

# Hairdressing Modern Apprenticeship Report

**A report on the review of off-the-job training in  
Hairdressing Modern Apprenticeships by  
Education Scotland**

**November 2016**

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# Context

The UK hair and beauty sector has a turnover of over £6 billion per year. This sector employs nearly a quarter of a million people, and makes a contribution of around 1% to the UK economy.<sup>1</sup> The latest statistics from *Habia (Hair and Beauty Industry Authority)* show that 8% of the hair and beauty sector is based in Scotland, providing around £0.5 billion per year to the Scottish economy. However, UK statistics also show that 20% of hair salons have vacancies, which equates to around 4000 job opportunities across Scotland. According to Habia, 1500 of these vacancies are unfilled due to the poor quality of applicants coming forward<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.habia.org/industry/overview>.

Clearly there are many employment opportunities available in the Scottish hairdressing sector. To ensure a trained workforce, Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) are designed to support individuals with career aspirations to gain industry recognised qualifications while earning a wage. A MA may be a new or an existing employee who is seeking to increase their capability or qualifications. As such, apprentices are entitled to receive training that matches the business needs of employers.

MA opportunities are available across a wide range of industry sectors and each sector has a set of occupational standards. National Occupational Standards (NOS)<sup>2</sup> are statements of the standards of performance that individuals must achieve when carrying out functions in the workplace, together with specifications of the necessary underpinning knowledge and understanding. NOS are developed for employers by employers, through the relevant Sector Skills Council (SSCs) or Standards Setting Organisation (SSOs) who are recognised by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES). SkillsActive<sup>3</sup> is responsible for the NOS across the Active Leisure, Learning and Well-being sector. Through their license with UKCES, SkillsActive manage the Hair and Beauty NOS in partnership with Habia. These are the standards considered in this review<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> <http://nos.ukces.org.uk/Pages/index.aspx>.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.skillsactive.com/standards-quals/skillsactive-s-national-occupational-standards>.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.habia.org/>

Education Scotland have been commissioned by the Scottish Government to undertake external reviews of the off-the-job training element of MA programmes within each of the industry sectors over the coming years.

The strategic vision outlined by the Scottish Government in *Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy (YES)* is for a post-16 education and training sector in which:

- all provision, regardless of provider, is focused on providing young people with the skills, knowledge and attributes necessary to support Scotland's economic growth and maximise their life chances;
- all providers and their key stakeholders work together regionally and nationally to ensure high quality provision that meets the needs of learners and employers; and
- the relevance and quality of this provision, the extent to which it supports economic growth and post-16 reform, and the outcomes learners achieve are evaluated through an appropriate blend of self-evaluation, external scrutiny and public reporting through a national quality assurance and quality improvement system.

# External review methodology

Education Scotland's external review of the off-the-job training element of MAs builds upon and complements Skills Development Scotland's (SDS) current quality assurance arrangements. These arrangements require all non-college training providers to demonstrate they are meeting SDS quality standards as set out in the SDS Quality Assurance Framework. SDS takes assurance of MA programme delivery from Education Scotland's external review of colleges, which focus on the contribution made by training providers and the quality of the training they deliver.

A team of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) from Education Scotland and Associate Assessors (AA), from SDS, colleges and Independent Training Providers (ITP) conduct external reviews. Associate Assessor input ensures that each review team has the expert knowledge and industry-related experience to ensure a full and well-informed review process. The review team evaluated the work undertaken by a sample of colleges and ITPs, referred to collectively as 'centres' in this report.

External review approaches incorporate:

- Observation of training activities.
- Discussions held with centre managers and staff.
- Discussions held with employers and apprentices.

Upon conclusion of the external review, a written report is provided to each centre by Education Scotland. This includes the grades awarded for each of the six high-level questions posed during the review (see below). This report is shared with SDS but is not published externally, although centres may choose to share their individual reports after the main report is published. The findings from each of the visits are brought together to generate a national report which is published by Education Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government. National reports are designed to inform Ministers about the quality of the off-the-job training element within specific MA programmes. The report will also assist providers in preparing and implementing their quality improvement and enhancement agendas, and include examples of excellent practice where identified.

For this review of hairdressing MAs, Education Scotland evaluated the provision of providers' off-the-job training in the following centres between January and May 2016:

- Fife College.
- First Happy Ltd (Rainbow Room International).
- Moray College UHI.
- North East Scotland College.
- Qualitas International Limited.
- The Academy of Hairdressing Excellence Ltd.
- West College Scotland.
- The Kramer Consultancy Ltd.

Prior to commencing the centre visits, Education Scotland and SDS agreed that the revised Hairdressing and Barbering Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) frameworks (approved through Habia in September 2015) would be the focus of the reviews. Within the Habia framework there are three levels of qualification for Hairdressing and Barbering, at SVQ Levels 1, 2 and 3 of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Levels 4-6. Each level includes a core skills signposting matrix. For this review, Education Scotland evaluated the

delivery of the off-the-job training elements in Hairdressing and Barbering at SVQ Levels 2 and 3 (SCQF levels 5 and 6) along with the relevant level of core skills.

The report also uses the following terms to describe numbers and proportions:	
almost all	over 90%
most	75-90%
majority	50-74%
less than half	15-49%
few	up to 15%

# The National Report

The framework and model for this external review are based upon the quality elements from the National Quality System, designed by Education Scotland, in collaboration with organisations such as the SQA, SDS, Scottish Government, and industry partners.

The national report includes a grade for each of the questions within the four high level principles. These high level principles are:

- Outcomes and Impact.
- Delivery of Training.
- Leadership and Quality Culture.
- Capacity for Improvement.

