

## A Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media at SCQF level 6

**GT6M 46**

**GV72 46** (Preantasachd Toiseachaidh ann am Meadhanan Cruthachail agus Digiteach (Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative & Digital Media))

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This document provides you with information you will require to deliver a Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media.

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1.0	New Framework Specification post FA developments	Frank Quinn	<b>October 2020</b>
2.0	New Framework Specification	Deborah Miller	<b>July 2022</b>
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4.0	Removal of Customised Units and Update of Assessment Arrangements	Deborah Miller	<b>September 2024</b>
5.0	Addition of Group Award code for delivery of Framework to be assessed in Gaelic	Deborah Miller	<b>November 2024</b>

## Background

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) is pleased to have worked with many industry, school, college and independent learning provider representatives on the redevelopment of the Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative Digital Media, many of whom have been involved in the delivery of the programme since it launched in 2017.

The new programme has been supported by colleagues from the Scottish Qualifications Authority<sup>1</sup>, the national accreditation and awarding body for Scotland, whose key purpose is to help people fulfil their potential and maintain standards across Scottish education, [Screen Scotland](https://www.screen.scot/)<sup>2</sup>, the national body that drives development of all aspects of Scotland's film and tv industry, through funding and strategic support, [ScreenSkills](https://www.screenskills.com/)<sup>3</sup>, the industry-led skills body for the UK's screen-based creative industries - animation, film, games, television including children's TV and high-end drama, VFX and immersive technology.

The pandemic created extraordinary challenges for Scotland's creative industries with many parts of it, especially venue or place-based activities at museums, galleries, cinemas, concert halls, theatres and festivals suspended as public health and safety measures. This had a very significant impact on people's ability to work in this sector, but it is clear that people continued to create over the lockdown; developing new approaches to making, promoting and selling their goods, services and experiences, responding to the public's new appetite for home entertainment, learning and creative making across recent years.

A number of areas of Scotland's creative industries were able to pivot from the old way of physically working to remote working very quickly, adapting their former methods and approaches to making creative content digitally. We saw this in areas as diverse as animation, film, television and radio production, visual effects and post-production, podcasting, magazine and book publishing and games.

Many creative performers and companies like National Theatre of Scotland, Scottish Ballet, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and Scottish Opera and many others across the country, were able to keep in touch with their creative teams, workers, clients and audiences using social media, digital marketing and by using new digital technologies could present music, theatre and dance online. Some creatives extended their work and practice into areas like promoting health and well-being, as well as resetting their creative teaching and coaching activities to work online.

Visual artists, crafts people and designers were able to utilise their creative digital skills to showcase their studios, working methods and present and sell their work in new ways. Others relied on their sales orders, group emails, websites and social media channels like Tik Tok, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook to present their work or work differently and innovatively in new teams, based in different parts of Scotland but also internationally.

Over the pandemic, consumer demand for creative content grew to unparalleled levels and shows no sign of reducing. The UK Games industry reached more than [£7billion of sales](#) over 2020/21<sup>4</sup>; combined investment in UK feature film and high end TV drama production in 2021 was [£5.64 billion, £2.19 billion \(63%\) more than in 2017](#)<sup>5</sup>. The British Film Institute Skills

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<sup>1</sup> SQA - <https://www.sqa.org.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> Screen Scotland - <https://www.screen.scot/>

<sup>3</sup> ScreenSkills - <https://www.screenskills.com/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://ukie.org.uk/consumer-games-market-valuation-2021>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bfi.org.uk/news/official-2021-bfi-statistics>

Review (June 2022) [estimates that continued film and HETV production growth will require between 15,130 and 20,770 additional full-time equivalent employees \(FTEs\) by 2025.](#)<sup>6</sup>

Recent industry surveys found that 19.57 million UK homes had access to a subscription video-on-demand (SVOD) service, an increase of close to half a million on the last quarter, with Apple+, Disney+, Netflix all showing growth.<sup>7</sup>

In 2021, total publisher sales of books, journals, and rights for both physical and digital formats reached £6.7 billion, up from £6.4 billion the previous year. Print accounted for £3.5 billion of sales revenue in 2021, an increase of five percent from 2020, and digital revenue grew by the same amount in that time frame.<sup>8</sup>

