

# Skills Development Scotland



## Head of Sector Development Digital Technologies & Financial Services Position Profile

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## **1. Welcome Note from Chris Brodie, Head of Skills Planning & Sector Development**

Dear Applicant,

My sincere thanks to you for taking the time to show interest in the business-critical role of Head of Sector Development - Digital Economy and Financial Services Skills.

As Scotland's national skills agency, we have responsibility to help our country face the global challenges we have seen as a result of the COVID pandemic. Before the pandemic the world around us was changing at a rapid pace with Climate change, the rise of automation and digitization, increased dependency ratios and significant competition for public finances, all creating challenges and opportunities for Scotland. As the economy emerges from the impacts of COVID Scotland has the potential become one of the most productive, inclusive and sustainable economies in the world.

The economic vision set for a green and education led recovery set out in the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery (AGER) report described the pivotal role of digital technology and the digital economy in driving Scotland's economic future. We need to ensure we have a skilled workforce available to meet the needs of a growing digital economy and SDS has a leading role in mobilizing collective efforts to increase the digital skills talent pool in Scotland.

We are looking for a highly motivated and influential leader who will help us drive the required realignment of skills provision to ensure that Scotland capitalises on the economic opportunity from the Digital Economy. This critical role will take on leadership of the Digital Economy and Financial Services Skills Team and building on the achievements of the Digital Technologies Skills Investment Plan lead on the development of a new cross sectoral Digital Economy Skills Action Plan for Scotland

The role presents a unique opportunity to position Scotland at the leading edge of skills development in relation to the Digital Economy and Financial Services, and you will build and develop strong and effective relationships with industry partners, Scottish Government and our key stakeholders including the SFC, Colleges, Universities and Training Providers.

If you would like to be part of our evolution, leading a talented and driven team of people and making a difference to the people and businesses of Scotland, we would love to hear from you.

**Chris Brodie**  
**Head of Skills Planning and Sector Development**

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## 2. Overview of Skills Development Scotland

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) is Scotland's national skills body and contributes to Scotland's sustainable economic growth by supporting people and businesses to develop and apply their skills.

With more than 1,600 colleagues working across the country with businesses, in schools, careers centres and partner locations, we are passionate about skills development and its contribution to a modern, innovative and prosperous Scottish economy.

Working with our partners, we strive to ensure employers have the right skills at the right time in high performing, fair and equal workplaces, and that every individual has the skills and confidence to get a job and progress in the workplace, achieving their full potential. Engaging with the skills system to help ensure it better meets those needs in the short, medium and longer term, SDS' core services and activities include:

- Careers Information Advice and Guidance Services - focused on equipping Scotland's current and future workforce with the career management skills they require to achieve their potential
- Apprenticeships – administering Scottish Apprenticeships on behalf of Scottish Government, SDS is committed to developing and growing a world-class work-based learning system in Scotland
- Skills Planning – robust skills intelligence enables SDS to understand the current and future demand for skills and jobs across Scotland, by geography and by industry sector
- Employability Skills – supporting individuals through a range of programmes to increase their work-based and employability skills, enabling them to take their first steps into the labour market or make successful career changes and progression
- Supporting Scotland's Employers – working directly with employers across Scotland, SDS provides trusted advice that helps employers invest in existing skills, develop new talent and get the right products to grow their business
- Research & Insight – producing and commissioning high quality research on a variety of topics relating to skills and employment, SDS looks to inform policy and practice

As an organisation SDS has four core values which underpin everything it does:

- We put the needs of our customers at the heart of all we do
- We demonstrate self-motivation, personal responsibility and respect
- We continually improve to achieve excellence
- We make use of our continued strengths and expertise to deliver the best outcomes

More information can be found at: [www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk](http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk)

### 3. Background to the Opportunity

SDS has a significant role to play in supporting the government’s agenda for economic development and growth, career management skills and youth employment and needs to develop and deliver services which will meet these demands.

Within SDS, the Skills Planning and Development (SP+SD) Directorate has responsibility for Regional, National and Sector Skills Planning and Development.

Working with local stakeholders to understand the needs within their Local Authority areas, the Directorate develops Regional Skills Investment Plans and actions for all geographical areas across Scotland, engages with Regional Economic Partnerships, City and Growth Deals whilst also managing SDS’s relationships with a range of enabling sectors.