Grades are awarded for the following six questions in the four high level principles:

## **1. Outcomes and Impact**

How well are apprentices progressing and achieving relevant high quality outcomes?  
How well do we meet the needs of our apprentices, employers and stakeholders?

## **2. Delivery of Training**

How good is our delivery of training?  
How good is our management of training delivery?

## **3. Leadership and Quality Culture**

How good is our strategic leadership?

## **4. Capacity to Improve**

A capacity to improve judgment based on evidence from all key areas above, in particular Outcomes, Impact and Leadership.

## Grades

The following six-point scale is used to determine the individual grade awarded for each of the six questions:

- **EXCELLENT** – Outstanding.
- **VERY GOOD** – Major Strengths.
- **GOOD** – Important strengths with some areas for improvement.
- **SATISFACTORY** - Strengths just outweigh weaknesses.
- **WEAK** – Important weaknesses.
- **UNSATISFACTORY** – Major weaknesses.

Grade descriptors are provided in Appendix 1.

# Findings

## The review of Hairdressing MAs

Inspectors observed learning and teaching and other important activities that impact upon the quality of the apprentice experience. These were evaluated against the four high-level principles of Outcomes and Impact, Service Delivery, Leadership and Quality Culture and Capacity to Improve; using the 12 reference quality indicators outlined in Education Scotland’s *External quality arrangements for the review of Modern Apprenticeship Off-the-job training April 2015*<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> <http://educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/othersectors/modernapprenticeship/index.asp>

The summary grades awarded for each of the six questions are presented below.

1. Outcome and Impact		2. Delivery of Training		3. Leadership and Quality Culture	4. Capacity for Improvement
How well are apprentices progressing and achieving relevant high quality outcomes?	How well do we meet the needs of our apprentices and stakeholders?	How good is our delivery of training?	How good is our management of training delivery?	How good is our strategic leadership?	How good are internal evaluation and self-reflection activities to ensure we have the capacity to improve and enhance the delivery of training?
good	good	good	good	good	good

## Summary of Findings

### Areas of Strength

- All centres delivering MA provision ensure programmes achieve lead and awarding body standards through effective standardisation and verification meetings.
- The majority of centres offer flexible start dates and options for curriculum delivery that suit the needs of employers.
- Most centres use feedback from apprentices and employers effectively to improve the delivery of training.
- Hairdressing competitions and apprentices’ successes are used well to inspire the professional ambitions of apprentices and raise their vocational skill levels.
- Most apprentices are enthusiastic about their training and motivated to succeed. They are satisfied with their apprenticeship training and with the progress they are making.
- Most teaching staff plan the delivery of training well and include a good balance of theory and practical activities that apprentices find engaging.
- Almost all teaching staff have relevant, up-to-date experience and vocational knowledge that is enhanced through their own part-time work as hairdressing professionals.
- Very good relationships exist between centre staff, this supports apprentices well and encourages achievement and progression.
- Most training salons are high quality and provide industry standard facilities, equipment and products. A few salons promote sustainability in their design, equipment and



products that encourages apprentices to consider their environmental responsibilities and supports government priorities.

- The majority of apprentices receive a high quality learning experience that develops their hairdressing and employability skills effectively.
- The majority of employers are satisfied with the training provided and confirm it is meeting their needs.
- Most teaching staff are highly committed and motivated to provide a positive experience for their apprentices.
- Most centres have productive links with employers and schools which take good account of the local economic context.
- Managers in centres lead their teams well and there is a collegiate culture that contributes to effective team working.
- Most centres have effective self-evaluation arrangements in place to evaluate their MA programmes and to determine actions for improvement.
- Apprentice progress is tracked well and apprentices are aware of their progress and goals.
- Most apprentices achieve their core skills units and these are contextualised well into programme design and delivery.
- Teaching staff promote equality and diversity well during training sessions and use naturally occurring opportunities to stimulate discussion.
- Apprentices are involved in the planning of curriculum delivery and learning and teaching approaches.

## Areas for Development

- In more than a few centres, attainment is below national performance levels.
- In some centres, low attendance prevents apprentices from progressing with their studies.
- More than a few centres do not recruit sufficient apprentices to meet their SDS contract.
- Strategic planning to embed government priorities for the post-16 education and training sector is not yet fully effective in all centres.
- The majority of centres do not analyse performance data sufficiently well to inform self-evaluation and improvement planning.
- The recruitment of male apprentices into the hairdressing profession remains a challenge and only a few initiatives, such as the barbering award, have made any impact on gender balance.
- In more than a few centres, arrangements to engage with employers and to gather formal input from apprentices are not sufficient to inform planning of delivery and programme content.
- More than a few centres do not engage effectively with their local employers, particularly in relation to apprentice recruitment and employers' responsibilities for supporting apprentice training.
- In a few centres, self-evaluation arrangements are insufficiently systematic and robust and planning for improvement is not fully effective.
- Access to Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for apprentices in a few salons is not sufficient and only a few salons have industry based software for apprentices to practice their ICT skills.
- Some Centres do not have effective arrangements to support apprentices with additional support needs or appropriate referral to other agencies, and a few centres do not have sufficient access for individuals with a physical disability.
- Most centres have difficulty in finding sufficient hairdressing clients for apprentices to practice their skills and to complete their assessments.

