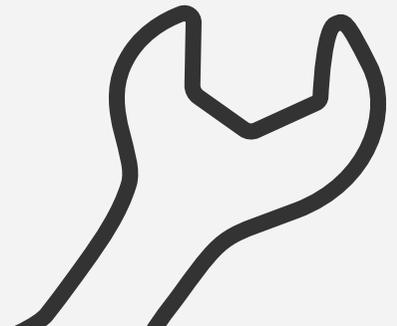the **skills** network

Our Brand Toolkit

Welcome

...to The Skills Network's brand guidelines! Grab a drink, sit back and relax as we show you what it's all about!

the
skills
network

Contents

Click the logo at any time to return

the **skills** network

We care about

people

The Skills Network are a family born from a passion to help people learn. We are real and we understand that sometimes life gets in the way. The last year has seen big changes in the way the world works, and we know that learning needs to be flexible and accessible for all. By understanding out learners, the generational gap and the way they receive learning, we can better understand our business; We know there's no one size fits all!

Our system, infrastructure and processes need to be designed with people at our core. The Skills Network are transforming the way we look at learning and humanising our work to provide the best experience for all our learners.

Our new branding is here to tell this story.

the
skills
network

Who we are what we represent

We're different!

We provide online training content, led by market-leading tech but more importantly we are a company that understands training, skills and teaching.

Our staff are our super-power and we trust and empower them to make some big decisions. This entrepreneurial ethos drives our growth and new ways of thinking. From our end-to-end learning and development solutions, through to our processes driven by the latest technologies, we have created a business that has a reputation for excellence.

One of the biggest asset's to our success is our bespoke technology solution, developed for all learners. This, alongside our outstanding customer service and our delivery expertise, allows us to enrich lives through learning and nurture this ethos worldwide.

the skills network

What is our brand about?

We're about delivering high quality training courses in a way that puts our learners first. We know that life is busy and learning needs to work around the lives of our customers.

Our brand is fun, personal and above all human. We celebrate people - individual learners, FE providers, and employees - and their achievements.

We're about more than just training - We're about the people.

the
skills
network

The four key ways
of making learning & skills accessible

Everything that we do, is to help our customers reach their potential.

We're not just delivering tech and e-certificates, we're giving people the skills to develop, progress and reach their individual goals.

Technology provider – content and technology platform

Services provider - tutor assessors, learning support advisors, learner find, careers support and consultancy

Delivery provider- whether adult education, apprenticeships, loans provision, bootcamps or any other contract from either our partners or direct from government, delivered through a bundle of our technology and services

Foundation – providing a charitable route for The Skills Network and other funding partners to support the disadvantaged and excluded across the world.

the
skills
network

Equality & diversity

Committed to supporting all.

the
skills
network

Diverse
illustrations

Keeping our character illustrations simple and very similar in terms of faces and colour makes them appear more racially ambiguous which avoids bias on using particular demographic groups.

We celebrate diversity. We use different hairstyles to depict between masculine and feminine characters and international and multicultural nations. We show religious groups through head attire and simple accessories.

Our illustrations are inclusive. The characters are only ever outlined, no fill colour means the race and skin tone are open to interpretation.

the
skills
network

strapline

Making learning & skills accessible

the skills network

Who are we & why we do what we do
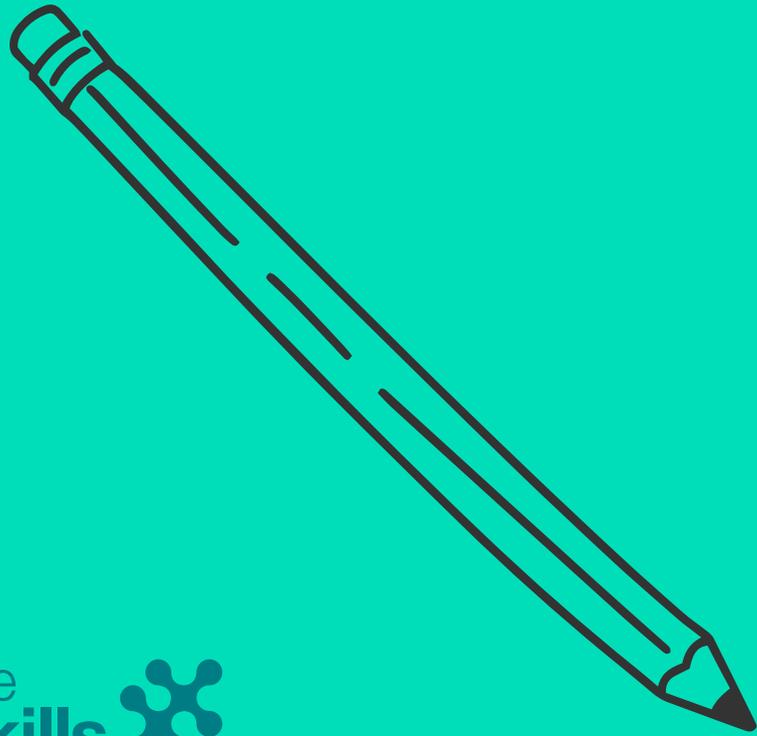
Our mission is to combine innovative technology and outstanding customer service to help enrich lives through learning and to inspire and nurture this ethos worldwide.

the
skills
network

Our values

Empowering lifelong learning & skills development.

Achieving excellence.

Collaborating for success.

Inspiring.

Innovating.

the
skills
network

The heart of the brand

Our brand is straightforward, supportive, real and above all human. Humanising our brand is the key to developing our relationships, operations and performance.

People are central to what we do. We embrace technology and innovation because it allows us to deliver the best learning experience for all people. We're flexible because we live in a world that requires flexibility. Learning opportunities should be accessible to all and we as an industry must develop to provide alternative learning solutions that work around the real lives of the people of today.

With this approach, we can influence a positive change not only through our business but for the future of our sector.

the skills network

Let's keep it simple.

the
skills
network

We're progressive, accessible, empathetic,
and most importantly we care.

Brand outputs

the
skills
network

Our logo

Block

the
skills
network

Long

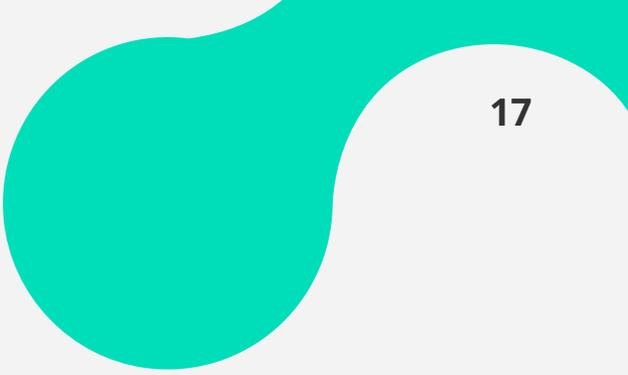the **skills** network

the **skills** network

The evolved logo makes use of our new colour palette and also adapts to fit the space in which it is placed. On print and advertising, the 'block' logo can be used, whereas on devices where space is limited, this can be swapped for the 'long' version.

Our logo

By creating a logo that can adapt, we can ensure that the brand will always look it's best and be recognisable on whatever output is required.

These examples show how it can respond to different space allocations.

Logo alternative colourways

For dark
backgrounds

For light
backgrounds

Along with
the primary
colourway, these
are the only other
colourways our
logo should be
used.

Logo deconstructed

Digital (px)
Print (mm)

Min height:
180px
10mm
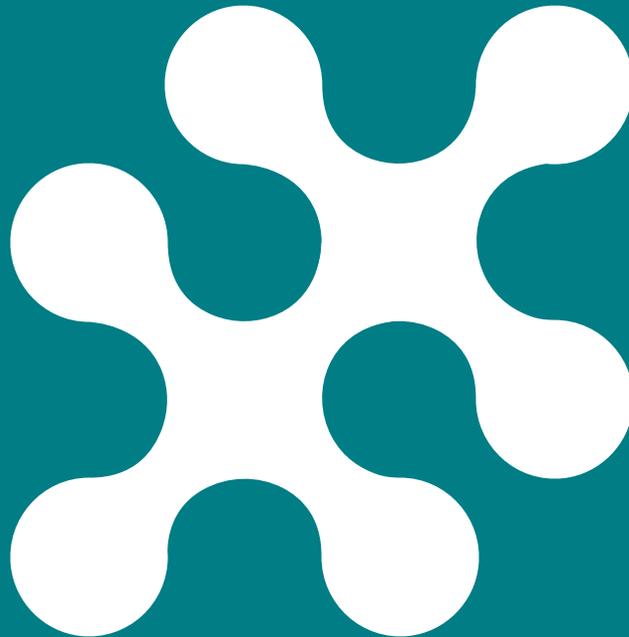
Border (at min):
20px
6mm

Min height:
70px
4mm

Border (at min):
20px
6mm
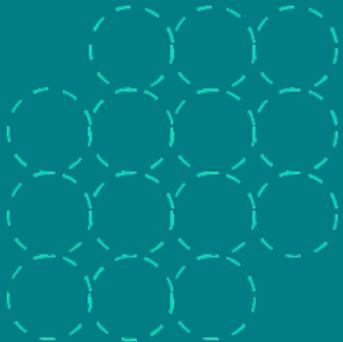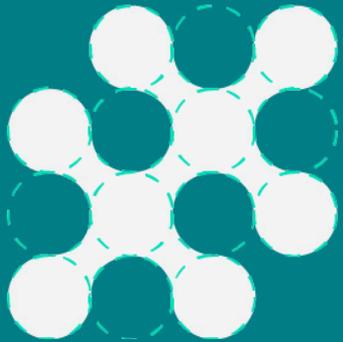
Min height:
42px
10mm
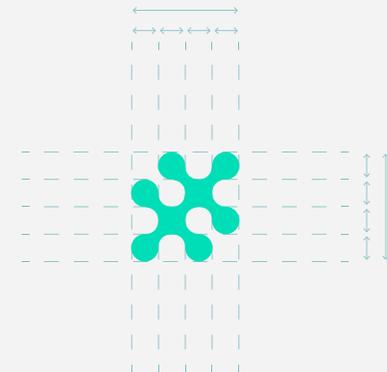
Lock-up

The lock-up is an evolution of the existing The Skills Network logo, which was meant to depict two people connecting.

