

Hospitality Modern Apprenticeships

A report on the external review by Education
Scotland of training in Hospitality Modern
Apprenticeships

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Context

Education Scotland has been commissioned by the Scottish Government to undertake external reviews of the off-the-job, and from June 2017, on-the-job, training elements of Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programmes, within each of the industry sectors. The strategic vision outlined by the Scottish Government in Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy¹ (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.

The hospitality sector is an increasingly important part of the Scottish economy and also plays an underpinning role in terms of supporting the competitiveness of other key sectors. The hospitality sector is ranked as a top six employer in every region of the UK, and is the 2nd largest employer in Scotland. Within Scotland, the hospitality industry represents 304,000 direct jobs, or about 10% of the whole UK hospitality workforce. It is of huge importance to the economic and social structure of the country and is the main driver for the success of the visitor economy from the tip of Shetland, to the Borders.

¹ <http://www.gov.scot/News/Releases/2012/01/Employment>
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/12/7750>

Grades

The overall grades for each of the questions from the quality indicators, summarised from the providers visited, are shown below:

Outcomes and impact		Service delivery		Leadership and quality culture
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?
very good	very good	very good	very good	very good

An evaluation of excellent describes a provision of training in which apprentices' experiences and achievements are of a very high quality. It 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.

A grade of very good describes an evaluation of training characterised by major strengths. There are very few areas for improvement in this evaluation, 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 contracted provider will take opportunities to improve and strive to raise performance to excellent.

A grade of good describes an evaluation of 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 contracted provider should seek to improve further the areas of important strength, but take action to address the areas for improvement.

A grade of satisfactory describes training which is characterised by strengths just outweighing areas for development. Apprentices have access to a basic level of provision and 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, while there may be some strengths, the important areas for development will 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.

The table below shows the distribution of the grades for each quality indicator, across the thirteen providers that Education Scotland visited for this report. Those providers were: Babcock Training; Hospitality Training; Di Maggio Restaurant Group; Perth College; GO@L Training; Edinburgh College; Lanarkshire Catering School; The Principal Blythswood Square Hotel; Macdonald Hotel and Resorts; MGT Training; Montpeliers (Edinburgh) Limited; On Track Training; Training Matters.

Distribution of grades across the sample of individual providers

	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?
Provider	very good	excellent	excellent	excellent	excellent
Provider	good	very good	excellent	very good	very good
Provider	weak	satisfactory	weak	weak	weak
Provider	very good	very good	very good	very good	very good
Provider	very good	very good	very good	very good	very good
Provider	very good	good	good	very good	good
Provider	excellent	very good	very good	very good	very good
Provider	good	very good	excellent	very good	very good
Provider	satisfactory	good	good	very good	satisfactory
Provider	very good	excellent	very good	excellent	very good
Provider	very good	very good	very good	very good	very good
Provider	good	very good	good	good	good
Provider	excellent	very good	very good	very good	very good
Overall	very good	very good	very good	very good	very good

Outcomes and impact

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

Grade: **very good**

How effective are training providers at achieving and maintaining high levels of service delivery?

Areas of positive practice

- Almost all providers are achieving their Skills Development Scotland (SDS) contractual obligations. A few providers have responded well to the recruitment needs of the sector and delivered additional demand. For example, within contract year 2016-17, MGT Training were awarded a further 57 additional modern apprentices starts.
- In most providers, apprentice achievement rates are on, or above, the national achievement rate for the sector of 73.8%. In a few cases, Independent Training Providers (ITP) have delivered achievement rates which are significantly higher than the national average.
- Almost all providers are making good progress in recruiting increasing numbers of apprentices who have protected characteristics, or are from care-experienced backgrounds.
- The proportion of MA starts self-identifying with an impairment, health condition or disability, and for those MA starts from ethnic minorities, is higher than the SDS national benchmark.
- Almost all apprentices are making good progress in their awards and are on target to achieve their full qualifications. They are making good progress towards achieving their core skill components within programmes. In the best centres, core skills are embedded fully and signposted well within awards.
- More than a few providers encourage apprentices to enter nationally recognised competitions, which helps to celebrate apprentice achievement. For example, an apprentice from Training Matters was recognised as SDS's Scotland's Apprentice of the Year 2017.
- In a few cases, ITPs are nominated for, and been successful in achieving, national awards which recognise excellence in the provision of training. For example, Babcock Training was voted the winner of the Scottish Training Federation's 2018 Provider of Quality Training award, and GO@L Training was shortlisted for the SDS 2018 MA award for Small to Medium Sized Enterprises.

