

Meta-skills — stepping up from HNC to HND in NextGen: HN

Advice for practitioners

The meta-skills outcome is the same at HNC and HND

Learners who progress from a Higher National Certificate (HNC) to a Higher National Diploma (HND) must continue their meta-skills development. HND learners produce evidence in line with the meta-skills outcome requirements, which are the same as in the HNC. Although the meta-skill assessment requirements and standards are the same, the context, projects and carrier units within which meta-skills development takes place are different at HND, and represent the appropriate step-up in learning.

Why is the outcome the same?

The continuation of the meta-skills outcome into HND reflects the fact that we continually develop these skills in our day-to-day experiences and interactions. Within the outcome, assessment standards are tied to a process of plan – do – review, which is designed to complement common employment practices, such as annual professional development reviews, performance reviews and appraisals.

The broad outcome and evidence requirements give learners and centres continuity. When learners revisit the meta-skills outcome at HND, they are already familiar with the skills in the model, and with the skillset most appropriate to their studies and future pathways. They do not need to repeat the groundwork on this. Their starting point in terms of self-assessment is quite likely to be where they left off at the end of HNC. Continued development and ongoing reflective practice can be captured regularly, or in mid- and/or end point reviews.

Approaches at HND

Learners don't need to take the same approach to recording development or reflection as they did at HNC level. Centres and learners have the autonomy to choose an approach that best fits their learning and teaching contexts. HND learners could draw upon previous experiences or employment, and align with progression pathways or professional, sector and reflective practices. For example, their goals could mirror the language of job or course adverts and applications.

Reflective practice could connect with competence or values-based interview questions. Our learner SQA Academy resources, especially the [Developing Meta-Skills](#) module, contain activities and advice around these approaches.

Learners can revisit the SQA Academy modules if they wish, but this may not be necessary. They are likely to be more autonomous and self-directed in their meta-skills development and reflection at HND, which, in itself, reflects continued development.

We have produced a similar information document for learners.