Meta-skills — Assessment Requirements in Next Generation Higher National Qualifications

Information for learners

www.sqa.org.uk

Introduction

This document is for learners on Next Generation Higher National (NextGen: HN) courses. It contains information about how you will be assessed in relation to meta-skills on your course.

Meta-skills are transferable behaviours and abilities that help you adapt and succeed in life, study and work. There are three categories of meta-skills: self-management, social intelligence and innovation. Each of these is made up of four meta-skills and a number of sub-skills.

Self-management	Social Intelligence	Innovation
• Focusing	• Communicating	• Critical Thinking
• Integrity	• Feeling	• Sense-making
• Adapting	• Collaborating	• Creativity
• Initiative	• Leading	• Curiosity

You have opportunities to develop meta-skills throughout your NextGen: HN Qualification. You do this at:

♦ unit level — every unit has opportunities for you to develop meta-skills, and there is an assessed meta-skills outcome in one of the mandatory units
♦ course level — your lecturers will consider your commitment to engaging with meta-skills development when they make overall grade decisions

You are not assessed on your ability in individual meta-skills. Instead, you are assessed on your engagement with the overall process of meta-skills development.

Your lecturers will advise you further, and we have produced a range of resources to help you work with meta-skills and produce your assessment evidence — you can access these through the NextGen meta-skills web page.

Unit-level assessment: meta-skills outcome

The outcome is worded in this way: 'Develop meta-skills in a vocational or academic context'

Evidence requirements

To meet the requirements of the outcome, you need to provide evidence that you have engaged in a process of meta-skills development, including showing that you have:

♦ self-assessed your meta-skills baseline
♦ created a plan to develop your meta-skills
♦ carried out activities to develop and demonstrate your meta-skills
♦ used reflective practice to monitor and assess the meta-skills you have improved and developed

The meta-skills outcome is the same at HNC and HND. If you are progressing from HNC to HND, you should continue to build on your meta-skills development, using the progress you made at HNC as a starting point.

You can generate all the required evidence for this outcome from the activities in the unit it forms part of, but you can also generate evidence from any other relevant activities and experiences across the course.

Evidence requirements explained

Self-assessment of your meta-skills baseline

For the first part of the outcome, you must reflect — near the beginning of the development process — on how you view your own meta-skills. The aim of this baseline reflection is to:

♦ create a benchmark to let you reflect on and measure progress in your meta-skills development throughout the year
♦ set personalised goals for your meta-skills development that build on personal strengths and areas for development

You can do your baseline reflection on a skill-by-skill basis. Or, you can reflect on each category as a whole, bringing in the skills as appropriate. Whichever approach you take, you have to reference at least three of the four meta-skills in each category.

In your reflections, you should take an analytical approach, connecting your personal strengths and areas for development to things like:

♦ previous experiences (including work, study and interests)
♦ the qualification you are doing
♦ your personal and professional ambitions
♦ any activities undertaken to understand yourself better
♦ any other relevant information.

Create a plan to develop your meta-skills

You set **three personal goals** to develop meta-skills across all three categories.

Your goals can:

♦ focus on **an individual meta-skill**; for example, your communication skills
♦ focus on **a meta-skills category**; for example, innovation
♦ focus on **a general goal** relevant to your strengths, development aims, qualification or future ambitions. You can link this goal to any appropriate meta-skills, potentially across categories. For example, developing your ability to work effectively with others may touch upon collaboration, leadership and feeling, among others.

You then plan steps or strategies to work towards your meta-skills development goals and record these in an **action plan**.

These steps or strategies can highlight actions, behaviours, ways of working and course activities that you think will help you to develop and demonstrate your meta-skills.

Carry out activities to develop and demonstrate your meta-skills

You need to show evidence of activities that have helped you to develop your meta-skills.

These might include actions, experiences, coursework and feedback. They might have been detailed in your action plan; or, they may have contributed to your development — even if you didn't initially plan them, or didn't know in advance you'd be doing them.

These activities form the basis of your reflective practice.

Use reflective practice to monitor and assess the meta-skills you have improved and developed

You reflect on these activities to monitor your own meta-skills development. You can do this regularly or at a couple of points around the middle and end of the academic year.

Remember, as your goals cover all three categories of meta-skills, so should your reflections.

You need to demonstrate an analytical approach to your reflective practice. This means that you must clearly show how your experiences or course activities have influenced your meta-skills development, or how your meta-skills have helped you to successfully manage the requirements of your course.

Course-level assessment: overall engagement with meta-skills

In NextGen: HN courses, meta-skills development contributes to grading for the whole qualification. This means that the time and effort you spend engaging with meta-skills development is recognised and rewarded in your final grade for the course.

The criteria used is as follows:

Achieved
You **adequately** engage with the process of meta-skills development in the context of your qualification by:

♦ completing a self-assessment of your own meta-skills, giving reasons for the ratings or judgements you make

♦ setting clear and measurable goals along with action strategies to develop meta-skills in all three categories

♦ using reflective practice strategies to track your progress, and analyse the links between your course activities, experiences and meta-skills development

Achieved with Merit
You demonstrate **clear commitment** to the process of meta-skills development in the context of your qualification by:

♦ completing a self-assessment of your own meta-skills, giving **some insightful reasons** for the ratings or judgements you make

♦ setting clear and measurable goals along with action strategies to develop meta-skills in all three categories

♦ using reflective practice strategies to track your progress, and analyse and **demonstrate some insight** into the impact of your course activities and experiences on your meta-skills development

Achieved with Distinction
You demonstrate **strong commitment** to the process of meta-skills development in the context of your qualification by:

♦ completing a self-assessment of your own meta-skills, giving **some insightful reasons** for the ratings or judgements you make

♦ setting clear and measurable goals along with action strategies to develop meta-skills in all three categories, and updating these as required

♦ using reflective practice strategies **very effectively** to track progress, and analyse and **demonstrate insight** into the impact of your course activities and experiences on your meta-skills development