

Standard for Food and Drink Advanced Process Operator Apprenticeship

Section 1: Occupational Profile

Food and Drink Advanced Process Operators work in one of the largest, most dynamic and fastest growing sectors of industry. Every day, producers, manufacturers and retailers make and sell millions of innovative food products to consumers in the UK and around the world. This includes drinks, cakes, biscuits, ready-to-eat and ready-to-cook food, sandwiches, wraps, fresh fruit and salads. It is imperative that apprentices in the industry have the skills and knowledge to ensure our food products, which millions of people consume every day, are safe.

Advanced Operators work in the manufacturing sector of the food and drink industry. They typically work on production lines in manufacturing plants, but will spend some time offline while working on activities such as new product development. They have both knowledge and skills in preventative maintenance activities and Continuous Improvement (CI) techniques, which are essential to maintaining and improving productivity in food and drink manufacturing sites.

Whichever part of the industry they choose to work in, on completion of this programme, the individual will be able to evaluate and make improvements to safety, quality and performance in a food and drink manufacturing environment.

Advanced Operators will develop an in-depth knowledge of food and drink products, health and safety systems, quality systems and Good Manufacturing Processes (GMP). They are trained to interrogate and interpret data to identify trends and carry out basic fault finding. This will help to avoid future faults and improve quality and productivity. Advanced Operators may be expected to lead others; as such they will develop skills in leadership and management.

On completion of this programme, individuals may progress into more advanced technical or leadership roles. This apprenticeship is an ideal spring board for potential future leaders of the food and drink industry.

Section 2: Food and Drink Advanced Operator – The Essential Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours

At the end of their apprenticeship, Advanced Process Operators will have gained the following knowledge:

Core Knowledge

- Principles of plant maintenance of equipment and processes
- How to identify and resolve technical problems (including products, equipment and safety) in line with organisational processes
- The process of introducing new processes, products and machinery
- The wider business environment: internal and external customers, profitability and commercial awareness
- Principles of:
 - o monitoring and assessing risks, including Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP)
 - o team leading, training, mentoring and buddying
 - o asset care
 - o data analysis and food operations
 - o continuous improvement
 - o incident management
 - o multistage operations, including start-up, shutdown and changeovers, in line with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
 - o internal and external audits
 - o high quality systems
 - o environmental management systems
 - o health and safety systems
 - o food science and technology
 - o planning and stock control

At the end of their apprenticeship, Advanced Process Operators will demonstrate the following skills, and will be able to:

Core Skill

- Ensure compliance with Health and Safety regulations, eg Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP)
- Contribute to risk assessment
- Analyse and report data
- Anticipate potential problems or delays and plan accordingly
- Use problem solving techniques to eliminate root cause of problems
- Evaluate and improve production in line with Continuous Improvement (CI) techniques and take responsibility for CI activity
- Take action to minimise waste
- Carry out routine and specialist maintenance of equipment, in line with organisational guidelines
- Execute incident management protocols
- Support a variety of internal audits
- Participate in external audits, in line with organisational procedures
- Contribute to the development and improvement of quality controls
- Carry out testing for quality control
- Take part in mentoring, buddying and on-the-job training
- Interpret and implement Standard Operating Procedures to ensure working towards best practices

At the end of their apprenticeship, Advanced Process Operators will demonstrate the following core behaviours:

Behaviours

- Safe working: ensures safety of self and others, food safe, challenges safety issues
- Ownership of work: accepts responsibility, is proactive, plans work
- Pride in work: aims for excellence, time management
- Self-development: proposes objectives to support the business, seeks learning, drives the development of self and others
- Integrity and respect: respect for colleagues, adapts style where appropriate
- Working in a team: builds good relationships with others, works collaboratively, contributes ideas and challenges appropriately, leads by example
- Problem solving: works to identify and ensure root causes are resolved, demonstrating a tenacious approach
- 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
- Effective communicator at all levels
- Demonstrates and encourages curiosity to foster new ways of thinking and working
- Acts in alignment with the business vision and values

Section 3: Additional Information

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| Duration | Typically 30 – 36 months |
| Entry Requirements | Employers will set their own criteria, but typically an entrant to this apprenticeship will already have achieved a minimum of Level 1 in English and maths |
| Level | Level 3 |
| Qualification | There will be a new level 3 qualification in food and drink advanced operations (currently in development) |
| Renewal | After 3 years |
| English and Maths | Apprentices without level 2 English and maths will need to achieve this level prior to completion of the apprenticeship |