Areas for development

- A few providers are performing significantly below the SDS national achievement rate of 73.8% for hospitality programmes, and one provider has been unable to fulfil their SDS contractual obligations for apprentice starts.
- More than a few providers are not sufficiently proactive in addressing gender imbalance in programmes, and do not benchmark their recruitment statistics against national targets.
- In a few providers, core skills development is not fully valued by apprentices or by employers. Opportunities to signpost these in context are often missed and diminish the progress of the candidates in understanding the importance of core skills in the programmes.

How well do providers adhere to statutory principles and guidance?

Areas of positive practice

- All ITP and college providers have well-established and effective compliance and internal verification arrangements in place. These processes ensure MA programmes meet the required awarding body standards. They also support assessors and managers well in understanding the requirements for standardisation and provide a consistent standard of delivery.
- Regular and effective standardisation meetings are helpful in ensuring that providers meet the standards for awarding bodies. Overall, external verification reports are positive for providers and identify significant strengths.
- Most providers have effective arrangements for Safeguarding. For example, Babcock Training have a robust programme called “Strictly Safeguarding” which helps to ensure that all staff understand safeguarding policies fully.
- Assessors understand well the requirements of equality and diversity procedures and policies. They signpost these effectively at induction with candidates and are proactive in ensuring that they are promoted effectively as part of the programme.
- All colleges and ITPs place a strong emphasis on health and safety practices and legislation. Apprentices gain a strong understanding of health and safety, as most training takes place in the workplace and follows strict health and safety policies. In the best cases, providers deliver additional health and safety related qualifications to candidates to ensure they develop their practice and add value in their job roles.
- Assessors are generally highly qualified, and those holding Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) external verifier positions, share their expertise well within their organisations and with colleagues. For example, the Lanarkshire Catering School has a staff member who is an external verifier for two awarding bodies and contributes well to sharing good practice with colleagues.

Area for development

- In a few providers, approaches to safeguarding and equality and diversity are under developed. As a result, apprentices do not benefit from any provider devised, awareness raising initiatives.

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

Grade: **very good**

How well do apprentices make progress and achieve individual outcomes?

Areas of positive practice

- All colleges and ITPs offer a comprehensive induction programme for apprentices. These programmes are effective in ensuring that candidates understand clearly what is involved in their programme and what types of activities they will be undertaking. For example, DiMaggio's Restaurant Group have a Declaration of Intent, signed by candidates, which sets out the responsibilities of candidates, employers and assessors and provides a firm idea of what is involved in the programme for apprentices.
- All ITPs plan their activities well in conjunction with employers and apprentices. They negotiate the best level and type of programme with them, and offer a range of optional units, which helps to individualise the learning experience for the apprentice and meets the needs of the employer.
- All assessors plan their engagements flexibly to meet the needs of apprentices, including working around rotas and timings in their work places, to ensure candidate evidence can be gathered effectively.
- Assessors visit apprentices regularly, which maintains relationships with apprentices and employers, and provides a focus on apprentice progress. Apprentices and employers prepare well for these discussions during progress reviews with assessors.
- Almost all assessors have effective arrangements in place to track the progress of apprentices. For example, specific, measureable, agreed, realistic and time-bound (SMART) targets are agreed with candidates and supported well by employers. The setting of these SMART targets provides opportunities for apprentices to reflect on their progress and plan effectively for the next steps in their learning.
- In most providers, core skills planning and delivery are effective. In many cases, core skills are contextualised to reflect working practices. Assessors take good account of opportunities to credit apprentices with skills and competencies from current and previous learning.
- Almost all employers consider that the programme is adding value to their business and meeting their needs well. They feel that apprentices are more committed to their role, than those entering employment through traditional qualification routes.
- Almost all apprentices and employers speak enthusiastically about their relationships with providers. They are satisfied with the training provided and the progress apprentices are making in enhancing their skills.
- Those providers which work throughout Scotland, and in particular in remote rural locations, support apprentices well and ensure regular progress visits take place.

