption or residential care).

## Diversity in financial services

While the financial services sector may not have obvious equality and diversity challenges, women are over-represented in the MA programme compared to the general population. That might be because of the availability of flexible work patterns. However, there is a perception that the board room is 'male and white' and consideration is required around the representation of women at management and senior levels, including opportunities for women returners.



## Apprenticeship agreement and employment status

All post-school apprentices must hold a contract of employment for the period of the apprenticeship. In addition, an apprenticeship agreement, confirming the commitment of the employer, the apprentice and the learning provider to the agreed apprenticeship framework (this document) must be signed by all parties. This agreement forms part of the individual employment arrangements between the apprentice and the employer; and of the learning arrangements between the learning provider, the employer and the apprentice.



## Registration and Certification

Registration and certification of apprenticeships is undertaken through [Modern Apprenticeship Online](#). It is the responsibility of the learning provider to ensure that the registration of apprentices is completed within four weeks of the start of their apprenticeship.

# DURING THE APPRENTICESHIP

Once the apprenticeship starts, there are a number of key considerations, tasks and milestones that apprentices, employers, learning providers, mentors and assessors should undertake to optimise a successful outcome for all parties.

## Work-based learning

Work-based learning – aligned to and assessed against both the learning outcomes and the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the apprenticeship – is the central and most significant component of an apprenticeship and is based on apprentices' real-life experiences in the workplace. Work-based learning is a partnership between apprentice, employer and learning provider and all apprentices must have the support of a mentor in the workshop.

Get more information on work-based learning [here](#).

## Meta-skills development

This apprenticeship includes a **learning outcome** that provides opportunities to develop **meta-skills**. To effectively develop the 12 meta-skills outlined earlier, apprentices must first understand what they are and how they might apply them in their role. To help with this, a simple exercise to define what the 12 meta-skills mean in their role (in language that both apprentice and employer are comfortable with) should be used. This will allow apprentices to consider their own meta-skills profile and which meta-skills they might need to develop or apply in order to perform effectively at work.

Setting development goals, action planning and regularly reflecting on progress will help apprentices to develop their meta-skills and it is vital to provide the time and space for reflections to take place. Naturally occurring opportunities to discuss and reflect on meta-skills might include inductions or performance management, career development and performance review sessions.

## Delivery of training

Consultation indicated that employers prefer an 80/20 split for training with 80% taking place in the workplace and 20% off-the-job, ideally through day release rather than block release as this allows learning to be quickly and easily embedded in the workplace with employers able to provide regular and continuous support to apprentices.

A learning and development plan and an assessment plan should be developed to identify any additional needs and provide apprentices with the appropriate support or adaptations required to successfully complete their apprenticeship.

## Approaches to assessment

Apprentices are expected to provide evidence of meeting the **learning outcomes** and the **knowledge, skills and behaviours** required of this apprenticeship; also, evidence to demonstrate that they are competent in the workplace. It is important for apprentices to recognise how they have developed skills and understanding along the way, and where these still need to be developed.

### **Observation, questioning and examination of product evidence**

This three-method approach classifies all assessments under observation, questioning and examination of product evidence. It is therefore based on the development of a **portfolio of work** and **regular reflection** on learning and skills development through professional dialogue between apprentices and mentors, employers and learning providers.

# DURING THE APPRENTICESHIP

## Holistic Assessment

The holistic approach allows larger pieces of work to evidence a number of **learning outcomes**, rather than a piecemeal process of finding separate evidence for each outcome and/or its associated **knowledge, skills and behaviours**. **Work-based projects** or **problem-based activities** often provide the richest opportunities for holistic assessment.

Consultation indicated that employers are of the view that the learning outcomes in this apprenticeship describe routinely performed aspects of a project management role and they therefore see little need to allow more than a minimal element of simulation in their assessment. However, the exceptions to this are the learning outcomes ‘Supporting procurement’ and ‘Supporting the management of contracts’ – here, simulation is permitted when the apprentice is unable to provide sufficient evidence of workplace performance and/or where there is a potential risk to the apprentice or others. Details of where this is permitted and any conditions that should be set are provided in the associated competence-based qualification specification.

