Fife College

Essential Skills Policy

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Responsible for implementation:	Academic Heads and Academic Quality Managers
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Document Change History

Document Version	Section (No. or Heading)	Description of change(s)	Date of change
4			
3			
2	All	Inclusion of Career-Ready terminology to encompass Meta Skills 4.0. Updates to post titles to reflect new structure.	Oct 2019
	3	Inclusion of new Career-Ready section.	
	8	New Career-Ready poster included.	
	Assoc. Documents	Hyperlinks updated (some removed and some added)	
	Appendix 1	New appendix	
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1 Introduction

Fife College recognises that Essential Skills are as critical as vocational skills to employers and is committed to the development of these skills as part of the overall student experience for all programmes of study. The importance of Essential Skills in developing students' skills for work and life have been highlighted at a national level in the Scottish Government's Skills for Scotland Strategy and in CDN's Essential Skills Statement of Ambition, and at a local level in the Fife College Learning and Teaching Strategy.

Fife College will support the Skills Development Scotland (SDS) Skills 4.0 skills model to drive Scotland's future. We need to ensure we prepare our students so they can thrive as individuals in a fast changing future environment by developing their capacity to excel, to collaborate and empathise with others and to create their own futures. Fife College will ensure that we develop the "Career-Ready skills" defined by SDS as 'meta-skills' of our learners. All programmes of study will place a focus on those timeless, transferable and higher order skills that equip individuals to become adaptive learners and promote continued success.

This Policy sets out a clear definition of Essential Skills and the College's approach to providing opportunities for their development.

The term Essential Skills encompasses SQA's five Core Skills (Communication, Numeracy, ICT, Problem Solving and Working with Others) together with other Essential Skills as defined below. It is mandatory that all students develop their Core Skills to the level required for their course and the approach for Core Skills delivery is described within the separate Essential Skills Procedure.

2 Scope

This Policy applies to all full-time further education students.

Part-time further education students and higher education students will also have the opportunity to develop their Essential and / or Career-Ready Skills appropriate to their programmes of study.

3 Defining Career-Ready Skills

Career-Ready Skills are those skills, other than specific vocational skills, individuals need in order to function successfully in learning, in work and in life. Fife College defines these as:

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Career-Ready Skills or "Meta skills" as defined by SDS, are classified under three headings:

- Self-management: Manage the now
  - Required to cope with ongoing change and support wellbeing, growth and ultimately performance and productivity.
- Social intelligence: Connect with the world
  - Digital technology has allowed society to connect globally in new ways, to make a positive change, we recognise that we can do this more effectively with others
- Innovation: Create our own change
  - Need to ensure our students have the skills and capabilities to create change themselves, rather than let change happen to them.

There are twelve components within the meta-skills model are shown below:

Self management	Social intelligence	Innovation
Focussing	Communicating	Curiosity
Integrity	Feeling	Creativity
Adapting	Collaborating	Sense making
Initiative	Leading	Critical thinking

These broad Career-Ready skills encompass a large number of individual skills and attributes. Different Career-Ready skills will take precedence in different vocational areas, and so a model for identifying and promoting key skills by curriculum area is described in Section 8.

Curriculum teams will also create a matrix/summary of where they incorporate these skills within their courses at the various SCQF levels. An example of a form that can be adopted for this is included in Appendix 1.

4   Key Principles - General

Effective Career-Ready Skills development lies at the heart of effective learning and, therefore, teaching.

Career-Ready Skills develop not only as part of the formal curriculum but need to permeate all facets of students' college experiences.

All College programmes should be designed so as to maximise opportunities for Career-Ready Skills development and these opportunities should be reviewed as part of the programme review processes.

Success in developing vocational skills and knowledge supports the development of Career-Ready Skills.

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Experiences such as work placements, competitions, volunteering and enterprise activity support the learning and application of Career-Ready Skills.

Career-Ready Skills are wide-ranging and are developed in a myriad of ways; therefore, the sharing of effective practice is important.

It is desirable for all students to develop their responsibility for Citizenship, Enterprise, Sustainability and Health & Wellbeing.

5   Key Principles – Core Skills

The Core Skills of Communication, Numeracy and ICT will be integrated into FE programmes wherever practicable. Where they have to be delivered discretely, learning and teaching tasks and assessment instruments will be contextualised according to students' vocational areas. The Core Skills of Problem Solving and Working with Others will normally be embedded within full-time FE programmes.

SQA Course Framework documents, the SQA Core Skills Catalogue, National Occupational Standards documents and mapping tools will be referenced to identify: where Core Skills are mandatory or optional; what levels of Core Skills are required for programmes at each SCQF level; whether Core Skills are embedded or should be integrated.

The College will always seek to give students accreditation for any Core Skills units/qualifications they have achieved prior to coming to College and will follow the SQA Policy on Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) for Core Skills.

