

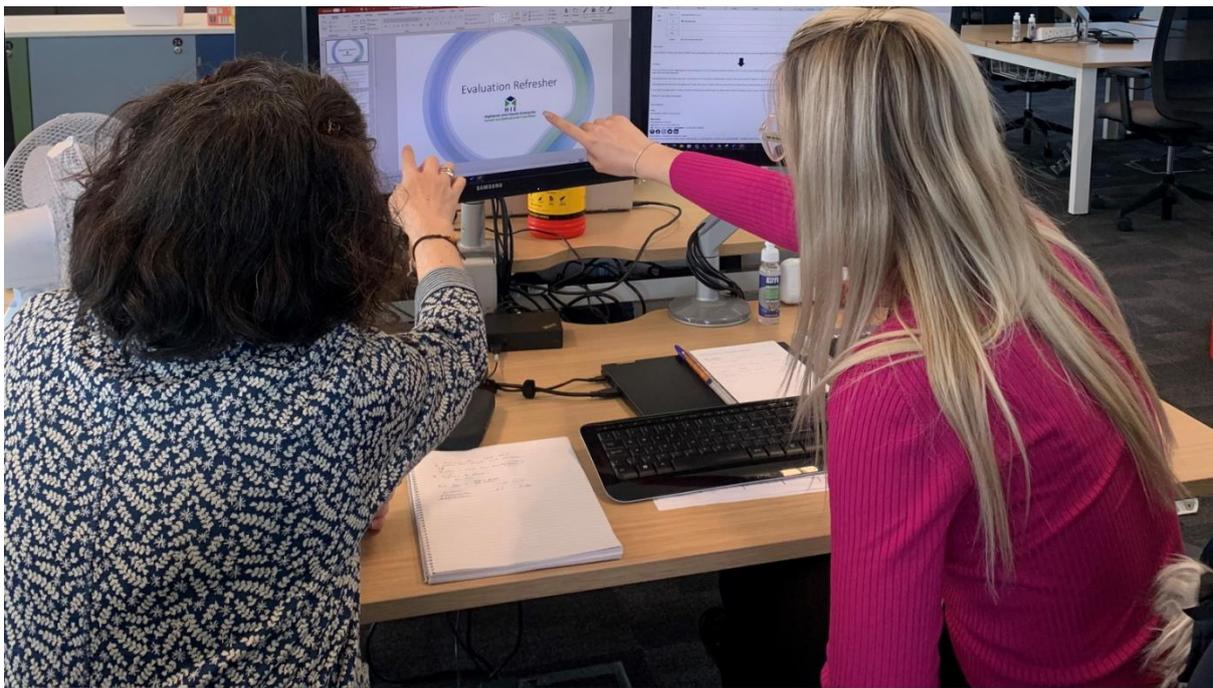


**Highlands and Islands Enterprise**  
**Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean**



scottish credit and  
qualifications framework

## **SCQF CASE STUDY – KATA, MODERN APPRENTICE AT HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS ENTERPRISE (HIE)**



### ***About Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)***

HIE is an ambitious organisation with a remit from the Scottish Government that integrates economic and community development. With around 300 staff, HIE supports hundreds of businesses and social enterprises across the Highlands and Islands. HIE works in a diverse region covering more than half of Scotland's land mass and including all inhabited islands. Our vision is for the Highlands and Islands to be a prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable region, attracting more people to live, work, study, invest and visit.

Our three priorities are to: enable strong, capable, and resourceful communities; build successful, productive, and resilient businesses; and create the conditions for growth and a green recovery.