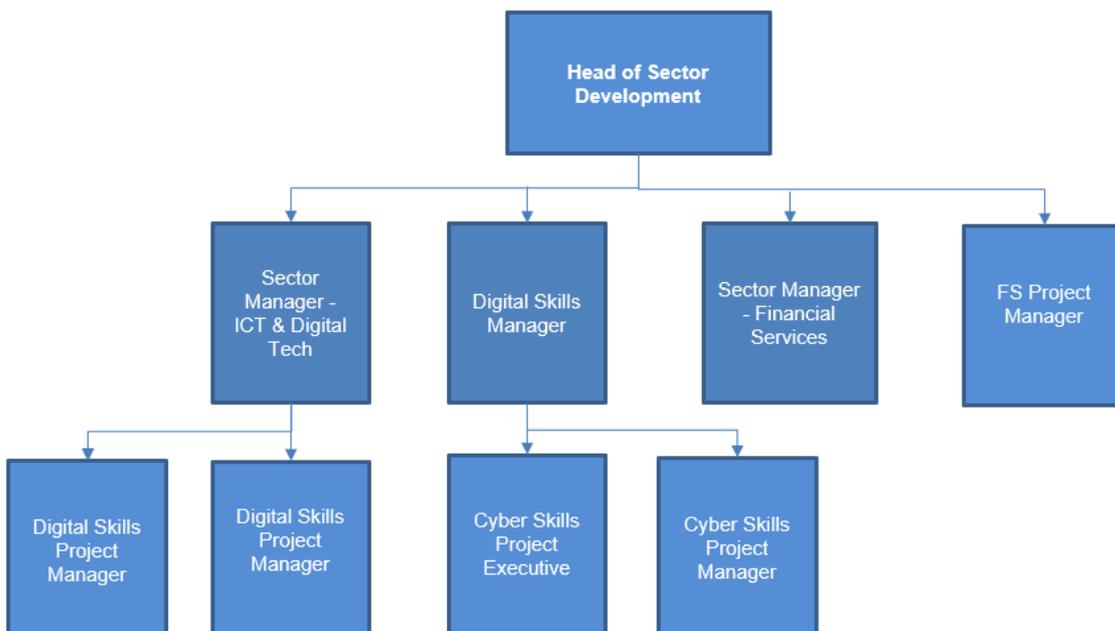
The Sector Development Departments have accountability for working with specific sectors and industry leaders and bodies to develop strategies, influence government policy and funding and align these with the skills system. There are several key sectors for Scottish Government with both the Digital Technologies & Financial Services and the Climate Emergency & High Value Manufacturing (HVM) sector families having been identified as instrumental in Scotland’s post-COVID economic recovery.

In response to this, SDS have created two new and business critical Head of Sector Development Roles. Through their teams, each role will ensure the effective deliver of the agreed interventions that will deliver the strategy, achieve the desired economic impact and align the supply of skills to meet the relevant sector’s needs.

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### 4. The Role

#### Organisational Structure Chart



## **Role Overview:**

This role will provide leadership and strategic direction for the Digital Technologies and Financial Services team, which is one of the two priority sector families that will be critical to Scotland's post-COVID economic growth.

As the Head of Sector Development, you will shape and develop cross-sectoral strategies to ensure skills planning, investment and delivery are demand led, and deeply informed by industry perspectives as well as oversee the successful delivery of multi-year plans and activities, across several stakeholders.

## **Key Priorities**

- Development of a cross-sectoral Digital Economy Skills Action Plan that identifies the key programmes of activity that need to be delivered to ensure the right supply of skilled people to meet the needs of the digital economy
- Develop a deep understanding of the economic drivers to enable the creation of ambitious, multi-year (3-5 year) skills investment strategies, as part of the Annual Planning process, that ensure skills planning, investment and interventions meet the current and future needs of Digital Technologies (cross sector) and Financial Services sector
- Develop and maintain effective partnerships with key industry leaders, providing thought leadership (expertise and innovation) to understand their current needs and forecast future skills needs (horizon scanning)
- Directly influence Scottish Government policy and investment plans to support long-term targeted interventions and develop a skills system that delivers the best outcome for the economy whilst also delivering the long-term needs of relevant industry and sectors
- Provide leadership and operational oversight for existing activity in the team including the Cyber Skills Action Plan, Digital Start Fund and Financial Services sector skills planning and engagement
- Ensure all activities are aligned to, and directly support the delivery of, SDS's key strategic priorities and driving productivity and inclusive growth and enabling businesses and people to achieve their full potential

