

FOUNDATION

APPRENTICESHIP

HANDBOOK

A GUIDE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN FIFE,
THEIR TEACHERS, AND PARENTS,
GUARDIANS AND CARERS

All your
questions on
Foundation
Apprenticeships
answered in
one place!



Fife College

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FIFE
Developing the
Young Workforce

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COUNCIL

1 WHAT IS A FOUNDATION APPRENTICESHIP?

A Foundation Apprenticeship (or FA as it is often referred to) is a vocational qualification that provides the opportunity to develop new knowledge and skills in the classroom whilst also experiencing work-based learning in a local business or organisation.

The FA actually includes some elements of a Modern Apprenticeship (MA) and enables you to gain your FA with work-based learning whilst still being at school and as part of your school timetable!

There are currently Foundation Apprenticeships on offer in Fife covering:

- Accountancy
- Business Skills
- Civil Engineering
- Creative and Digital Media
- Engineering
- Food and Drink Technologies
- Information Technology: Hardware/ System Support
- Information Technology: Software Development
- Scientific Technologies (Lab Skills)
- Social Services and Healthcare
- Social Services: Children and Young People

An FA contains a number of Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) subjects that you will study throughout your time in the classroom and in the workplace. The mix of subjects and approaches taken will ensure the skills, techniques and knowledge you learn as you complete your FA are confirmed by actually doing, showing and recording your competence – that is your ability to do the things you have been shown and apply the knowledge you have learned.

2 DOES AN FA DIFFER FROM OTHER SCHOOL/ COLLEGE SUBJECTS?

The FA does differ from your other National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher subjects. One main difference is that the FA is normally studied over TWO years, with a large part of your time in second year spent on work placement with a local business or organisation, learning and doing real work.

The other main difference is that the FA has no big exams in May/June each year like National 5s and Highers. For some young people this may be a preferred option if you do not perform well in exam conditions.

FAs consist of several SQA units/topics and once you complete them these will all appear on your SQA certificate along with your FA certificate.

AN APPRENTICESHIP HELPS YOU BUILD THE EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS THAT EMPLOYERS WANT TO SEE.



3 WHY SHOULD I STUDY FOR AN FA?

There are many reasons why you and other young people may choose to study towards an FA:

- While still at secondary school, FAs provide you with a work-based vocational qualification which includes work placement and the skills and knowledge today's employers are looking for
- The FA aims to give you the skills and knowledge you need to develop a career in your chosen industry
- The FA includes industry recognised qualifications
- The FA frameworks have been designed in subjects to meet specific skills gaps identified in Scotland
- The FA will give you essential employability skills including problem solving, communication, team working, time management and IT skills
- Some of Scotland's biggest employers have been involved in the creation, design and implementation of the FAs, including Scottish Water, the NHS and local authorities
- An FA provides an accelerated route for young people who then progress onto a Modern Apprenticeship as some of the topics have been designed to be in both apprenticeships
- With the unemployment rate for people aged 16-24 at double the national rate, an FA provides important skills and work placement to put on your CV to gain a job
- It is a great way for you to try out a career to see if it is right for you!

4 WHAT LEVEL OF STUDY IS AN FA?

There are currently three different types of apprenticeships in Scotland. Each apprenticeship is at a different level of study which is confirmed on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). The three types of apprenticeships are:

Option whilst at school:

- Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) combines learning and training with your school subjects at SCQF Level 6 (the same level of learning as a Scottish Higher)

Options after leaving school:

- Modern Apprenticeship (MA) combines training with paid employment at SCQF Levels 5, 6 and 7 (up to the same level of learning as a Scottish Advanced Higher)
- Graduate Apprenticeship (GA) combines paid employment with learning up to degree level at SCQF Levels 8, 9, 10 and 11 (up to the same level of learning as a Masters Degree)

5 WHERE CAN I PROGRESS AFTER MY FA?

As an FA is a recognised qualification on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) at level 6, many doors open for further progression in the world of work and study. Let's look at what is possible:

- 1 One option could be to progress from your FA to a Modern Apprenticeship (MA) and, as the FA contains some units/topics from the MA qualification, your length of time as a Modern Apprentice will be shorter
- 2 You could progress to college or university to study on a full or part-time course. Both colleges and universities will recognise your FA qualification and using this along with your National 5 and Higher certificates you could meet entry requirements into Higher National Certificate/Diploma or Degree courses. Your FA is at SCQF Level 6 and, depending on the college or university you chose to study at, the FA should be recognised as equivalent to one or two SQA Highers
- 3 You could use your FA qualification with the work placement on your CV to enter straight into employment. Remember, gaining an FA in a specific subject does not mean it is only useful in that one employment area. You will gain many transferable skills and having the work placement is of great value for any job or career path you choose to follow. So think wider
- 4 and pursue an area you enjoy and are good at!

6 HOW LONG IS MY FA?

It normally takes two years to complete an FA, so it will be part of your study timetable in years S4 and S5 or S5 and S6. Your school timetable will include two half days per week for your FA. You may also be expected to undertake part or all of your work placement during school holidays (e.g. October, Easter or summer).

During the two years you will spend time doing various activities which may include:

- Attending classes at your school, another school in Fife, or at a Fife College campus
- Attending practical workshops, computer labs, or science labs
- Visiting local businesses or organisations for a morning or afternoon
- Attending talks or presentations from local employers
- Work placement of several days and weeks, particularly in year 2 of your FA
- Having fun whilst learning new and exciting skills and meeting new friends

There is a lot of time committed towards your FA, but do remember it will be worth it and the qualification is at the same learning level as a Scottish Higher. It's also recognised by colleges and universities as equivalent to one or two Scottish Highers.

