

**Food and Drink Process Operator  
Apprenticeship  
Assessment Plan**

## Food and Drink Process Operator Apprenticeship

### Summary of Apprenticeship

The Food and Drink Process Operator apprenticeship is an integrated programme of knowledge and skills acquisition, developed alongside core behaviours expected of a competent process operator working in a commercial setting. The award of the apprenticeship certificate will signify recognition of competence in the role. Apprentices will typically spend 18-24 months working towards the apprenticeship standard, with the endpoint assessment completed in the final twelve weeks. Performance in the end-point assessment will determine the apprenticeship grade of fail, pass, merit or distinction.

There are no pre-requisite entry requirements for this programme. Apprentices without English and maths at level 1 must achieve level 1 English and maths, and are required to attempt level 2 English and maths tests prior to taking their end-point assessment.

Prior to the end-point assessment, apprentices will undertake a structured period of on-programme training to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required of the standard. Achievement of a Level 2 Diploma in Food and Drink Operations, which includes grading at pass, merit and distinction, is a pre-requisite to taking the end-point assessment.

The structured period of on-programme training may include additional non-mandated qualifications required to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required of the standard depending on individual requirements.

End-point assessment will be conducted by an independent assessment organisation (IAO). IAOs must be on the Skills Funding Agency's (SFA) Register of Apprentice Assessment Organisations (RoAAO) for this standard.

The end-point assessment will include three distinct components:

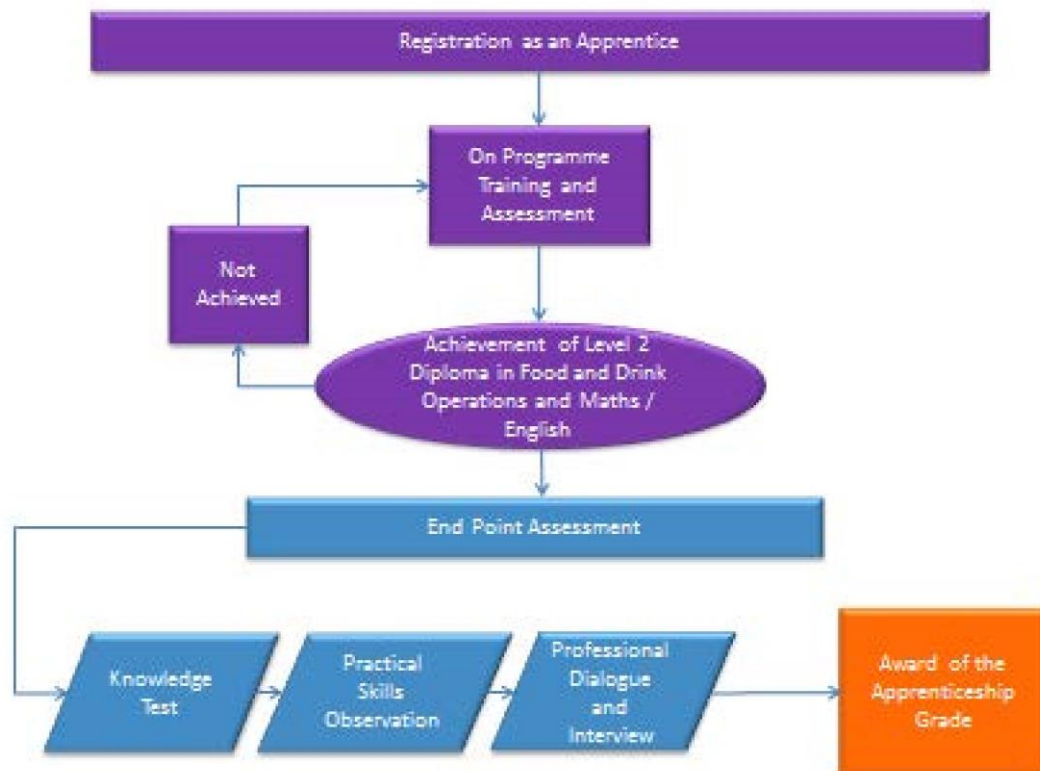
- A **written knowledge test** answered through multiple choice questions
- A workplace-based **practical observation of skills**
- A **professional dialogue and interview**, which is undertaken after all other endpoint assessment components have been successfully completed.

