

# External review of Modern Apprenticeship delivery by

Scottish Association of Master Bakers

A report by HM Inspectors

05/09/2023

<b>CEO/Principal</b>	<b>Ian McGhee</b>
<b>External review date</b>	<b>9 June 2023</b>
<b>Provider type</b>	<b>Independent Training Providers</b>
<b>Lead HMI</b>	<b>Peter B Connelly</b>
<b>Apprentice numbers</b>	<b>160</b>

## 1. Background

External reviews of Modern Apprenticeship providers are planned collaboratively between the provider and HM Inspectors. Skills Development Scotland (SDS) provide information regarding provider performance including key data to support this process.

During the review, a team of HM Inspectors evaluated the quality of training provision and the experiences of apprentices and key stakeholders such as employers. During the visit, the team met with staff, learners and other stakeholders and explored the quality of training delivery, how well the needs of apprentices are met, and approaches to improving quality of provision.

This report summarises the findings from the visit, award grades for the three elements and highlights areas of positive practice, areas for development, and any associated main points for action. The report will be shared with the provider, Scottish Government, and SDS. For colleges, the report will be shared with the College Principals and Board or Regional Strategic Body, and SFC. An accompanying short report will be published on Education Scotland's website.

## 2. The provider and its context

The Scottish Association of Master Bakers (SAMB) has been in existence since 1871. The organisation represents and supports all aspects of Scotland's baking industry. SAMB is the largest provider of apprenticeship training to the bakery manufacturing sector in Scotland with 170 new starts in 2022-23. All training takes place entirely on employer premises and SAMB assessors cover the whole of Scotland. SAMB deliver frameworks at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 5 and 6 in Craft Bakery Skills, Food Sales and Service Skills, Distribution Skills, Production and Processing Skills, Dairy Industry Skills, Food and Drink Operations and Food Manufacture Excellence.

### 3. Outcome of external review

The grades for each of the three elements are:

Leadership and Quality Culture	Very good
Service Delivery	Very good
Safeguarding and meeting the needs of apprentices	Very good

### 4. Summary of review findings

A summary of the findings of HM Inspectors are set out below.

#### 4.1 Leadership and Quality Culture - Grade: Very Good

##### 4.1.1 Securing improvement of quality and impact of training

###### Areas of positive progress

- SAMB has a strong tradition of delivering training for the baking industry throughout Scotland and has a strategic emphasis on maintaining traditional bakery craft skills for apprentices. Employers receive frequent communication from SAMB with regular updates on support available to raise the standards of MA provision.
- Assessors conduct apprentice review meetings on employer premises at least every four weeks and are very flexible around working patterns and shift requirements. Assessors also meet with employers during these visits to develop and gain a shared understanding of the progress each candidate has made against the apprenticeship framework.
- All employers are very satisfied with the SAMB partnership and the training provision. They comment very favourably on their relationships with assessors. SAMB staff are in regular contact with employers and any operational matters or information requests are dealt with promptly and helpfully.
- SAMB staff conduct initial assessments of each candidate to ensure they have the requisite skills and abilities. Prior learning is also formally recognised. Staff ensure individual learning support needs are assessed and identified at the start of the programme, and relevant adjustments to apprenticeship training are made as appropriate.
- Employers highly value the MA programmes and recognise that apprentices are developing relevant skills and confidence in their roles. This assists employers to plan apprenticeship progression pathways into promoted and supervisory roles.
- Recruitment to the baking industry is a major challenge for employers and SAMB. To help address this, staff visit schools and careers fairs regularly, where they promote apprenticeships in the industry. However, they find it challenging to fully promote MAs in schools as food and drink courses are not part of the national curriculum.

## Areas for development

- None identified.