# 1. Outcomes and Impact

How well are apprentices progressing and achieving relevant high quality outcomes?  
GRADE: good

## How effective is the centre at achieving and maintaining high levels of service delivery?

The majority of centres visited are making good progress in achieving their organisational priorities and meeting SDS contract levels for MA hairdressing programmes. These centres make good use of local labour market intelligence to create useful development plans that reflect their wider strategic aims and Scottish Government priorities, including *Developing the Young Workforce* (DYW). These plans incorporate targets to increase MA provision that are aligned well with the local economic context and national priorities for skills development.

However, in some centres, aims and objectives for the achievement of high quality outcomes are vague, and apprentice recruitment is declining. In these centres, employer engagement is not fully effective, which limits the scope to inform and influence plans, reflect on training delivery or actively promote the benefits of MA programmes. Some Centres do not disaggregate performance data for apprenticeship programmes to inform future plans and targets. In a few centres, arrangements that inform future planning of the MA programme is predicated on informal knowledge of the local employer network, rather than a detailed analysis of employer needs.

In the majority of centres, achievement rates are high compared with national performance levels for hairdressing MA programmes. In these centres, withdrawal rates are low and most apprentices progress from the SVQ Level 2 to Level 3. However, in more than a few of the centres visited, withdrawal rates are high and achievement rates are low. In a few centres, the attendance of apprentices is affected due to employers choosing to prioritise the staffing needs of their salon over off-the-job training. This impacts on the ability of individual apprentices to make progress, and can lead to their early withdrawal from the MA programme.

Most apprentices attain core skills units and are making good progress in developing their confidence and skills for life, learning and work. Most apprentices who complete their MA programme gain employment with local hairdressing salons.

Almost all centres actively promote opportunities for under-represented groups, with a particular focus on addressing the gender imbalance on MA programmes. Some centres have introduced a barbering qualification to increase opportunities for male apprentices to undertake a career in hairdressing. However, despite efforts to improve gender imbalance, the participation of male apprentices on MA hairdressing programmes is low, at approximately 9%.

## How well do centres adhere to statutory principles and guidance?

All centres ensure that MA programmes meet the required awarding body standards. Centre staff hold regular standardisation meetings that are effective in ensuring consistency and compliance with awarding body and lead body requirements. However, in a few colleges, teaching staff do not always ensure awarding body standards are delivered consistently across the MA programme. All centres have a positive working relationship with SDS. This supports well the monitoring of MA contractual requirements and progress towards implementation of any identified development points.

Most centres have appropriate arrangements in place to comply with health and safety legislation. These include health and safety training that is relevant for practical activities in the workplace and best practice that is promoted effectively by staff in the training salons. However, in a few centres, there is a need to reinforce salon policies and procedures for the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and clients' skin testing.

All centres recognise equality and diversity as a strategic priority. They use a variety of methods well, including social media, employer forums and school visits, to promote opportunities for apprentices from a range of backgrounds and circumstances. Almost all centres take good account of the individual needs of apprentices. However in a few centres, particularly ITPs, arrangements for apprentices and clients with physical disabilities to access centre facilities are insufficient.

Almost all centres are members of the UK's largest trade association for hairdressing, barbering and beauty salon owners, The National Hairdressers' Federation (NHF). The NHF offer a range of useful Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) opportunities through attendance at annual conferences and training events, which enable staff to maintain their professional knowledge of industry standards.

At one centre, all hairdressing lecturers and managers are registered with *The Hair Council*,<sup>6</sup> who campaign to make regulation compulsory for all hairdressers, raise standards, and recognise hairdressing as a profession. Registration endorses the expertise and training of qualified hairdressers, provides clients with reassurance and allows them to make an informed choice. Staff within the centre highlight the benefits of being registered with the Hair Council to apprentices and actively encourage them to apply on completion of their apprenticeship. The centre and the Hair Council contribute towards a voucher that is provided to successful apprentices to assist them with the initial cost of their registration.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.haircouncil.org.uk/>

How well do we meet the needs of our apprentices and stakeholders?  
GRADE: good

### How well are apprentices progressing and achieving relevant high quality outcomes?

The majority of apprentices are making good progress and achieving relevant high quality outcomes. They develop confidence and skills which their employers recognise as valuable to their business. Almost all apprentices make good progress with their core and essential skills, and those who require additional assistance are supported well to achieve the requirements for their award. However, in a few centres, apprentices do not have the opportunity to achieve in core skills subjects beyond the minimum requirements of the award.

In most centres, the delivery of MA training is supporting apprentices to mature and gain the vocational skills required in their workplace. These MA programmes meet the needs of employers, local schools and apprentices well. Almost all employers prefer this blend of work-based training with day-release attendance at a training centre. Wherever possible, centres offer additional activities to apprentices, which develop further their skills and knowledge across a wider range of topics. These include industry-led workshops for hair colouring, bridal hair, plaiting and weaving, razor cutting and vintage hair. All apprentices who participate in these activities value the additional experience and the skills they gain.

The majority of centres offer flexible attendance options to suit employers, including a choice of start date, fast-track routes, roll-on-roll-off intake, and attendance on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis. A few centres also offer twilight practical sessions, which attract a wider variety of clients and allow more time for apprentices to develop their range of practical skills. However, not all employers are made aware of the opportunities for flexible delivery, assessment in the work place or the availability of bespoke topics. A few centres offer only one start date each year, which increases the challenge for the recruitment of apprentices.

Most apprentices make good use of individual training plans to work independently towards their training goals at their own pace. These training plans support effective tracking and review of apprentice progress, which is shared with employers. Regular feedback to apprentices helps to ensure a clear understanding of their progress and most apprentices recognise the progress they are making.

