



world **skills** uk  
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***FIND YOUR  
SHINING STARS***

# ***A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO DELIVERING WORLDSKILLS UK PRE-COMPETITION ACTIVITY***

WorldSkills UK Competitions provide real-world environments, to stretch and challenge the capacity of apprentices and students beyond their formal learning programme.

- 86% of competitors cited improvement in career progression from competition experience
- 82% of competitors reported improved technical skills
- 85% of competitors reported improved personal and employability skills
- 85% of competitors reported raised aspirations

Our tools, developed by our competition partners in industry and education, provide solution-based outcomes to help train and prepare for skills competition. We recognise that the best vocational learning is hands-on, practical, experiential, and related to the real world. It must also involve feedback, questioning, application and reflection. We believe that our competitions can help to deliver all of these aspects.

Skills competitions can play a vital role in teaching and learning environments by complementing differentiated approaches that bring learning to life. Some of the benefits of skills competitions are that they can:

- Foster rich opportunities for learning and achievement
- Develop professional and technical skills to extremely high levels of excellence and contribute to young people's understanding of their education, career and life choices
- Engage, challenge and motivate learners so that they get the most out of their learning experience
- Provide opportunities to develop critical skills, attributes and behaviours valued by employers such as problem-solving, self-reflection, time management and the ability to work under pressure
- Enable apprentices and students to get experience of using the skills they have learned in pressurised, time-dependent environments developing their skills to high levels of performance which will enable them to meet the demands of real-life workplaces

## Competition preparation

Before registering to enter apprentices and students to take part in a WorldSkills UK Competition, it can be helpful to allow them to practice, test and challenge their technical and mental skills by getting involved in pre-competition activity. This could involve preparing apprentices or students for the qualifying rounds of skills competitions and involving your wider organisation. This will often take the form of a competition within a college, training provider or business, or between multiple organisations. This is also a great way of involving the entire class/college.

## How to use our pre-competition activities

1. Visit our website to view the full list of skills competitions
2. Select the skills competitions you are interested in entering your apprentices or students, review the information, taking into consideration the entry criteria and stages of the competition
3. Review the tools for each skills competition and download the pre-competition activity pack
4. Read through the activity pack and think about how you can integrate the materials into your teaching, planning and delivery, for example, including competition activity in your assessment plans and schemes of works
5. Consider the infrastructure and environment you will need to run the activity such as equipment, materials, people, space and time
6. Partner with a local business, training provider or college to spread the resources you may need to run the activity
7. Use the pre-competition activity to enhance your teaching by providing a fun and inclusive learning environment to engage and motivate staff and learners

## Top tips

- Ensure that all apprentices and students understand the marking scheme before they start, so that they know the standard of performance required
- Ensure that you are giving your apprentices and students a realistic task and providing them with the right support, equipment and materials to complete it to a high standard
- Use self-assessment as a tool to promote self-reflection and questioning techniques
- Make sure you provide good quality, constructive feedback, highlighting where apprentices and students met the criteria and where they didn't, describing elements that they need to work on
- Celebrate the success of all participants - skills competitions are a great tool to enthuse and motivate learners and staff

## Skills competitions as your vehicle to success

Delivering pre-competition activity is an excellent way to improve standards of teaching, learning and outcomes for apprentices and students, there are many other ways in which the talent of members of your organisation can be developed, such as:

**Mentoring:** a mentor can be an excellent way of helping apprentices and students to get a different perspective on the work that they are completing, and of giving them access to an experienced individual who can offer them expert advice and guidance.

**Embedding a competitive spirit in the curriculum:** embedding competitiveness in everyday classroom, workshop or office activities can encourage those taking part to strive for excellence against their peers, which can have the effect of driving up standards.

**Recognising outstanding achievement:** demonstrating that above average achievement is appreciated and valued can encourage a greater number of staff or young people to aim higher.

**Offering specialist training:** up-skilling your workforce with focused training in their vocational area can lead to a greater depth of understanding of the skill in general.

**Developing professional practice skills:** focusing attention on the softer skills surrounding technical abilities may lead to a greater understanding of personal strengths and areas for development and can lead to enhanced employability skills.

**Practising work to an industry standard:** by encouraging apprentices and students to work to a professional, high standard early on in their careers, they will foster attitudes that will lead to a higher level of attainment and improved outcomes for themselves, their college or learning provider and ultimately, their employer.

Get in touch with us for further support on how to run WorldSkills UK pre-competition activity  
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