We have pushed this further by fusing the two parts together to try and really embody the spirit of connection, network and helping people become the best version of themselves that the brand strives for.

It's also designed to somewhat resemble a jigsaw piece with the implication that people can 'find their missing piece' whether that's personally or career wise by partaking in a course with us. From a purely aesthetic point of view, it has also been designed to be as flexible to use as possible, with many different ways to incorporate it into our branded output by either using it as a lock-up, a container for a design or as an interlocked pattern. Pushing it even further it could also be rotated and used in place of an equals symbol for our EQUAL product.
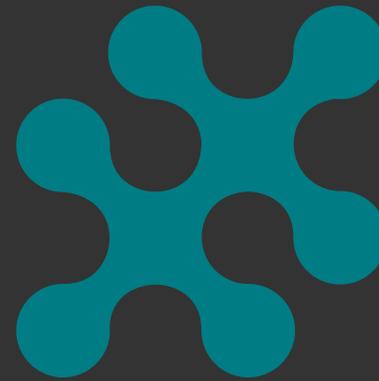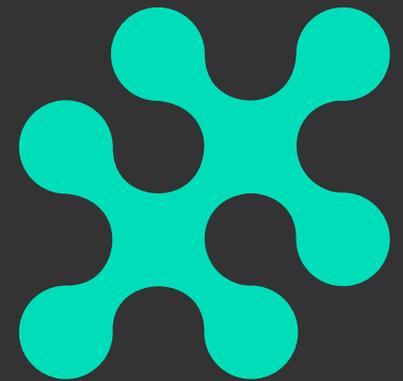
the
skills
network

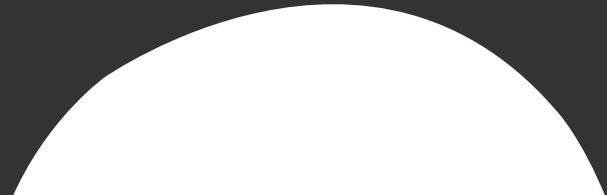# Lock-up
colourways

#F3F3F3
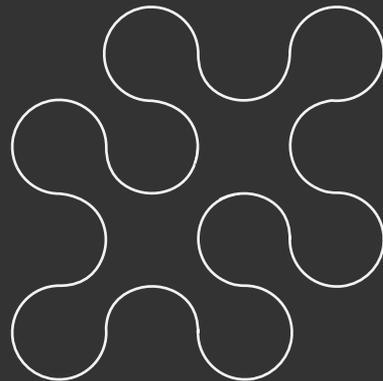
#333333

#007C85

#00DEB9

the
skills
network
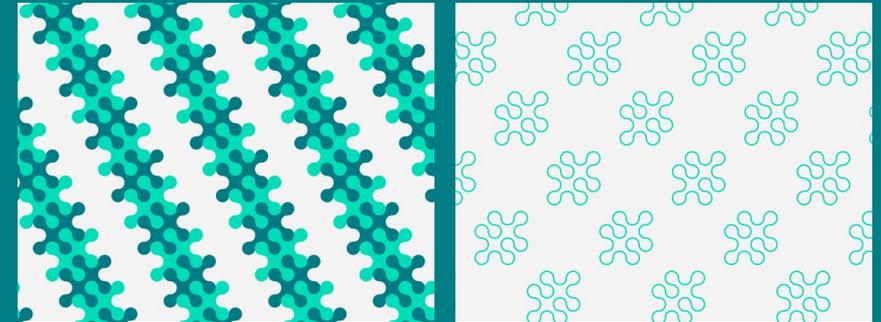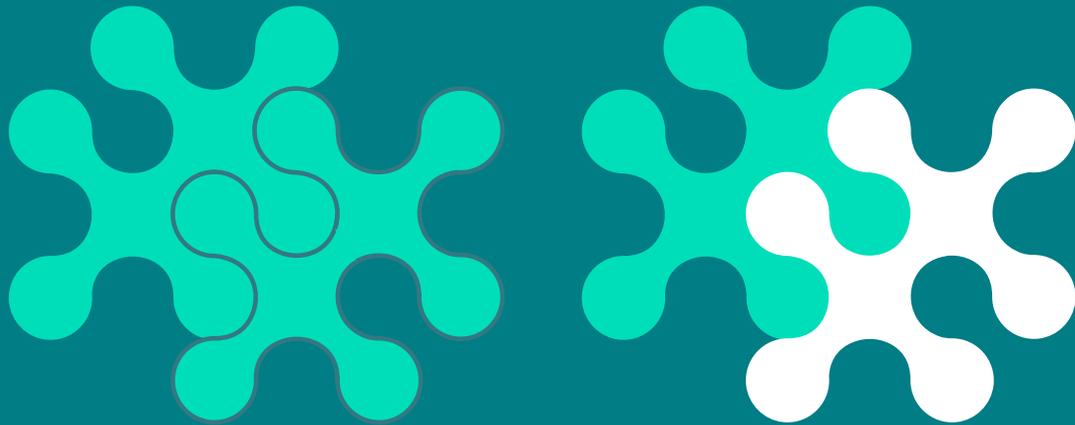
Brand patterns

By making the lock-up larger, and rounding off the whole shape, it not only becomes easier to distinguish, but also creates a shape which can be interlocked as a pattern or used as a shape within other design elements of the brand creating a distinct The Skills Network look.

the skills network

Logo don'ts

Don't outline

Don't use non-brand colours

Don't apply effects

Don't distort or skew

Don't change the font

Don't resize or move around elements

Brand colour
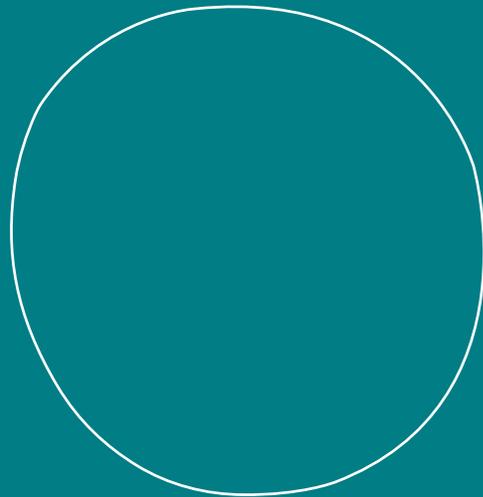
#007C85

Our refreshed brand green is brighter and better. The new vibrancy reflects who we are as a company, we are bright, fresh, new and fun!

Teal is a great colour for us because it sits right in the middle of the green and blue spectrum. Green and blue as colours both embody values that us as a company possess and want to communicate to our clients.

Feelings associated with blue commonly include those of stability, trust, confidence, and calmness, while green is seen to bring calm, growth, safety, and balance. Colours in the middle of the scale for both are also linked to honesty, optimism, and happiness.

the
skills
network

Primary colour palette
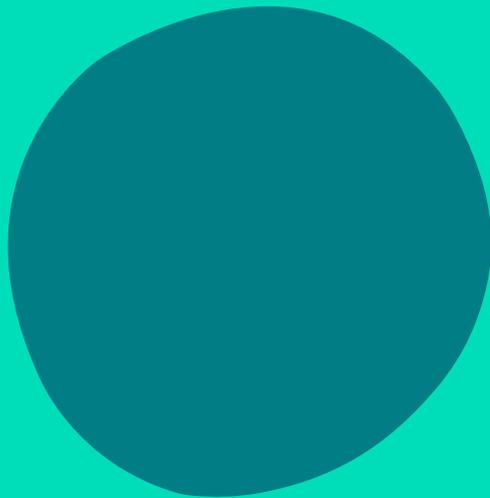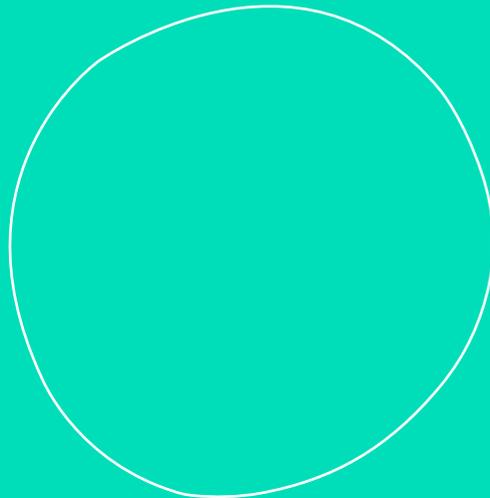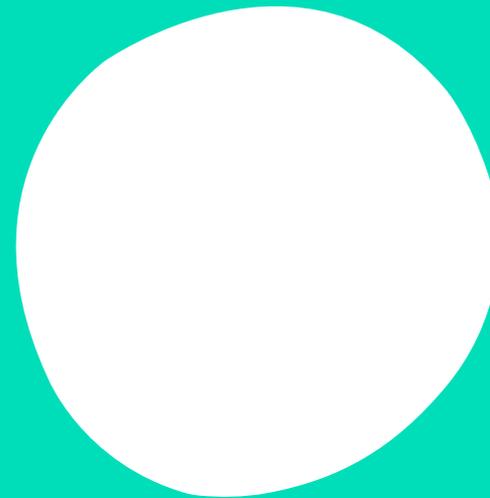
#007C85   #00DEB9   #F3F3F3   #333333
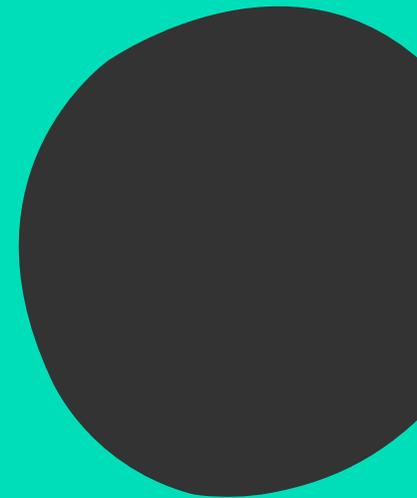
This colour palette allows us to remain recognisable, but with a brighter hue, giving us the swanky new refresh!

