

Skills England Employability Skills Framework

The Employability Skills Framework draws on the Standard Skills Classification and aligns to other recognised frameworks including the Skills Builder Universal Framework and Essential Digital Skills Framework to provide a practical translation resource that can be used across the skills and employment system.

The framework stems from recognition that young people and employers often struggle to recognise the same employability skills in each other. At the same time, digital and AI capabilities are increasingly embedded within core employability requirements, yet existing employability, digital and AI skills frameworks are fragmented and often expressed in language that is difficult to apply in recruitment and employment contexts.

Skill (UK SSC core skills)	Definition - what this means at the start of a career	What this looks like in a first job	How a young person might have developed the skill	Potential for employers to look for	How employers can assess through recruitment	How employers can help develop during early career	AI-enabled employability skills: employer perspective	AI-enabled employability skills: young person perspective
Planning and organising	Managing time and tasks to get things done	Follow instructions carefully; break tasks into steps; organise what to do first; meet deadlines; keep track of work; be reliable, on time and focused; work independently to complete tasks accurately.	Managing school deadlines; organising an event (e.g. a club, trip or fundraiser); balancing study, part-time work or caring responsibilities; participating in structured programmes (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh's Award or project-based learning); coordinating tasks in a team activity, sports team, or enterprise project.	Can describe how they approached and completed a task; shows awareness of deadlines; attempts to plan ahead; prioritises reliability, commitment, preparedness and follow-through.	Ask candidate to talk through how they completed a task step by step; give a simple "what would you do first?" task; check if they arrive on time and prepared; use scenario questions and examples that test dependability and prioritisation.	Set clear tasks and deadlines; show how to break work into steps; check progress regularly and give simple feedback; reinforce professional habits through mentoring and ownership of tasks.	Uses AI tools to assist planning, prioritisation and organising tasks, while checking outputs and maintaining control over accuracy.	I can use AI tools to plan and organise my work, checking the outputs carefully and making changes to ensure they are accurate and make sense.
Adapting	Adjusting to change, feedback or new situations	Handle change well; change approach when needed; stay calm and in control; keep a positive attitude; keep going when tasks	Moving schools or courses; handling changes in routine; adapting in part-time work or group activities; responding to feedback in coursework or	Speaks positively about change; shows willingness to try again; gives examples of perseverance, learning from mistakes and	Ask about a time something didn't go to plan; listen for how they reacted to feedback and what they did next to recover from difficulties.	Give small changes in tasks; reassure that mistakes are normal; talk through what they learned and what to do next time; continue to build confidence through coaching.	Adapts how they work as AI tools and processes change, being curious about using new tools as they emerge and adjusting approach	I can adapt how I work as AI tools change, and I am confident trying new tools and approaches when needed.

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		are difficult; learn from mistakes.	training; adjusting approach during team sports, performances or competitions; participating in outdoor or residential experiences that require flexibility.	responding positively to feedback.			where needed.	
Working with others	Collaborating to achieve a shared outcome	Work well with other people; be respectful, inclusive and polite; support colleagues and contributes positively to team culture; play own part and help the team achieve shared goals.	Team sports; group coursework; volunteering or social action projects; participation in clubs (e.g. drama, coding, debating); community activities; family responsibilities; contributing to group challenges such as enterprise projects or Duke of Edinburgh's Award.	Describes working with others; demonstrates inclusion and shows respect for different views; explains their role in a group and how they contributed to group success.	Ask for an example of working in a group; use a short paired or group task if assessing more than one candidate at the same time; notice how they treat others (including interviewer).	Put them in team tasks; explain roles clearly; allocate a mentor in the team; give feedback on how they work with others.	Collaborates effectively using AI tools; shares effective practice with colleagues.	I can work with others using AI tools, sharing how I use them and learning from others to improve my approach.
Listening	Understanding information and perspectives from others	Listen carefully; understand instructions; notice when others need help or clarification; respond appropriately; check understanding before moving on.	Following instructions in lessons or training; taking part in group activities or discussions; responding to coaching in sports or arts activities; volunteering or helping others; participating in structured programmes where instructions or safety briefings must be	Gives others time to speak; understands questions, taking time if needed; responds appropriately; exhibits curiosity and reflects back what others have said; respects other perspectives.	Give simple instructions for a short task for them to complete; describe a simple workplace situation (e.g. a customer asking for help) and ask what they would do.	Model active listening; give structured instructions; provide clear guidance; encourage active listening habits.	Interprets information from digital and AI-supported communications, checking requirements before acting.	I can understand information shared digitally, including AI-supported content, and I check I understand what others need before using AI tools.