Most full-time FE programmes have an identified level required at entry and exit for the five Core Skills. Students enrolling at College with a Core Skills profile which indicates that they have already achieved the required exit unit(s) for their programme will be given the opportunity to undertake relevant, alternative units/activities of value.

6   Responsibilities - General

All staff have a responsibility to:

- support the development and integration of Career-Ready Skills
- help students to recognise that these are an integral part of all learning experiences
- help students to exercise self-reflection as a key element in the development, recognition and application of Career-Ready Skills
- engage in continuous professional reflection and development in order to ensure the highest standards of professional practice.

Curriculum Teams are responsible for ensuring that opportunities for the development of Career-Ready Skills are maximised in programme design and review.

The Vice Principal Academic Strategy, Academic Heads and Academic & Quality Managers are responsible for the implementation of this Policy.

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7   Promotion of Career-Ready Skills

The Career-Ready Skills landscape can appear complex. It is therefore vital that Career-Ready Skills are clearly communicated and understood by all concerned.
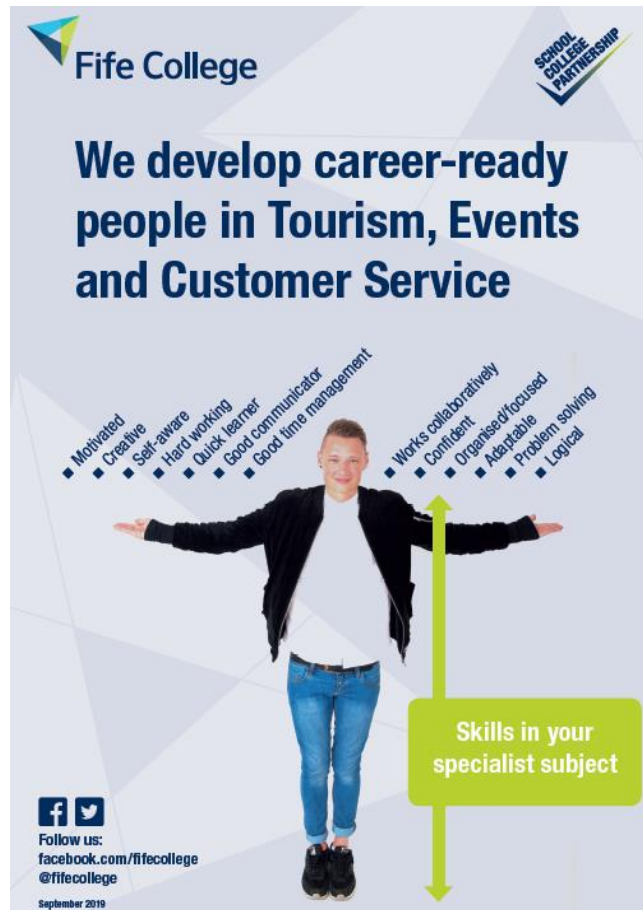
The concept of the T-shaped person is used effectively in industry and education to describe the desired abilities of persons in the workforce. This model will be adapted across curriculum areas and a bespoke version of a Career-Ready learner, showing the most important technical Career-Ready skills for relevant industries or professions will be created, displayed and reinforced by staff.

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Associated Documents

Document Title	Location
Essential Skills Procedure	Staff Gateway
Skills for Scotland	http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/326739/0105315.pdf
Essential Skills: Statement of Ambition	http://www.collegedevelopmentnetwork.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Essential-Skills-Statement-of-Ambition-1.pdf
Skills 4.0	https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/44684/skills-40_a-skills-model.pdf

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Career-Ready Tracking Matrix

| Curriculum Area: | e.g. Tourism, Events and Customer Service | | | | | | | | | | | | Compiled: | xx Sept 2019 | | | |

Career-Ready Skills (from T-Shape model)

Course Code	Course Name	SCQF Level	Project/ Live Briefs	Employer Engagement/ Work Placement	Motivated	Creative	Self-aware	Hard working	Quick learner	Good communicator	Good time management	works collaboratively	Confident	Organised/focused	Adaptable	Problem Solving	Logical
CodeA	Course.....	4			Unit xx & hh				Unit ggg				Unit ggg				
CodeB	Course.....	4		Employer Talks & visit to Edi Airport	Unit yyy	Project xxx				Unit yyy	Unit yyy			Unit yyy	Unit yyy		Unit ccc
CodeC	Course.....	5	Sem 2 Project xxx	20 hr placement								Unit aaa				Unit aaa	
CodeD	Course.....	6		Tourism Career Fayre	Unit vvv				Project ddd	Project ddd		Unit xxx	Project ddd			Unit xxx	
CodeE	Course.....	7	GU Live Briefs		Unit bbb		Project aaa	Project aaa			Project aaa			Project aaa	Project aaa		
CodeF	Course.....	8	GU Project is Live Brief	40hr placement				Graded Unit			Graded Unit					Graded Unit	

Overview of how enterprise, resilience and reflective practice are developed:

Other comments: