

Arrangements for Foundation Apprenticeship Frameworks at SCQF Level 6 from 2020

SQA and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) have agreed new arrangements for 11 of the Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) frameworks for 2020–21, following extensive engagement with stakeholders. You can read the most recent update on changes to FAs for 2020-21 [on SDS's website](#).

The new arrangements include the introduction of customised units as options alongside SVQ/Diploma units, and the pilot of a Work-based Challenge Unit in five frameworks. You can find details of these arrangements below.

You will be able to access supporting documents including the Work-based Challenge Unit specification, Candidate Assignment Brief and guidance for teachers on the new SQA Centre Hub.

Customised unit arrangements

Customised units have been developed using a broader definition of 'the workplace' to offer more flexibility of delivery and assessment. The customised units are based on the National Occupational Standards (NOS) of the related SVQ or Diploma units currently in the FA frameworks.

As an alternative to attending the workplace, learners will engage in practice-based activity, involving employers, that is aligned to the same knowledge and understanding outcomes of the original frameworks. It is expected that learners will engage with employers to support their learning throughout and this can take place in various ways.

The Engineering (GL7C 46) and Accountancy (GN7T 46/GR6D 46) frameworks will not have the customised unit option because they already accommodate flexible delivery and assessment methods.

Temporary Frameworks

Social Services and Healthcare, and Social Services: Children and Young People

Two new additional temporary frameworks have been developed for Social Services and Healthcare, and Social Services: Children and Young People, which include customised units. The customised units retain the same or similar learning outcomes as the SVQ units in the original frameworks, whilst removing the requirement for direct work placement.

The following FA L6 Care Frameworks are now available:

- (GL52 46) Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare
- (GR84 46) Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare (Customised Route)
- (GL7A 46) Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services: Children and Young People
- (GR85 46) Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services: Children and Young People (Customised Route)

There is no route which combines both SVQ and customised units.

If the work placement becomes unavailable to the candidate, learners who have started on the SVQ unit route can transfer to the customised unit route, with the SVQ evidence they have produced being mapped to the customised unit.

Learners who have begun the customised route but then have the opportunity to undertake a work placement, could move from the customised unit framework to the SVQ unit framework. However, these learners would need to evidence 'competent practice' for the SVQ units, with the SVQ Assessors undertaking observations and FA learners producing reflective accounts of their workplace practice to meet the SVQ unit performance criteria and the Sector Skills Council (SSSC) Assessment Strategy.

Please note: Learners must fully complete either the SVQ FA framework route or the customised FA framework route to be certificated for the specific FA framework.

Engineering

SQA, SDS and Enginuity have developed a temporary framework for the Foundation Apprenticeship in Engineering at SCQF level 6.

This recognises the challenges faced by providers and learners in completing the SVQ Performing Engineering Operations (PEO) component of the framework.

The new temporary framework consists of the National Certificate at SCQF L6 and only the three mandatory PEO SVQ units. No optional PEO units will be required:

- ◆ Engineering (Temporary 2021 No PEO options) (GR93 46)

Candidates who are already entered for the existing framework (GL7C 46) and do not have the opportunity to complete the optional PEO Units, should be withdrawn from the existing framework and entered for the new temporary framework (GR93 46). There will be no cost to the centre to do this.

Centres who currently have approval for the existing framework will be given approval for the new framework by SQA.

Where candidates have already completed, or will complete, the three mandatory and two optional PEO units, please continue to use the existing framework.

Framework structure

- ◆ The FA framework structures can be viewed in Navigator. The SDS FA Framework Specifications will be updated with the new FA framework structures, and will be available [on the publications page of the SDS website](#).
- ◆ The customised units will be included in FA frameworks as optional units alongside the SVQ/Diploma units from September 2020. This means that centres and candidates can choose the options that best suit their workplace circumstances. Candidates could do a customised unit or an SVQ/Diploma unit, or a combination. It is also possible to transfer candidates from an SVQ/Diploma unit to a customised unit if a work placement has to stop. Centres must map evidence from one unit to the other to ensure full achievement and to evidence Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
- ◆ Customised units are charged at the same rate as the SVQ/Diploma units (£7.50), and if a candidate transfers from one unit type to another there will be no need to pay the fee again.

Approval

- ◆ We have issued a declaration form to centres who are currently approved for the FA and related SVQ/Diploma units asking you to confirm your compliance with the conditions of approval for the customised units.
- ◆ When we receive the completed declaration, we will apply automatic approval to you for the customised units.
- ◆ For the customised units, you must use assessors and internal verifiers with the same competence as for the related SVQ/Diploma units.
- ◆ Centres coming forward for approval to deliver FA frameworks for the first time will go through the full approval process as normal.