## Quality Assurance

Skills Development Scotland is responsible for making sure all funded learning is of high quality and benefits the apprentice. A quality assurance framework is in place to cover the delivery of work-based learning in an apprenticeship and is designed to demonstrate how effectively learning providers and employers support this by ensuring that apprentices:

- receive appropriate support and guidance to enable them to become successful apprentices and confident individuals;
- receive quality training and develop their skills to achieve their learning goals;
- are treated with dignity and respect in a way that promotes equality and inclusion; and
- work towards successful outcomes, leading to future employment or further appropriate career progression.

The relevant awarding and accreditation bodies will undertake the quality assurance of the assessment of competence-based and professional qualifications.

## Qualification Requirements

### **Certificate for Customer Service in the Financial Services Sector at SCQF Level 6 (GT3E 46)**

Through their apprenticeship, apprentices must complete the Certificate for Customer Service in the Financial Services Sector at SCQF level 6. This competence-based qualification brings together the development and assessment of all the learning outcomes and knowledge, skills and behaviours required of the role in a single qualification. It integrates the development and assessment of meta-skills with the more technical skills required in a financial services context.

### **Professional qualification**

In addition to achieving the competence-based qualification noted above, apprentices should complete either an introductory professional qualification relevant to their area of employment or a Professional Development Award.

The professional qualification can be selected from :

### **Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)**

Chartered Banker Institute (CBI) Professional Banker Certificate SCQF Level 7

Chartered Banker Institute Foundation Certificate in Responsible Banking at SCQF Level 7

### **Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)**

Chartered Insurance Institute (CII) Certification in Insurance Level 3 Certificate in Retail and Digital Banking (CertRDB) Level 3

Certificate in Mortgage Advice Level 3

(cont.)

# DURING THE APPRENTICESHIP

Certificate in Mortgage Advice and Practice (CeMAP) Level 3

Chartered Insurance Institute (CII) Certificate in Investment

Operations Level 3

Chartered Institute for Securities and Investment Certificate in

Investment Operation Level 3

Chartered Institute of Credit Management (CICM) Certificate/

Diploma in Money and Debt Advice Level 3

Chartered Institute of Credit Management (CICM) Intermediate

Diploma in Credit and Collections Level 3

Chartered Institute of Credit Management (CICM) – Money and

Debt Advice/Credit & Collection Level 3

Alternatively, if none of the above listed professional qualifications are appropriate to the area of employment, or if the apprentice is seeking to develop skills in leadership and supervision rather than to pursue a professional route in a specific sector, then the following Professional Development Award (PDA) must be completed:

**PDA Introductory Leadership and Management SCQF Level 6**

## Progression and pathways

**A successfully completed apprenticeship, including the achievement of competence-based and professional qualifications, opens the door to a number of opportunities for progression in both work and further learning.**

### **Career advancement**

Successful apprentices may progress to supervisory or managerial positions, or to more specialist roles such as underwriter or broker within an insurance context.

### **Further study**

Options for those within to pursue further professional learning and development include:

#### **Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)**

- CBI Certificate in Complaint Handling SCQF Level 8
- CBI Professional Banker Diploma SCQF Level 8
- CBI Certificate and Diploma in Green and Sustainable Finance SCQF Level 8
- CBI Associate Chartered Banker Diploma SCQF Level 9
- CBI Advanced Diploma in Banking and Leader Apprenticeship in a Digital Age SCQF Level 10
- SVQ in Insurance at SCQF Level 8 (GJ2C 24)

#### **Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)**

- CII Diploma Level 4 in Insurance
- CII Advanced Diploma Level 6 in Insurance
- Additional CISI modules

Technical Apprenticeships are also available:

- Technical Apprenticeship in Insurance at SCQF Level 8

## Professional registration

This apprenticeship may support professional recognition as it includes learning and skills outcomes common to a number of the introductory professional qualifications relevant to the financial services sector. The apprentice, employer and learning provider will determine the most appropriate professional pathway in light of the apprentice's specific work role and the learning provider will guide each successful apprentice on the professional registration process they should follow.

# AMENDMENTS

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