Areas for development

- In a few providers, apprentices did not receive sufficient challenge to extend their knowledge and skills. For a few apprentices, this lack of challenge within extension activities and progression opportunities, demotivates them.
- Not all apprentices understand the relevance of core skills within their MA programme, and more than a few are unclear about how they achieve the required core skills. For example, candidates understood how they attained problem solving and team working skills, but were less clear as to how other core skills such as numeracy and communication, were being developed.

- A few apprentices have limited access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities within their workplace to research and broaden their learning. This restricts their abilities to use ICT to support and develop the knowledge and understanding required by their awards.
- In a few providers, employers have limited communication with staff and find it frustrating not to discuss the design of the programme, to better reflect the needs of their business and the progress of apprentices.

Creativity, innovation and impact

Training Matters

Apprenticeship in Hospitality Scotland: Ambassador Role

Apprentices who have completed their Apprenticeship in Hospitality Scotland (AHS) Level 2 in Hospitality Services are asked to become Ambassadors to promote the benefits of apprenticeships to potential recruits, as a route to gaining a qualification and a career in hospitality. Ambassadors publicise the benefits of apprenticeships and technical skills to young people by visiting schools and speaking at careers events. They also mentor new and existing apprentices.

Ambassadors use social media and forums to provide information to their peers. They participate in official AHS events, handovers and meetings as a spokesperson for AHS, which aim to build relationships with potential apprentices for referral on to partner employers. Ambassadors also provide feedback to the Board regarding the activities of AHS.

Delivery of training

How good is our delivery of training?

Grade: **very good**

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

Areas of positive practice

- Overall, providers deliver programmes well, which are designed in conjunction with employers and support apprentices to improve their skills and enhance their qualifications. They provide suitable career progression and help ensure employers develop a skilled workforce which meets their needs well.
- Almost all apprentices engage well in their training and as a result are making good progress towards achieving their qualification aim. In most cases, apprentices work well in team tasks and in individual assessments, developing high levels of skills and have a very positive approach to their training programme.
- In almost all cases, programmes are highly relevant to the role of the apprentice in their jobs. For example, ITPs hold discussions with employers to ensure apprentices are enrolled onto appropriate programmes, which match their job roles closely.
- Apprentices and assessors discuss and plan effectively, the appropriate level and award for each candidate to achieve their MA. This is negotiated with the employer and takes good account of the apprentice's current role and future aspirations.
- Overall, training plans for apprentices are developed in conjunction with employers and apprentices. Optional units are agreed jointly with employers and apprentices. This aligns well apprentices' learning experiences and the development of skills, with the business need within their employers. For example, in GO@L Training and On-Track Training, apprentices benefit from fortnightly face-to-face review meetings which set appropriate training targets. These targets take good account of work patterns and opportunities to collect evidence of competency.
- Almost all providers make good use of well-equipped resources to improve and enhance the experience of apprentices. Most providers have appropriate arrangements to support apprentices effectively with additional support needs (ASN). For example, for many apprentices with English as a second or other language, providers have introduced additional support materials. These arrangements are assisting apprentices to make progress and achieve positive outcomes. ITPs including MGT Training and Macdonald Hotels have a high number of apprentices who are developing their English skills, and signpost them to locally available English for Speakers of Other Languages resources and provision.
- All apprentices are motivated to succeed and engage well in their workplace learning activities. They speak enthusiastically about gaining their qualifications and the types of the activities they undertake. Assessors take an active role in encouraging and motivating apprentices, which improves their confidence within the workplace.

Area for development

- A few providers do not support sufficiently apprentices who have additional support needs in the workplace. Apprentices in these contexts are not aware of how they might access additional support.

Babcock Training - Mentoring programme for new assessors

At Babcock Training, new assessors undertake a comprehensive range of development activities which help them across every aspect of their role. New assessors are fully supported to develop effective teaching and assessment practice during their induction and beyond. Following a series of initial familiarisation activities, they begin a six month induction programme and are allocated a peer mentor, who provides direct support throughout this period.

In addition, new assessors are enrolled on Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement (CAVA) qualification and Core Skills at Level 4 and 5. A dedicated skills trainer supports this activity and they are further supported by regular meetings with their line manager and Internal Quality Assurer.

