

Quality Assurance Assessment 2019-20

Provider Name: Scottish Association of Master Bakers Ltd

Visit Dates: 8th – 10th April 2019

Contents

Executive Summary, Provider Scoring and Overall Conclusion..... 3

Provider Description..... 4

Visit Approach and Team Details 5

Service Delivery 6

Leadership and Quality Culture 9

Outcomes and Impacts (Results) 12

Overall Rating Definitions..... 13

Executive Summary, Provider Scoring and Overall Conclusion

This visit was based upon Skills Development Scotland's formal review process which is set out in our Quality Management Framework¹ document and is scored against our quality indicators according to the RADAR methodology. This report identifies the main findings of the review team from their visit. It sets out areas for improvement which the provider should place within its Quality Action Plan.

Standard	Quality Indicator	BRAG Rating
Service Delivery	1.1 Providers develop and prepare work-based learning provision	Green
	1.2 Providers plan resources for effective delivery of work-based learning provision	Green
	1.3 Providers deliver and manage work-based learning provision and ensure quality of delivery (including sub contracted provision)	Green
	1.4 Providers manage partners and stakeholders to deliver outcomes for learners and employers	Green
Leadership and Quality Culture	2.1 The provider's work-based learning strategy is based on the needs and expectations of stakeholders, employers and learners	Green
	2.2 Leaders ensure appropriate resources are in place to deliver the work-based learning strategy	Green
	2.3 Leaders ensure staff are appropriately skilled and motivated to deliver work-based learning provision	Green
	2.4 Leaders take ownership for the continuous improvement of quality and performance of work-based learning provision	Green
Outcomes and Impacts (Results)	3.1 Providers achieve and maintain high levels of service delivery and outcomes for all WBL provision	Green
	3.2 Work based learning provision meets the needs of employers	Yellow
	3.3 Work based learning meets the needs of learners	Yellow
	3.4 Providers meet all statutory, equality and funding body requirements	Green

¹ [2019 Quality Assurance Framework](#)

The provider has achieved a grade of **Good**, meaning they have fully demonstrated meeting the standards with strong strengths and minor areas for improvement noted.

The overall feedback from apprentices and employers was positive with close working professional relationships being maintained between SAMB staff and apprentices throughout the learning journey. The SAMB team are clearly invested in the development of skills within their sector and pride themselves on their solid reputation as a provider of Modern Apprenticeship (MA) provision in Scotland.

The SAMB team are very experienced within their industry and are clearly engaged and motivated to provide a good learning experience for their apprentices. The provider has sound administrative mechanisms in place and communications between the SAMB team are good which supports the planning and delivery of the MA contract.

The overall achievement rates for the qualifications delivered are good. However, there is limited evidence of the provider consistently engaging effectively with employers from the outset and throughout the apprenticeship journey. SAMB could also benefit from undertaking a more systematic approach to gathering feedback from apprentices and employers to help drive continuous improvement initiatives.

The provider has good resources available for apprentices and they are keen to develop more of their online offering. However, not all apprentices are aware of the range of resources and SAMB could highlight these more effectively in order that apprentices benefit from them.

Provider Description

Established in 1891, the Scottish Association of Master Bakers (SAMB) are a trade association for the bakery sector in Scotland and their trading name is Scottish Bakers. Based in Dunfermline, SAMB have held a contract for the delivery of work-based learning with Skills Development Scotland for several years.

SAMB offer MAs in the following vocational areas and levels:

MA Framework	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Level	Awarding Body	Sector Skills Council (SSC)	Nos in Training as at February 2019
Food and Drink Operations	Level 5	SQA	National Skills Academy for Food and Drink	275

MAs are delivered to apprentices employed in a range of Small to Medium Employers (SMEs), and larger national and international organisations, and apprentices are based across Scotland. Training delivery and assessment is carried out in the workplace by SAMB Training Advisors. Core Skills are separately certificated by SQA for the SCQF Level 5 qualification and they are embedded without the requirement for separate certification for the SCQF Level 6 qualification.

The provider has one Director and a Chief Executive who is supported by a Training and Quality Manager, a Marketing Manager, Senior Training Advisors, a Senior Training Services Administrator, Training Advisors and a Training Administrator. Internal Verification (IV) responsibilities are shared between the Training and Quality Manager, Senior Training Advisors and Training Advisors. The Training and Quality Manager has line management responsibility for the staff detailed in the report.