## 4.2 Service Delivery - Grade: Very Good

### 4.2.1 Delivery of training

#### Areas of positive progress

- Staff use of the well-defined and comprehensive induction arrangements provide employers and apprentices with a good overview of the framework requirements and the types of behaviours required to succeed within the baking profession.
- Staff deliver training entirely on employer premises. Apprentices benefit from training focussed specifically on industry standards in the areas of their work and the relevant skills they should be developing.
- Almost all apprentices value the care and attention they receive from their assessors. This is supporting achievement rates. Apprentices can confidently discuss how relevant their training is to their duties at work.
- All employers are involved in creation of the framework delivery plan. Optional units are selected, in discussion with employers, to meet their business needs. In addition, assessors are very familiar with the requirements of the employers.
- All assessors are highly professional, knowledgeable, and experienced. This helps employers to fully understand the assessment process and how the apprenticeship programme can benefit their business.
- Assessors provide useful advice and guidance to candidates on the progress they are making. This helps them to reflect on their work and understand how to improve their performance. During meetings held with assessors, apprentices are questioned effectively on programme-related issues to determine knowledge and understanding.
- Through regular progression discussion meetings, assessors provide apprentices with active encouragement and agree improvement targets.
- Assessment and progression visits are planned well. They integrate with apprentices' shift patterns and work stations, and are flexible should the need arise.

#### Areas for development

- Evidence recording of candidate progression discussions is almost entirely paper-based. This limits off-site access to candidate records and does not meet apprentice or employer preference for an increased use of digital technology.

## 4.2.2 Staff reflection on provision to improve training

### Areas of positive progress

- Internal verification procedures work well and meet the requirements of awarding body quality assurance processes and Skills Development Scotland (SDS). External review reports are positive, requiring no improvement actions.
- Regular verification meetings with assessors and SAMB managers are used constructively to share feedback from employers and apprentices. These result in helpful improvements to provision for apprentices and employers.
- Apprentices have good opportunities to influence their training. Assessors use discussions with apprentices effectively to identify challenges within the delivery of the framework and use outcomes from these discussions to support improvements.
- Assessors regularly discuss areas of good practice with colleagues. They visit bakers' premises throughout Scotland to see at first-hand different working practices, which they discuss with other assessors, during regular standardisation meetings. This helps to ensure assessors can match the needs of employers with the apprenticeship framework and provide a platform for sharing best practice.

### Areas for development

- None identified.

## 4.3 Safeguarding and meeting the needs of apprentices - Grade: Very Good

### 4.3.1 Achieving and maintaining high levels of service delivery

#### Areas of positive progress

- All employers value the apprenticeship programme and highlight how it helps them retain apprentices during their training programme. In an industry which relies heavily on the retention of skilled staff, employers are satisfied with the assistance of SAMB and their assessors in retaining staff.
- All apprentices are very pleased with their training and confirm the MA programme has enabled them to grow in confidence within their job role. Almost all apprentices acknowledge that the training has equipped them well with the underpinning knowledge and skills required to succeed in their careers.

#### Areas for development

- None identified.

### 4.3.2 Adherence to statutory principles and guidance

#### Areas of positive progress

- SAMB ensures apprentices are fully aware of safeguarding and health and safety requirements. These are explained well by staff during apprentices' induction procedures and are reinforced by assessors during progress reviews.

- Apprentices are supported well during their programme by both their employer and assessor, and know who to contact should they have any safeguarding issues or concerns.
- SAMB staff and assessors ensure that all apprentices receive relevant health and safety information, including food hygiene and regulatory practices. This is supplemented by contextualised employer training to support the use of specific industrial equipment.
- All assessors effectively ensure statutory and regulatory knowledge is developed within the framework and through apprentices' experiences. Apprentice understanding is evaluated well by staff through appropriate use of formative and summative questioning.
- Employers support the safety and wellbeing of their apprentices well. They record details of apprentices adherence to relevant health and safety practices and appropriate storage of goods and discuss these at regular intervals with assessors.

### **Areas for development**

- None identified.

