



Skills Summary in Practice: How Youth Organisations in Ireland are Using the Tool

Examples include:

- Exchange House Ireland
- Crosscare Dún Laoghaire Youth Service
- Donegal Youth Service
- iScoil
- Liberties College
- Griese Youth Theatre
- Youth Work Ireland Cork
- National Youth Council of Ireland
- Youth Work Ireland Galway

Skills Summary – The easy way to track and develop your life skills

Skills Summary is the result of a partnership project between the NYCI, Accenture and SpunOut.ie and was developed with input from Volunteer Ireland and a range of NYCI member organisations. The programme is funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and was officially launched in March 2019. Skills Summary is recognised as a measurement tool in the Youth Employability Initiative.

National Youth Council of Ireland

The National Youth Council of Ireland is the representative body for voluntary youth organisations in Ireland. We use our collective experience to act on issues that impact on young people.

Skills Summary in Best Practice examples submitted by:

Crosscare Dun Laoghaire Youth Service, iScoil, Exchange House Ireland, Donegal Youth Service, Youth Work Ireland Cork, Griese Youth Theatre, Liberties College, Youth Work Ireland Galway

“Big thank you to all the organisations and their staff who shared their experience of using Skills Summary and how it enriched their youth work practice! We got to create this wonderful resource thanks to you!”

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Skills Summary is an easy to use online tool that measures the skills young people gain by participating in non-formal education, such as volunteering, youth work and other out-of-school opportunities. Many of the people who use the tool are young people who were not catered for by formal education or have been disadvantaged, but Skills Summary provides a neatly designed and accessible way for young people, and those who support them, to evidence their skills, knowledge and progress. The Skills Summary website has more information about the tool or training on offer.

This resource offers an insight into just some of the ways organisations have shared with us about how they are using Skills Summary in various ways to support their work. We hope it will inspire you in your work, and as always please do reach out to us for support or to share how you are using Skills Summary in your work.

Example 1

BUILDING CONFIDENCE WITH SKILLS SUMMARY EXCHANGE HOUSE IRELAND

“Skills Summary is really helpful in terms of the young people taking the onus over their learning. It delivers part of the module we use and individuals feel more in control of their learning, which is positive for both the tutors and the learners. This, in turn, builds confidence. In this way, the young people aren't forced to consider their skills development, but it gets them thinking on their own terms 'what do I need to do, what skills do I have'. This creates that internal dialogue rather than us pushing the agenda. Also, I find young people really like being on computers, the tool is very accessible and not intimidating, which makes it easier to 'engage' to the young people.”

This project:

- Used Skills Summary at the start to help learners identify the skills and achievements they already had
- Incorporated Skills Summary into various subjects and aspects of the project which is an educational programme
- This helped learners to understand their own abilities, putting them in control of their own learning, and in turn built confidence.

Example 2

SKILLS SUMMARY AS A REFLECTIVE TOOL

CROSSCARE DÚN LAOGHAIRE YOUTH SERVICE

“Skills Summary was introduced as an employment preparation tool to the Members of our Youth Cafe Committee, to enable them to capture the skills learnt. An additional benefit for us, as Youth Workers, is the outcome part... It gives us a record of the outcomes of our work, it measures the development of the young people from where they were at the beginning to the end of the programme by demonstrating the increase in skills developed.”

Skills Summary was first introduced as a part of a committee workshop. It was for the young people on the committee to be able to express what they're doing. Skills Summary can be used as a reflective tool for young people to see their strengths, areas for improvement, and discuss achievements.

Example 3

USING SKILLS SUMMARY TO FOSTER DISCUSSION AND LEARNING

DONEGAL YOUTH SERVICE

Skills Summary was used as a tool for the young people to record their own progress throughout the YouTurn programme. The young people could track their own positive progress and have it as a portfolio for when they needed it for future employment opportunities. It provided a great opportunity to give 'seminars' on various areas covered in the tool, such as leadership skills, confidence building, CV writing, interview skills, and information on courses and apprenticeships. You could even include some of the Career ABC content!

Consider how you could use Skills Summary as a tool for discussion, by discussing the skills as a group with different exercises so the group can fully explore these skills, what they look like in reality, and any questions they may have about them.

