

## **SAAB Definition of Apprenticeship Principles and Guidance – updates in the guidance**

### **Principle 1:**

#### **Apprenticeships and Employment - All Modern and Graduate Apprentices are Employed**

##### **Guidance:**

Employment status is fundamental to the success of an apprenticeship and is what differentiates it from other 'training programmes', 'Work Based Learning' or 'Vocational' qualifications.

The apprentice must be employed in a genuine job aligned to the Apprenticeship Framework.

Apprentices are employees first and must have this status from the first day of their apprenticeship.

- The job role must provide the opportunity for the apprentice to gain and develop the competence, knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to achieve their apprenticeship.
- Apprenticeships should endeavour to align with the Scottish Government's 'Fair Work First' policy. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-work-first-guidance-2/pages/9/>

##### **Updates in the guidance:**

Reinforces employment status and the apprentice as an employee. The need for the apprentice to be employed in a genuine job aligned to an Apprenticeship Framework.

### **Principle 2:**

#### **Apprenticeships and Occupational Competence – Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships are designed to develop skills and competence in an occupation required by their employer.**

##### **Guidance:**

- Apprentices develop occupational competence primarily through the execution of their duties at work. It is therefore critical that the apprenticeship development aligns with the occupation and is supported within the workplace.
- Occupational competence is further supported through the provision of underpinning knowledge. This can be in the form of formal or informal learning and can take place either 'on' or 'off-the-job'.
- Occupational competence is achieved when the employee can execute their duties in a manner consistent with the skills level and the behaviours required of the role.
- Apprenticeships place the learner at the centre with a holistic approach to skills development. Alongside the development of technical capabilities, apprentices gain underpinning knowledge and develop related work behaviours and aptitudes.
- Apprenticeships develop the skills, knowledge, behaviours and Meta-skills required for the workplace.

##### **Updates in the guidance:**

Reinforces the need for the apprentice to develop occupational competence as required by the employer and expected within the workplace.

Introduces Graduate Apprenticeships which was omitted from the original DoA Principles

### Principle 3:

**Availability and Investment – Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships are available across a wide range of occupations and sectors through demand assessment processes.**

#### Guidance:

- Apprenticeship availability and investment are aligned to the needs of the Scottish economy and informed by Scottish Government priorities.
- Apprenticeship investment must demonstrate effective use of public funding whilst delivering economic, societal and cultural benefits.
- Apprenticeships support the development of skills and competence across a wide range of sectors, including niche industries and are essential to retaining specialist and/or traditional skills.

#### Updates in the guidance:

Reinforces the need to ensure apprenticeships are developed in line with industry and economic demand and places greater emphasis on delivering economic, societal and cultural benefits.

### Principle 4:

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships support equality, diversity and inclusion and are designed to ensure there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.**

#### Guidance:

- Apprenticeships must be designed and delivered to ensure there are no unnecessary barriers to access learning or assessment.
- Apprenticeships should endeavour to align with the Scottish Government's 'Fair Work First' policy. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-work-first-guidance-2/pages/9/>

#### Updates in the guidance:

Reinforces the need to design and deliver Apprenticeship Frameworks with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

Outlines the importance of aligning Apprenticeships to the Scottish Government's 'Fair Work First' policy.

### Principle 5:

**Apprenticeships and amount – Modern and Graduate Apprenticeship Frameworks are based on recognised standards that are aligned to occupational activity and skills requirements.**

#### Guidance:

- All Modern and Graduate apprenticeships are designed to align with the needs of occupations and the required competence.
- In the UK the recognised occupational standards of competence are defined as National Occupational Standards (NOS), developed on behalf of respective Devolved Governments.
- Modern Apprenticeship must utilise, as its main qualification, Scottish Vocational Qualifications

which are wholly based on NOS.

- Graduate Apprenticeships, typically utilise subject benchmark statements defined to the degree-level qualifications within the apprenticeship.
- Apprenticeships may also directly align with identified Professional Standards subject to the requirements of employers and industry bodies.

#### **Updates in the guidance:**

Reinforces the need for Apprenticeships to align with occupational activity and the competence required by the employer in the workplace.