Visit Approach and Team Details

This is the second formal assessment that has been undertaken by SDS of the provider's MA delivery, the last assessment being carried out in 2014. The provider submitted a self-assessment in April 2018 and evidence has been considered in relation to this. The assessment team also considered additional evidence presented by the provider during the visit.

The visit team had four members, a Quality Assessor and three Associate Assessors. The visit took place at the provider's premises in Dunfermline, and during the visit the team were given full access to the office space used by the SAMB team. The provider was well

prepared for the visit and all the evidence identified within the self-assessment, along with additional evidence identified by the provider was readily available in well organised paper or electronic format. Arrangements for apprentice, employer and staff monitoring were facilitated well by the provider, and this was both helpful and appreciated.

The members of staff who were involved in the interviews and who provided evidence were the Chief Executive, the Training and Quality Manager, the Senior Training Advisors, the Training Advisors, the Marketing Manager and the Senior Training Services Administrator. The 18 apprentices and 11 employers sampled during the visit are based across Scotland. Most of the apprentice, employer and staff interviews were carried out face-to-face, with some of the sampling being completed by telephone to take into account the geographical spread of the delivery areas. Monitoring undertaken by the contract SIA over the previous six months was also considered.

Service Delivery

Strengths – These are the things that are working well for the provider

- The provider has a robust process in place for initial assessment. They use a diagnostic initial assessment tool / test for most apprentices, alongside diagnostic conversations which allow them to uncover additional support needs and identify learning styles. The provider has an initial consultation with new employers to discuss their job requirements. This ensures the apprentices are on the most appropriate and relevant qualification for their job role.
- The induction is well structured and informative. The apprentices understand the qualification and there is clarity on expectations and commitment. Core skills are discussed when completing the Individual Training Plan. Assessors make themselves available and apprentices know how to contact them and are also given an alternative support contact should the assessor be unavailable. Optional units are selected by the apprentice with support from their assessor and employer to ensure the right fit for the job role and most apprentices are given time during working hours to complete their qualification. As a result, apprentices feel supported by the provider and collaborative relationships are developed from the outset.

- Learning and assessment planning is effective. Most apprentices and employers are involved in assessment planning which accommodates varying shift patterns and supports employers to arrange workloads around the four-weekly review visits. Assessors are very adaptable to different additional support needs. For example, they break down units into more manageable tasks and offering more frequent assessments where required. The frequency of support ensures apprentices maintain good progress with their qualifications.
- The provider has designed and prepared their provision well to meet the needs of different equality groups. Assessors are adaptable, supportive and regularly support apprentices with dyslexia and dyspraxia by using alternative assessment methods. The provider has a high number of apprentices where English is not their first language and they have been able to accommodate and support them through their qualification by translating some of the resources into another language. This enables individuals from more diverse backgrounds to be successful in apprenticeships in the sector.
- The provider has designed and prepared well to deliver transferable skills. They have developed core skills workbooks. Although these are not all contextualised, apprentices are aware of core skills and their importance. At each visit, assessors and apprentices agree which core skills will be completed and assessors make good use of naturally occurring evidence. This ensures apprentices value the development of transferable skills and how these skills can support their career ambitions.
- The preparation and delivery of the qualification meets the individual needs of employers. The provider tailors the programmes to specific employers when required. They are flexible around shift works and busy periods. Employers are fully supportive of extra assessment having to be put in place with some individuals when required. Employers are also involved in the skills scan during the initial assessment to determine which units should be selected for a given qualification.
- The provider is effective in showcasing the success of apprentices and sharing good practice across their employer network. For example, they facilitated a meeting between two employers to showcase the success of the apprenticeship programme in their business and share best practice. All employers also receive the informative SAMB quarterly newsletter which regularly highlight updates on the MA programme

and industry developments. These activities help to create positive relationships between the provider, apprentices and employers.