Almost all centres arrange in-house competitions and encourage apprentices to enter tournaments for national hairdressing awards to help enhance their experience and build confidence. Many apprentices are successful in competitions and this is often celebrated through annual awards ceremonies, which motivate apprentices to achieve high standards and share their success with employers, family and friends. Centres use these ceremonies well to showcase MA programmes and to strengthen and extend employer links.

## Excellence Example

### North East Scotland College – North East Hair and Beauty Festival

*North East Scotland College has hosted the North East Hair and Beauty Festival for the last twelve years. The event is organised by the Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy curriculum teams to showcase the creativity of learners and apprentices, with approximately three hundred entrants across a range of competitions, including evening hairstyles, creative colours, manicures and fantasy make-up. All colleges located north of the central belt are invited to compete, along with hairdressing salons in the Aberdeen city and Aberdeenshire areas. The event also promotes collaboration with other apprentices from North East Scotland College, in subject areas such as photography, multi-media and event planning, all of whom contribute to the organising and running of the event.*

*To ensure the event has a professional atmosphere, experienced judges are invited from the National Hairdressers Federation, Association of Hairdressers and Therapists and from City and Guilds. Medals, certificates and prizes are presented to those who are placed in the competition and a trophy is presented to the North East Trainee Hairdresser of the Year, North East Trainee Beauty Therapist of the year and Qualified Hairdresser of the Year.*

*The competition provides learners and apprentices at all qualification levels with an opportunity to participate in a large hair and beauty hairdressing competition that prepares them well for national tournaments. Participants are encouraged to compete against those at a higher level, which builds their confidence and provides opportunities to showcase their vocational skills. Local stylists also enter the Qualified Hairdresser category, giving apprentices a realistic competition experience and employers attend to support their modern apprentices.*

## How well does training meet the needs of apprentices and employers?

Almost all centres engage well with a range of partners to ensure that MA hairdressing programmes are relevant to the economy and local employers. All centres have effective partnership arrangements with SDS and most centres deliver activities to promote MAs to employers, including national campaigns, such as Scottish Apprenticeship Week and promotional activities such as a '100 MAs in 100 days'. All centres have good relationships with Habia and benefit from access to Habia resources that enhance the delivery of training and the apprentices' experience. Many centres enrich the MA training experience by inviting local employers, professional bodies and product/equipment suppliers to deliver talks and demonstrations for apprentices. These opportunities support apprentices well to develop relevant knowledge and skills for employment.

Most centres engage well with employers, either through a dedicated liaison team in the larger centres, or through work placement assessors. These arrangements enable strong communication links between employers and centres, ensuring that apprentice progress is monitored and providing opportunities for centre staff to establish employer requirements. However, not all centres make employers fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in recruiting apprentices and providing the necessary support for their off-the-job training.

The majority of employers are positive about their engagement with centres and a few indicate a high level of satisfaction with the experience of their apprentices. They welcome the opportunities offered for training of apprentices and value the development of the knowledge and understanding elements delivered by teaching staff, which they do not have the capacity or expertise to deliver themselves. However, in more than a few centres, around half of the employers are not satisfied with the delivery of training, have insufficient communication with the centre and do not find centre staff responsive to their needs.

The majority of apprentices are satisfied with their MA programme, enjoy their training and appreciate the support provided by centre staff. They are positive about the progress they are making and have aspirations to be successful hairdressers in the future. Many apprentices would recommend an MA programme to their family and friends.

Most apprentices are able to influence what is delivered within their MA programme, such as researching particular hair styles or learning new skills related to their own employment circumstances. Many have the opportunity to share their views with staff about their satisfaction with their MA programme and suggest improvements to the training. Whenever practical, centres take apprentices' interests and employer preferences into account to enhance the MA programme content. However, in more than a few centres, the views of apprentices and employers are not systematically sought or analysed to ensure the context of delivery reflects current industry practice.



## 2. Delivery of Training

How good is our delivery of training?  
GRADE: good

### How well does the design and delivery of training meet the needs of apprentices and employers?

Most centres offer a good range of professional qualifications for the hairdressing industry across SCQF Levels 5 to 7. A few centres also offer specialisms such as a barbering. Almost all off-the-job training is relevant to the local and regional economy and provides a positive contribution to raising the employability levels of hairdressing apprentices. Almost all MA programmes are designed well and incorporate a good range of practical units, aligned with current industry standards, that deliver a realistic learning experience for apprentices.

Almost all centres have in place a sufficient and appropriate range of resources to deliver apprenticeship training for hairdressing. The practical training areas for apprentices are modern, attractive work spaces and a few incorporate sustainable technology and products that encourage apprentices to consider the natural environment. Most specialist accommodation, resources, products, tools and equipment are appropriate to the training needs of apprentices and comply with current industry standards. Almost all apprentices use their toolkits and resources within the training salons confidently and well. The classroom spaces used for theory lessons in most centres are spacious, well-equipped and have appropriate ICT available for each apprentice. However, not all training salons are equipped with electronic salon management systems for apprentices to experience the use of client-scheduling software and further enhance their ICT skills.

Some centres have taken the opportunity to incorporate sustainable technology into their salons, often during the design phase of new facilities. These provide an insight for apprentices, clients and stakeholders into the impact of decisions on the environment when procuring equipment, furniture, and products during their professional careers. These salons have a range of innovative ecological features and provide opportunities for embedding sustainable practice into the curriculum. 'Green salon' designs use materials, equipment and products that are carefully selected from sustainable sources or sustainably produced. For example, the use of sustainable flooring, bio-degradable towels, energy efficient lighting and hand dryers, wallpaper made from recycled paper and outdoor dryers.

