

## Definition of Apprenticeships

An Apprenticeship is a job with an accompanying skills development programme designed by employers in the sector. It allows the apprentice to gain technical knowledge and real practical experience, along with functional and personal skills, required for their immediate job and future career. These are acquired through a mix of learning in the workplace, formal off-the-job training and the opportunity to practice and embed new skills in a real work context. The broader mix differentiates the Apprenticeship experience from training delivered to meet narrowly focused job needs.

On completion of the Apprenticeship the apprentice must be able to undertake the full range of duties, in the range of circumstances appropriate to the job, confidently and competently to the standard set by the industry.

## Background information about Apprenticeships

All Apprenticeship Frameworks are linked to **specific job roles or occupations**. Providers must work closely with employers to ensure that the Apprenticeship offered is the most appropriate for the individual's job role with their employer, whilst reflecting individual employer and learner needs.

The focus of an Apprenticeship is on equipping individuals with the **new skills and learning** they need for their job roles and future employment and progression.

It is appropriate for those moving into a new job or for individuals in an existing job where significant new knowledge and skills will be acquired through the Apprenticeship. Providers must work closely with the employer to ensure that the Apprenticeship will meet this requirement.

**Employment** is a fundamental part of an Apprenticeship and in this context is more than just having a contract of employment. An apprentice must be employed in a job role with a productive purpose.

Ideally they will have a range of experience and additional enhancement opportunities that can aid their **future progression**. This can include, but is not limited to, additional units with smaller employers and higher level Maths and English.

The **duration of the Apprenticeship** must meet the minimum duration requirement announced by NAS:

- Apprenticeships for apprentices aged 16 – 18 must last at least 12 months. For those Apprentices aged 19 or over the Apprenticeship should also last at least 12 months unless relevant prior learning is recorded. Where this is the case the Apprenticeship will not be less than 6 months.
- Apprenticeship delivery must be planned to make full and effective use of the duration, including the opportunity for apprentices to embed and extend their learning through repeated workplace practice.

All apprentices commencing their Apprenticeship on or after 6th April 2012 must have an **Apprenticeship Agreement** between the employer and the apprentice. This can be used to reinforce the understanding of the requirements of the Apprenticeship.

## **The Food and Drink Industry**

The food and drink industry is an exciting, dynamic, fast-paced and competitive industry driven by innovation and new technology. As the largest manufacturing sector in the UK (based on number of employees and financial turnover), it includes some of the country's best known businesses and brands, and offers a wide variety of well paid, relatively secure jobs. There are opportunities for people with different abilities, backgrounds and experience to enter the sector and develop and progress in their chosen career.

The food and drink manufacturing and processing (FDMP) industry develops, manufactures, processes, packs and distributes food and drink products for sale in the UK and worldwide. With more than 313,000 employees across 5,700 businesses and annual exports worth £8.8bn, making up nearly half (48%) of total UK food and drink manufacturing exports, England's food and drink industry has a vital role to play in the UK's economy. This can only be achieved if the sector continues to have world-class skills and has the ability to see the bigger picture. This Apprenticeship Framework in Food and Drink provides an excellent basis to introduce these skills. (Source: Improve England Skills Insight and Labour Market Facts Profile 2013/14)

The UK food and drink manufacturing and processing industry needs to recruit 170,000 staff between 2010 and 2020 to meet growth demands and replace those who leave or retire (with 35% of the current workforce being eligible for retirement in the next 20 years). This includes 25,000 managers and senior officials; 16,000 high skilled professionals; 24,000 associate professional and technical roles; 33,000 process, plant and machine operatives; and 35,000 elementary roles. (Source: Working Futures 4, 2012)

There are a number of complex issues currently driving the FDMP industry in England including:

- Consumer protection and public health – for example, supply chain issues and traceability
- Globalisation - companies are tending to relocate where cost advantages are identified
- Consumer demands - consumers are more concerned about health and nutrition than ever before
- Technology – innovative production methods are being introduced
- Environmental change – finding sustainable methods for food production is critical

## **Recruitment and skills issues facing the industry**

The FDMP industry in England is facing a number of skills issues, negatively affecting its ability to achieve its potential:

- Within the existing FDMP workforce, 15% of employers report having vacancies

- Employers are most likely to have vacancies for associate professionals (30%), machine operatives (30%) and elementary occupations (14%)
- 15% FDMP employers in England have skills gaps
- Of the 15% of England FDMP employers reporting vacancies, about 4% of these are considered 'hard to fill'
- 2% of employers in the FDMP sector in England report skills shortage vacancies
- Technical skills, oral communication and team working skills are the most frequently stated skills deficiencies found in production roles

### **How this Framework will help address skills issues**

The Apprenticeship Framework for Food and Drink allows apprentices to follow the most relevant pathway for their roles - whether specialist (eg., Craft Baker), sector-specific or generalist; operative or supervisory/management - providing them with an opportunity to learn new skills in an industry with wide-ranging careers and good progression prospects.

The Framework allows apprentices to gain technical knowledge and real practical experience, in areas where there are known skills gaps and 'hard to fill' vacancies. The Intermediate Level Apprenticeship provides an entry route into the sector, and is suitable for those learners moving into a new job, or for equipping existing employees with new skills and learning; whilst the Advanced Level Apprenticeship provides progression routes to technical supervisory and management roles and senior operative roles where there are skills gaps and increasing future demand.

The most significant training benefits for businesses in the industry are found to be those associated with intermediate level skills. Investment in intermediate level skills brings broader benefits, not just in terms of the apprentice's job satisfaction and career opportunities, but also in meeting business goals, innovation and responding to the market. This Framework, with its diverse range of pathways, including many at intermediate level, provides an opportunity for employers to invest in these skills; and for learners to achieve their career goals.

The Intermediate Level Food and Drink (Food Industry Skills) pathway is for those in generalist roles relevant to all food and drink sectors, such as processing control operative, quality control, facilities support or sales/service support in a food industry organisation; and specialist operatives such as butcher, baker or dairy production operative. Operatives often work with semi-automated processing control and monitoring functions coupled with batch production systems. However, batch operations may require some specialist sub-sector skills and knowledge. Role-holders need to be highly responsive to customer needs where the requirement is for flexible processing operations.

The Intermediate Level Food and Drink (Food Industry Team Leading) pathway is for team leaders; and the Advanced Level Food and Drink (Food Industry Skills and Technical Management) pathway is for those performing advanced technical skills in operative roles; and for technical managers and supervisors of food manufacture and the food supply chain environment, in areas such as production, technical control and quality assurance. These are areas where there are known skills gaps.

Throughout the Framework, including the Higher Apprenticeship, the Food Manufacturing Excellence (FME) pathway, focuses on business improvement techniques and 'lean' production methods. FME can have a significant and tangible impact on productivity and profitability. Employers recognise FME techniques are powerful development tools, critical to business success.