To achieve final certification, the apprentice must have completed and achieved a minimum of a pass in each end-point assessment component.

A pass in the end-point assessment will demonstrate that the apprentice can apply the knowledge, skills and behaviours required by the standard and will satisfy the requirements

for the award of an apprenticeship certificate. Apprentices achieving a merit or distinction will be demonstrating performance above the requirements of the standard.

## Summary of Apprenticeship



## Grading and Weighting Overview

Assessment Method	Summary of Assessment	Assessed by	Grading	Weighting
Knowledge Test	<i>All knowledge will be assessed in the written knowledge test. The knowledge test will be drawn from all of the knowledge statements within the standard.</i>	Independent Assessment Organisation	Pass Merit Distinction	15%
Practical Observation	<i>Apprentices will be observed in the workplace demonstrating a range of competencies appropriate to the workplace setting.</i>	Independent Assessment Organisation	Pass Merit Distinction	60%
Professional Dialogue and Interview	<i>The professional dialogue and interview is a structured discussion between the apprentice and the independent assessor covering areas of the standard not assessed in the other end-point assessment components. A standardised set of competency based questions will be used.</i>	Independent Assessment Organisation	Pass Merit Distinction	25%

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The apprentice must achieve a pass as a minimum in every individual end-point assessment component to achieve an overall pass and achieve the apprentice certificate.

## **Assessment Gateway**

Prior to undertaking the end-point assessment, the apprentice must have completed and achieved a pass as a minimum in the Level 2 Diploma in Food and Drink Operations, passed Level 1 English and maths, and have attempted the tests for Level 2 English and maths.

Judgement on whether the apprentice is ready for the end-point assessment should be by the employer who may wish to take advice from the learning provider.

## **End-point Assessment**

### ***Knowledge Test***

The knowledge test will be administered and marked by an independent assessor from the IAO. This written test should be taken as early as possible in the 12 week period of the endpoint assessment. The knowledge test assesses the underpinning knowledge and understanding of the apprentice through 30 multiple choice questions (MCQs).

The assessment will be undertaken under controlled conditions within a 60 minute time limit (but not necessarily undertaken as an online or computer based test).

All knowledge areas will be tested and MCQs drawn from all statements, however particular emphasis will be placed on the following knowledge:

- The principles of quality management
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Hygiene standards and food safety
- Health and Safety in the food industry
- Products: how to handle products and the effects of external influences on them
- Effective communication skills and team working
- How to use relevant tools and equipment in food production
- The principles of Continuous Improvement (CI) in the food production industry
- Good manufacturing practice in the food industry
- Performance data: understanding, interpreting and acting on it.

The knowledge test will result in a pass, merit or distinction grade and it will contribute 15% to the weighting of the final apprenticeship grade.

The grading threshold will be as set out in the table below:

Acceptable achievement – Pass	Good achievement - Merit	Outstanding achievement Distinction
>18 correct answers out of 30	>23 correct answers out of 30	>27 correct answers out of 30

Candidates achieving between 13 and 17 correct answers may resit the assessment on one further occasion within three months. It is anticipated that candidates achieving less than 13 correct answers need to undertake a period of further learning and will not be allowed to retake the assessment until after completing a professional review of performance.

### ***Practical Observation***

Each apprentice candidate will be observed by the independent assessor undertaking a variable range of process tasks from the stated competencies. It will include the opportunity for questioning to clarify knowledge and understanding being applied. This assessment will take place in the workplace or simulated food processing environment.

The observation can be carried out in one two hour session, or in two one hour sessions, depending on the needs of the employer and observation opportunities. During the observation the apprentice should have the opportunity, if required, to move from one area / function of the business to another in order to best demonstrate how they have applied their knowledge, skills and behaviours in a real-work environment to achieve genuine and demanding work objectives.