- The provider effectively monitors and reviews each apprentice's learning plan according to their pace of learning. The assessors visit every four weeks or more frequently if additional support is required. Clear, timebound and collaborative goals are set enabling the apprentice to progress at an appropriate pace and most apprentices value the professional conversation and feedback given via different methods. This collaborative approach encourages apprentices to take ownership and responsibility for their learning.
- SAMB staff meetings take place quarterly and there are also two standardisation meetings per year. The staff use these meetings as an opportunity to discuss contract priorities, apprentice and employer feedback, industry developments and to share best practice. This ensures the full SAMB team can reflect on their delivery and assessment methods and supports continuous improvement.
- The Training and Quality Manager undertakes an unannounced observation of each assessor annually and employs an External Verifier to do an annual unannounced observation. These observations along with regular discussion and IV feedback give the provider an assurance of the quality of their delivery.
- The provider uses partnerships from their memberships and employer networks well. They have supported employers when there have been redundancies in the sector and have used their network to source alternative employment for apprentices allowing them to continue with their qualifications. SAMB have encouraged some employers to get involved with their local schools to promote and highlight the various roles within the bakery sector. This proactivity from SAMB demonstrates their drive to support the skills gap within the industry.

Areas for Improvement or Development

- The diagnostic initial assessment tool is only consistently used for new employers. This may mean that the specific learning needs of some individual apprentices are not identified at the outset which may impact on apprentice progress.
- Some employers are not involved at induction. This limits the ability to ensure roles and responsibilities are clear and that apprentices are being appropriately supported from the outset.

- Although the core skills are well delivered and valued, they are not all contextualised. Some of the core skills workbooks are not relevant to the sector. This may limit the understanding of the apprentices and how they can apply those skills to their job roles.
- Some employers are not sufficiently involved in discussing apprentice progress. Some apprentices are having to provide their employers with updates on their progress following their 4-weekly meeting with their assessor. This prevents the employer from being able to contribute to the feedback and this may hinder the progress and motivation of the apprentice.

Effective practice – this is an area that we believe is working well for the provider

Resources

The provider plans the resources well to support effective delivery of their Craft Bakery qualification through the use of their recently developed electronic portfolio. The electronic portfolio used by apprentices is packaged as the “James Allan Bakery Academy”. It includes interactive resources to support the various modules such as the “Use Your Loaf” module which helps apprentices to understand the importance of using available resources effectively in a bakery. Other module resources include Weighing and Measuring, Mixing, Pre-bake Processing and Confectionary. The SAMB social media platforms promote the “James Allan Bakery Academy” and encourage apprentices to source external online support materials which relate to their qualification. The SAMB assessors have a wealth of knowledge and industry experience which they impart to apprentices to enhance their learning experience.

Leadership and Quality Culture

Strengths - These are the things that are working well for the provider

- The Chief Executive is a member of the Scottish Food and Drink industry group and is also part of the Skills Investment Plan group for the industry. As the trade body for the bakery industry they have an established network of employers that they work with, many returning to SAMB with repeat business year after year. SAMB use this

intelligence to inform their strategic plan and annual contract bid to ensure employer and industry needs are met.

- SAMB leaders and staff regularly attend STF, SDS and Food and Drink sector events. They also host an annual conference for their members. Updates from these events are shared across the team ensuring all staff keep up to date with industry developments and fully understand employer demand within their sector.
- Staff have access to a range of good training and development opportunities including Equality and Diversity training, which they use to good effect to support apprentices who require additional support. Staff appreciate this learning as it ensures they are sufficiently equipped to support apprentices from all backgrounds.
- A robust, formal annual appraisal process has recently been reintroduced where staff will agree yearly objectives with their manager. Prior to this reintroduction staff would explore training and development needs and agree training on a more informal basis. There were examples of staff being offered the opportunity to upskill e.g. IV award. Staff find these development activities useful to develop their knowledge and skills.
- SAMB have had team development trips for example going to Germany for gluten free and sugar free bakery training. These opportunities help to support team building and enhance skills for the SAMB team.
- The provider is very successful in recruiting the right staff for the organisation. A robust induction takes place where new staff are linked with a peer who can support their introduction to their role. Staff found this useful as it helped increase their knowledge of their role and enhance their understanding of the SDS contract requirements.
- SAMB communicate well as a team and any issues are quickly resolved. Staff are encouraged to make suggestions for improvement such as the creation of the learning styles questionnaire used at initial assessment, the development of online resources and presentations, and the apprentice handbook. Staff appreciate the opportunity to inform improvements and feel listened to as a result.
- Staff workloads are well planned and individual KPI's are clearly communicated. There are good contract management arrangements in place with starts, spend, forecasting and milestone tracking mechanisms in place. There are also appropriate contingencies for the contract management functions and an experienced leadership

team who support the team well. This indicates that the SDS provision is managed well.