Following completion of the CAVA award, assessors are enrolled on the Level 3 Award in Education and Training qualification, which focusses on the key areas of planning and delivering inclusive teaching sessions, assessment processes and the delivery of constructive feedback. New assessors value these career development opportunities which help to develop their practice.

More widely, assessors at Babcock Training are supported with rigorous continuing professional learning which continues to drive improvement and enhancement. This includes stringent observation of teaching, learning and assessment and includes a strong focus on developing effective relationships with employers.

How well is training delivered?

Areas of positive practice

- Overall, assessors plan and prepare well for their engagements with apprentices, attending the workplace when candidates undertake specific tasks. They are generally able to accommodate changing work patterns and commitments of apprentices in the workplace. This is facilitated by effective communication between employers, apprentices and assessors.
- Almost all assessors in colleges and ITPs balance well the provision of effective support to candidates in the workplace, ensuring that apprentices take ownership of their work and progress, and develop their independence and confidence, as they progress. Employers and apprentices appreciate this approach.
- Most assessors adopt a flexible approach to gathering evidence from candidates. Many apprentices are encouraged to use mobile devices to provide relevant evidence, which aids the completion of their portfolios and develops their ICT skills.
- The availability of high quality dedicated online resources within ePortfolios is valued highly by apprentices. For example, at MGT Training, the use of ePortfolios assists the delivery of the qualifications and the communication of candidates progress. Assessors can review evidence before a review meeting and make best use of the time spent with the candidates.
- Almost all assessors in colleges and ITPs use a good range of effective questioning techniques to gauge knowledge and understanding and ensure apprentices are making good progress. They know their apprentices, and their work contexts well, and observation of apprentices' activities are carried out in appropriate contexts to support the gathering of evidence.
- Most apprentices are suitably challenged by assessors and are often encouraged to stretch themselves to gain further knowledge and skills. For example, employers will order special ingredients for apprentices to develop menus and dishes and develop the underlying skills involved in their production.
- In general, assessors are highly qualified and use their extensive experience of the industry effectively, to support apprentices as they progress through their qualifications. For example, in ITPs, assessors regularly identify and access modern work practices and career and lifelong professional learning sessions to ensure their skills and knowledge are current and industry standard.
- Almost all assessors develop positive relationships with candidates and employers. Assessors are very approachable and flexible, and build the confidence of apprentices through positive engagement and encouragement.
- Overall, feedback to apprentices and employers is constructive and informative, which supports apprentices in understanding how well they are performing, and where they can develop their skills further. Most apprentices welcome this and find it motivates them to understand how best they can improve their skills and competencies.
- In general, employers and apprentices are satisfied with the delivery of the MA training programme.

Areas for development

- In more than a few centres, opportunities to reinforce core skills development are not contextualised, and apprentices therefore fail to see the relevance of core skills within their overall MA programme.
- In a few instances, one-to-one discussions with apprentices are heavily assessor-led. Apprentices would benefit from more active involvement, contributing equally during these conversations.

- In a few providers, apprentices and employers had no formal opportunities to feedback directly on their programme and were rarely involved in progress review discussions.
- A few providers did not provide appropriate learning resources for the apprentices. For example, a kitchen in one provider did not reflect current industry standards, and in another provider, the ICT facilities were poor.

How well do staff reflect on provision to improve training?

Areas of positive practice

- All colleges and ITPs have robust internal verification processes in place which satisfy awarding body quality assurance procedures. Assessors and internal verifiers have clearly defined roles, and regular standardisation meetings support the sharing of practice and assurance of standards.
- All ITPs engage well in standardisation meetings which are scheduled regularly, so that progress of apprentices and any other issues can be addressed. These meetings generally involve all team members and ensure that there is a consistent implementation of the qualification standards.
- Most staff meet regularly as a team to provide opportunities for reflective activities, the review of caseloads and discussions on important issues which lead to improvement. They also share effective practice on an informal basis, which complements formal meetings, and assists in providing peer support. Staff make good use of messaging, including group chat, to seek support and share ideas.
- The use of ePortfolios for assessment facilitates a quick turnaround in relation to internal verification. This is a particular benefit where assessors within teams are geographically dispersed.
- In most programmes, employers and apprentices actively contribute to the evaluation of the delivery of programmes. They comment positively on the communication between them and the providers. These opportunities help to shape the way programmes are delivered as assessors and apprentices evaluate learning at the completion of units. For example, apprentices have suggested enhancements to communication through the use of social media, and changes to the duration candidates spend within particular business functions, to consolidate their learning.