The green hues symbolise social and communicative moods while the blue undertones represent the brand as calming, kind, and honest!

the
skills
network

Secondary colour

#8880F0

Our secondary (or 'pop') colour is on the violet spectrum. Colours in this group are associated with boldness, power, reliability, and wisdom.

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skills
network

Colour pop

First and foremost is our iconic green: Yes, we've always been green and yes, we always will be! But now, our refreshed green compliments our vibrant tone of voice. This is followed by a range of recognisable colours, refreshed from our previous palate, and our accent "colour pop" in a violet, to be used minimally throughout design. This pop shows our energy and excitement and keeps the attention of our users and partners.

the
skills
network

Do's & don'ts
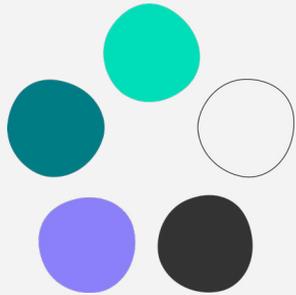
DO:
Use only the brand colours

DO:
Use Violet minimally, as a call-out colour

DON'T:
Use Violet as a primary colour

DON'T:
Use non-brand colours
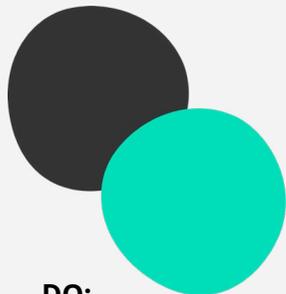
DO:
Pair colours well
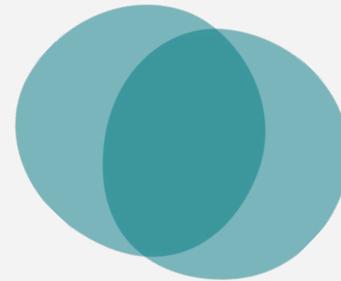
DON'T:
Change opacity of colours
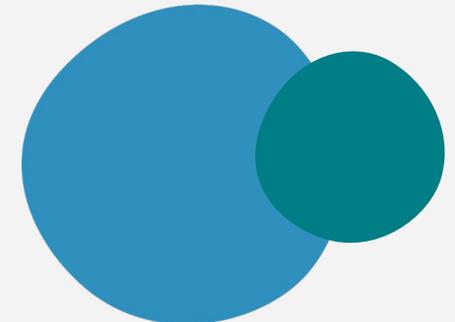
DON'T:
Change hue / tone / saturation of colours

the skills network

House of brands

For the new EQUAL logo, we have carried across The Skills Network feel by using our Cocogoose font, and adapting the Q to contain a section of The Skills Network Logo.

This subtly hints at the ownership of EQUAL without it being too much.

Block

EQUAL
the skills network

Long

EQUAL *powered by* the skills network

As with The Skills Network logo, it's necessary to have a logo for EQUAL that will adapt to the space available. For this reason there are two versions, a block for larger areas & a long version for smaller spaces and phones.

the
skills
network

International proposition

Future skills

Providing an experience for the future of learning

Sustainability

Committed to providing training in line with the UN's 17 sustainability goals

Transferable skills

Giving all people the skills to develop

the skills network

Charitable foundaton

The Skills Network is committed to providing the best and most accessible learning experience to all people, and as part of this commitment our charitable foundation will allow us to provide more services to more people around the world.

As we begin offering free experiences to learners, focusing on social good and in alignment with the UN's 17 Sustainability Goals, we are transforming our business, accessing a much greater range of funded opportunities across digital education, Higher Education and Technical and Vocational Education training. Not only will this benefit the lives of our learners across the world, but it will open the doors to exciting new strategic partnerships and opportunities, supporting the evolution and growth of The Skills Network.

the skills network

Our typography is distinct

the
skills
network

Our typography is entertaining

the
skills
network

what is our type face ?

The choice to source a new call out font came from the business looking forward to the future. As The Skills Network moves forward, our branding reflects our progressive steps, and by utilising a new typeface that is fresh, on-trend and accessible, it will help show how modern we really are, while still being approachable yet professional.

Sounds good to me!

the
skills
network

Our primary typeface is...

Open Sans SemiBold Italic Subheading

abcdefghijklmnopqrstucwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789~!@#$%^&()[]<>?:"'|*

Open Sans SemiBold Opening Para

abcdefghijklmnopqrstucwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789~!@#$%^&*()[]<>?:"'|

Open Sans Regular Body Text

abcdefghijklmnopqrstucwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789~!@#$%^&*()[]<>?:"'|\

the
skills
network

Our secondary typeface is...

Cocogoose Regular Headings

abcdefghijklmnopqrstucwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789~!@#$%^&*()[]<>?:""'|\

The choice to source a new call out font came from the business looking forward to the future. As The Skills Network moves forward, it is important that the branding reflects that, and by utilising a new typeface that is fresh and on-trend it will help us appear relevant and modern to the user, while still coming across as approachable yet professional.

the
skills
network

Font
setting

Print

Our Cocogoose headlines work hard to grab people's attention and show them what we have to offer.

After that it's over to Open Sans for the subheads & body copy. Remember to keep it clear, no kerning above -30 and no hyphenating!

Heading – Cocogoose Regular 18-22pt, Max -30 Kerning, Min 26pt Line Spacing.

Subhead - Open Sans SemiBold Italic, 18pt, Max -30 kerning, Min 19 pt Line Spacing.

Opening Para - Open Sans SemiBold, 12pt, Max -30 kerning, Min 14 pt Line Spacing.

Body Text - Open Sans Regular, 12pt, Max -30 kerning, Min 14 pt Line Spacing.

Small Print - Open Sans Regular, 8pt, Max -10 kerning, Min 9 pt Line Spacing.

the
skills
network

No need to shout

We stay away from using all capitals in our titles, headings and body text to enforce our calm and friendly tone of voice.

the
skills
network

Our alternative fonts are...

Calibri
(Open Sans)

abcdefghijklmnopqrstucwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789~!@#$%^&*(){}[]<>?:"'|\

**Futura Bold
(Cocogoose)**

**abcdefghijklmnopqrstucwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789~!@#$%^&*(){}[]<>?:"'|**

When Open Sans is unavailable, we recommend using Calibri Regular as a replacement.

Futura Bold can also be used as a replacement for Cocogoose in emails etc, but should not be used for any advertisements or graphics.
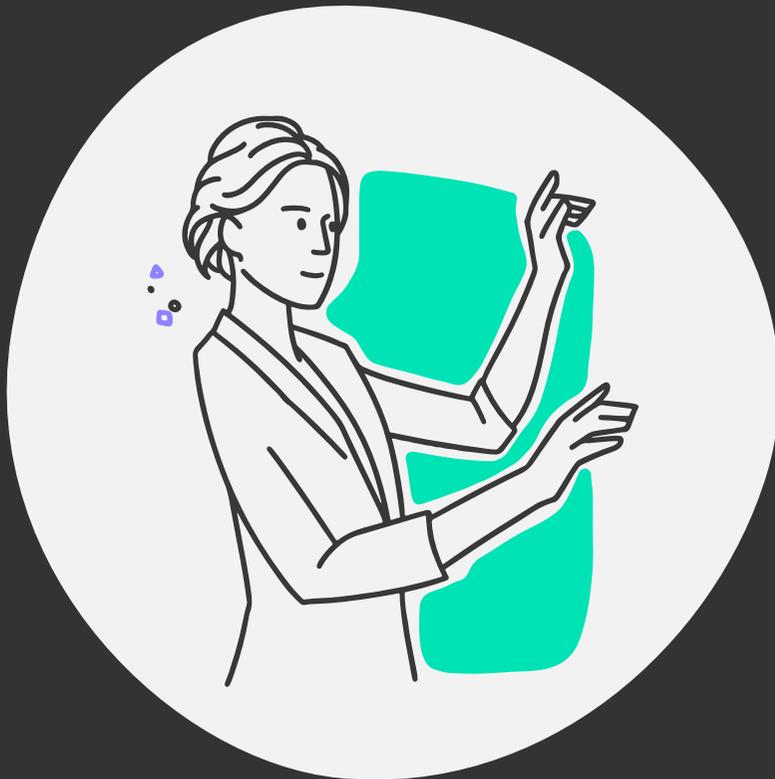
the
skills
network

Illustration style

The illustrations are fun, vibrant and modern, just like The Skills Network. They show our human personality with their hand-drawn style.

These work as simple outlines for black and white purposes, as well as coloured giving them more usability for different purposes and digital/print outcomes.

the
skills
network

shapes & blobs

the skills network

Segments of the logo when broken down, will be used as an additional way to add colour to any format. These pops will help to create more personality within the page, and can be used as a subtle way to add in colour, however it's important not to go overboard! Keep it to one or two per element.

