

Case study: Ensis Solutions



Ensis Solutions is a leading provider of Health and Social Care courses, offering high-quality training to adults and young people across the UK. Established in 2014, Ensis offers a range of apprenticeships and work-based learning programmes that combine the extensive sector experience of its team, with a focus on quality learning.

Working with Aptem has enabled Ensis to put curriculum at the heart of the learner journey, by designing a 'one-stop shop' for apprentices to enrol, learn and engage with Ensis throughout their apprenticeship.

A solution to underpin growth ambitions

Ensis is a leader in Health and Social Care courses and apprenticeships, focusing on standards such as Adult Care Worker, Lead Practitioner and Team Leader/Supervisor. The company has grown to offer quality teaching to over 250 learners in 2022.

With ambitions to double its learner starts over the next 18 months, Ensis knew it needed a system that could help it to efficiently scale its apprenticeship delivery. “Our systems felt quite clunky, and teams were spending their time compiling reports and carrying out manual enrolment due to limitations with the technology. Learners were unsure about how best to interact with each of the systems, and the team was limited in terms of the content formats they could use to bring their curriculum to life,” explained Katie Thornton, Head of Curriculum and Quality at Ensis.

The search for a system

From the outset, Ensis had a clear vision of what its new apprenticeship solution needed to do. Some key requirements included:

- ✔ A 'one-stop shop' approach to allow it to consolidate multiple systems and simplify the learner journey.
- ✔ A platform that could deliver engaging eLearning without the need for a separate Learning Management System (LMS).
- ✔ The flexibility to design a curriculum that would engage and progress learners.
- ✔ The opportunity to add to programmes and customise Learning Plans according to learner needs.
- ✔ A streamlined enrolment process, including the option for learners to self-serve.
- ✔ Improved access to learning to suit the realities of the apprentices' working week, including down-time on shifts.
- ✔ Oversight of all key metrics required for governance and compliance.



Why Aptem?

Ensis evaluated three platforms in the market, and ultimately chose Aptem due to its flexibility and the fact that it could achieve everything required in a single system.

Katie explained: “Aptem ticks every single box we needed it to tick. If a small business puts as much thought into implementation as we did, they don’t need anything else. They don’t need PICS, they don’t need Maytas, not even an LMS. They literally do not need anything else.”

Aptem was not an insignificant investment for Ensis, especially as a smaller provider. However, the team was confident that using the platform would help them to realise significant cost and time savings, at the same time as delivering a better experience for learners and coaches.

Katie also explained that Aptem is helping Ensis set itself apart when speaking to employer partners, as it can offer a bespoke curriculum; something that can often be offered only by larger providers.



As a smaller provider, Aptem was a significant investment. However, we recognised that the time and cost savings that the system would bring would offset the implementation costs within the first year. We estimate Aptem is giving us back the equivalent of two salaries.

Katie Thornton, Head of Quality and Curriculum, Ensis Solutions

Designing a curriculum that works for the industry

Arriving as the new Head of Quality and Curriculum at Ensis in 2021, Katie was keen to ensure the team was designing its curriculum in the way it made most sense for learners, rather than adapting its vision to suit the underlying technology.

Katie designed the curriculum in chapters, supported by a blend of written content, videos and links to suggested reading. Aptem has the flexibility to add or adapt eLearning content according to the specific needs of each learner, personalising their experience and therefore demonstrating compliance with a key Ofsted requirement.

“The nature of Health and Social Care means that many learners don’t often have set hours for Off-the-job (OTJ) training, or frequent access to a computer. Aptem is giving our learners a lot more freedom by allowing them to complete bite-sized learning during downtime on shifts. For example, some Domiciliary Care learners now schedule their learning for what are typically quieter times, such as the early afternoon,” said Katie.

Ensis notes that learners who have been using Aptem are progressing more effectively than past learners. Learners are highly engaged, as it is simple to log in to the system and watch a video, do some research using supporting resources or answer questions.



Encouraging digital literacy

Ensis was mindful that many of its learners did not have advanced digital skills and not all were native English speakers. By bringing their curricula and apprenticeship-management tools into a single place, Aptem has simplified what Ensis asks of its learners, while encouraging interaction with digital tools. The uptake of the system within this group has exceeded Ensis’s initial estimations, with large numbers of learners who were previously reluctant to engage online, now embracing the change.