Areas for development

- In a few providers, there are insufficient formal opportunities for staff to reflect meaningfully on the experiences of apprentices, or plan for improvement more generally.
- In more than a few providers, approaches to assessment do not always provide sufficient opportunities for apprentices to support the development of reflective practice and development of independence in learning.

MGT Training

Improving access to apprenticeship opportunities and employment for those facing significant barriers to training and accessing employment opportunities.

MGT Training have been working closely with a community group for four years to support young people who face significant barriers in accessing employment and training opportunities. They work with young people and adults in supported employment who have complex additional support needs, to prepare them for progression to further employment opportunities. In addition to gaining an MA qualification, there are also opportunities for these participants to achieve additional qualifications, such as Barista certification, which assists in increasing their employability.

Delivery of these MAs requires careful planning and close working between MGT Training and the community group to ensure support needs are effectively met.

Delivery is paced appropriately and programmes are tailored to individual need with an emphasis on developing apprentices confidence and independence. Over the four year period, MGT have assisted over 12 young people and adults who face additional barriers to their learning to complete Hospitality and Management Apprenticeships across a range of levels.

How good is our management of training delivery?

Grade: **very good**

How well does the contracted provider work with partners to improve outcomes for apprentices?

Areas of positive practice

- Overall, there are good partnership arrangements in place between providers and employers. In particular, ITPs have productive links with employers and with strategic partners. These relationships help to establish the levels of industry demand for apprentice specialisms and promote employment opportunities. These relationships also support transitions into, and during, MA programmes.
- ITPs make good use of partnership arrangements to support learners who have additional support needs to apply for apprenticeships. For example, the Lanarkshire Catering School provides helpful promotional events to schools, in partnership with local employers, to promote apprentice recruitment to learners in the senior phase who have additional support needs.
- Overall, providers are responding well to national priorities for Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) and working effectively to deliver to government policies. For example, Babcock Training and Macdonald Hotels work closely with the Prince's Trust to provide work experience opportunities for prospective apprentices. Many young people who complete these programmes progress to MA programmes and achieve well.
- Most providers are represented well on local networks and forums. They are committed to promoting apprenticeships within the sector and work well with local authorities, DYW co-ordinators and third sector organisations to provide training, pre-employment and employment opportunities.
- Most providers collaborate well with local schools, promoting careers in hospitality to senior phase pupils. For example, GO@L Training provides helpful promotional events to schools to support recruitment for pupils who might not have considered hospitality as a career option.

Area for development

- For a few providers, there is insufficient engagement with partners such as the local DYW group, or wider trade associations, to deliver actions from the Scottish Government's Youth Employment Strategy.

Leadership and quality culture

How good is our strategic leadership?

Grade: **very good**

How appropriate and influential are the contracted provider's vision, values and aims?

Areas of positive practice

- Overall, providers have strong employer and strategic links which ensures programmes are industry relevant. In doing so, their programmes align well to the needs of the sector.
- Almost all providers communicate effectively to staff their vision in relation to the importance of the hospitality industry to the Scottish economy and the values and aims of delivering high quality training to apprentices.
- In most providers, key business performance information is communicated well to all staff, particularly contract performance against targets. This knowledge helps the staff to plan their activities with employers and apprentices more effectively.
- Team working across staff in almost all of the providers is strong. All staff are highly motivated and engaged in their work, and are committed to delivering high-quality training experiences for apprentices, which meet employer needs well.
- Most providers promote the industry and its careers well, including working closely with DYW teams in local areas. They engage productively with a wide range of sector related partners to help improve the attractiveness of the sector.

Areas for development

- In a few providers, strategies for engaging fully with schools to develop a pipeline for pupils to undertake apprenticeships are underdeveloped.
- A few managers do not undertake a focussed analysis of the success of the component parts of the MA programme to inform discussions with employers and apprentices to help identify improvements in the delivery of training.
- Staff in a few providers have a limited awareness of how their organisation performs in relation to the sector as a whole, and against SDS minimum performance expectations for hospitality apprentices.