Habia standards require that apprentices have access to appropriate clients to support the practice and assessment elements of their off-the-job training. However, in some centres there are not enough clients available, which can impede apprentices' progress in achieving their practical skills and completing their assessments. When access to appropriate clients is challenging, opportunities for apprentices to practice and develop their skills are limited to the use of simulated model heads.

Almost all apprentices are highly motivated and enthusiastic about their apprenticeship training. They engage well in practical tasks to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence. Most apprentices acquire a good range of professional standard vocational and employability skills. They work competently and independently, with relevant one-to-one support from staff and have a positive approach to their apprenticeship training. However, a few apprentices are not sufficiently engaged, are passive and often left to wait until teaching staff approach them.

Almost all apprentices use portfolios well to track their own progress and record assessment outcomes, including core skills. Staff use these portfolios effectively as a basis for discussion with apprentices to help them set personal targets. Most apprentices have a good understanding of their targets and these are reviewed regularly by staff from SDS. However, in a few centres, the arrangements for setting and monitoring targets are not consistently applied and some apprentices are unaware of the importance of core skills or how their progress in these skills is identified. This diminishes their training experience.

Almost all lessons and practical activities are planned well and take good account of how practical tasks are linked to assessment. Encouraged by teaching staff, apprentices reflect on their work within the training salons and practice their skills when returning to the work place. Planning for delivery includes opportunities for apprentices to develop broader essential skills such as problem solving and customer care. Most teaching staff involve apprentices in the planning of outcomes required for their award, encourage apprentices to influence the learning activities, and to work independently.

Most staff are confident in recognising and supporting apprentices with additional learning needs. They are proactive in arranging support from learning assistants, scribes, and access to support through ICT. In most centres, appropriate adjustments are made during practical demonstrations. For example, one centre provides customised essential tools for an apprentice who is left-handed. However, the process for identifying the support needs of apprentices in a few centres, particularly ITPs, is reactive, ad-hoc and not sufficiently systematic.

### How well is training delivered?

Almost all teaching staff plan lessons well and use resources, including workbooks and ICT, effectively to support the delivery of theory subjects. Overall, learning materials are of a high standard and levelled appropriately to meet the needs of apprentices. In some centres, learning materials have been developed with input from apprentices. Most course work materials reflect aspects of equality and diversity, professional ethics and protected characteristics, and are linked well to the workplace through the use of relevant examples from industry. Most learning materials support apprentices well to work with and meet the needs of a variety of clients and to adjust behaviors when dealing with clients from diverse groups.

Staff in all centres have a high level of professional knowledge and skills. Some staff adopt a coaching approach, which is particularly successful in encouraging apprentices to develop confidence in their practical and independent learning skills. Teaching staff ensure their professional knowledge and skills are current and relevant to their training role through regular work with clients in the salon, attendance at industry seminars and at hairdressing competitions. Many staff also continue to be employed in the industry, alongside their training role and some continue to manage their own salons. Links with commercial companies provide effective CLPL opportunities for staff and apprentices that ensure training is current and in line with industry trends. All staff are enthusiastic about their subject area and this has a positive impact on apprentice motivation.

Almost all teaching staff promote high standards and provide positive role models for apprentices. Staff are proactive in developing and updating learning materials and reflecting on and sharing their practice with other members of their team. However, in a few centres, teaching staff do not take sufficient account of issues affecting the salon environment, such as temperature or restricted movement.

The majority of teaching staff use an appropriate range of learning and teaching approaches that suitably challenge apprentices and enable them to complete tasks in line with industry standards. One centre has developed a particularly flexible approach to programme delivery,

combining sessions for Level 2 and 3 apprentices which encourages peer learning and motivates apprentices to broaden their career aspirations. Most teaching staff provide helpful feedback during practical sessions that helps to build the skills and confidence of apprentices. However, in more than a few centres, apprentices are not given clear guidance on the timing of tasks in relation to the NOS and apprentices knowledge and understanding is not challenged sufficiently.

Most apprentices have very positive and supportive relationships with teaching staff, which enhances mutual respect and creates camaraderie in the training salons. The majority of apprentices engage well in practical tasks and group work in a relaxed and purposeful atmosphere, encouraging high levels of motivation and high standards of work. However, more than a few apprentices express low satisfaction with their programme and are concerned about completing the necessary practical assessments required for their apprenticeship.

The majority of employers value the off-the-job training provided for apprentices that develops their underpinning knowledge and vocational skills, reflecting the working ethos of a salon. A few centres respond well to employer and apprentice feedback for further learning, such as perming techniques, when these topics are not mandatory in the curriculum. However, some employers believe the pace of delivery could be improved and that off-the-job training does not fully reflect current industry needs.

Most centres use ICT to access resources, often using a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), to support the consolidation of skills and underpinning knowledge. This is effective in developing apprentices as independent learners and helps those who cannot always attend training to catch up with aspects of the programme that they may have missed. However in a few centres, there is insufficient use of ICT resources, including VLEs, to support the use of interactive and innovative learning and teaching approaches for apprentices. In these centres, apprentices do not benefit from opportunities to recap on their learning.