Proposes stronger focus on the use of National Occupational Standards (NOS) whilst recognising alignment with identified professional standards as required by the employer.

Introduces Graduate Apprenticeships and the use of benchmark statements as defined in degree-level qualifications.

#### **Principle 6:**

**Apprenticeship Framework Design - The requirements of a Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships align to occupational requirements are set out in a Standard Apprenticeship Framework document defined by industry which adapts to emerging and future needs.**

#### **Guidance:**

- The world of work is evolving, and occupations are constantly changing, therefore apprenticeship design methodology must be able to respond, offering and enabling a rapid and agile response to skills needs.
- Apprenticeships are designed for industry, by industry and must be fit for purpose.
- To be fit for purpose nationally funded apprenticeships must:
  - Adhere to all the apprenticeship principles.
  - Be designed with the input and involvement of the following stakeholders:
    - employers of all sizes: large, medium and small, whose occupations directly align.
    - Skills Development Scotland (SDS), Scottish Funding Council (SFC), learning providers and qualification bodies, trade federations and unions.
    - Respective apprenticeship learning providers and qualification agents

#### **Updates in the guidance:**

Introduces Graduate Apprenticeships.

Reinforces the requirements for Apprenticeship Frameworks to be designed in alignment with occupational requirements.

Makes clear the stakeholders involved in the design process.

Removes historical references to the SAAB Employer Engagement Group and Standards and Frameworks Group

## Principle 7:

**Qualifications & Certification - Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships offer internationally recognised, accredited or externally quality assured qualifications at SCQF Levels 5 to 12.**

### Guidance:

- Apprenticeships must certify employees with qualifications that illustrate achievement of the required occupational competence and where required achievement is aligned to Professional Qualifications and standards.
- The SVQ (or alternative competency-based qualification) and mandatory qualifications within apprenticeships must be included on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) illustrating pathways and progression to apprentices and employers.

#### Modern Apprenticeship Qualifications:

- Contain a Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) that is directly aligned to the national occupational standards required to become competent, accredited by Scottish Qualifications Authority's (SQA) accreditation function, known as SQA Accreditation.
- Where required by employers, supplemented by underpinning knowledge-based qualification to enable theoretical understanding of the role
- Learning providers and employers seeking to deliver qualifications in Scotland must be approved to do so by the relevant awarding body, which is approved by SQA Accreditation.
- Certified by the approved awarding body.

#### Graduate Apprenticeship Qualifications:

- Graduate Apprenticeships contain a relevant degree-level qualification aligned with the occupational requirement.
- Upon completing all Graduate Apprenticeship assessments, the HEI/University as the learning provider will validate and certify accordingly.

As employees, apprentices must also develop the necessary behaviours and aptitudes required within the workplace.

There are two types of learning that support these behaviours and aptitudes, namely:

**Core Skills:** Capabilities that are fundamental to support the development of the technical and professional skillsets within the apprenticeship. These include - Numeracy, Communication, Information and Communication Technology, Problem Solving and Working with Others.

**Meta-skills:** Capabilities aligned the requirements of the workplace in carrying out duties. These include - critical thinking, problem solving, collaborating, using initiative and others.

### Updates in the guidance:

Introduces Graduate Apprenticeships.

Significant improvements to distinguish the differences between a Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships and the purpose of and difference between Core Skills and Meta-skills

Reinforces the necessity for qualifications that demonstrate occupational competence.

Removes historical references to the SAAB Standards and Frameworks Group activity

#### Principle 8:

**Assessing Competence - Each Modern and Graduate Apprenticeship Framework describes the required learning content and method of learning and assessment.**

#### Guidance:

- Employers and learning providers must discuss and agree on a continuous assessment programme for the apprentice, identifying and planning relevant daily occupational activities that allow the apprentice to develop competence and improve continuously.
- The assessment programme must be agreed for each activity with the individual apprentice, employer and learning provider and set out in the Apprenticeship Agreement.
- There are two recognised methods of learning within an apprenticeship:
  - Learning through workplace activities is referred to as 'on-the-job' and
  - Learning away from day-to-day workplace activities is 'off-the-job'.
- Monitoring and recording employee competence requires ongoing communication and collaboration between the manager, employing organisation & learning provider(s).
- Approaches to assessing competence should reflect the type of skills. For example, assessing technical or practical competence will differ from the assessment of core skills development.

