



## WorkSkills from Edexcel

# WorkSkills for adult returners

Returning to work after an extended period can be a daunting prospect. Adults who have been out of the workplace often report a lack of confidence, rusty skills and 'not knowing where to start' as obstacles to re-entering the job market. These difficulties can be acute among lone parents for whom getting back to work may be an economic imperative.

### Delivering the skills employers want

The new **WorkSkills** suite can give learners the updated skills and renewed confidence they need to return to work. They can fit the flexible, short term units around their current responsibilities, such as childcare or caring for elderly relatives, by taking as many or as few units as they wish. Through **WorkSkills** learners can gain formal recognition for valuable skills that they have developed outside the workplace and also acquire new skills to improve their employability.

*The table below is a profile of a typical adult returner. It lists existing skills that this type of learner may already have, and suggests the **WorkSkills** units that they could take to gain formal recognition for those skills. It also identifies potential skills gaps and names the **WorkSkills** units which could help them to upskill.*

Adult returner: representative profile	WorkSkills unit suggestions	Learner benefits
Potential unrecognised existing skills	Earn recognition	Adult returners:  - gain formal recognition for skills adults already use on a daily basis - understand how unpaid skills they've developed could be transferable to paid work - appreciate how self-management skills are of value to potential employers
Money management	Managing your Own Money	
Organisational skills	Alternatives to Paid Work	
Time management	Self-Management Skills	
Potential skills gaps	Upskill	Adult returners:  - present personal information in an appropriate fashion - develop up to date, workplace-appropriate communication skills - build confidence and learn business principles and disciplines
Applying for an appropriate job	Applying for a Job	
Communication skills within the work environment	Speaking Confidently at Work	
Entrepreneurial skills	Planning an Enterprise Activity	

*Note: There are 88 units in the highly flexible **WorkSkills** suite. The central column of this table features just 6 of the units to give you a flavour of the choice available*

# WorkSkills in action

## Gemma, 34, mother of two

Gemma plans to return to work after eight years out of the job market.



### Where I am now

"Now that both my kids are in full time school I've got time to think about my career. I know that my skills need updating because I'm really behind the times on current workplace practice. I'd appreciate proper training on how to talk to clients and colleagues. Spending so much time with under fives has definitely had an affect on my communication skills! **WorkSkills** looks great because I can choose the units that I want to concentrate on and be realistic about the time commitment. I won't be biting off more than I can chew."

### Where I want WorkSkills to take me

"I'm going to start with *Alternatives to Paid Work*, *Self-Management* and *Effectiveness at Work*. I was really pleased to find that for these units I can show evidence of everyday skills I'm using at home to complete the 'learning outcomes'. If I succeed with those three units I'll earn a BTEC Award in **WorkSkills**. That alone will be a huge confidence boost and prove to employers that I take my career seriously."

Then I plan to take three more units: *Searching for a Job*, *Applying for a Job* and *Interview Skills*. They will be a great way of refreshing my communication skills and improving my chances at interviews. I'll start looking for a job after that. In the long term I fancy being my own boss, so *Planning an Enterprise Activity* is also on my 'to do' list!"

This is a representative composite case study based on conversations about **WorkSkills** held between Edexcel researchers and parents wishing to return to work.

## CBI/Edexcel Education & Skills Survey 2008

This survey revealed that wider employability skills such as **team-working** and **communications skills** were deemed to be the most valuable assets in the workforce. Employers reported that job seekers who could demonstrate these attributes were more likely to succeed in the workplace.

For further information please visit [www.edexcel.org.uk/worksheets](http://www.edexcel.org.uk/worksheets)  
or call 0844 576 0026

### Edexcel

190 High Holborn London WC1V 7BH

Online enquiries: [www.edexcel.org.uk/ask](http://www.edexcel.org.uk/ask)

Tel: 0844 576 0031

Fax: 020 7190 5700

[www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk)

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### About Edexcel

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Our general qualifications taken internationally include GCSEs, AS and A Levels, IGCSEs and O Levels. Our vocational qualifications include NVQ and BTEC from entry level to Higher National Diplomas. Our entire vocational portfolio had over one million registrations across 45 countries.