### **4.3.3 Apprentice progress and achievement of individual outcomes**

#### **Areas of positive progress**

- Almost all apprentices confirm that their MA programme has enabled them to grow in confidence within their job role. Apprentices acknowledge that the training has equipped them with the knowledge and skills required for their work.
- The ratio of successful completions for the last three years is well above the SDS target of 75%, and above the sector average.
- Staff ensure that programmes are delivered flexibly, with learning and assessment contextualised well to the apprentices workplace. Assessors undertake visits at times and locations to meet the needs of employers and apprentices.
- Many candidates complete their qualifications early. Employers believe their close working relationship with assessors supports apprentices to reach their programme milestones ahead of schedule, using a flexible training approach, which works around employers' business priorities.
- All employers are positive about their relationships with SAMB. They are satisfied with the training provided and the progress apprentices are making in enhancing their skills, which prepare them well for their future careers.
- Almost all apprentices continue to be employed with their current employer at the end of their MA programme. Those who leave do so to take up other employment opportunities.
- Managers at SAMB take care to celebrate apprentices' awards and achievements. Apprentices feel proud of the progress they have made and the qualifications they have attained.

## Areas for development

- Whilst apprentices are clearly demonstrating the development of meta skills, these are not formally recorded during progression discussions and apprentices do not benefit from a focus on skills development beyond the immediate requirements of the apprenticeship framework.

## 5. Main points for action

The following main points for action are required:

- There are no main points for action.

## 6. Examples of highly effective practice

None identified.

## 7. What happens next?

HM Inspectors are confident that the provider has the capacity to continue to improve and HMIE will make no further visits to the provider during this cycle as a result of this review.

**Peter B Connelly**  
**HM Inspector**

## Appendix 1 Grades used in reporting

A common grading scale is used in making judgements for provider reviews:

- Grade 1 EXCELLENT – Outstanding and sector leading
- Grade 2 VERY GOOD – Major strengths
- Grade 3 GOOD – Important strengths with some areas for improvement
- Grade 4 SATISFACTORY - Strengths just outweigh weaknesses
- Grade 5 WEAK – Important weaknesses
- Grade 6 UNSATISFACTORY – Major weaknesses

### Summary

- An evaluation of **excellent** applies to training which is of a very high quality. An evaluation of *excellent* represents an outstanding standard of training which exemplifies very best practice and is worth disseminating beyond the current provision. It implies that very high-levels of performance are sustainable and will be maintained.
- An evaluation of **very good** applies to training characterised by major strengths. There are very few areas for improvement and any that do exist do not significantly diminish apprentices' experiences. While an evaluation of *very good* represents a high standard of training, it is a standard that should be achievable by all. It implies that it is fully appropriate to continue to provide training without significant adjustment. However, there is an expectation that the provider will take opportunities to improve and strive to raise performance to excellent.
- An evaluation of **good** applies to training characterised by important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh any areas for improvement. An evaluation of *good* represents a standard of training in which the strengths have a significant positive impact. However, the quality of apprentices' experiences is diminished in some way by aspects in which improvement is required. It implies that the provider should seek to improve further the areas of important strength but take action to address the areas for improvement.
- An evaluation of **satisfactory** applies to training characterised by strengths which just outweigh weaknesses. An evaluation of *satisfactory* indicates that apprentices' have access to a basic level of training. It represents a standard where the strengths have a positive impact on apprentices' experiences. However, while the weaknesses will not be important enough to have a substantially adverse impact, they do constrain the overall quality of apprentices' experiences. It implies that the provider should take action to address areas of weakness while building on its strengths.
- An evaluation of **weak** applies to training which has some strengths, but where there are important weaknesses. In general, an evaluation of *weak* may be arrived at in a number of circumstances. While there may be some strengths, the important weaknesses will, either individually or collectively, be sufficient to diminish apprentices' experiences in substantial ways. It implies the need for prompt, structured and planned action on the part of the provider.
- An evaluation of **unsatisfactory** applies when there are major weaknesses in training, requiring immediate remedial action. The training experience for apprentices is at risk in significant respects. In almost all cases, staff responsible for training evaluated as unsatisfactory will require support from senior managers in planning and carrying out the necessary actions to effect improvement. This may involve working alongside other staff or agencies in or beyond the immediate support given by the provider.



## Appendix 2 Evaluative Terms

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.