In 2021, podcast advertising expenditure in the United Kingdom (UK) amounted to £46 million. This figure is estimated to increase within the next few years, reaching an estimated £80 million by 2026. The Internet Advertising Bureau UK, the industry body for digital advertising reported UK digital ad spend surged 41% in 2021 to hit a record high of £23.5bn.<sup>9</sup>

This incredible growth in the sector, alongside the range of products, services and experiences it creates, and the new approaches developed to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic has led to a real demand for skills across creative digital platforms and processes, collaboration and portfolio working, which contribute to innovation, flexibility and new hybrid ways of producing and distributing relevant and current content to the widest audiences possible.

SDS publishes Sectoral Skills Assessment twice a year, and the publication on [Scotland's Creative Industries \(October 2023\)](#) shows that the mid-term demand for new workers to 2026 is 8,600 people (4,300 people replacing people who leave the industry and further 4,300 people needed to fill new jobs created by new demand). This growth is projected to continue up to 2033 in Scotland, when it is estimated that 15,700 people will be needed and 12,300 of these will be to replace workers and practitioners who have retired or left the sector for other work. There are very strong work prospects for young people seeking to enter this sector going forward.

SDS also reviews job advertisements in the Creative Industries as part of the sector skills assessment as a means of measuring the top skills employers are looking for currently. These were teamwork/collaboration, customer service, social media, budgeting, ahead of the digital technical content skillsets.

The knowledge, skills and understanding to create content; to better understand your audience, their interests and behaviours, to develop further creative content which engages, informs and entertains them – these are all built into the Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media.

This programme helps learners to explore and develop their creative, social, cultural, technological and economic interests, enabling them to create content that is shaped by personal views and experiences, supporting individuals to better understand the work opportunities ahead and how to begin to develop the in-demand future skills of creativity, working with others, managing work flexibly and dynamically working with others to achieve the very best creative content possible.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bfi.org.uk/news/bfi-skills-review-published-film-high-end-television>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.broadbandtvnews.com/2022/05/24/svod-subscriptions-grow-in-uk/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.publishers.org.uk/uk-publishing-reached-a-new-high-in-2021/#:~:text=UK%20publisher%20sales%20rose%205,2%25%20to%20%C2%A33.8%20billion.>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.thedrum.com/news/2022/04/26/iab-uk-digital-ad-spend-boomed-41-2021>

The programme gives learners a strong foundation of creative and digital skills that employers across Scotland's creative industries and the wider economy seek now from new talent, providing learners with real opportunities to demonstrate these through placement, industry case studies and developing their own creative and digital content portfolio.

Foundation Apprenticeships will allow pupils to gain vocational qualifications that combine sector specific skills alongside the knowledge that underpins these skills in a workplace setting while still at school.

The Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media aims to give pupils in S5 and S6 the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge to work towards a National Profession Award at SCQF6 and so enter a career in the Creative Industries.

It will also help pupils to gain the units of the Modern Apprenticeship (MA) in Creative and Digital Media at SCQF level 7, leaving them with fewer units to complete when they start the MA programme.

### The Creative and Digital Media sector in Scotland

The SDS 2023 [Sectoral Skills Assessment for Scotland's Creative Industries](#) demonstrates that not only is the sector quickly returning to its pre-pandemic, high growth value but is projected to increase.

Over the past two years, we have seen an uplift in film and television drama production in Scotland and this has been supported by new screen studios developments and expansion of facilities in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Screen Scotland and ScreenSkills have expanded their investment in industry-based training and developing apprenticeships in new entrant production roles; visual effects animation and post-production.