Assessment

The requirements for the assessment of the customised units are specified in SDS's *Approach to Assessment*. You can find this, along with information on specific FA frameworks and customised unit specifications, on the [Publications section of the SDS website](#).

Verification

Selection of the customised units will be aligned to the corresponding SVQ units. This will allow the SVQ units and the customised units to be verified at the same verification activity.

Verification arrangements are the same as those currently in place for FAs.

Sectoral meetings

Ongoing support from SQA and SDS will be delivered through a series of sectoral meetings to support delivery staff in centres. Dates will be confirmed and invitations issued by SDS.

Work-based Challenge Unit pilot

Five FA frameworks have been chosen to pilot an approach to a Work-based Challenge Unit (J4YL 04). This has been designed to support the development of learners' meta-skills using project-based assessment. The frameworks that will include the pilot Work-based Challenge Unit are:

- ◆ Financial Services
- ◆ Business Skills
- ◆ Accountancy
- ◆ IT Hardware
- ◆ IT Software

Candidates starting in September 2020 onwards

All candidates starting in 2020 and onwards should be entered onto the new frameworks created for the pilot:

- ◆ Financial Services (GR6F 46)
- ◆ Business Skills (GR50 46)
- ◆ Accountancy (GR6D 46)
- ◆ IT Hardware (GR53 46)
- ◆ IT Software (GR54 46)

The Work-based Challenge Unit (J4YL 04) will be mandatory in each of the five frameworks, replacing the following units:

- ◆ Financial Services – Work Placement (HF88 46)
- ◆ Business Skills – Work Placement (HF88 46)
- ◆ Accountancy – Work Placement (HF88 46)
- ◆ IT Hardware – Personal Effectiveness 2 (H3C4 04)
- ◆ IT Software – Personal Effectiveness 2 (H3C4 04)

Candidates who started in 2019

Candidates who started in 2019 will continue on the original FA frameworks:

- ◆ Accountancy (GN7T 46)
- ◆ Financial Services (GL53 46)
- ◆ Business Skills (GL8J 46)
- ◆ Information Technology: Hardware/ System Support (GL55 46)

- ◆ Information Technology: Software Development (GL54 46)

These frameworks will have a finish date of 31 July 2021.

The Work-based Challenge Unit will be added as an optional unit to the work placement unit for candidates on Accountancy, Business Skills or Financial Services FAs.

In the Business Skills and Financial Services FAs, the work placement unit was part of the National Progression Award (NPA). New NPAs have therefore been created to allow the option to complete the work placement unit or Work-based Challenge Unit. The new NPA codes are:

- ◆ Business Skills (GR3P 46)
- ◆ Financial Services (GR3Y 46)

The Work-based Challenge Unit has also been added an optional unit to Personal Effectiveness 2 in the IT FAs.

Approval

Centres who are already approved for these FA frameworks will be automatically approved for the Work-based Challenge Unit in the new FA frameworks. You can find the specification for the unit on the SQA Centre Hub.

Centres who are already approved for the NPAs Business Skills (GL8H 46) and Financial Services (GL6W 46) will also be approved for the new NPAs: Business Skills (GR3P 46) and Financial Services (GR3Y 46).

Assessment

We have developed a Candidate Assignment Brief and guidance for teachers. You can find these on the SQA Centre Hub.

Verification

The Work-based Challenge Unit must be delivered in the context of subject of the NPA in the FA framework. Verification of the unit will be picked up along with the NPA for FA candidates.

Pathway Apprenticeship Programme and Work Based Challenge Unit – Approval Arrangements

The Pathway Apprenticeship Programme has been developed by Skills Development Scotland using:

- Foundation Apprenticeship qualifications

- SVQs
- A Work Based Challenge unit (J4YL 04)

These are awarded by SQA, and centres delivering Pathway Apprenticeships require approval from SQA for these.

Centres already approved for the Foundation Apprenticeship or the SVQ still require approval for the Work Based Challenge unit.

Once a centre is approved for the Work Based Challenge unit, there is no need to be approved for it again – for example if they seek approval for an additional Foundation Apprenticeship as part of the Pathway Apprenticeship Programme.

However, the Work Based Challenge unit will be reviewed during verification. The project must be aligned directly to the subject of the Foundation Apprenticeship or SVQ as part of the Pathway Apprenticeship Programme.

The Pathway Apprenticeship Programme also includes non-SQA qualifications. Centres are not required to gain SQA approval for these and should contact SDS directly regarding them.

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