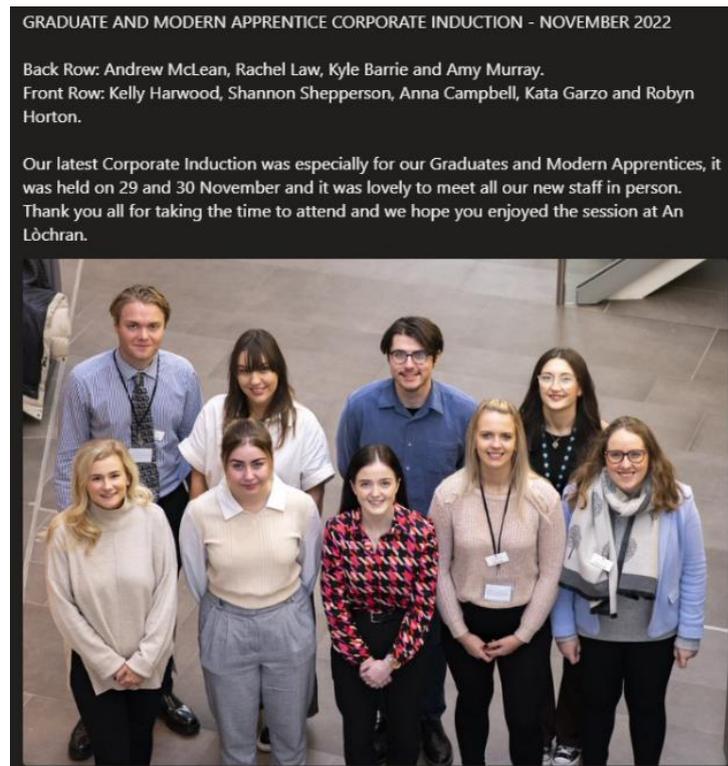
HIE's recruitment and selection activity is conducted in line with our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. As such, we were delighted to become an SCQF Inclusive Recruiter. We are committed to developing the young workforce as part of our workforce plan and have recently appointed a cohort of graduates and modern apprentices, including Kata, who has shared her thoughts on her experience so far.

***What's your name, what age are you, where do you work & what is your job title?***

My name is Kata Garzo, I am 20 and currently a Procurement Assistant MA with Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

***How did you find out about the apprenticeship?***

Word of mouth – a family friend who also works for HIE told me about the opportunity, then I went onto HIE's website to find out more. It really stood out for me, where HIE particularly highlighted their interest in giving young people an opportunity to work in such a professional environment, rather than expecting applicants to have many years' experience.



***Why did you decide to do an apprenticeship?***

Honestly, I had no idea what an apprenticeship truly was, until I took this opportunity. I like the fact that I can learn while on the job. I am more of a practical person; I struggle to sit above a book and study. I think apprenticeships are hugely underestimated. I was sceptical at first too because I didn't know what to expect, but it's nothing like school or uni'. It actually teaches you the specific skills for a specific job, giving you a big advantage and plenty of opportunities to grow, move up the ladder and gain experience.

***What have you enjoyed most about your apprenticeship journey so far?***

I love how I am able to learn, not just about Procurement but other departments' work too by working with them on procurement projects; doing it all without realising that I am learning/studying! My team are great at teaching me something new every day, it feels like they are keen to get me up to speed with the procurement processes, rather than neglecting me. Many times, they have come to me about guide docs and templates for feedback, with the eyes of a 'newbie', if the documents make sense to me enough that I could do a project on my own relying on solely the documents... The answer was no, so we are currently in the middle of rewriting these docs to help any future new starts.

***How did the SCQF help you understand the different learning pathways available to you?***

Again, I think apprenticeships are extremely underestimated. I think there are many more options and opportunities doing one than not. Coming from a former college student, I can safely say I learnt more in 6 months with the programme, than I have at college in 1 year. The programme has helped me see and understand my own skills and abilities I didn't know I had, while learning without realising. There is plenty of support at all times.

***Were you always interested in undertaking an apprenticeship & do you understand how the SCQF level of the Modern Apprenticeship compares with other post-school options?***

Truthfully, after leaving school, I had no idea I would end up doing an apprenticeship, because I feel like MA programmes are greatly misrepresented. From my MA experience, it is nothing like what teachers, lecturers make it out to be. SCQF has really given me a huge opportunity to maximise what they can offer and create a path to progression for my future self. I have definitely not regretted going down this path and would highly recommend it for everybody!

***What are your plans for the future/your future career?***

Future plans will include working for a Public Sector Organisation, (hopefully be able to stay with HIE), with a keen, open mind to progressing within the organisation and taking any opportunities offered.