Brand illustrations

Our illustrations are to be used as photographs would, so never make them smaller than 120px high.

the skills network

Campaign illustrations

the
skills
network

These style illustrations are good to use in areas such as email campaigns, communicating to our learners how they're doing, what they need to do, or what other courses they should do next.
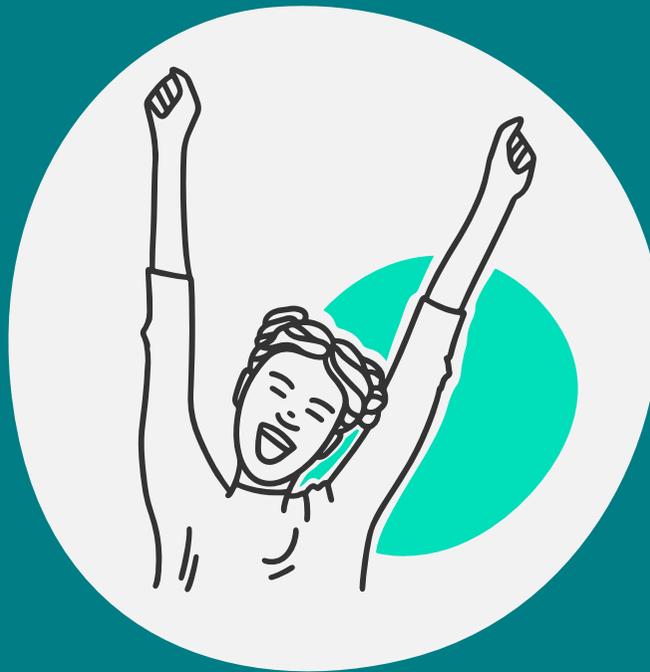
course illustrations

These style illustrations can be used to demonstrate and talk about specific course areas such as Health & Safety, Childcare & Education, and Health & Social Care.

the
skills
network

Do's & don'ts

Do

Don't

- Only use our colour palettes

- Don't overdo the line weight
- Don't use sharp edges

the
skills
network

Iconography

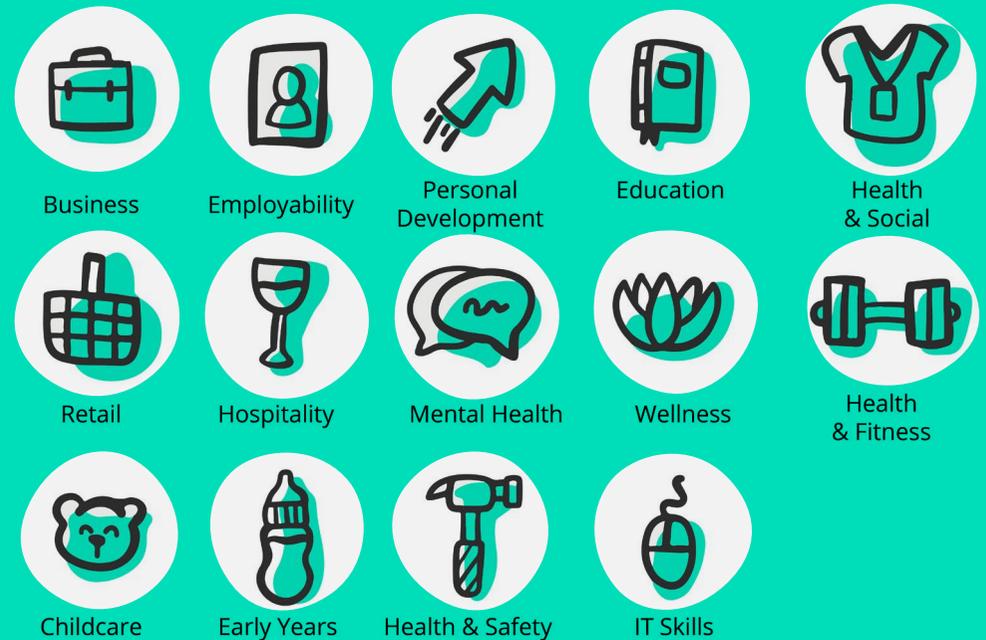the
skills
network

General iconography

Minimum size 20px

These icons can be used across the companies social pages, as a way to brighten up emails and as a way to help a learner navigate our website.

the
skills
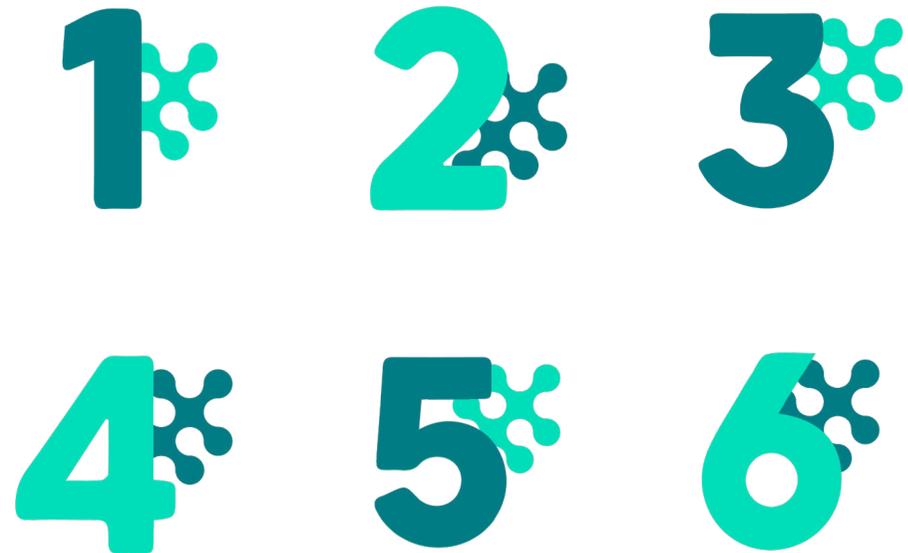network

Course category
iconography

This style of icon works as a meeting point between the main, hand drawn style of the illustrations throughout the brand and the sleek icons which will be used throughout digital platforms.

(Min size 42px)

Business

Employability

Personal Development

Education

Health & Social

Retail

Hospitality

Mental Health

Wellness

Health & Fitness

Childcare

Early Years

Health & Safety

IT Skills

the
skills
network

Level
icons

Having specified iconography to represent each course level we provide allows us to create good communication throughout our interfaces. Users will know clearly what level the information they're looking at is.

the
skills
network

Learner journey
touch
points

We want to make the learner journey as clear as possible. Using a set of clean, vector icons this helps to visually illustrate each of the 14 steps a learner will go through during their time with The Skills Network. Their simple colour scheme and line style means these can be used across both print and digital outputs.

the
skills
network

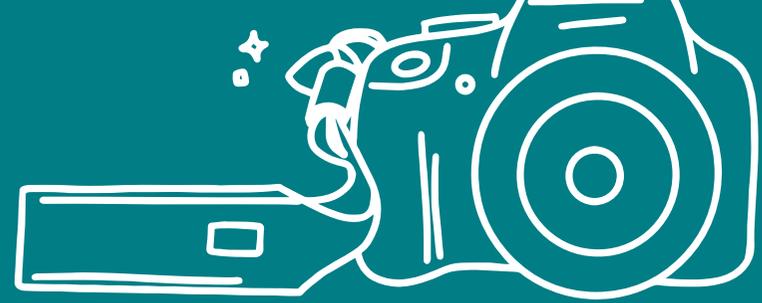# System icons

About Us

Blog

Email

Phone

Login

the **skills** network

For any system icons it's important to keep them simple and easily recognisable to make the website as accessible as possible. Basic lines and a one-colour design means these will always look their best no matter what device they're being viewed on.

Authenticity in our photography

When using photography, we know that stock imagery can be an easy option. While we would prefer to use our own images wherever possible, if this is not an option then we want stock imagery that feels real to connect with our learners.

the
skills
network

Choosing stock photography

When choosing stock imagery, it's important to remember the feel of the brand. Images that look real, and contain happy faces are perfect for helping us appear approachable. Make sure the images are nice and clear and don't have too much going on in them.

the skills network
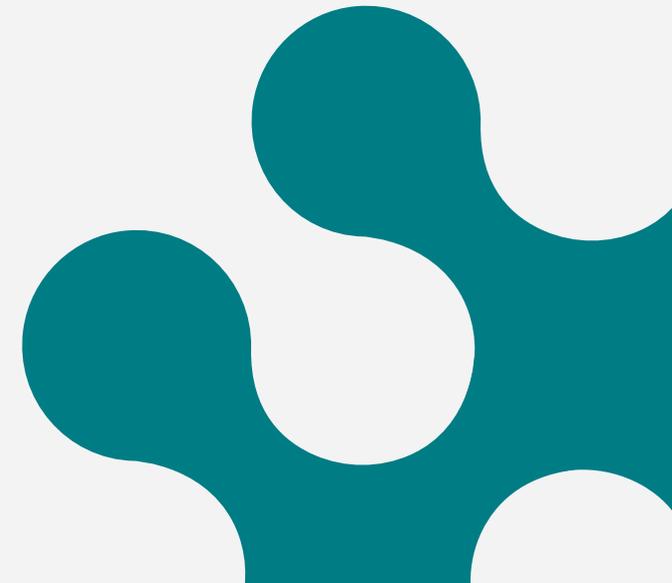
Choosing stock photography

Images to avoid are anything including a lot of text or company logos other than our own. We also don't want to appear impersonal, so any images that cut off peoples expressions are a no. It's also important to not go for anything unrealistic or photoshopped.
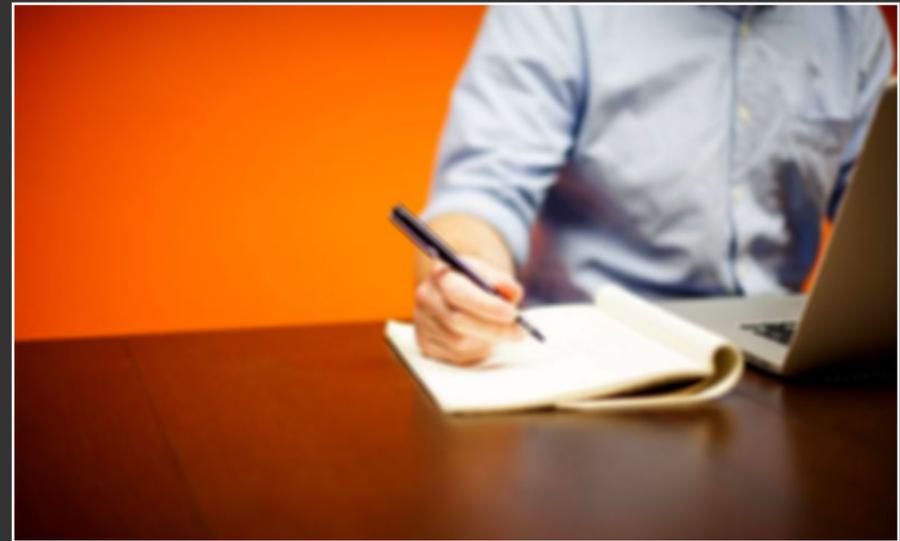
the skills network