Example 4

MAPPING YOUR PROJECT WITH SKILLS SUMMARY

iSCOIL

“Our Head of Learning mapped the Skills Summary content to our courses so our students could see how they have developed and used particular life skills during their time with iScoil, and as a result it was ran as an optional course. One student said they really liked the tool ‘because the things I’ve learnt from it are really helpful and I think they are important skills to have for the future’”.

As a youth worker, map the skills courses to your project before you begin so you know where each fits in your project.

Consider taking five minutes to map how Skills Summary fits with your project. Use the pages at the end of this resource could get you started!

Example 5

CREATING LEADERSHIP WITH SKILLS SUMMARY

LIBERTIES COLLEGE

The young people studying youth and community were introduced to the tool, both for themselves and in terms of using it professionally in the future. The group were learning about the tool by using it, which is a great way to show its usefulness, as by using it they see the value of it. The tool validated the skills and experience they had already but may not had recognised, as well as the learning from their placement during the course. Moreover, there is an ‘instant synergy between the non-formal education world and Skills Summary’ as the two complement one another so well.

“Skills Summary is a framework to reflect on experience and extract the learning from it”.

Example 6

DEVELOPING PROGRESSION PATHWAYS WITH SKILLS SUMMARY

GRIESE YOUTH THEATRE

Skills Summary can be a brilliant instrument for supporting young people in deciding what their next steps might look like and for developing youth employability. By examining a young person's Skills Summary, you can create a plan to further develop a young person for a specific route in mind, or to identify passions that could be explored as possible career progression pathways. Moreover, young people can identify barriers to their progress, as with one young person experienced "having articulated this has given her greater confidence in dealing with it" and to progress further.

Example 7

USING SKILLS SUMMARY ONE ON ONE YOUTH WORK IRELAND CORK

Using Skills Summary when working with young people one to one and in small groups can assist in jumpstarting their self-development journey. When working with young people on writing a CV, many young people believe they have nothing to put on it. This organisation used Skills Summary as a tool to help the young people think of examples of when they used that particular skill or think of opportunities where they can seek out opportunities to start developing that skill, shows how they can start writing their CV. By working one-on-one the tool can facilitate conversation.

Example 8

SKILLS SUMMARY IN RECRUITMENT NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL OF IRELAND

We used Skills Summary PDFs instead of application forms or CVs when we were looking for a Content Creation contractor. In our invitation to tender, we outlined five essential and desirable skills from Skills Summary required for the role, then we shortlisted and interviewed candidates based on the PDFs. We had excellent interviews with highly skilled candidates who would never have been shortlisted had we used the standard application process as their education and/or previous work experience would not have revealed that they had all the skills required for the job.

"We noticed the candidates were able to comfortably talk about how they demonstrated their skills as working on their Skills Summary profiles served as great interview preparation."

Example 9

USING SKILLS SUMMARY IN SUPERVISION YOUTH WORK IRELAND GALWAY

Skills Summary is a very useful tool for measuring a baseline and agreeing goals with new staff, especially those at the start of their careers. While schools and colleges are essential for academic development, there are opportunities to better prepare students for the workforce and encourage reflection and planning in their personal and professional lives. Skills Summary is an effective way to get on the path of empowering staff to own their development and for you to provide them some support on the way.

"By trying the quizzes it's possible to discern the current level of skill and compare it to a job/role description and to work with the individual to create a progression plan. This plan can be as low key or as detailed as you both need it to be, but it does offer goals and targets that can be aspired to, planned for and met."

Notes:

Use the notes space to map out your project and check out the PRO tips!

Project aim:

Desired outcomes:

Mapping the skills to my project:

- Communication skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Teamwork
- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Organisation skills
- Adaptability
- Leadership
- Entrepreneurship
- Drive and resilience
- Ethics and integrity
- IT skills

PRO TIP!

Watch the tutorial videos and run through it all with one young person before starting your project, that way when you use it with a group in a session you already have the solutions to some of the questions they may have about using and navigating the site.

-Crosscare Dun Laoghaire Youth Service

PRO TIP!

We are adding a Skills Summary Forum to our online student forums - the forum will explain what Skills Summary is, how it works and give the students a space to ask questions and share their experiences of using it for others to see. The aim of this is to increase the number of students engaging with this amazing tool!

- iScoil

PRO TIP!

It is helpful to make a timeslot for your group's engagement with Skills Summary. It makes it easier for young people to consistently update their personal Skills Summary and also keep them thinking of what they can include.

-Liberties College

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Department of Children, Equality,
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