Digital Design Houses, Advertising, Marketing, Communications and Public Relations companies are all seeking new, diverse and inclusive talent in creative, business, and client-facing roles. A sign of this drive for new talent is the recent publication of sector research and policy development papers, such as the Creative Industries Policy Evidence Centre's Screened Out: Tackling Class Inequalities in the UK Screen Industries <sup>10</sup>, Social Mobility in the Creative Economy: Rebuilding and Levelling Up? <sup>11</sup> and the launch of new, industry talent management activities like the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) [Entrant Level Talent Advisory Service](#) <sup>12</sup>

The first level jobs across Scotland's Creative Industries that learners can work toward include Production Assistant, Content Assistant, Junior Creative Assistant, Junior Copywriter, Research Assistant, Camera Assistant, Creative Tech Assistant, Marketing Assistant, Digital Design Assistant, Graphic Design Assistant, Assistant UX Developer and others.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://pec.ac.uk/research-reports/screened-out-tackling-class-inequality-in-the-uks-screen-industries>

<sup>11</sup> <https://pec.ac.uk/research-reports/social-mobility-in-the-creative-economy-rebuilding-and-levelling-up>

<sup>12</sup> <https://ipa.co.uk/knowledge/careers-in-advertising/entry-level-talent-advisory-service>

Further information on first stage jobs in the sector and advice on how to apply and get them can be found at the ScreenSkills, Screen Scotland and Creative and Cultural Skills <sup>13</sup>websites. SDS also posts regular updates on sector job profiles and current advice for job applicants on its [My World of Work](#) website, but you can also view a live feed of apprenticeship job vacancies across Scotland on [Apprenticeships.scot](#) –

## Why choose Creative and Digital Media?

Creative Digital Media (CDM) encompasses the range of creative roles where interactive media storytelling and commerce collide.

The utilisation of creative digital content to enable either a product or another service such as marketing or advertising, or information gathering, offers a vast array of job roles ranging from pure creative to more technical and data-driven responsibilities.

More importantly, this growing sector needs people! One third of tech companies cite talent shortages as an inhibitor to expansion and there are significant opportunities for young creative people whose interest in digital media extends beyond consuming content and into creating it and getting it out to audiences.

## What is the Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media?

The Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) in Creative and Digital Media is for pupils in S5 and S6 and typically takes 2 years to complete. Increasingly the framework is also available over a shorter duration, typically a single academic year.

Irrespective of the delivery model, the Creative and Digital Media framework includes three core elements, namely:

- National Progression Award in Creative and Digital Media Skills
- Industry Challenge Project
- Work Based Learning units

The full programme specification is outlined further in this document.

## Background / rationale

This Foundation Apprenticeship supports the commitment to provide relevant work-based vocational education and training as part of the senior phase curriculum. This will prepare young people for direct entry into a career in the Creative and Digital Media sector by equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to work effectively from day one of employment. This includes both the development of practical and technical skills alongside the development of learner meta-skills, supported via project-based learning. It also highlights meaningful vocational pathways as challenging and valuable alternatives to existing academic subjects.

## Partnership

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<sup>13</sup> <https://ccskills.org.uk/>

A Foundation Apprenticeship is about the right balance between delivering the taught elements of the programme (the NPA) and the development of work-based competences the meta-skills and work-based learning elements.

Development of true competence depends on the continuing acquisition and application of underpinning skills and knowledge. Young people need to build real workplace skills including both those that are specialist to the chosen career and the generic behaviours and attributes that apply to any workplace. This is achieved in a real work setting involving meaningful activities introduced throughout the programme.

Foundation Apprenticeships are delivered by partnerships comprised of school, learning provider and employer. The learning provider is responsible for the approvals, delivery, assessment and quality assurance of the component units and qualifications. Where multiple learning providers are

The learning provider must have the appropriate SQA centre and qualification approvals in place before it can deliver the Foundation Apprenticeship.

For further support and guidance on SQA's approval, quality assurance processes and SQA Partnership Agreements, please see:

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/101347.html>

Employers are an essential part of the partnership and can contribute in a range of ways, from creating a workplace challenge, to coaching and mentoring, to interviewing and selection. They may also be involved in the assessment of the work-based learning element.

## Pastoral Care

The young people embarking on this Foundation Apprenticeship are school pupils and therefore all those involved in delivering the programme have a duty of care. This includes providing appropriate health and safety training and measures to ensure the safety of the young people, including relevant safeguarding requirements that are required by respective Local Authority and School partners. This must be in the context of the specific workplaces of the individual pupils (one of the mandatory units of the FA covers health and safety).

In addition, a workplace mentor must be assigned to be a point of contact for the young person when they are not in the school environment.

Work placement allocation and methodology, whether on-site or through remote working, should take cognisance of the learner's personal circumstances to maximise the learner experience and opportunity.