Do's & don'ts

Do

Don't

- Do choose High Quality Images
- Do make sure these aren't copyrighted
- Do pick images that feel real

- Don't use blurred or pixelated photos
- Don't feature a lot of bright colour

the
skills
network

How we use our

photos

Like with everything our photos reflect our personality; fun, modern and a little bit cheeky!

the
skills
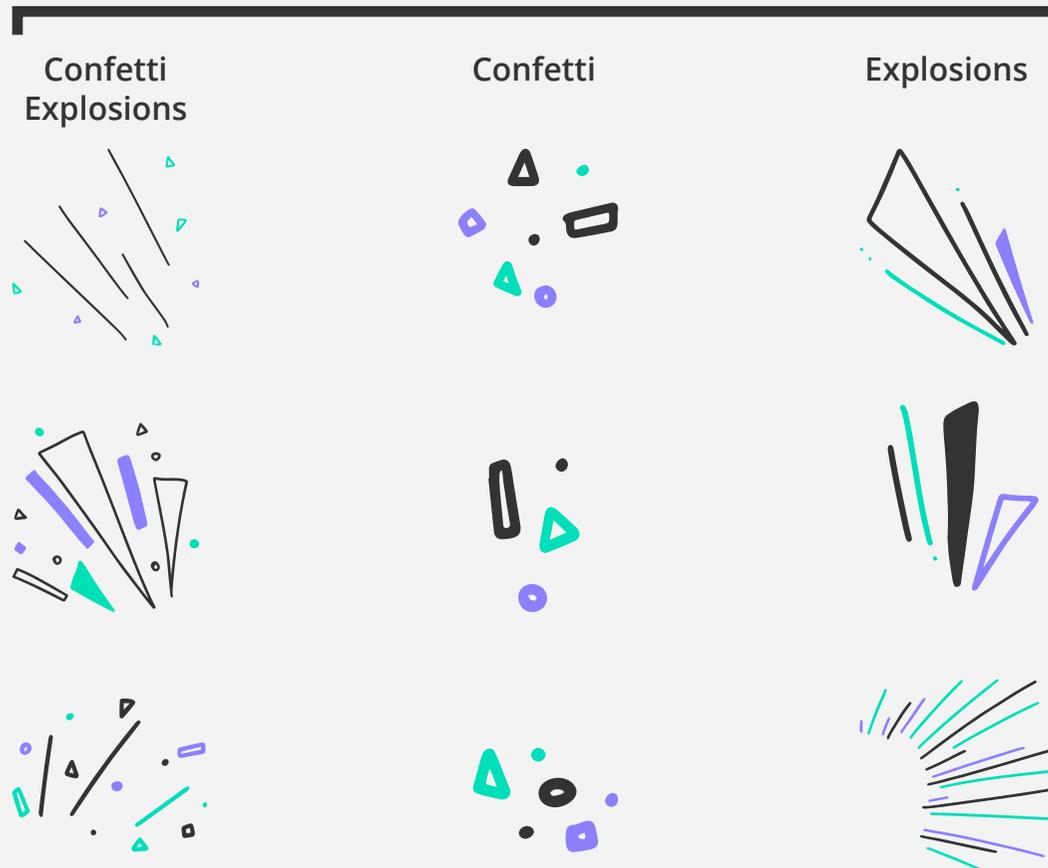network

Illustration with photography

Pairing together illustrations with our photography gives it an exciting and original feel, steering away from the standard stock imagery appearance.

Adding simple but fun elements like these create a more energetic appearance that has originality & unifies the brand identity.

the
skills
network

Illustration in photography
elements

Doodles

Confetti Explosions

Confetti

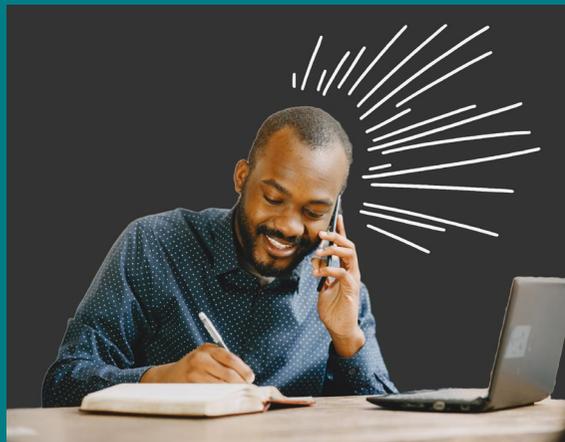### Explosions

Blobs

the
skills
network

Do

**Remove photo backgrounds where possible
or use images with plain backgrounds**

**Opt for our brand dark or light grey when
only one colour elements are desired**

the
skills
network

Don't

Use more than 2 blobs

Use off-brand colours

Only use Indigo

Pair different style doodle elements

Place doodle elements over the photo

Use more than 3 elements in total

the **skills** network

digital direction

We'll move our new brand across printed and digital platforms. Our website and social channels should reflect our progressive and fun brand.

Online design needs to focus heavily on the practicality and ease of understanding, so keeping these clean and easily recognisable to assist with navigation of the site is a must.

the
skills
network

Mobile first

From colours, imagery, fonts, tone, and even the feeling you get when you see our brand, our digital design should be fun but accessible to all.

The key principles our digital platforms are:
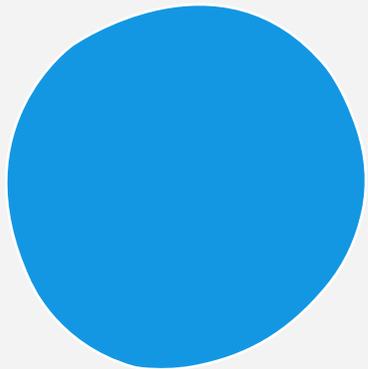
Simple and helpful:
Focus on accessibility! Our design should ensure that out learners know how to navigate our digital spaces.
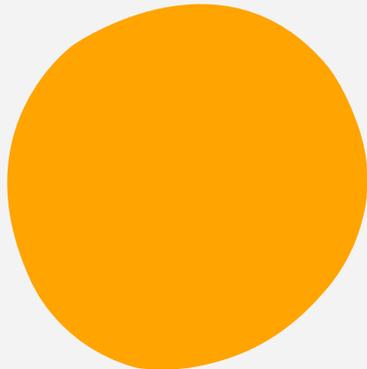
Remember mobile:
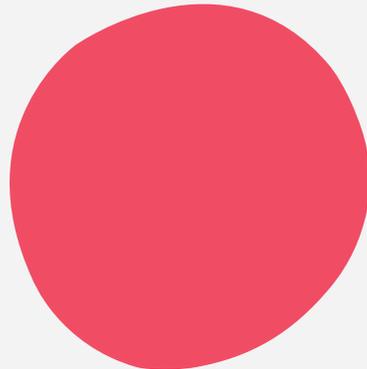We use our phones a lot so make sure designs translate to mobile usage too!

the
skills
network

Functional colours

Functional colours are exactly as the name suggests – colours that we use for a specific purpose and in a specific context. These are used on our digital platforms. The three main colours we use are based on a traffic light system, as it is easily and almost universally understood by users of all ages, backgrounds, and literacy levels.
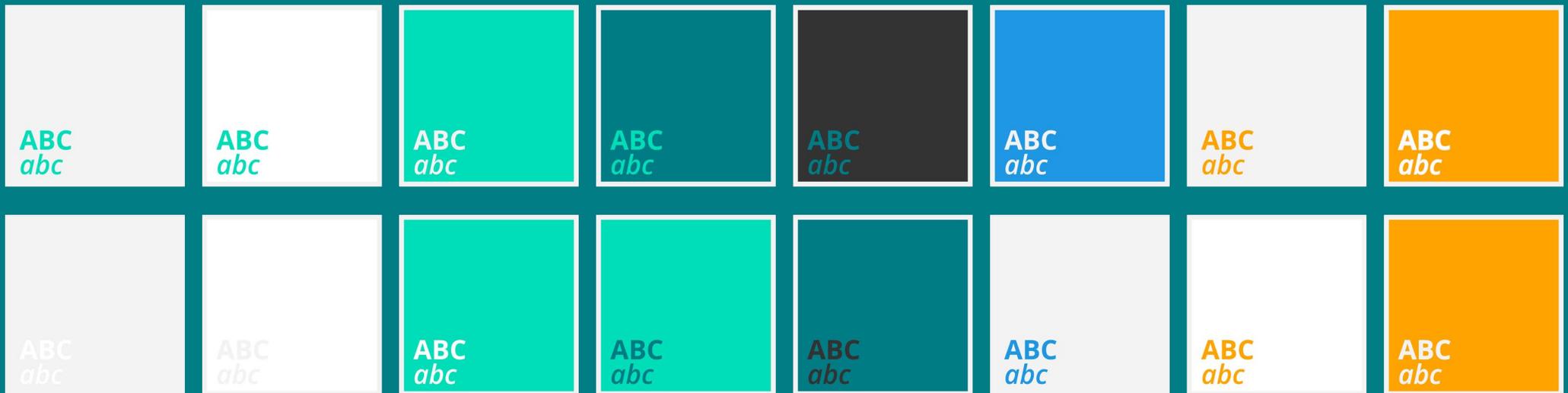
For example, blue is used for positive reinforcement – such as when a form is submitted successfully, or a question is answered correctly.

Amber can be used to show the need for caution. Things like information messages, and for situations where we need to communicate something neither positive or negative.

Red is a warning or error colour, used for things such as validation messages, flagging incorrect answers, or showing anything that requires urgent attention by the user.