### How well do staff reflect on provision to improve training?

Most centres have in place quality assurance arrangements that support teaching staff to engage well with programme evaluation activities. However, most formal reporting processes in colleges combine MA programmes with general college provision, and it is not always apparent which improvement actions relate specifically to MA hairdressing programmes. Most ITPs use informal meetings well to reflect on the quality of training delivery and any improvements required. Almost all centres hold regular standardisation meetings to underpin consistency in the delivery of the MA programmes, and arrangements for internal verification and moderation meet awarding body quality assurance requirements. However, in a few centres, there is no systematic or formal review of the delivery of training to inform improvement and no formal arrangements in place to support staff to reflect on the quality of learning and teaching.

In the close-knit environment of a training salon, most staff quickly identify how they can adapt their teaching practice and where improvements to the learning process can be implemented, based on informal feedback from apprentices. Formal methods of reflection are mostly questionnaire based, either relating to individual lessons or units. Staff use learner feedback from questionnaires well to improve the experience of apprentices. Most teaching staff demonstrate a strong commitment to share good practice and this contributes effectively to improvements in the design and delivery of MA programmes.

Most centres provide staff with a range of appropriate CLPL opportunities which encourage staff to keep up-to-date with current industry practice and facilitate effective professional dialogue. Managers encourage teaching staff to reflect on their training practice, adapt their delivery accordingly and share best practice. However in a few centres, staff have limited access to development opportunities and not always able to develop their training skills.



Almost all teaching staff are aware of the reasons why apprentices leave their MA programme early. Staff discuss issues that affect the ability of individual apprentices to sustain their learning and, wherever possible, put in place effective measures to provide support. For example, if an apprentice loses their job, experiences ill health or encounters financial difficulty. However, in a few centres, planning for improvement of the MA programme is not effective and many issues such as poor attendance, low attainment, limited employer engagement and low apprentice satisfaction are not being addressed.

### **How well do employers and apprentices participate in the development and planning of training?**

In most centres, partnership working is strong and this provides opportunities for employers and apprentices to influence the planning of training to meet their needs. In a few centres, employers are invited to attend team meetings and offer their views on programme design or suggest improvements. Most centres use this feedback well to plan delivery of the MA programme and improve the learning experience for apprentices. Most centres arrange events to encourage engagement from employers such as internal competitions, salon open evenings and commercial seminars. In a few centres, staff visit employer premises to learn the specific arrangements for on-the-job training of their apprentices and, wherever possible, provide individualised assessment arrangements within employers' premises. However, in a few centres there is no formal process for employers to contribute to the review of the MA programme or influence the planning of learning.

In most centres, apprentices are provided with opportunities to shape and influence their learning experience and staff use this input well to implement improvement actions. In a few centres, apprentices participate in team meetings. In most colleges, designated class representatives represent the views of their peers well. The majority of apprentices have the opportunity to influence the choice of delivery methods and identify their preferred learning style, which is then incorporated into their training plan. In a few centres, apprentices complete a pro-forma to establish their individual skills and experience, which enables teaching staff to adapt their learning and teaching approaches to suit each new group. However in more than a few centres, apprentices are not sufficiently involved in the planning and review of learning and teaching.

Most employers consider that communication arrangements with centres are effective and collaboration is enhanced when apprentices share good practice from their training when they return to their employer's salons. However, in more than a few centres employers and stakeholders are not involved in the planning of provision or delivery of the MA programme and the roles and responsibilities of employers as key partners in apprentice training is not communicated effectively to employers.

How good is our management of training delivery?  
GRADE: good

### How well does the centre work with partners to improve outcomes for apprentices?

All centres visited are aware of the Scottish Government employability priorities to increase the number of apprentices, and managers actively promote and encourage apprenticeships as a career option. All centres have established collaborative and constructive working relationships with SDS, awarding bodies and Habia to support their apprentices. All centres have good links with commercial companies who provide a valuable source of up-to-date equipment, demonstrations and product ranges from which both staff and apprentices benefit.

Colleges are represented well on a range of relevant local partnerships and have established effective links with local councils, economic forums and Community Planning Partnerships. These partnership arrangements provide a useful forum for the prioritisation and development of MA provision. College links with local authorities are well established, with most colleges offering introductory programmes for school pupils that lead to an apprenticeship. Almost all colleges work proactively with local schools and attend careers fairs to promote hairdressing as a career, provide taster sessions and organise work placement opportunities for senior phase learners. However, not all local schools engage consistently with colleges.

The majority of ITPs collaborate well with their local authorities and schools, this is generally associated with assisting in the recruitment of potential apprentices. Most ITPs are members of local networks for the hairdressing profession and these meetings allow providers to discuss common issues and share best practice. However, in a few ITPs, collaborative arrangements do not take sufficient account of the recommendations from DYW and YES in their partnership plans.

In almost all centres, employers and stakeholders are provided with opportunities to feed back on the planning of MA provision and transitions for their employees. However, only a few take the opportunity to do so beyond confirming their satisfaction.

When apprentices have more complex needs or experience difficult circumstances, most colleges have links with external agencies who offer help with issues affecting their learning such as housing or addiction. However in some centres, there are no systematic arrangements in place to provide apprentices who may have more complex additional or personal needs with specialist help. Furthermore, there is no collaboration with other agencies and no sign-posting to inform apprentices about where they might be able to get help.

### 3. Leadership and Quality Culture

How good is our strategic leadership?  
GRADE: good

#### How effective is leadership for partnership working and delivery of training?

All ITPs have developed clear business plans which identify targets and objectives relating to MA programmes within their SDS contract. Most of these business plans include a mission statement and a marketing strategy, along with targets for developing relationships with employer salons. Most ITP owners have a strong presence in their training salons and lead the business well, with a positive vision for meeting their objectives. This provides a solid foundation for leaders to secure informal, candid feedback from staff and for apprentices to contribute to improvement planning.