## How should the Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media be delivered?

Often, delivery and assessment of the relevant NPA and work-based professional units occurs at the start of the programme so that the underpinning knowledge can be obtained before contextualising within the work-based learning element.

The work-based learning element is designed to offer the learner access to the workplace, either physically onsite or through remote working. Learning providers are required to identify host employer(s) to provide the work placement opportunity. Employer(s) are asked to provide real work activity aligned to the organisation's objectives and to support the development of evidence for assessment against the outcomes

Involvement of industry is encouraged across the entire programme of learning. Learner success is best reflected when the delivery of the theory and practical elements are aligned. This approach maximises the contextualisation for the learner and offers the opportunity to put into practice underpinning learning.

### Work Based Learning Element:

The Creative and Digital Media FA contains units aligned to the respective modern apprenticeship programme. Providers are encouraged to utilise the SVQ route where physical access to the workplace remains and assess in accordance with the SVQ assessment standards required for external verification.

*Please refer to the Foundation Apprenticeship Product Specification for further information on the principles of Foundation Apprenticeship delivery.*

*Please refer to Annex 1 at the end of this document for a detailed breakdown of the units and codes within the framework*

## Certification

SQA will issue the commemorative certificate for the Foundation Apprenticeship.

Learning providers must ensure that they have appropriate approvals in place with SQA for the Foundation Apprenticeship and all mandatory components. Candidates must be entered and resulted for all relevant units for verification and certification purposes.

Once all contributing results are entered on SQA systems, the candidate's commemorative certificate will be produced.

SQA Awarding Body quality assurance requirements apply to the delivery of the SQA component units and group awards. Centres are required to sign up to the relevant Assessment Strategy for the SVQ and comply with all its requirements.

## Learner Selection and Entry Requirements

The Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media is aimed at pupils with an interest and enthusiasm in exploring this area of work. Although set at SCQF L6, due to the contextualised



learning experience where underpinning theory and practice are aligned with industry, learners operating at SCQF L5 or above on arrival are encouraged.

## Equalities

We expect those involved in the development, recruitment and delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships to be pro-active in ensuring that no-one should be denied opportunities because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or pregnancy and that any barriers (real or perceived) are addressed to support all pupils. These are the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 and training providers and employers must comply with this Act to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against in terms of entry to and promotion within the industry.

Our emphasis throughout is upon equality and diversity both for new entrants to the sector and opportunities for progression for the existing workforce.

## Learner Progression

Foundation Apprenticeships are directly aligned to three primary progression pathways. These are:

- Modern Apprenticeship
- Further Education
- Higher Education

### Modern Apprenticeship:

A pupil completing the Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media will have achieved a large proportion of the requirements for a Modern Apprenticeship in Creative Media at SCQF level 7.

### Further Education:

All Scottish further education colleges recognise the Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media as an eligible qualification towards Higher National provision, alongside other qualifications.

### Higher Education:

Scottish universities recognise the Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media as an eligible qualification towards under-graduate degrees and graduate apprenticeship provision, alongside other qualifications.

## Recognition of Prior Learning

SQA's policy is to recognise prior learning as a method of assessing whether a learner's experience and achievements meet the evidence requirements (i.e. the standard) of a SQA Unit or Units and which may or may not have been developed through a course of learning.

More information can be found on the [SQA website](#).

## Foundation Apprenticeships – assessment arrangements 2024/25

SQA and SDS can confirm that learners who are starting a Foundation Apprenticeship in 2024-25, completing in 2025 or beyond, must be assessed using the original Foundation Apprenticeship frameworks and accordingly, learn and be assessed in a workplace.

## Changes to Language of Assessment Policies

After a period of review and engagement, SQA have now updated their policies for Language of Assessment and Certification. SQA will publish these on their website from 1 November 2024.

There has been a change in the policy position for language of assessment for **regulated qualifications**. This change now means that the following qualifications and Foundation Apprenticeships can be delivered and assessed in Gaelic:

- Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative & Digital Media (GT6M)
- Diploma in Creative Media at SCQF Level 7 (GR1J)

Any centre that wishes to deliver these qualifications in Gaelic must seek specific qualification approval from SQA for.