#1397E3

#ffa400

#f04d65

the skills network

Online colours

What not to use

ABC *abc*	**ABC** *abc*	**ABC** *abc*	**ABC** *abc*	**ABC** *abc*	**ABC** *abc*	**ABC** *abc*	**ABC** *abc*
ABC *abc*	ABC *abc*	**ABC** *abc*	**ABC** *abc*	**ABC** *abc*	**ABC** *abc*	**ABC** *abc*	**ABC** *abc*

Accessibility is our priority.
That's why it's important to know
how best to pair the brand colours.
(These are rules for body text online).

the
skills
network

Digital
fonts

Cocogoose
Open Sans Bold
Open Sans Regular
Open Sans Regular Italic

the
skills
network

Tone of voice

the
skills
network

straightforward
supportive,
real.

the
skills
network

Straight-forward

Our language is simple, accessible to all. We avoid jargon because we are a human organisation focused on providing accessible learning solutions for all people. We're cheeky and engaging, reflecting the human nature of The Skills Network and the family that we are.

the
skills
network

Supportive

We understand the varied needs of our customers, so we can provide an individual learning experience made just for them. We're flexible in our delivery, because modern learning must be accessible to all.

Our support is focused on giving all our customers an experience that works around them, not us.

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Real

Our goal is to change the way education is delivered, to reflect the changing world we live in. We embrace technology and innovation because it helps our customers have a better experience. We understand that each of our learners have their own individual and unique needs and our tech, resources delivery and the experience our customers have with us, reflects this.

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network

Our personality

We want our learners to be both reassured and excited by learning with **The Skills Network**.

We have the calming voice of Michelle Obama, with the flare of Ryan Reynolds. We have the loyalty of Apple, with the cheek of innocent smoothie. We have the arrogance of Carlsberg, with the integrity of John Lewis. You get the picture...

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skills
network

Our personality

We are

Empathetic
Trustworthy
Sincere
Uncomplicated
Passionate
Not too formal

We're not

Pushy
Abrasive
Ostentatious
Old-fashioned
Overly serious

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Do's & don'ts

Do

Keep it concise
Make it engaging
Be passionate
Be real

Don't

Be boring
Use unnecessary jargon
Use long sentences

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A couple key rules

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Be accurate & honest

We're a training provider and our content must reflect our expertise. Be sure of the accuracy of your written content - we've got plenty of experts around to help!

When you write for The Skills Network, it should be honest and simple. Sometimes things go wrong and if they do, we admit it, fix it and learn from it.

the **skills** network

Less is more

Don't be too formal. We know in the education world there are some big words, but try to use everyday language. We are a human organisation, and inclusive language is key to communicating our brand message.

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network

Be adaptable

Here at The Skills Network, our business covers many areas; From technology, resources, delivery and experience, adaptability is key. When writing content, know your audience and find your focus, but our tone of voice should remain the same.
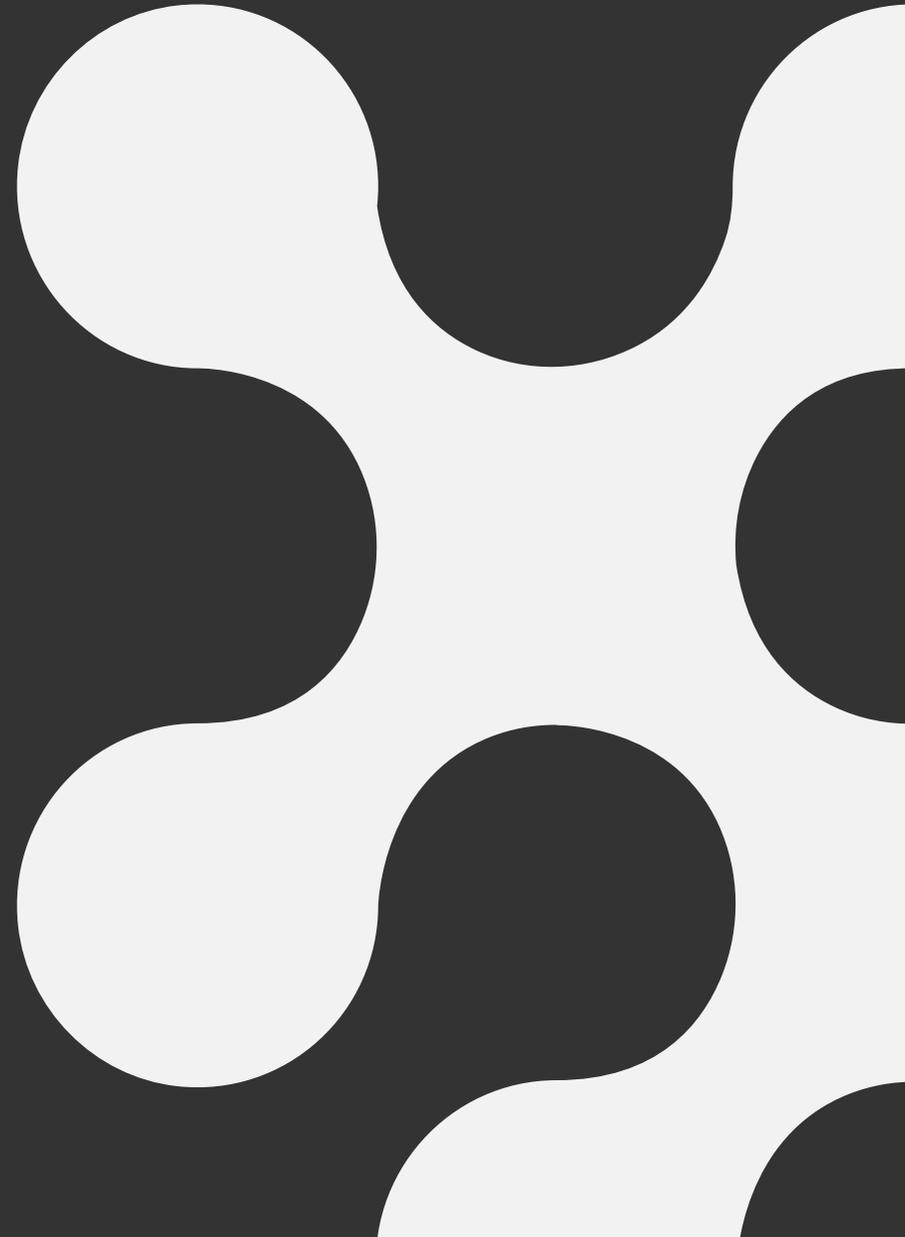
the **skills** network

Piecing *it all*
together
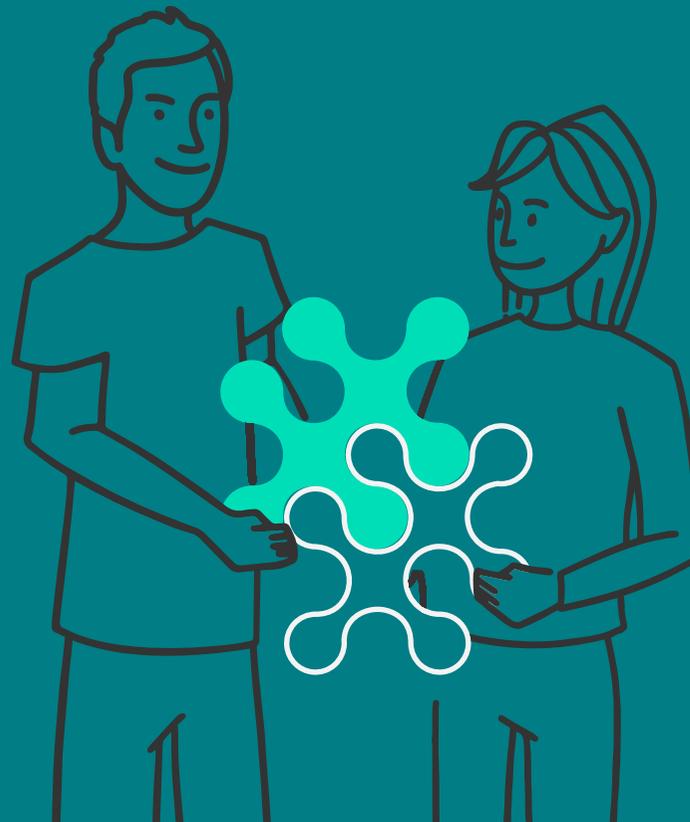
Let's look at how it should look, when it all comes together...

the
skills
network

Advertising online
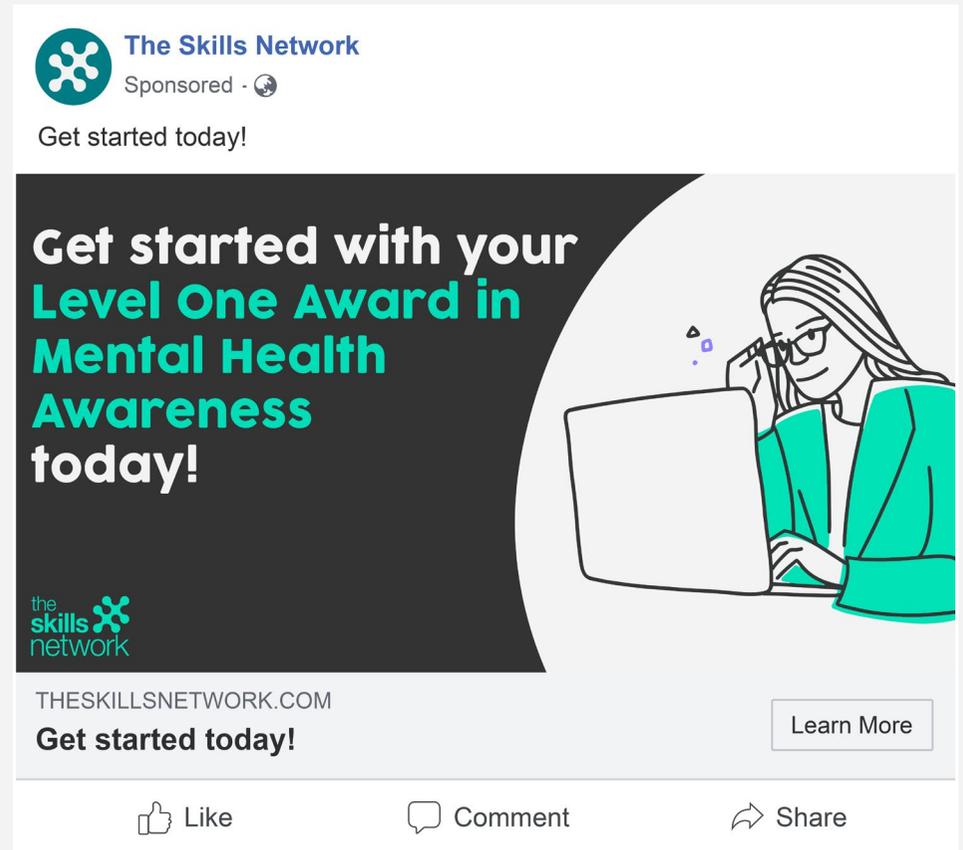
A combination of illustration and typography can help make our digital ads stand out against the noise