It is mandatory that the observation covers the following aspects of the standard:

### **Knowledge**

- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Environmental Management System requirements
- Hygiene standards and food safety
- Health and safety in the food industry
- Products: how to handle products and the effects of external influences on them •  
Performance data: understanding, interpreting and acting on it

## Skills

- Follow and implement Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and work with the quality process as appropriate
- Carry out basic fault finding and problem solving; take action according to organisational procedures
- Clean equipment according to specifications and schedules
- Ensure personal compliance with regulatory and company Quality, Food Safety, Environmental, and Health and Safety requirements
- Identify Health and Safety, Food Safety, Hygiene and Quality issues where appropriate and escalate
- Monitor product quality and identify and communicate opportunities for improvement according to organisational practices
- Interpret, record and act upon performance indicator data
- Engage in HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) monitoring and controls

## Behaviours

- Safe working: ensures safety of self and others, food safe, challenges safety issues
- Ownership of work: accepts responsibility and is proactive
- Pride in work: aims for excellence, punctual and reliable, has 'first time right' attitude
- Integrity and respect: respect for colleagues, customers, products and equipment
- Effective communication: with others, listens effectively, gives and receives feedback.

The practical observation provides the opportunity for substantial synoptic assessment against the relevant elements of the standard. The observation must be scheduled when the apprentice will be working in their normal place of work or simulated food processing environment and will also:

- Be conducted at a time which reflects typical working conditions
- Allow the apprentice to demonstrate all aspects of the standard being observed
- Take a synoptic approach to observing the overall competence.

The independent end assessor will plan the observation in conjunction with the apprentice and employer. They will use the assessment tools and procedures that are set by the IAO to record the observation and questioning.

The observation will result in a pass, merit or distinction grade and it will contribute 60% to the weighting of the final apprenticeship grade.

All knowledge, skills and behaviours assessed in the observation must be satisfactorily achieved to pass the observation. The grading criteria for the practical observation are based on the assessment of behaviours:

Behaviour Statement	Acceptable achievement (Pass) – 1 point	Good achievement (Merit) – 2 points	Outstanding achievement (Distinction) – 3 points
Safe working:	Ensures safety of self and others, food safe, challenges safety	Consistently ensures safety of self and others; spots and	Identifies and communicates potential safety,
	issues	challenges unsafe behaviour	health or other risks across teams and departments; takes appropriate action when others are not behaving safely
Ownership of work:	Accepts responsibility and is proactive	Takes ownership of own work, plans work	Identifies potential issues and takes appropriate actions to minimise disruptions to workflow
Pride in work:	Aims for excellence, punctual and reliable, has 'first time right' attitude	Continuously demonstrates punctuality and reliability, aims for excellence, demonstrates good time management	Consistently uses time proactively and anticipates problems which may cause delays to work plans or compromise to quality
Integrity and respect:	Shows respect for others, customers, products and equipment	Consistently shows respect for others, customers, products and equipment	Actively encourages others to respect the values of others, customers, products and equipment
Effective communication:	Communicates effectively visually and verbally	Effectively uses a range of communication techniques and demonstrates effective listening skills	Reviews effectiveness of and recommends improvements for different methods of communication; demonstrates effective influencing skills



Each element is scored one point for acceptable achievement, two points for good achievement and three points for outstanding achievement based on the assessment criteria given in the table above. For the practical observation, to achieve a pass the apprentice must achieve a minimum score of five points. Please see the table below for the scoring and grading rules which must be applied when allocating the grade for the practical observation:

Pass	Merit	Distinction
5-7 points	8-12 points	13-15 points

### ***Professional Dialogue and Interview***

The professional dialogue and interview is a structured discussion between the apprentice and their independent assessor. It is recommended that the independent assessor conducting the professional discussion is not the same person who carried out the workplace observation assessment. Apprentices can only undertake the interview component once a pass as a minimum has been achieved in each of the other two end-point assessment components.

The professional dialogue and interview will cover areas of the standard not assessed in the other end-point assessment components, that is:

#### **Skills**

- Ensure effective handovers to appropriate colleagues
- Actively contribute to optimal production performance, eg line optimisation in the control of yields/stock levels
- Contribute to effective changeovers
- Contribute to Continuous Improvement (CI) activities

#### **Behaviours**

- Self-development: seeks learning and development opportunities
- Working in a team: builds good relationships with others
- Problem solving: participates in problem solving
- Responsiveness to change: flexibility to changing working environment and demands
- Company/industry perspective: desire to learn about the company and food industry, acts as an ambassador
- Demonstrates and encourages curiosity to foster new ways of thinking and working.

The discussion must be appropriately structured to draw out the best of the apprentice's competence and excellence.