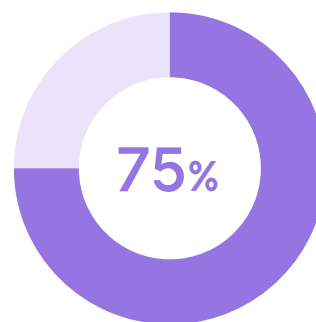
Reducing administrative overhead through self-service enrolment

According to personal preference, learners can enrol via Teams, face-to-face, or online using self-service. Access to Aptem is immediate upon enrolment.

75% of learners now complete their enrolment themselves using Aptem's self-service functionality, significantly reducing the administrative overhead for the Ensis team. As so many learners are now more self-sufficient in enrolment and throughout their apprenticeship, Ensis has more time to spend with those that have additional support needs or could benefit from more one-to-one guidance.

Use of Aptem's messaging system and inbuilt tools for marking and feedback have dramatically reduced email traffic and opened up a more effective method of

communication between Skills Coaches and learners. Conversations are now happening within the system that simply would not have happened previously. Skills Coaches are more readily able to share guidance and explore how learners are applying learning in their roles, as well as setting up mini projects mid-programme to further stretch and challenge.



75% of learners now complete their enrolment using self-service.



One of our Skills Coaches noted that she now gets around 50% fewer emails since the introduction of Aptem. Using Aptem's messaging has opened up conversations that would never have happened prior to Aptem, with Skills Coaches more readily able to share guidance and delve deeper into how learners are applying their learning in the day-to-day.

Katie Thornton, Head of Quality and Curriculum, Ensis Solutions

Enhancing insights, reporting and regulation

Prior to Aptem, reporting was largely a manual process of drawing data from various systems into spreadsheets for analysis. Not only was this very time consuming, but it couldn't provide the level of insight that Ensis needed.



Insights that drive progress

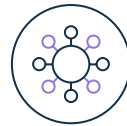
As well as surfacing data more readily, Aptem is giving the Curriculum and Quality team the tools to complete a deep-dive analysis into individual curriculum areas to identify issues and improvements. Functionality has also been put in place to enable Ensis to better track and monitor metrics such as attendance at masterclasses, giving insights into non-attendance and the reasons for it.



Easy-to-access reporting

Aptem's reports are helping Ensis to track and evidence progress against KPIs. Progress reports for each learner display their last review, the last learning they completed, and any feedback given, helping Skills Coaches to manage their diaries and ensure timely follow-ups.

"Our SMT meetings and reports have become more streamlined as everything is at our fingertips," explained Katie.



Compliance at scale

When changes are made to relevant rules or regulations, Ensis can now make a change in Aptem, then synchronise this across all learner records, dramatically reducing the time taken to accommodate these changes and maintain compliance.



Prior to Aptem, reporting took one of our team at least a week per month. Now, this is all readily available in our Aptem dashboards, and our leadership team has far better oversight of exactly where all of our learners are and how they are progressing, which is really good."

Katie Thornton, Head of Quality and Curriculum, Ensis Solutions



Implementation and innovation

A key component of the success of Ensis's project was the time taken to truly understand the capabilities of the product and how it could best help the team to achieve its vision.

By not rushing through implementation, Ensis was able to make sensible decisions that will have real long-term benefits.

The implementation was a collaborative experience. The Ensis team learned the platform through experimentation, while feeling reassured that their Implementation Consultant was on hand for any questions or challenges they faced. This means the team is not only confident to use Aptem day-to-day, but they can also innovate and use components in creative ways to meet requirements.