Advertising in
email
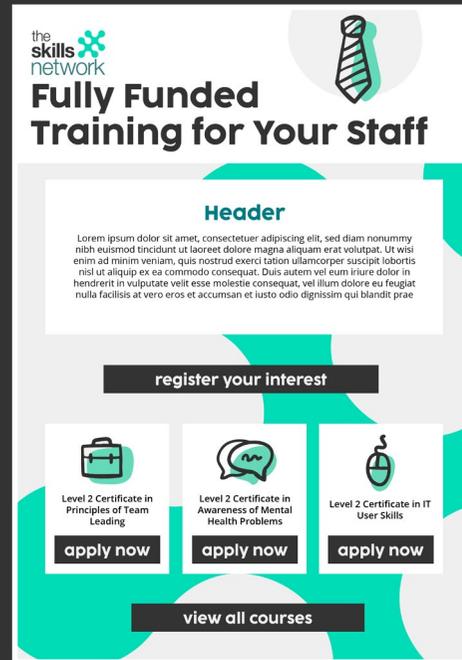
Our primary colour palette works well for digital uses as it allows for a light mode and a dark mode within our interfaces. This gives the brand more accessibility features and allows our users and partners to choose what works best for them, again showing we understand and care.
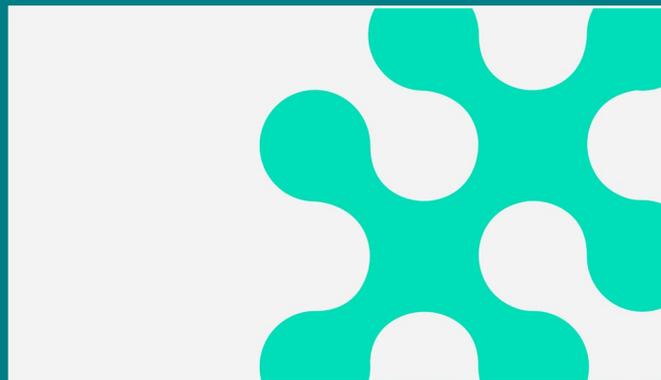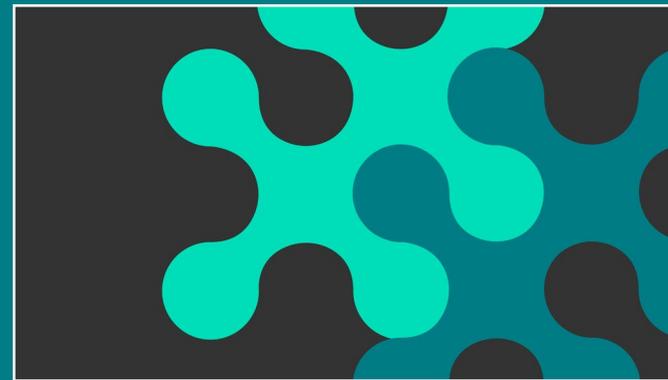
Do's & don'ts

Do

- Use the correct fonts.
- Make sure text is legible.
- Use the correct colours

Don't

- Don't make the logo too small.
- Don't use stock images when possible.

Teams
backgrounds

the
skills
network

Layout

the
skills
network

Don't mess it up...

the skills network

Best practices...

We have some do's and we have some don'ts, use this to remind you of the rules to make sure you don't mess it up!

How to get it right

So now you know what not to do, let's look at what we will do!

Deconstruction of the brand elements

the
skills
network

Clear logo

Cocogoose headers

Simple digital icons

Use of lock-up to create background

Open sans body copy

Limited colour palette

the skills network

Fully Funded Training for Your Staff

Header

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulputate velit esse molestie consequat, vel illum dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero eros et accumsan et iusto odio dignissim qui blandit prae

register your interest

Level 2 Certificate in Principles of Team Leading

apply now

Level 2 Certificate in Awareness of Mental Health Problems

apply now

Level 2 Certificate in IT User Skills

apply now

view all courses

*Subject to eligibility criteria

The Skills Network, Abbey Court, 06-16 Benedict Drive, Selby, North Yorkshire YO8 8RY
Unsubscribe Manage preferences
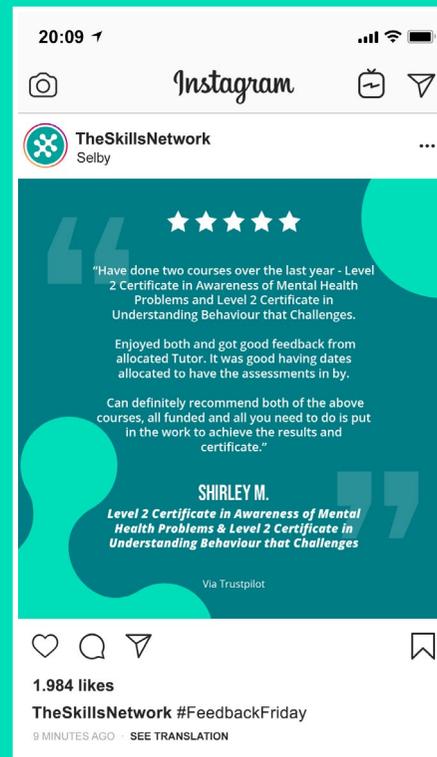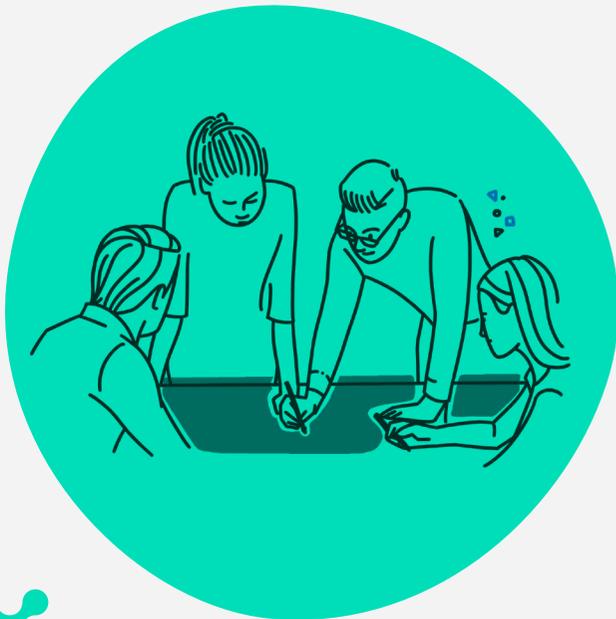
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The golden rules

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Our design changes depending on who we're talking to. Our brand is the same, we just tweak it a little bit...

b2c
design

the skills network

The People's Playlist

To engage the customer in the The Skills Network brand, we aim to capture their attention with our fun and friendly typefaces and illustrations. This will differentiate us from competition who solely rely on stock imagery which can often appear cold and impersonal.
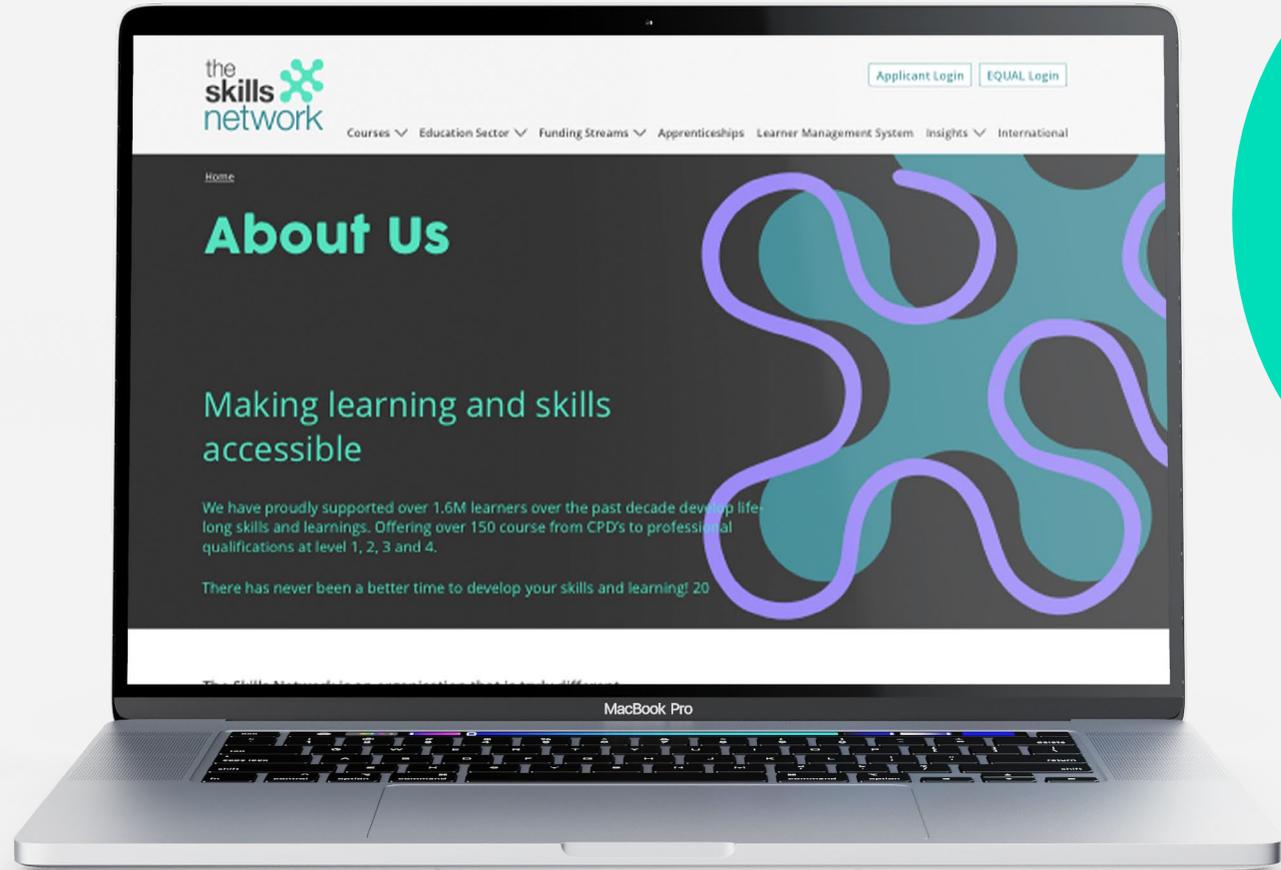
b2b
design