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			followed (e.g. outdoor activities, workshops).					
Speaking	Expressing ideas clearly to others	Explain ideas clearly; speak in a polite and professional way; adjust depending on the situation; show confidence. and speak up when needed	Presentations in school or college; participating in discussions, debates or public speaking activities; customer-facing roles (e.g. part-time work or volunteering); performing in drama, music or other arts activities; contributing to student council or leadership groups.	Speaks with confidence so that others can hear; explains ideas clearly in their own words; shows willingness to contribute to conversation.	Ask them to explain something they have done; check if they can explain clearly and confidently.	Give opportunities to speak (e.g. updates, customer interaction); give simple feedback on how clear they were.	Communicates clearly about their work, including how AI has been used and any limitations of the output.	I can explain my ideas clearly, including how I have used AI and any limitations in the results.
Leadership	Guiding or supporting others to achieve a goal	Take responsibility; follow through on tasks; support and encourage others; take initiative and step up when needed; set a positive example even without a formal leadership role.	Leading part of a group task; mentoring or supporting peers; organising activities or events; taking responsibility in clubs, societies or sports teams (e.g. team captain); involvement in student council, youth voice or community projects; contributing to structured leadership programmes (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh's Award, cadets).	Shares examples of taking responsibility (formal or informal); shows initiative; describes supporting or guiding others.	Ask about a time they took responsibility or helped others; look for examples where they stepped up or followed through.	Give responsibility for small tasks; encourage them to take ownership; recognise when they show initiative.	Takes responsibility for decisions supported by AI-and uses tools in a safe, ethical and responsible way.	I take responsibility for how I use AI tools, making sure I use them in a safe, ethical and appropriate way.
Learning and investigating	Finding out information and building understanding	Show curiosity and interest; ask questions; find information when needed; think	School or college projects; self-directed learning (e.g. learning a new skill or hobby); participating in STEM	Shows curiosity; asks questions; describes how they learned something new;	Ask how they learned something new; look for examples of asking questions or improving over time.	Encourage questions; show how to find information; give feedback and time to reflect and improve.	Uses AI tools to find and evaluate information, checking reliability and building their own	I can use AI tools to find information and help me learn, but I check sources and

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		about what went well and what could improve; learn from feedback and take steps to improve.	clubs, competitions or research projects; exploring topics through enrichment activities such as museum visits, fieldwork or guest talks; engaging in problem-based or project-based learning.	reflects on what they improved.			understanding.	build my own understanding.
Creating	Generating ideas and improving ways of doing things	Suggest ideas; look for ways to improve how things are done; take initiative; be proactive and willing to try new approaches.	Creative subjects (art, music, drama); generating ideas in group projects or enterprise activities; problem-solving in daily life; organising events or campaigns; participation in creative clubs (e.g. media, design, coding, performance); contributing ideas in social action or community projects.	Suggests ideas or improvements; shows willingness to try different approaches; describes thinking beyond the obvious.	Ask for an example of improving something or suggesting an idea; prompt with “what would you do differently?	Ask for their ideas; encourage small improvements and experimentation; show that new ideas are valued in everyday work.	Uses AI tools to generate ideas and refine outputs creatively, applying their own judgement to refine outputs.	I can use AI tools to generate ideas, but I improve and refine them using my own judgement.
Problem solving and decision making	Understanding issues and choosing appropriate actions	Break down problems into smaller parts; think about different options; keep trying to find a solution; use judgement; take ownership of decisions with support when needed.	Resolving everyday challenges; managing conflicts in school, work or social settings; coursework tasks requiring analysis; participating in team sports or competitions where decisions are needed under pressure; involvement in	Talks through how they approached a problem; shows logical thinking; explains what they tried and what they learned.	Give a simple scenario and ask what they would do; ask them to talk through their thinking.	Talk through problems together; show simple ways to approach problems; review what worked and what didn't.	Uses AI to explore options and solutions, testing outputs and using judgement to decide the best approach.	I can use AI tools to explore solutions, but I check the outputs and decide what is the best option.