<u>Modern Apprenticeships assessment</u>	<u>Graduate Apprenticeships assessment</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Primarily assessed within the workplace (on-the-job)</li><li>• On-the-job assessment takes place through the output or observation of naturally occurring tasks in the workplace.</li><li>• where an employer requires the apprentice to develop technical or underpinning knowledge as part of the apprenticeship, formal summative assessment can take place at an external provision, in most cases at a learning provider site. (off-the-job)</li><li>• Learning providers will undertake formal summative assessment visits at the employer site to meet with the apprentice to review evidence of competence – including core skills competence, discuss actions, provide feedback and forward plan.</li><li>• Learning providers may also conduct some summative assessments out with the normal working environment of the apprentice in accordance with the Apprenticeship Framework's assessment strategy as part of the continuous assessment programme.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• assessment of competence must align the occupational activity within the workplace, to the theoretical and practical requirements of the degree qualification.</li></ul>

#### Meta-skills:

- Meta-skills are transferable skills and attributes that apprentices are required to reflect upon. Assessment in relation to meta-skills development relates to the apprentice's ability to reflect upon their own development and demonstrate an appropriate level of awareness for the level of the apprenticeship.

**Updates in the guidance:**

Introduces Graduate Apprenticeships.

Important improvements to clarify the necessity of agreeing on the assessment approach using an Apprenticeship Agreement, and defining the roles of the learner, employer, and learning provider within the process.

Detailed explanation of various assessment methods, including both on-the-job and off-the-job evaluations, highlighting how meta-skills are recognised within the assessment framework.

**Principle 9:**

**Enabling Workforce Agility – The occupational standards and qualifications included in apprenticeships are designed to develop transferable skills across occupations and sectors.**

**Guidance:**

- Apprenticeships are constructed to include skills that are transferrable across multiple occupations, coupled with occupationally specific skills and aptitudes.

**Updates in the guidance:**

Greater emphasis on workforce agility whilst continuing to recognise transferable skills across occupations and sectors

**Principle 10:**

**Supporting the Apprentice in the Workplace - Apprentices are employees. Employers are required to ensure appropriate support for their employees within the duration of the apprenticeship.**

**Guidance:**

- To maximise the opportunity for successful completion of the apprenticeship, all apprentices, as employees must have an allocated/named line manager or supervisor.
  - The line manager or supervisor must ensure the apprentice understands the requirements of the job and how the apprentice can gain the relevant level of competence for the role including tasks, how progress will be monitored, two-way feedback provided and opportunities for improvement and set out in the Apprenticeship Agreement.
  - The line manager or supervisor is responsible for ensuring a safe working environment for the apprentice to undertake the duties of the role and set out in the Apprenticeship Agreement.

Where capacity and resource permits, employers are also encouraged to put in place practices that enable the apprentice to adapt to the workplace environment and support workplace well-being including networking and building professional relations with colleagues.

**Updates in the guidance:**

Reinforces the role of the employer in supporting the apprentices as an employee and the need to provide support structures such as a named line manager and the value of a workplace mentor, well-being and professional network structures with colleagues.

Highlights the importance of the Apprenticeship Agreement in capturing the responsibilities of the line manager or supervisor

#### **Principle 11:**

**Types of Learning and Duration - Apprenticeship learning is delivered to fit the requirements of the Apprenticeship Framework, the needs of the industry and the individual's pace of learning.**

##### **Guidance:**

##### **Types of learning:**

- The choice of Apprenticeship Framework is critical to ensuring that the learning required matches the needs of the employer. This should be discussed and agreed between the employer and learning provider at the outset and included in the Apprenticeship Agreement
- The primary method of learning is through the daily execution of occupational activity by the apprentice.
- This may be further supplemented by learning that takes place at a provider location typically designed to support the development of underpinning knowledge and theory and/or practical skills development.
- Where deemed necessary by employers or for regulatory and compliance purposes, other learning is identified to supplement the apprentices' occupational competence which may take place either on or off the job.