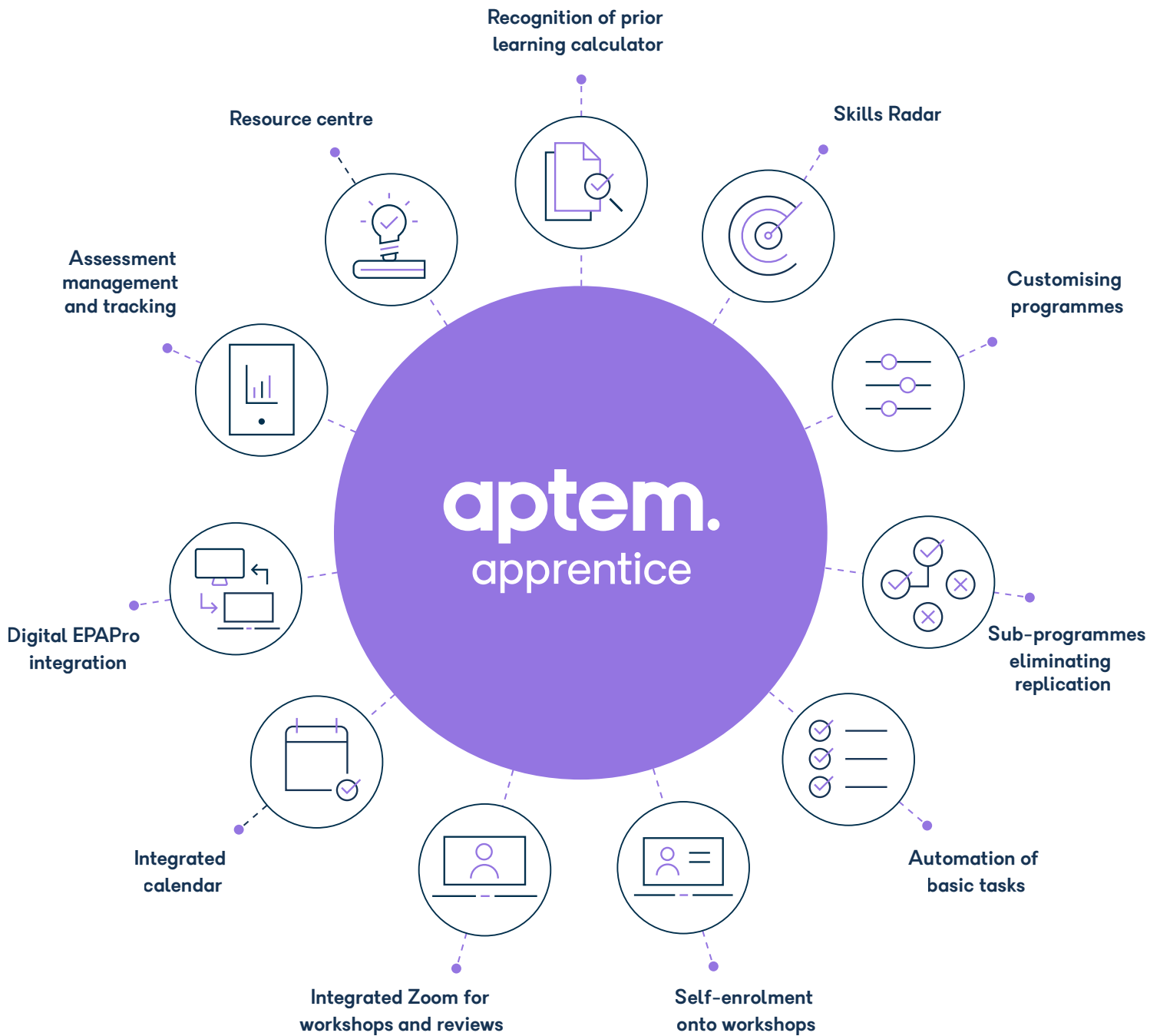
Change management

The delivery of a new apprenticeship solution often invokes a significant change in working practices. In Ensis's case, their Skills Coaches appreciated the reasons behind the change and could anticipate the benefits immediately upon seeing the platform in action for enrolment.

Ensis gave all team members the opportunity to experience the learner journey first-hand, by progressing through enrolment as if they were a learner. Their feedback and insights helped shape the enrolment process to make sure it was as informative and efficient as possible.

"The introduction of Aptem has brought about a change in the way that the Ensis team views their curriculum. As they see what is possible with Aptem, Skills Coaches have become more ambitious and creative, actively sharing content to be added to the system for stretch tasks and supplementary learning," explained Katie.

The features that make Aptem Apprentice unique





Aptem really understood our business and did not try to rush us through implementation. Our Implementation Consultant had a lot of sector experience, having worked in the sector previously, and took the time to guide us through setting up the system in the best way for us.

We're already seeing great value from the system and we're looking forward to seeing further benefits as our learners progress through their programmes.

Katie Thornton, Head of Quality and Curriculum,
Ensis Solutions

If you are an organisation that helps deliver further education and employment programmes and would like to transform the way you deliver in a cost-effective, efficient and compliant way, get in touch:

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