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			enterprise challenges, STEM activities or outdoor problem- solving tasks.					
Numeracy	Using basic maths to understand and work with numbers	Use numbers with confidence; understand and explain information; double check work; pay attention to detail; be honest about mistakes and correct them.	Budgeting or managing money (personal or project- based); handling money in part-time work or volunteering; measuring or estimating in practical activities (e.g. cooking, construction, design projects); analysing data in coursework; applying numbers in sports, fitness tracking or enterprise activities.	Shows confidence using numbers in everyday situations; explains how they checked their work or ensured accuracy.	Use a simple real-life task (e.g. read a chart, basic calculation); ask how they would check their answer.	Give practical tasks using numbers; show how to check work; encourage checking and asking if unsure.	Uses AI tools to work with numerical data, checking outputs and ensuring results are accurate and make sense.	I can use AI tools to work with data and numbers, but I check the results to make sure they are accurate and make sense.
Digital literacy	Using digital tools effectively and safely (including AI)	Use digital tools in the right way and independently; communicate clearly using digital tools; check outputs (including AI) are correct; use technology safely and responsibly.	Using devices and school systems; engaging with digital platforms for coursework or communication; participating in digital or STEM clubs (e.g. coding, robotics, media production); using technology in creative activities; informal use of AI and digital tools; contributing to online collaboration or content creation.	Describes using digital tools confidently; shows awareness of checking information or outputs (including AI); understands appropriate use.	Ask what digital tools they have used; give a simple task if possible (e.g. follow instructions); ask how they check information; explore approach to AI outputs and checking.	Provide training - show how to use tools step by step; explain what “good” looks like; reinforce checking work and safe use.	Uses digital and AI tools confidently, understanding what they can and cannot do and checking outputs appropriately.	I can use digital and AI tools confidently, and I understand their strengths and limitations which helps me to use them appropriately.

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Reading	Understanding written information	Read and understand instructions and information; pick out the most important points; check understanding; pay attention to detail; follow written guidance correctly.	School or college learning; interpreting written instructions in activities or tasks; engaging with online information and research; reading materials linked to enrichment activities (e.g. scripts, briefs, guidance for projects or competitions); following written guidance in volunteering or part-time work.	Interprets written information and identifies key messages; uses appropriate tone for the situation.	Give short written instructions and ask them to explain/summarise key points or follow them; check understanding.	Provide clear written instructions; encourage them to highlight key points; check understanding regularly.	Reads and evaluates written and AI-generated content, identifying what is relevant, accurate and useful to their work.	I can read and assess written and AI-generated content, deciding what is accurate, relevant and useful.
Writing	Communicating ideas clearly in written form	Write clearly and accurately; organise information in a clear way; use a professional and appropriate tone; be polite and respectful; check written work and take responsibility for it.	Coursework and assignments; writing emails, applications or messages; producing content for enrichment activities (e.g. student newspaper, blogs, project reports); completing forms or documentation in volunteering or part-time work; contributing written work in group or enterprise projects.	Clarity and structure rather than perfection; ability to communicate ideas in writing.	Ask for a short written response (e.g. message or form); check clarity and structure rather than perfection.	Provide simple templates (e.g. emails); give feedback; show examples of good writing.	Produces clear written work using AI tools, checking content for accuracy, clarity and appropriateness.	I can use AI tools to support my writing, but I check and improve the content to make sure it is clear, accurate and appropriate.