All colleges have comprehensive planning arrangements for curriculum provision that relate well to college strategic plans and set out clear targets for MA provision. Almost all college strategic plans commit clearly to the development of MAs as expressed in their Regional Outcome Agreements (ROAs) and set specific targets to increase the provision of MAs to meet regional demand through improved progression opportunities. College strategies in relation to learning and teaching on MA programmes and for quality improvement, provide good direction for staff. However, clear improvement actions are not always identified for the development of MAs and DYW objectives are not consistently identified as a high priority by all colleges. For example, MA information does not always appear on college websites, or in any detail within college prospectus. Overall, centre staff are aware of the DYW and YES Scottish Government strategies and are working well to help fulfill the recommendations in these strategies.

Directors of centres and college curriculum managers often play a key role in selecting appropriate MA candidates and provide regular training sessions to stylists, which helps to maintain a culture of continual improvement and maintain high standards. Overall, staff teams work well together and are motivated to provide a high quality training experience for apprentices. Staff teams are led well and team working is strong, with teaching staff actively contributing to development planning. However, in a few centres, managers do not collaborate sufficiently well with partners to expand the number of employer links and encourage applications for hairdressing apprenticeships.

#### How well do leaders secure improvements in the quality and impact of training?

In most centres the Self-Assessment Action Planning process is used well and informed appropriately by feedback gathered from staff, apprentices and employers. All centres have arrangements in place for self-evaluation and operational planning. The majority of centres have operational plans containing targets for improvement which are monitored regularly and communicated well to staff. In most centres, self-evaluation procedures are regular and robust and help managers to determine specific actions for improvement. Most self-evaluation is carried out by teams effectively and analysis leads to the identification of action plans for improvement.

Self-evaluation and improvement actions are often enhanced by apprentice and employer participation in team meetings. Most centres focus on standardisation and internal verification and the retention, attainment and progression of apprentices, although a few include inspiring creative learning and discussions around learning and teaching approaches. However, in most colleges, the aggregation of MA performance data with mainstream provision constrains the

opportunities for evaluation by curriculum teams and the analysis of Performance Indicators (PI) is therefore not systematic or robust.

In a few centres, there are no formal records of self-evaluation meetings or strategic plans to inform improvements. Their operational plans lack detail or are incomplete and departmental objectives are insufficiently specific. This makes progress with improvement actions difficult to measure. In a few centres, there are no specific targets relating to the MA hairdressing programme, particularly in relation to low attainment rates and self-evaluation processes do not focus sufficiently well on the issues contributing to low attainment of apprentices.

The majority of apprentices are confident in raising issues of concern directly with training staff as the need arises. Most centres respond well and take action quickly, with any areas of concern noted by managers to help inform future improvements. Most apprentices feel that they are listened to and appropriate actions are taken in response to their comments. Almost all feedback from apprentices to staff is based on positive and supportive relationships, and apprentices are confident that staff will deal with any issues that arise. In colleges, course team meetings include representation from apprentices through elected class representatives and their feedback contributes to improvement actions. For example, in one centre, apprentices stated that they would like to work with more than one client in a single salon session and now have multiple appointments, which is more reflective of industry practice. Although apprentice representation is less formal in the majority of ITPs, most apprentices have sufficient opportunity to discuss any concerns they have and these are taken forward appropriately by management. However in a few centres, questionnaires, particularly those sent to employers, lack detail which limits analysis to inform improvement. In these centres, curriculum planning for future MA provision relies predominantly on informal feedback from apprentices rather than robust evidence gathered from employers.

## 4. Capacity for Improvement

How good is our capacity to improve?  
GRADE: good

### How good are our internal evaluation and self-reflection activities to ensure we have the capacity to improve and enhance our provision and delivery?

Overall, training providers are effective in meeting the needs of apprentices, the hairdressing industry, employers and other stakeholders. Their strategic and operational plans relate well to government priorities and centre staff are working hard in response to the requirements of local employers. However, in more than a few centres, arrangements for engaging employers and apprentices in the design and evaluation of MA hairdressing programmes are not robust or systematic.

Most centre managers provide clear and effective team leadership and use opportunities with teams well to ensure quality standards are implemented and to share ideas that help improve the training experience for apprentices. Almost all staff are highly committed to and motivated about the quality of training they provide to best meet the needs of apprentices and employers. Many staff remain actively involved as professional hairdressers which keeps their knowledge and vocational skills relevant to high quality training.

Attainment rates on MA hairdressing programmes vary considerably across centres and withdrawal rates in some centres are high. Most apprentices achieve their core skills units and are making good progress in developing their skills for life, learning and work. Most apprentices are motivated, engage well in the learning activities and are able to negotiate the pace of their own learning. The majority of apprentices and employers are satisfied with the training delivered by centres. However, more than a few apprentices and employers are dissatisfied with MA off-the-job training and some apprentices are not making sufficient progress.

Training is delivered well in most centres, often with flexible attendance options and additional specialised topics when these are not mandatory in the curriculum. Most apprentices benefit from a pace and style of learning which reflects the ethos of a working salon and prepares them well for the work place. However, more than a few centres do not involve apprentices and employers routinely in the planning of delivery, beyond informal discussions.

Core skills are embedded in the activities and assessment undertaken by apprentices and they are aware of what progress they are making in developing these skills. Apprentices have good relationships with teaching staff, value their support and guidance, and are confident that any issues they raise informally will be considered appropriately.