Centres that are approved to deliver these qualifications in Gaelic can enrol learners for these qualifications by using the title and code below:

- Dioploma ann am Meadhanan Cruthachail (Diploma in Creative Media) (GV73 47)
- Preantasachd Tòiseachaidh ann am Meadhanan Cruthachail agus Digiteach (GV72 46)

Any centre that wishes to deliver these qualifications in Gaelic must seek qualification approval from SQA.

Centres with learners who are currently enrolled for these qualifications in English can transfer them to the same qualification in Gaelic by withdrawing the learner from the qualification in English and then re-enrolling them onto the qualification in Gaelic.

The SQA Business Development contact for the centre can provide a credit note to refund the cost of re-enrolling the learner.

If you have any questions about this process or these policies, please contact your SQA Coordinator or Regional Manager.

## Foundation Apprenticeships Framework Specification: Creative & Digital Media at SCQF Level 6

GT6M 46 Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media			
Group Award Title	Unit Title	SCQF Level	SCQF Credits
<b>GM16 46 National Progression Award (NPA) in Creative and Digital Media: Technologies, Processes and Practices</b>	H6MV 75 Creative Industries: An Introduction – Scotland	5	6
	HE0E 46 Creative Industries: Understanding a Creative Brief	6	12
	F5D1 12 Media: Understanding the creative process	6	6
	HH7T 46 Storytelling for the Creative Industries	6	6
<b>Work Based Learning</b> (GR1J 47)  Diploma in Creative Media	<b>Mandatory Units</b>		
	J3Y4 04 Work Effectively with Others in the Creative Industries	6	4
	J465 04 Ensure Responsibility for Actions to Reduce Risks to Health and Safety	6	3
	<b>Optional Units (any 3 of the following)</b>		
	J3YK 04 Prepare for and Conduct Interviews in Creative Media	6	4
	J3YP 04 Communicate Using Marketing/Sales Channels	6	5
	H6PH 04 Use Digital and social media in Marketing Campaigns	6	5
	J3YR 04 Record Audio and Video Material	6	5
	J3YS 04 Edit Audio and Video Material	7	6
	<b>Industry Challenge Project</b> F57P 12 Media Project	6	12
<b>Foundation Apprenticeship Certification Unit</b>	HE6E 04 Foundation Apprenticeship Certification Unit	-	0
<b>TOTAL SCQF CREDIT POINTS</b>			<b>63 - 65</b>

## Foundation Apprenticeships Framework Specification: Creative & Digital Media at SCQF Level 6

GV72 46 Preantasachd Toiseachaidh ann am Meadhanan Cruthachail agus Digiteach (Foundation Apprenticeship in Creative & Digital Media)			
Group Award Title	Unit Title	SCQF Level	SCQF Credits
<b>GM16 46 National Progression Award (NPA) in Creative and Digital Media: Technologies, Processes and Practices</b>	H6MV 75 Creative Industries: An Introduction – Scotland	5	6
	HE0E 46 Creative Industries: Understanding a Creative Brief	6	12
	F5D1 12 Media: Understanding the creative process	6	6
	HH7T 46 Storytelling for the Creative Industries	6	6
<b>Work Based Learning (GR1J 47 Diploma in Creative Media at SCQF level 7)</b>	<b>Mandatory Units</b>		
	J3Y4 04 Work Effectively with Others in the Creative Industries	6	4
	J465 04 Ensure Responsibility for Actions to Reduce Risks to Health and Safety	6	3
	<b>Optional Units (any 3 of the following)</b>		
	J3YK 04 Prepare for and Conduct Interviews in Creative Media	6	4
	J3YP 04 Communicate Using Marketing/Sales Channels	6	5
	H6PH 04 Use Digital and Social Media in Marketing Campaigns	6	5
	J3YR 04 Record Audio and Video Material	6	5
	J3YS 04 Edit Audio and Video Material	7	6
<b>Industry Challenge Project</b>	F57P 12 Media Project	6	12
<b>Foundation Apprenticeship Certification Unit</b>	HE6E 04 Foundation Apprenticeship Certification Unit	-	0
<b>TOTAL SCQF CREDIT POINTS</b>			<b>63 - 65</b>