Mapping to frameworks

Skill	UK SSC core skills	Skills Builder Universal Framework (most relevant skill)	FutureDotNow Essential Digital Skills Framework The Essential Digital Skills Framework	Skills England Foundation Apprenticeship employability skills and behaviours (Apprenticeship search / Skills England)	T Level outline content – employability skills T Level outline content	V Level, foundation certificate, occupational certificate Framework for transferable skills and work-related behaviours –	Skills Imperative 2035 Essential Skills for the Future
Planning and organising	SSC.C01	Self-Management – Planning	Tasks 11, 12	EB2: Act in a professional manner including good time keeping and conduct. EB4: Complete own work tasks and ask for help when needed. EB8: Work in line with health, safety and environmental requirements.	Planning Self-managing Recording Reliable Independent Self-controlled Committed Professional Responsible Attention to detail Focussed Punctual	Planning Recording Self-managing Attention to detail Committed Focussed Independent Professional Punctual Reliable Responsible Self-controlled	Organising, planning and prioritising
Adapting	SSC.C02	Self-Management – Adapting	Tasks 12, 25	EB6: Seek ways to manage own financial, health and wellbeing needs using available resources. EB7: Overcome challenges and adapt to changes at work.	Self-managing Persistent Flexible Adaptable Resilient Inclusive Reflective Independent Responsive Tolerant	Self-managing Adaptable Flexible Inclusive Independent Persistent Reflective Resilient Responsive Tolerant	

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Working with others	SSC.C03	Collaboration – Teamwork	Task 4, 12	EB2: Act in a professional manner including good time keeping and conduct. EB4: Complete own work tasks and ask for help when needed. EB5: Work with colleagues to contribute to team outcomes.	Working in a team Negotiating Integrity Socially adept Empathetic Tolerant Honest Helpful Inclusive Respectful Polite	Communicating Empathetic Helpful Honest Inclusive Integrity Respectful Polite Socially adept Tolerant	Collaboration
Listening	SSC.C04	Communication – Listening	Tasks 3, 4	EB1: Communicate and share information using verbal, non-verbal, written and digital methods. EB2: Act in a professional manner including good time keeping and conduct.	Communicating Negotiating Perceptive Responsive	Communicating Perceptive Responsive	Communication
Speaking	SSC.C05	Communication: Speaking	Task 3	EB1: Communicate and share information using verbal, non-verbal, written and digital methods. EB2: Act in a professional manner	Communicating Presenting Negotiating	Communicating	Communication

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				including good time keeping and conduct.			
Leadership	SSC.C06	Collaboration: Leadership	Tasks 14–15, 25	EB3: Apply new learning and feedback to everyday practice.	Leading Self-managing Self-confident Committed Enthusiastic Integrity Responsible Responsive Takes initiative	Leading Self-managing Assertive Committed Enterprising Enthusiastic Integrity Responsible Responsive Self-confident Takes initiative	
Learning & investigating	SSC.C07	Creative Problem Solving: Problem Solving	Tasks 9, 10, 23	EB3: Apply new learning and feedback to everyday practice. EB6: Seek ways to manage own financial, health and wellbeing needs using available resources.	Investigating Analysing Evaluating Observing Persistent Self-aware Enthusiastic Reflective	Analysing Investigating Observing Enthusiastic Independent Persistent Reflective Self-aware	Information literacy
Creating	SSC.C08	Creative Problem Solving: Creativity	Tasks 12, 13		Designing Creativity	Creativity Takes initiative	Creative thinking

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					Enterprising Takes initiative	Enterprising	
Problem solving and decision making	SSC.C09	Creative Problem Solving: Problem Solving	Tasks 11, 12, 13	EB4: Complete own work tasks and ask for help when needed. EB7: Overcome challenges and adapt to changes at work.	Solving problems Assessing Risks Analysing Critical thinking Decision making Evaluating Assertive	Critical thinking Decision making Evaluating	Problem solving and decision making
Numeracy	SSC.C10	Creative Problem Solving: Problem Solving	Task 11		Integrity Honest Attention to detail Analysing	Integrity Honest Attention to detail Analysing	
Digital literacy	SSC.C11	Cross-cutting	Tasks 12, 13, 23	EB1: Communicate and share information using verbal, non-verbal, written and digital methods. EB2: Act in a professional manner including good time keeping and conduct.			
Reading	SSC.C12	Communication	Tasks 9, 23	EB1: Communicate and share information using verbal, non-verbal, written and digital methods. EB2: Act in a professional manner	Communicating	Communicating	Communication

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				including good time keeping and conduct.			
Writing	SSC.C13	Communication	Tasks 4, 13	EB1: Communicate and share information using verbal, non-verbal, written and digital methods. EB2: Act in a professional manner including good time keeping and conduct.	Communicating	Communicating	Communication