- The provider uses their social media presence and quarterly newsletter well to celebrate success and promote the MA programme. Articles featuring apprentices and assessors in the workplace and certificates being presented feature regularly. This is motivational for apprentices and also maintains a strong focus of the apprenticeship training available in their sector.

Areas for Improvement or Development

- There is limited evidence of interaction with equalities partners to support DYW agenda and targeted recruitment to the programme. The provider does not set internal benchmarks for Equality and Diversity against which they can measure progress of the recruitment of apprentices from under-represented groups.
- There is limited evidence of positive action in relation to influencing employer recruitment for under-represented-groups. However, it is recognised that SAMB have recently engaged with their SDS Equality Executive to explore a potential project with individuals from a BME background to encourage participation in their programme.
- The provider does not involve all staff in the self-assessment process and does not involve employers or partners in completion of their self-assessment. Including them would provide a wider range of opinions and perspectives that would support identification of strengths and areas for development.

Effective practice– this is an area that we believe is working well for the provider

Engagement with Schools

SAMB effectively engages with schools to promote the career pathways in the sector. They have supported students from a high school in Paisley to complete a Professional Development Award in Baking by working with a local college and facilitating the use of their kitchen to support the pupils to complete their award. They have also hosted interactive bread making workshops for school pupils at the Royal Highland Show. This approach demonstrates the providers commitment to the promotion of their sector as a viable career pathway.

Outcomes and Impacts (Results)

Strengths - These are the results that are good for the provider

- Achievement rates on the framework delivered have been consistently above the required benchmark over the last three years.
- SAMB have effective processes in place to measure and forecast against all SDS KPI's and they undertake analysis of any early leavers. SAMB demonstrate good overall performance and their robust contract management processes indicate this will be maintained.
- SAMB use the feedback gathered from the 4 weekly review meetings with apprentices and employers well. SAMB previously used a paper-based employer and apprentice survey up to 2018 and having recognised that this did not provide them with sufficient feedback for their programme, they have now replaced this with electronic surveys on their website. The provider also uses feedback from the 4 weekly apprentice review meetings to gather feedback from apprentices and employers. Feedback from contract SIA monitoring and the visit team indicates employers are generally satisfied with service from SAMB.
- The provider presents favourably for gender balance across their in-training demographic for the SDS Equality and Diversity benchmarks for the year 2017/18.
- All SAMB external verification reports for the last year were rated as green with significant strengths/high confidence demonstrated with an area of good practice highlighted.

Areas for Improvement or Development

- The provider does not have a systematic approach to gathering apprentice and employer feedback and as a result do not have any analysis of apprentice or employer survey results and response rates. Therefore, the overall satisfaction rates of the programme were not demonstrated.
- The proportion of BME apprentices on the programme is below the national average.
- SDS data at March 2018 shows participation from those who have a self-identified impairment, health condition or learning as below the national average.
- Participation from apprentices self-identifying as care experienced is below the national average for the year.

- SAMB do not analyse the participation of equality groups in their provision. As a result, they are unable to set themselves appropriate equality group targets in relation to geographical demographics.

Overall Rating Definitions					
					
Grade 6 Score rating not awarded (Unsatisfactory)	Grade 5 Score below 300 (Weak)	Grade 4 Score between 301 and 400 (Satisfactory)	Grade 3 Score between 401 and 500 (Good)	Grade 2 Score between 501 and 600 (Very Good)	Grade 1 Score over 601 (Excellent)
Provider is unable to demonstrate how they meet the standards – immediate remedial action required	Provider has been unable to meet the standards at an acceptable level – important areas for improvement identified	Provider has demonstrated how they have met all standards at the minimum level -with specific areas for improvement or further development highlighted	Provider has fully demonstrated meeting the standards with strong strengths and minor areas for improvement noted	Provider has fully demonstrated meeting the standards at a high level with major strengths and a few areas of enhancement to demonstrate ongoing continuous improvement	Provider has fully demonstrated meeting all standards providing a very high level of assurance - exemplifies best practice including delivery of ongoing Continuous Improvement.