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

Areas of positive practice

- Improving outcomes for apprentices is a priority for all providers. Almost all managers work closely with staff to ensure there is a clear focus on improving the delivery of training and assessment.
- In all on-the-job training activities, assessors are supported well by managers to provide high-quality training experiences and effective support for apprentices.
- In many ITPs, new assessors are given opportunities to shadow experienced members of staff to understand more fully their roles and also have mentoring support through their initial probation periods.
- Almost all managers and staff monitor apprentices' progress well to ensure projections for apprentice outcomes are in line with expectations. This includes regular discussion with assessors regarding their case-load of apprentices and the progress of the apprentices.

- Almost all staff are highly motivated and work well together as a team to support apprentices. Staff work well together to provide apprentices with the best possible learning experience.
- Almost all apprentices are generally satisfied with their programme and are clearly making good progress toward achieving their career goals.

Area for development

- A few employers would appreciate more effective communication from their provider. This restricts opportunities for employers to influence programmes which lead to improvement in training. For example, in a few providers, there are no systematic arrangements in place to gather feedback from employers about their experiences or levels of satisfaction, to inform improvements.

Creativity, innovation and impact

Macdonald Hotels and Resorts

Partnership working to promote Hospitality career paths

Macdonald Hotels have a strong track record in working with key external partners to promote MA programmes as part of a career path in the Hospitality industry. The company passionately supports the ambitions of DYW and has established productive relationships with DYW teams across Scotland. In addition, they are the Hospitality sponsor with DYW for West Lothian and Forth Valley. These ongoing partnerships help to raise the profile of MA programmes in Hospitality, as well as highlighting career opportunities within the Hospitality sector.

Macdonald Hotels has recently introduced a Hotelier Programme. Underpinned by an MA Programme, staff participate in a number of events for young people to help prepare them for work. These events include visiting local schools and colleges to advise young people on career options within Hospitality, and the training, development and qualifications available to support them to succeed.

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

Areas of positive practice

- All ITP and college providers comply effectively with SDS requirements for self-assessment and generate actions plans which inform improvement.
- In almost all providers, there is a strong commitment to self-evaluation leading to improving outcomes for apprentices. They react promptly as a result of feedback received from apprentices and employers.
- Most providers actively encourage staff to share examples of best practice. Approaches to internal verification are developed well and there are regular staff meetings, which staff value highly.
- Most apprentices have sufficient opportunities to contribute to the evaluation of their programmes and are satisfied these discussions generate improvements in the delivery of training.
- Most providers facilitate effective engagement with employers to discuss and plan training to ensure that the training needs of employers and apprentices are aligned well.

Areas for development

- In a few providers, the use of formal arrangements for gathering employer and apprentice views are not always used systematically to identify and inform improvement themes.
- For a few providers, communication links between the Business Development Unit and the programme area were insufficient, and employer feedback was not sought or utilised effectively to make improvements in the programme.

Creativity, innovation and impact

Training Matters

Apprenticeship in hospitality Scotland Partnership Agreement (AHS)

All employer partners sign up to a partner agreement to ensure apprentices are provided with a consistent experience and receive equitable support arrangements. Employer are involved actively in the development and enhancement of the MA hospitality Services programme. Partners agree to provide specialist training to all apprentices within the partnership. These include workshops, industry leading guest speakers and masterclasses.

Employer partners provide apprentices with a full introduction to their role and on-the-job training four weeks prior to the AHS official full residential induction. Employer departmental support for apprentices is arranged and staff time provided in the workplace to liaise with Training Matters which includes the nomination of work-based assessors. Time is also guaranteed for apprentices to complete their portfolio work.

Capacity to improve

How good is our capacity to improve?