Accountable for the delivery of Letter of Guidance requirements of SDS in relation to specific sector and programme deliverables your **key responsibilities include:**

- Providing both strategic and operational leadership to a team of Sector and Programme Managers, who are subject matter experts, with responsibility for wider team of 8 staff geographically dispersed across Scotland
- Accountable for developing the response to and management of the delivery of asks that emerge from Scottish Government Ministers across a range of portfolios (e.g. Digital Start)

- Strategic engagement with industry leaders and sector bodies to ensure skills strategies and interventions are informed and driven by industry and address the needs of the Digital & Financial Services sector families
- Effectively managing key strategic relationships with Scottish Government, Enterprise Agencies, Scottish Funding Council and Higher Education and Further Education to ensure that they are aligned towards and delivering their part of the implementation plan
- Positioning SDS as the thought leader in terms of skills policy and planning for critical future growth sectors; demonstrating expertise and innovation
- Representing SDS and enhancing the reputation and mitigating risk to PR of SDS by effective engagement, leading presentations and discussions with external stakeholders at key national and international skills and economic development events
- Developing strong business cases and negotiating with and influencing Scottish Government and partner organisations to secure the requisite multi annual funding required to support to support programme delivery
- Negotiating with and influencing partner organisations to secure additional external funding (circa £2 million) to support programme delivery by producing credible business cases that articulate need and benefits
- Shape and oversee effective delivery, through matrix management of multi-disciplinary, multi-agency project teams, of a significant programme of investment (£2.5M+) that will support the economic growth of the sector families
- Influence the development of internal SDS and external policy in support of these sectors and ensure they recognise and address sector needs
- Act as an influential and persuasive advocate for the Skills Planning Model and the work of the team with external audiences, and present and lead discussions at national and regional economic development structures on behalf of SDS to embed an evidence-based approach to Skills Planning across partners and stakeholders
- Accountable for developing business cases and securing approval for the team's work through the Skills Planning and Sector Development programme Board and where appropriate SDC, Directors Group and SDS Board
- Secure endorsement and approval for the team's work through the Skills Planning and Sector Development programme Board and where appropriate Directors Group and SDS Board
- Responsible for all aspects of SDS Governance and compliance in terms of the team's work plan deliverables including risk management, Continuous Improvement and team reporting
- Act as the point of escalation for any challenges that emerge internally and externally with stakeholders, anticipate and resolve unusual, and often unique challenges
- Develop and maintain a high-performance culture within the team based on developing an expertise in the whole business SDS service offer; deep collaboration with partners and other SDS directorates; on integrity and constructive challenge in multi-partner settings

- As a member of the Senior Management Team for the SP+SD Directorate with responsibility for setting and managing budgets, securing required staff resources and contributing to the strategic direction for and management of the Directorate
- Deputising for the Director of Skills Planning and Sector Development as required in relation to their areas of responsibility
- Responsible for deployment of an overall annual financial budget in excess of circa £2.5m, largely external programme funding attracted to SDS

## Partnerships

### External

This role will be focused on external engagement across the below organisations and partners at a senior level (Directors/Heads of Service). They will be responsible for leading a strategic, influential, persuasive approach to engagement that secures agreement and minimises conflicts.

- Scottish Government: to inform, influence and shape development of skills policy and programmes at a national level; to secure political and financial support to implement actions in pursuit of effective Skills Planning and Sector Development and across the critical sectors. This role will also be the primary contact for SG Digital Directorate and act as the point of escalation and decision making for any challenges that emerge. You will also be a lead contact with Economic Development and Skills Directorates in relation to the sectors within your portfolio
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Enterprise & South of Scotland Enterprise: to ensure alignment of strategic investment priorities across national economic development agencies and national skills agencies in support of key sectors
- Industry Leadership Groups, e.g. Technology Advisory Group (ILG): Identify the need for and create new Industry Leadership structures, lead SDS relationship with existing leadership structures, design and implement approaches to validating demand for skills, particularly work based learning and deeply involving employers in the design and delivery of education including Work based learning, FE, HE and upskilling
- UK Government Departments: leading SDS engagement with UK departments responsible for Digital Technologies & Financial Services to inform, influence and shape development of skills policy and programmes at a national and regional level
- International partners/academics (OECD, other Skills Development and Funding Agencies): identify and maintain relationships with key international experts and other international skills policy and funding agencies to ensure that SDS's approach to Skills Planning and Sector Development is informed by international best practice

