**Mentoring skills – Knowledge, Skills & Attitude (KSA)**

For any task you need three things: knowledge, skills and attitude. Being a mentor is no different and by looking at what sort of knowledge you need, what skills you require and what attitude makes a good mentor you can decide yourself where your strengths are and where you may have some areas that you need to strengthen.

One of the most important things to remember is that attitude is probably the area that you need to concentrate on the least. Through the application stages to become a mentor you have needed to demonstrate that you already have the right attitude, otherwise the co-ordinating team at your university would not have let you get this far. Here are some examples of the knowledge, skills and attitude required of a good mentor. See how many of them you can identify in yourself.

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| **Knowledge** | **Skills** | **Attitude** |
| * Know your subject * Understand the role of a mentor * Know the system and structure of mentoring * How to manage the paperwork * How to deal with different situations * Knowledge of your audience. | * Listening * Questioning * Communication * Clear in delivery * Engaging * Able to be interactive * Manipulating through process * Time management * Creative thinking * Leadership qualities * Team & group working * Facilitating. | * Positive * Professional * Friendly * Approachable * Confident * Flexible and open * Prepared * Honest * Natural and with belief * Enthusiastic, persistent and willing * Encouraging * Non-judgemental * Personally commitment * Sensitive & respectful of individual preference. |

**Using KSA with your learners**

Understanding your own KSAs is vital, but you can also use KSAs to support your learners. In any situation where you have somebody who is failing or unable to complete a task a good way to look at it is to ask what level of knowledge, skills and attitude do they need to complete it. By breaking it down into these three areas it is easier to identify where you need to put some in support, development or training. Different tasks will require different levels of the three areas. However, you need to be aware that whilst knowledge and skills can be improved, attitude is more difficult to change as it is part of an individual’s personality and character. But this is probably an area that you will have to tackle with your learner(s). For example if they have a particular attitude to their studies that is preventing them progressing, the way to remove that barrier to progression is to change their attitude.