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Get started with your
Level one Award in
Mental Health
Awareness

Motus
COMMERCIALS

the
skills
network

20:09

Instagram

TheSkillsNetwork
Selby

Nine In Ten
Hospitality
Business
Leaders
Expect To
Face Staff
Shortages
This Year

1.984 likes
TheSkillsNetwork Time to Plan Ahead #Hospitality
9 MINUTES AGO · SEE TRANSLATION

When targeting other business, we want to keep appearance approachable, but also come across as professional & trustworthy. This is done by limiting the shapes used, and keeping the designs minimalist.
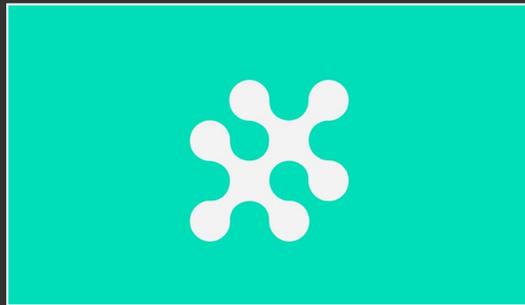
What will the brand look like?

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Website

Social

Brochure

Business cards

Name Surname
Job Title
✉ email@theskillsnetwork.com
📱 01757 210022

the skills network

Name Surname
Job Title
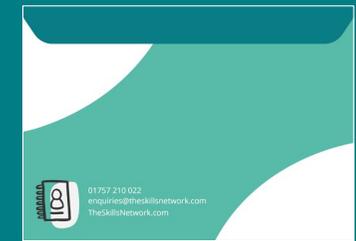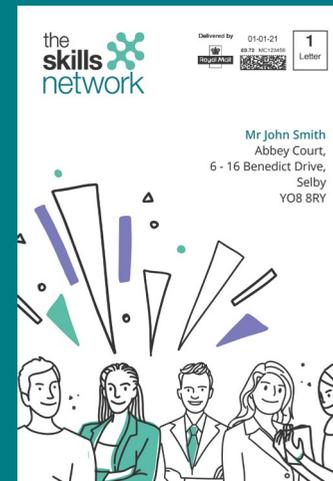✉ email@theskillsnetwork.com
📱 01757 210022

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Now you know it all, you're a
The Skills Network brand whizz!

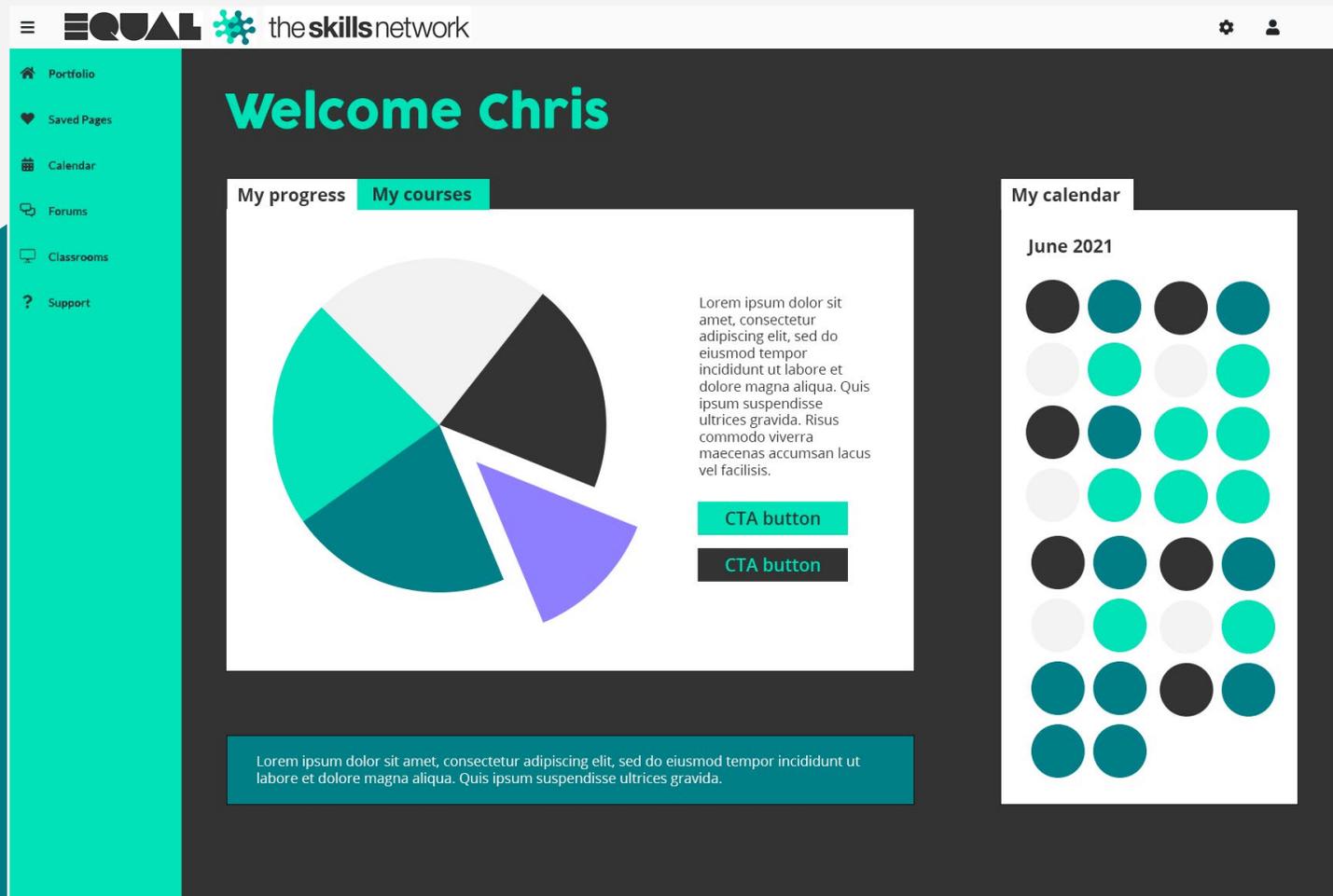So, it's time to put it into action, have fun!

Stationery

We want to ensure that materials from us are never missed and stand out from other day to day admin.

The illustrations and colours make our stationery pop while looking fun and professional!

the skills network

Equal

the
skills
network

Easter

the
skills
network

Pride

the
skills
network

Eid

the
skills
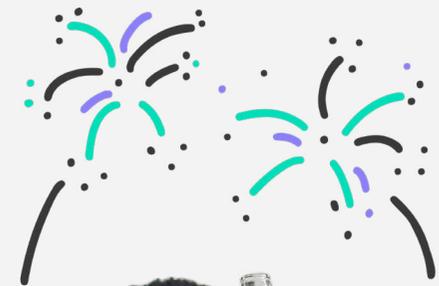network

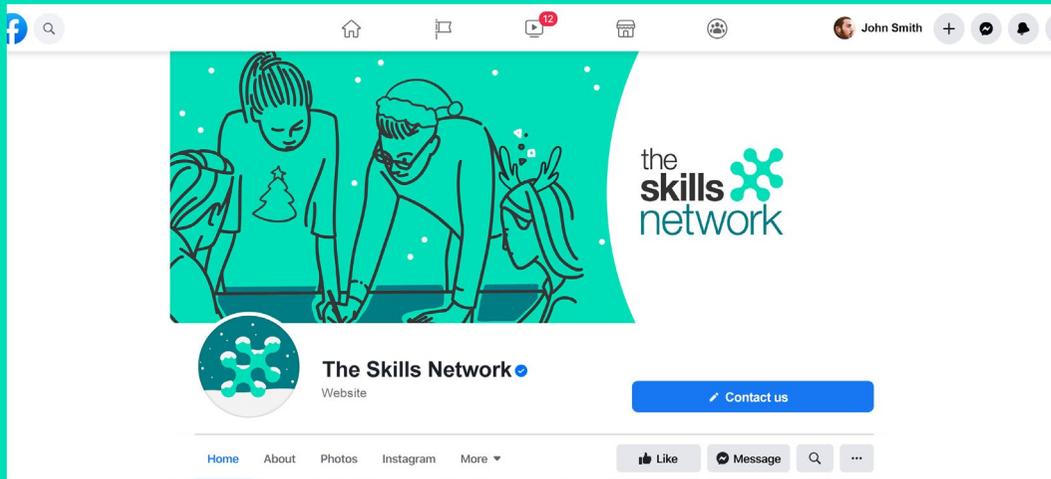*Valentines*

the
skills
network

World Cup

the
skills
network

Halloween

the
skills
network

Holidays & events

Holidays & events

As a way to start conversation with our learners online and keep them engaged, our branding can be adapted to celebrate holidays and events that occur throughout the year.

This can be adapted through our social avatars and headers through the use of seasonal illustrations, and could even be adapted on the main website in a similar way to Google.

Thank You

the skills network