## **Internal**

- SDS Board/ Chief Executive/ Directors: to provide overall leadership and to inform and help shape strategic thinking and planning. To provide robust evidence and insight to shape policy and operations. Requirement to attend relevant Board Committees as necessary
- Skills Planning and Sector Development Programme Board: to inform and shape strategic thinking and planning in relation to the sectors covered by the Climate Emergency and High Value Manufacturing team, in terms of strategy and project portfolio
- Skills Alignment Directorate: to work collaboratively to develop, implement and continuously improve approaches to secure industry validation and gather industry insight on evidence of demand for skills. Influencing and shaping approaches for gathering robust and effective evidence to support skills planning and sector development
- Work based Learning Teams/CIAG: to work collaboratively to help shape and influence the development of new, and enhancement of existing, apprenticeship frameworks in their area of responsibility. Identify, design and implement appropriate strategies and approaches to ensuring employer participation in these programmes
- Internal Enabling Services departments including Finance, CPPE and Mar Comms: to ensure that the teams work is effectively communicated, reported internally and risks are properly managed

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## **5. Preferred Candidate Background**

The successful candidate will bring expertise in either Digital Technologies or Financial Services having operated at senior leadership level in one of the following sectors: industry, academia, education or skills. The postholder will also require highly developed influencing and interpersonal skills to engender a high level of collaborative working and resolve matters where there are differences in terms of view and approach by the various stakeholders.

### **Knowledge, Skills and Experience:**

#### **Essential**

- Educated to SCQF Level 11 in a related field such as Economics, Labour Market, Skills, Education Policy or demonstrable work experience
- Strong operational management and strategic leadership skills
- Demonstrable experience of developing strategies, turning them into actions and programmes and delivering successful and impactful results

- The ability to evaluate the effectiveness of strategy in operation and identify and implement changes in response to external factors
- Direct experience of and the ability to operate in a highly politicised environment and work with politicians
- Good understanding of economic drivers of change in relevant sectors, within the role's remit
- Experience of successfully facilitating effective conflict resolution strategies
- Experience of developing strong business cases for key projects, continually seeking ways to create value for the public purse
- An awareness of Scottish Government Skills policies and agenda
- Highly developed communication and interpersonal skills; influencing, negotiation, relationship management and networking
- Strong relationship building with highly effective influencing skills with ability to facilitate collaborative working
- Project Management skills with ability to lead and deliver on large scale funding programmes
- Credible knowledge of the skills system and economic drivers and impacts

### **Desirable**

- Knowledge of the Inclusive Growth agenda and the challenges that this poses at a regional level
- Knowledge and understanding of SDS's Strategy and ambitions for Work Based Learning
- Clear understanding of Scottish Government's ambitions for key industry sectors and Regional Economic Partnerships

### **Personal Attributes**

- Strategic thinker; considers the long-term impact of plans, actions and decisions
- Results driven and outcome focused
- Acts with personal integrity and the utmost discretion, demonstrating strong values of trustworthiness and reliability
- Encourages and develops appropriate behaviours in line with organisation principles and challenges those who do not
- Customer focused; Builds creative solutions to organisational issues that deliver value for SDS and drives through to implementation
- Considers a diverse range of customer needs to ensure they drives strategic priorities within their team and across the organisation
- Change catalyst with ability to effectively lead and support team through change
- Resilient, with the ability to bounce back from challenging situations
- Excellent judgement, tactical awareness and decision-making skills
- The ability to act as an advocate of SDS both internally and externally with key stakeholders

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## 6. Remuneration

Salary:	£69,866 – £78,760
Pension:	Career Average Earning Scheme (22.3% employer contribution)
Holidays:	30 Days + 13 Public holidays

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## 7. The Recruitment Process

The recruitment for this position is being managed by our advising consultants, Livingston James.

Interested candidates should provide a tailored CV to Douglas Adam, Director – Public and Not for Profit Practice at [douglasadam@livingstonjames.com](mailto:douglasadam@livingstonjames.com)

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