The professional dialogue and interview will be conducted in a 'controlled environment' i.e. a quiet room, away from the normal place of work. The interview will typically last 30 minutes and be no more than 45 minutes duration.

Independent assessors will select six questions from a bank of standardised competency based questions to ensure a consistent approach is adopted, as well as ensuring all required areas of the standard are appropriately covered. The bank of competency based questions will focus on the behaviours and skills that have not already been assessed in the other endpoint assessment components, as shown above.

The professional dialogue and interview provides a basis for the Independent Assessor to make a holistic decision about the grade to be awarded for this component.

A structured brief and question bank will be developed by IAOs and independent assessors will be developed and trained in the art of professional discussions and reaching consistent judgement.

The professional dialogue and interview will result in a pass, merit or distinction grade and it will contribute 25% to the weighting of the final apprenticeship certificate.

All skills and behaviours assessed in the professional dialogue and interview must be satisfactorily achieved to pass this end-point assessment component. The grading criteria for the professional dialogue and interview are based on the assessment of behaviours:

Behaviour Statement	Acceptable achievement (Pass) – 1 point	Good achievement (Merit) – 2 points	Outstanding achievement (Distinction) – 3 points
Self-development:	Seeks learning and development opportunities	Takes ownership of learning and drives the development of self and others	Takes ownership for learning and practising new skills/ techniques/tools; constantly seeks to improve own understanding and learn from others; shares knowledge and experiences with others

Working in a team:	Builds good relationships with others	Works collaboratively, supporting others to achieve goals; contributes ideas and challenges appropriately	Builds excellent relationships with others, demonstrates knowledge and understanding of business objectives
Problem solving:	Participates in problem solving	Works to identify and ensure root causes of problems are resolved, demonstrating a tenacious approach	Takes ownership for resolving problems and issues; demonstrates determination to see things through
Responsiveness to change:	Demonstrates flexibility to changing working environment and demands	Demonstrates flexibility to get involved in different tasks; consistently reacts positively to changes and finds ways to support implementation	Looks to understand the reasons behind changes; constructively questions and challenges change; sets a positive example for others
			about change
Company/industry perspective:	Demonstrates knowledge of company and food industry, acts as an ambassador	Identified opportunities to improve own understanding of the company and wider food industry; sets an example to others	Proactively seeks to improve understanding of the company and wider food industry; actively seeks opportunities to promote the food technology department within the business
Innovation:	Demonstrates curiosity to foster new ways of thinking and working	Constructively challenges existing ways of working; volunteers to work across different areas of the business as appropriate	Recommends and implements changes to improve own work and work of others, capable of supporting others with change or learning new skill

Each element is scored one point for acceptable achievement, two points for good achievement and three points for outstanding achievement based on the assessment criteria given in the table above. For the professional dialogue and interview, to achieve a pass the apprentice must achieve a minimum score of six points. Please see the table below for the scoring and grading rules which must be applied when allocating the grade for the professional dialogue and interview:

Pass	Merit	Distinction
6-9 points	10-15 points	16-18 points

### Apprenticeship Grading

The final decision on whether the apprentice has passed the end-point assessment lies solely with the independent assessor who will grade the apprenticeship according to the requirements set out in this plan. The assessor's decisions will be subject to moderation and verification by the IAO.

The apprenticeship grade will be based on the outcomes from the: knowledge test, observation and professional dialogue and interview.

Apprenticeship Grading
Knowledge test: awarded a pass mark and grade 15%
Observation: awarded a pass mark and grade 60%
Professional dialogue and interview: awarded a pass mark and a grade 25%

Each component of the end-point assessment is individually marked and awarded a pass, merit or distinction based on the guidance given in this assessment plan. To achieve a pass overall the candidate must achieve a minimum of a pass in each of the end-point assessment components: knowledge test, practical observation and professional dialogue and interview.

In order to achieve a grade above a pass candidates are required to achieve a minimum of merit or distinction in the practical observation and one of either the knowledge test and professional dialogue and interview (totalling 75% of the weighting). To achieve a distinction the individual must achieve more than a pass for all components. See summary in the table below.