SCQF TABLE

SCQF Level	SQA Qualification		Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	Apprenticeships/ SVQs	
12	Some SQA qualifications changed between 2013-2016. see www.sqa.org.uk/readyreckoner		Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship	
11			Masters Degree, Integrated Masters Degree, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship SVQ	
10			Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship	
9			Professional Development Award	Bachelors / Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
8			Higher National Diploma	Diploma of Higher Education	Higher Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
7	Advanced Higher Scottish Baccalaureate	Higher National Certificate	Certificate of Higher Education	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ	
6	Higher	National Certificate Advanced Certificate		Foundation Apprenticeship Modern Apprenticeship SVQ	
5	National 5 Intermediate 2	National Certificate Intermediate Certificate		Modern Apprenticeship SVQ	
4	National 4 Intermediate 1	National Certificate Certificate	National Progression Award	SVQ	
3	National 3 Access 3				
2	National 2 Access 2				
1	National 1 Access 1				



7 WHERE WILL I STUDY?

Depending on your chosen FA subject and which school you attend, this will be different for each apprentice. But it will vary as the FA is a vocational qualification and is designed to enhance and develop your skills and knowledge.

You may study at your own high school, another high school in Fife, or at a Fife College campus. It could even be a combination of these three options. We can also guarantee you will be on work placement for several days and over several weeks, particularly in year 2 of your FA which will add to the variety, value and excitement of your learning experience!

8 HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The FA has no big exam in May/June each year like National 5s or Highers. Instead, you will be assessed on an ongoing basis which means you could get two assessments in one week or even an assessment within the first 8 weeks of your FA. Your teacher/assessor will advise you of planned assessments by providing you with a schedule of work, what format the assessment will take, what timescale you have, what you will be expected to do, and the format of your submission.

The frequency, size and type of assessment will vary for each FA. There are many different ways for your teacher or assessor to confirm what you know (to test your knowledge and understanding) and what you can do (to test your understanding and skills).

9 WHEN WILL I MEET AND WORK WITH EMPLOYERS?

You will meet and work with employers throughout your entire FA at different stages. During your first year, engagement with employers may include one or more of the following employer engagement formats:

- Visit or tour of the premises of a local business to see inside the organisation and find out more about the processes and systems they use to ensure they meet customer needs
- Attend a local event hosted by a local employer
- A local employer visiting your FA group to present, talk or host a workshop related to your chosen FA
- Meet and greet sessions to get to know more about the local organisations that will be hosting work placements for your year 2

Towards the end of year 1 and in year 2 you will be allocated a local employer who will host your work placement and provide you with an appropriate safe environment to learn and demonstrate new skills related to your FA. Some of your assessments used towards your gaining qualification will be completed in and during your work placement.

10 DO I GET PAID WHEN ON MY WORK PLACEMENT?

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The FA has been designed to combine learning and training with your school subjects. You will not receive any pay or salary whilst studying your FA, however you will continue to receive any Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) you have been receiving whilst studying all your subjects and classes in school in S4.

11 DO I GET PAID TRAVEL EXPENSES?

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Yes, all travel expenses are paid for and/or transport or travel passes are provided to ensure that you will not incur additional expenses due to having to travel to another school, college, or your work placement.

12 DO I HAVE TO BUY A UNIFORM OR SAFETY EQUIPMENT OR CLOTHING?

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No, any uniform, special clothing, or safety equipment needed will be provided free of charge to you.

13 AM I ASSESSED IN MY WORK PLACEMENT?

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Yes, as a Foundation Apprentice the workplace will also be your classroom and a location where assessment will take place as part of your FA. Your work placement is also a location that forms a key part of your learning, as in learning new skills and also applying the learning from your school or college classes into the workplace.

What you will find in the workplace is that assessment is often fun and very practical – just like when faced with challenges and problems to solve in the real world of work, as your work placement is the real world you are working in with a real employer!



14 ARE ANY CHECKS DONE WITH WORK PLACEMENT PROVIDERS?

Yes, all work placement providers and the site where you would be placed are checked against a list of Health and Safety requirements including confirming appropriate insurance. The work placement is also checked to ensure it has the appropriate staff and resources to support you correctly during your time there. All of these checks are completed prior to you attending your work placement.

15 WHEN WILL I RECEIVE MY CERTIFICATE?

FA certificates are issued by the SQA and the certificate will be issued in the summer after you complete your full FA qualification. The certificate will not normally be issued as part of your SQA National 5 and Higher results, in fact you may receive it before or just after this date.





**THE FA FRAMEWORKS
HAVE BEEN DESIGNED
IN SUBJECTS TO MEET
SPECIFIC SKILLS GAPS
IDENTIFIED IN SCOTLAND**

**FOUNDATION
APPRENTICESHIP
COURSE
INFORMATION**



**FIFE COLLEGE:
WWW.FIFE.AC.UK/FOUNDATION**

**FIFE COUNCIL:
MY.OPPORTUNITIESFIFE.ORG/
OPPORTUNITIES/APPRENTICESHIPS**

**SDS:
WWW.SKILLSDEVELOPMENTSCOTLAND.
CO.UK/WHAT-WE-DO/
APPRENTICESHIPS**

**APPRENTICESHIPS.SCOT:
WWW.APPRENTICESHIPS.SCOT**

**NATIONAL PARENT FORUM:
WWW.NPFS.ORG.UK/DOWNLOADS/
APPRENTICESHIPS-IN-A-NUTSHELL**

The information published in this guide was correct at the time of print.
For the most up-to-date information, you should always check our website.
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