Most centres have salons that are well-resourced realistic working environments that enable apprentices to develop a range of skills through integrated activities in a simulated industry setting. However, a few salons lack investment in ICT and this limits the opportunities for apprentices to experience modern client-scheduling systems or improve their ICT skills. Some centres do not have systematic arrangements in place to provide apprentices who may have additional needs, with specialist help or sign-posting arrangements to other agencies. A few centres do not reinforce sufficiently their health and safety procedures and arrangements for access in a few centres for staff, apprentices and clients with limited mobility are not satisfactory.

Most centres are experiencing difficulty with recruiting hairdressing apprentices to meet their SDS contract. They recognise that more engagement with employers and stakeholders is required to raise the profile of MAs in hairdressing and promote opportunities for apprentices to embark on a professional career.

In many centres, the analysis of PIs is not systematic or robust and colleges do not always disaggregate performance data for apprenticeship programmes. Target setting in a few centres is not underpinned by accurate labour market intelligence and some improvement actions lack detail or are insufficiently challenging to improve programme performance. More than a few centre plans do not highlight sufficiently the issues impacting on programme performance such as poor attendance, low attainment or low apprentice and employer satisfaction.

# Recommendations

Centres should:

- develop appropriate strategies and plans to address gender imbalance in the hairdressing industry and target the recruitment of more male apprentices, particularly from schools;
- improve access to ICT equipment and industry software in training salons;
- continue to improve feedback mechanisms that allow apprentices to contribute more effectively to improving MA programmes;
- improve formal engagement with employers to assist their understanding of the role they have in supporting apprentices with their training and to improve feedback regarding planning and delivery of MA programmes;
- ensure that performance analysis and self-evaluation arrangements are systematic and link effectively to action planning to improve the quality of MA programmes; and
- work with SDS and industry partners to raise the profile of hairdressing as a professional career option and improve the recruitment of hairdressing apprentices.

Education Scotland should:

- continue to monitor and review progress of colleges on achieving these recommendations through on-going engagement and validation activities;
- work with colleges, local authorities and schools to develop further and help focus their plans on achieving the objectives set out in the DYW and other strategies; and
- work with other post-16 education sectors to inform them of the findings of this report and engage them in working towards delivery of these recommendations.

SDS should:

- continue to support providers to work with employers, local authorities, awarding bodies and other stakeholders to respond to the changing needs within the hairdressing industry;
- continue to work with centres, local authorities and schools to develop further and help focus their plans on achieving the -ambitions as set out in the DYW strategies; and
- monitor and review progress of ITPs on achieving the recommendations within this report.



## Appendix 1

### Grade illustrations

- An evaluation of **excellent** applies to provision in which apprentices' experiences and achievements are of a very high quality. An evaluation of *excellent* represents an outstanding standard of provision 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 provision characterised by major strengths. There are very few areas for development and any that do exist do not significantly diminish apprentices' experiences. While an evaluation of *very good* represents a high standard of provision, it is a standard that should be achievable by all. It implies that it is fully appropriate to continue to make provision without significant adjustment. However, there is an expectation that the centre will take opportunities to improve and strive to raise performance to excellent.
- An evaluation of **good** applies to provision characterised by important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh any areas for development. An evaluation of *good* represents a standard of provision in which the strengths have a significant positive impact on apprentices. However, the quality of apprentices' experiences is diminished in some way by aspects in which development is required. It implies that the centre should seek to improve further the areas of important strengths, but take action to address the areas for development.
- An evaluation of **satisfactory** applies to provision characterised by strengths which just outweigh areas for development. An evaluation of *satisfactory* indicates that apprentices have access to a basic level of provision. It represents a standard where the strengths have a positive impact on apprentices' experiences. However, while the areas for development will not be important enough to have a substantially adverse impact, they do constrain the overall quality of apprentices' experiences. It implies that the centre should take action to address areas for further development while building on its strengths.
- An evaluation of **weak** applies to provision which has some strengths, but where there are important areas for development. In general, an evaluation of *weak* may be arrived at in a number of circumstances. While there may be some strengths, the important areas for development 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 centre. Where a grading of weak is given, it will lead to follow-up activity from SDS compliance managers.
- An evaluation of **unsatisfactory** applies when there are major areas for development in provision requiring immediate remedial action. Apprentices' experiences are at risk in significant respects. In almost all cases, staff responsible for provision 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 centre. Where a grading of weak is given, it will lead to a follow-up review by staff from SDS and Education Scotland within a year.



## Appendix 2

# Glossary of terms

<b>AA</b>	Associate Assessor
<b>CLPL</b>	Career Long Professional Learning
<b>DYW</b>	Developing the Young Workforce
<b>Habia</b>	Hair and Beauty Industry Authority
<b>HMI</b>	Her Majesty's Inspector
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>ITP</b>	Independent Training Providers
<b>MA</b>	Modern Apprenticeship
<b>NHF</b>	National Hairdressers' Federation
<b>NOS</b>	National Occupational Standards
<b>PI</b>	Performance Indicator
<b>PPE</b>	Personal Protective Equipment
<b>ROA</b>	Regional Outcome Agreements
<b>SDS</b>	Skills Development Scotland
<b>SCQF</b>	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
<b>SSCs</b>	Sector Skills Council
<b>SSOs</b>	Sector Skills Organisations
<b>SVQ</b>	Scottish Vocational Qualification
<b>TQFE</b>	Teaching Qualification in Further Education
<b>UKCES</b>	UK Commission for Employment and Skills
<b>VLE</b>	Virtual Learning Environment
<b>YES</b>	Youth Employment Strategy

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