Knowledge Test	Observation	Interview	Overall Grade
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Merit	Pass
Pass	Pass	Distinction	Pass

Merit	Pass	Pass	Pass
Merit	Pass	Merit	Pass
Merit	Pass	Distinction	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Merit	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Distinction	Pass
Pass	Merit	Pass	Pass
Merit	Merit	Pass	Merit
Pass	Merit	Merit	Merit
Merit	Merit	Merit	Merit
Merit	Merit	Distinction	Merit
Distinction	Merit	Merit	Merit
Distinction	Merit	Distinction	Merit
Pass	Merit	Distinction	Merit
Distinction	Merit	Pass	Merit
Pass	Distinction	Pass	Pass
Merit	Distinction	Pass	Merit
Pass	Distinction	Merit	Merit
Merit	Distinction	Merit	Merit
Distinction	Distinction	Pass	Merit
Pass	Distinction	Distinction	Merit
Distinction	Distinction	Merit	Distinction
Merit	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

If the apprentice does not achieve as a minimum a pass in any part of the end-point assessment and it has to be re-taken, the apprentice cannot be awarded a distinction. It is expected that a period of further learning will need to be undertaken if the apprentice has to re-take any part of the end-point assessment.

### **End-point Assessment – Summary of Roles and Responsibilities**

The employer, who may take advice from learning provider, will be responsible for signing off the apprentice as being ready to undertake end-point assessment.

End-point assessment will be conducted by an independent assessor working for an IAO on the SFA's RoAAO.

The IAO will be responsible for:

- Design of a question bank for the written knowledge test component
- Design of an observational assessment
- Design of a bank of competency based questions for the professional dialogue and interview component.

The IAO will be required to employ suitably experienced assessment staff who are able to administer and assess in line with the requirements of the assessment plan.

The IAO will need to employ independent assessors who are capable of overseeing and undertaking these different elements of assessment:

- Review of any documentation from on-programme elements
- Administration and marking of the knowledge test
- Assessment of an apprentice's performance in the observation of skills • Leading and assessing the professional dialogue and interview.

Independent assessors must be able to demonstrate they possess practical and up-to-date knowledge of current working practices appropriate to the sector in which they are carrying out assessment practice. They should hold or be working towards an assessor qualification. There are requirements to hold additional specialist training as required by the food and drink sector, which is detailed below.

Mandatory Requirements	Independent Assessors
A minimum five years' relevant practical experience working within food and drink operations	√
Qualified above the level they are assessing	√
Food Safety Level 3 qualification	√
HACCP Level 3 qualification	√

### Internal Quality Assurance

Once assessment has been undertaken, the IAO will be responsible for:

- Moderation and verification of the knowledge test component
- Moderation and verification of assessor judgements of the observation of skills component

- Moderation and verification of the assessor judgements of the professional dialogue and interview component
- Standardisation of assessment judgements
- Secure recording and storage of all assessment decisions • Verification of achievement of apprenticeship certificate • Administration of certification process.

Moderation, verification and standardisation of the assessment judgements is part of the IAO's internal quality assurance system. The judgement of the independent assessor must be subject to moderation and verification by the IAO's quality assurance team.

The IAO will monitor the assessment process and verify the assessment judgements to ensure consistency across assessors and across employers. This must be performed on a risk basis, i.e. new or poorly performing assessors must have every element of every assessment quality assured, but established, high performing assessors can be quality assured on a sampling basis, with at least one assessment component being subject to either desk based or live internal quality assurance activity.

The IAO will run standardisation events for assessors at least every six months to ensure consistency in the practice of marking observations, knowledge tests and professional dialogues.

An IAO will employ expert assessors, but must also have internal quality assurance mechanisms and staff to verify assessor decisions and to administer the awarding of the apprenticeship.

### **External Quality Assurance**

External quality assurance for the food and drink process operator apprenticeship will initially be undertaken by the Institute for Apprenticeships, whilst we are in conversation with Ofqual regarding them undertaking the role.'

### **Implementation**

There are currently over 1,000 starts on the food industry skills apprenticeship framework per year, which this apprenticeship standard will replace. It is therefore anticipated that take up will be approximately 1,000 per year.

A Level 2 Diploma in Food and Drink Operations on-programme qualification which includes a pass, merit and distinction grading, will be available from September 2016.

The end-point assessment will cost no more than 20% of the overall apprenticeship.