- Almost all apprentices are making good progress through their awards and are on target to achieve full qualifications. Achievement and retention rates in the sector are generally very good. The majority of providers are performing on or above the sector average. However, a few providers are performing significantly below the sector average.
- Most apprentices are clear on progress towards achieving their core skill components within programmes. In the best centres, core skills are embedded fully and signposted well within awards. However, in a few cases, core skills development is not fully valued by apprentices or by employers. Opportunities to signpost these in context are often missed and diminish the progress of the apprentices in understanding the importance of core skills in the programmes.
- All ITP and college providers have well-established and effective compliance and internal verification arrangements in place, which ensures MA programmes meet the required awarding body standards. These support assessors and managers well in understanding the requirements for standardisation and provide a consistent standard of delivery.
- ITPs deliver MA programmes in hospitality which ensure that apprentices improve their skills and enhance their qualifications. They provide suitable career progression and help ensure employers develop a skilled workforce which meets their needs well. However, a few providers did not engage sufficiently with apprentices or employers to deliver improvements in qualifications or skills.
- Assessors plan their engagements flexibly to meet the needs of apprentices, including working around rotas to ensure candidate evidence can be gathered naturally, and at times, which suits the needs of the businesses.
- Almost all ITP and college providers make good use of well-equipped resources to improve and enhance the experience of apprentices. These resources meet the training needs of the apprentices well. However, in a few providers, apprentices have limited access to ICT facilities within the workplace to research and broaden their learning. This limits their ability to develop the knowledge and understanding required by their awards.
- Almost all apprentices are motivated to succeed and engage very well in their workplace learning activities. They talk enthusiastically about gaining their qualifications as recognition of the work they undertake.
- A few providers do not support apprentices who have additional support needs in the workplace effectively. Apprentices who have additional support needs are not fully aware of how they might access additional support.
- Assessors and apprentices evaluate learning at the completion of units and these are analysed and actioned by the team where appropriate.
- Most providers are responding well to national priorities such as DYW, and working effectively to deliver government policies. However, there is insufficient engagement with employers on working to deliver actions for DYW.
- Almost all providers communicate effectively to staff their vision of the importance of the hospitality industry to the Scottish economy and the values and aims of delivering high quality training to apprentices.
- Almost all apprentices are generally satisfied with the programmes and are clearly making good progress toward achieving their career goals. However, in a few providers, employers would appreciate more effective communication about their experiences and levels of satisfaction to help inform improvements.

Recommendations

Providers should:

- work with Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and SDS staff to promote the practices from those centres with excellent grades, across all of the providers in the sector;
- further develop strategies that respond appropriately to national priorities, such as DYW;
- continue to improve the achievement rates for hospitality apprentices to at least the national average in the sector.
- take action to contextualise and highlight the relevance of core skills within programmes and ensure apprentices recognise fully how they are developing their core skills;
- improve formal communication with employers to ensure they fully understand the structure of the programme, the role they have in supporting apprentices within the programme, and the progress of their apprentices;
- continue to develop strategies to ensure applicants from under-represented groups apply and are recruited to programmes; and
- establish formal mechanisms for apprentices and employers to influence improvements in the programmes.

Education Scotland should:

- monitor and review the quality of hospitality apprenticeships in colleges through ongoing engagement and review activities, to improve achievement rates and the training experience for apprentices;
- work with colleges, schools and local authorities to meet the targets of the Scottish Government Youth Employment Strategy; and
- work with colleges and other post-16 providers to identify and respond to changing employer needs within the hospitality sector.

SDS should:

- work with providers to support employers, awarding bodies and other stakeholders, to help them respond to the changing needs within the hospitality sector;
- continue to support providers, local authorities and schools to implement fully DYW strategies, such as initiatives on the apprenticeship family; and,
- support providers to share the excellent practice delivered by ITPs, within this report.

Appendix 1 – External review methodology

Education Scotland's external review of the on-and off-the-job training element of Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) builds upon and complements 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 HM Inspectors from Education Scotland and Associate Assessors (AA), from SDS, colleges and ITPs 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 'providers' in this report.

External review approaches incorporate:

- observation of training activities;
- discussions held with centre managers and staff; and
- 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 five high-level questions posed during the review. This report is shared with SDS but is not published externally, although providers 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.

Appendix 2 – Grade exemplification

The grades which will be awarded to each of the elements are:

- excellent - outstanding and sector leading
- very good - major strengths
- good - important strengths with some areas for improvement
- satisfactory - strengths just outweigh weaknesses
- weak - important weaknesses
- unsatisfactory - major weaknesses

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 3 – Abbreviations

AHS	Apprenticeship in Hospitality Scotland
ASN	additional support needs
AA	Associate Assessor
BDU	Business Development Unit
CAVA	Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement
DYW	Developing the Young Workforce
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ITP	Independent Training Provider
MA	Modern Apprenticeship
SDS	Skills Development Scotland
SMART	Specific, measureable, agreed, realistic and time-bound
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
YES	Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy

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