

Quality Assurance Thematic Review

Meta-Skills

Provider Name: GTG Training Limited

Review Dates: 7th – 9th October 2025

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Introduction and Background

This report reflects your organisation's contribution to an overall national thematic report from SDS involving a sample of 32 learning providers where we seek to obtain a high-level view of how apprentice meta-skill development is being engaged with in apprenticeship delivery.

The report is designed to give you feedback from our quality interviews with you, your staff, apprentices and some of the employers that use your apprenticeship service. We hope that it will give you some valuable intelligence to inform your own quality enhancement processes, including your self-evaluation and quality action planning activities. The report is not graded and will not be published by Skills Development Scotland.

As part of the meta-skills thematic review, we interviewed:

- 4 of your own staff
- 4 apprentices; and
- 2 employers.

Additionally, we observed training delivery in the classroom and in the automotive workshop at your training centre in Glasgow.

The national report will be published on SDS website in Q1 of 2026/27 with overall findings.

Key Strengths

Awareness and understanding of meta-skills

- All apprentices interviewed demonstrate a very clear understanding of the relevance of developing individual elements of the meta-skills framework, and how these elements relate to the workplace, their job role and day to day tasks. Consistent use of meta-skills terminology is fully embedded across all aspects of training delivery. As a result, all apprentices are aware of the transferable value of these skills, from training to the workplace, to wider contexts beyond the world of work.
- All apprentices were confident in discussing individual meta-skills and offered examples of how they identify workplace tasks to help them develop specific elements of the meta-skills framework. Examples were also shared which demonstrate that apprentices understand how the development of meta-skills in the workplace has had a positive impact on their personal development, increasing confidence and resilience as individuals in both personal and work life.

Self-directed learning

- All apprentices confirmed that meta-skills development is discussed at progress review meetings. Examples of personal goal setting and activities to support these goals are clearly documented in the record of the meeting. Personal goals are proportionate to

the individual and their stage of learning. This encourages understanding of the interdependence between meta-skills and vocational skills and knowledge and supports positive progress for each learner at an appropriate pace.

- Effective use of Smart Assessor, the e-learning portfolio, and online resources supports apprentices well to take ownership of their own learning and identify which elements of meta-skills they wish to develop further. Apprentices appreciate being given responsibility for their own learning and development. Expectations of learners are clearly set out and apprentices embrace the opportunity to set personal goals and look for opportunities to improve specific skills e.g. volunteering to deliver presentations in group activities in the classroom.

Support and encouragement

- All apprentices, regardless of framework, are actively encouraged to identify which meta-skills they want to focus on, why this is relevant to their development, what tasks they can undertake to support progress and what impact this will have on their skills and competence. Autonomy in managing their own meta-skills development actively supports a culture of positive engagement and all apprentices confirmed this approach is beneficial to their learning.
- All apprentices confirmed that their knowledge and understanding, professional competence, skills and behaviours have benefited as a result of meta-skills development. All apprentices highlighted the excellent support offered by provider staff and the strong relationships that are built with their assessor. As a result, apprentices feel valued as individuals and motivated to develop their meta-skills.
- Very good use is made of Skills Development Scotland's meta-skills resources. Templates and online tools have been adapted to suit the provider's delivery model and incorporated into discussions with apprentices. For example, the Initial Assessment tool and the reflection worksheet are used to very good effect to measure the apprentice's starting point and progression during training.
- An annual apprentice award ceremony celebrates the achievement and success of individuals, highlighting the value that training and development brings to apprentices and their employers. Examples of apprentices progressing to more senior roles demonstrate the success of the programme and the realisation of personal goals through ongoing support and encouragement.

The value placed on meta-skills development

- There is a strong commitment to meta-skills delivery at all levels of the organisation. Leaders demonstrate understanding of, and commitment to, meta-skills delivery. Staff are fully supported in developing their own professional knowledge and competence to ensure they are skilled in incorporating meta-skills into programme delivery. As a result, development of meta-skills is an integral part of curriculum planning and delivery of training.
- Strategic planning incorporates resourcing of projects specifically designed to enhance the learner's experience during their apprenticeship. With a clear focus on meta-skills development, such projects are a very effective way to offer opportunities to add value to the learning journey. Continuous improvement of meta-skills delivery is at the heart of curriculum development and training delivery. Projects such as Sportify a Car demonstrate clearly the high value that GTG place on meta-skills development, offering

learning and development opportunities that stretch individuals and support their future career aspirations.

- As an organisation offering apprenticeships across the United Kingdom, delivery staff are very experienced in curriculum development and programme requirements across the different delivery landscapes. Very good use is made of opportunities to reflect on the different models and incorporate ideas from other programmes that will further enhance meta-skills delivery. This has a positive impact on the Modern Apprenticeship programme with GTG having incorporated meta-skills development into their programme well before it was a requirement. Meta-skills are very effectively embedded throughout the apprenticeship programme regardless of framework being undertaken.
- Meta-skills are a standing agenda item for assessor standardisation meetings. This encourages the sharing of good practice, the identification of and challenges in delivery and the opportunity for staff to increase their own knowledge and understanding. As a result, staff incorporate meta-skills development very effectively into the training programme.

Employer Engagement

- Employer interviews highlight a strong collaborative approach to the design and delivery of the training programme, and this includes meta-skills development. GTG has a clear approach to ensuring they understand employer requirements, and the curriculum is planned to take account of business needs, both now and in the future. Both employers interviewed were very positive about the contribution that apprentices make to their workforce and the value that the programme adds to their business.
- Employers demonstrate a clear commitment to supporting meta-skills development. Those employers interviewed offered examples of how they work collaboratively with the apprentice and GTG as the training provider to identify suitable and relevant opportunities to broaden apprentices' experiences. This joint approach has a positive impact on the individual's learning journey and ultimately workforce capacity for the employer.
- Meta-skills development is a key element of progress review discussions and employers confirmed they welcome the opportunity to be involved in those meetings. Collaborative approaches provide helpful opportunities to ensure workplace activities are planned to support meta-skills development with examples offered of initiative and leadership skills being developed. This is beneficial for both the individual learner and the employer workplace.

Recommendations

- To further enhance the very effective approaches already established in relation to involving employers in meta skills development, the provider may wish to explore additional collaboration opportunities for employers. Promotion of meta-skills via employer newsletters or networking events offers extended routes to highlight the value of meta-skills to employer businesses and provides ongoing feedback mechanisms as part of the provider's self-evaluation approach.

Exceptional Practice

- The provider has demonstrated exceptional practice in their approach to meta-skills development. From the start of training, apprentices are empowered to take responsibility for their own learning and development. Meta-skills terminology and reflective practice is integrated into the apprenticeship programme from the outset. The “language” of meta-skills is incorporated into delivery in a consistent manner at all “touch points”. Consistent use of words such as curiosity, integrity and collaborating during initial assessment; induction; progress review meetings; in learning resources; off the job training lesson plans; workbooks, and day to day conversations, embeds meta-skills in a natural and simple to understand way. This supports apprentices well to view meta-skills as an integral part of learning and development rather than a “bolt on” to a qualification.
- Excellent use is made of visual aids to support learners to reflect on their meta-skills development. Individual posters are displayed throughout the training workshop, one for each meta-skill, as an effective aid to learners. Each poster offers a short definition of what the meta-skills element is and asks a question e.g. “Curiosity – How good are you at asking the right questions?” with explanations of “what it’s all about”. This is an excellent example of how the provider uses simple language to support the apprentice to understand meta-skills in the context of their training.
- A further example of where meta-skills is integrated into everyday activity is in the training centre. PowerPoint slides used for training presentations have colour coded meta-skills labels incorporated into the slide deck. This helps apprentices to understand which meta-skills they might be using in a specific task or activity and aids reflection on completion of the unit. Lesson plans for each day are displayed throughout the training centre for each group of learners and these also incorporate the language of meta-skills, further highlighting their natural integration into training delivery.
- An output of a previous apprentice project, the Meta-skills Mini is an excellent example of how the provider is demonstrating exceptional practice in developing meta-skills. A refurbished Mini car has been customised with decals promoting each of the twelve meta-skills and is on display in the automotive training workshop. On completion of practical activities, apprentices are encouraged to use the car as a visual aid to discuss what meta-skills they have been using. This is a very effective approach to encouraging self-reflection and supports the discussion of meta-skills in a natural way within the context of classroom training. Clear links between this discussion and progress review meetings further embed meta-skills into programme delivery.
- To future proof the apprenticeship training programme, GTG are reviewing their delivery of meta-skills across all of the different frameworks as part of their robust self-evaluation cycle. Involvement of staff and stakeholders provides appropriate opportunities to reflect on what is working well and how they might further enhance their practices going forward.

Quantifying Statements and Proportions

Description of numbers and proportions	%
All	100%
Almost all	91 – 99%
Most	75 – 90%
Majority	50 – 74%
Minority / less than half	16 – 49%
Few	Up to 15%