##### **Duration of learning:**

- Each Apprenticeship Framework contains guidance on what is the recommended or expected duration of time needed to achieve the required level of competence.
  - The amount of time it takes to achieve competence may differ from apprentice to apprentice.
- Qualifications have 'guided' or 'notional' learning durations to achieve.
  - The time it takes an apprentice to achieve the required qualification(s) will differ from apprentice to apprentice.
- Completion of a Modern Apprenticeships typically ranges between 1 and 3 years. Completion of a Graduate Apprenticeship typically ranges in duration between 2 and 4 years.
- Achieving apprentice competence over time is paramount, therefore employers and learning provider(s) are expected to make reasonable adjustments designed to deliver this objective.
- The attendance pattern for off-the-job learning (where delivered) is variable and dependent upon the apprenticeship and learning provider. This can range from full-time block attendance over several weeks or on a day-release basis one day per week.

##### **Updates in the guidance:**

Reinforces the need for learning to meet the Apprenticeship Framework and the needs of the employer and recognises the important of individual pace of learning.

Proposes the use of an Apprenticeship Agreement to set out the type and duration of learning as agreed between the apprentice, employer and learning provider.



## Principle 12:

**Apprenticeship Roles and Responsibilities – Employers, Learning Providers and Apprentices/Employees have specific roles and responsibilities to maximise opportunities for success.**

### Guidance:

- All Apprenticeships contain an 'Apprenticeship Agreement', setting out the required roles and responsibilities of employers, learning providers and the apprentice.
- The 'Apprenticeship Agreement' recognises that employers, learning providers and apprentices/employees all have fundamental roles to play in the learning process and the overall quality of the experience.
- The 'Apprenticeship Agreement' represents a shared commitment between the parties to deliver successful outcomes for all.

### Updates in the guidance:

Reinforces the use of an Apprenticeship Agreement to make clear the required roles and responsibilities of the employers, learning provider and the apprentice.

Removes historical references to the SAAB Standards and Frameworks Group activity.

## Principle 13:

**Delivering Quality - Apprenticeships deliver high quality learning experiences.**

### Guidance:

- The learning environment contributes to achieving occupational competence.
- Within the delivery of apprenticeships quality assurance is governed by two primary approaches:
  - Aligned to the role of employers and the learning environment established within the workplace.
  - Aligned to the role of learning providers in the execution of duties around learning, teaching and assessment.

#### Employer role in delivering Quality:

- It is the employer's responsibility to ensure the provision of a quality learning environment for the apprentice.
- This includes appointing supervisor functions, appropriate performance management and review and guidance structures.
- Ensuring the apprentice is encouraged to offer their insights and suggestions for improvement.

#### Learning Provider role in delivering Quality:

- The qualification(s) within apprenticeship all have respective quality assurance principles that learning providers are obligated to abide by.
- The principles set out the expected quality standards required by learning providers when conducting teaching, learning and assessment activities.

#### Governance of Apprenticeship Quality:

- In addition to the above quality requirements of parties directly attached to delivering apprenticeships, the quality of apprenticeship provision is also governed at a national level. These include:



Skills Development Scotland:	Monitoring the overall delivery of apprenticeship with a focus on learner experience and outcomes
Scottish Funding Council:	Establishing and monitoring a shared set of principles, delivery pillars and outputs aligned to academic standards and quality of the student experience across colleges and universities.
SQA Accreditation:	Approves awarding bodies and accredits qualifications submitted by these awarding bodies. Performs a regulatory role in making sure that all approved awarding bodies and accredited qualifications maintain standards over time
Awarding Bodies:	Ensure assessment is delivered in accordance with the apprenticeship assessment strategy.
Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board (SAAB) and its associated groups	Provide employer leadership on the shape of Apprenticeship Frameworks, standards, and quality approaches to apprenticeship approvals and quality outcomes for the apprentice and employer

#### Updates in the guidance:

Clearly defines the responsibilities of the employer and the learning provider in ensuring quality, and outlines the specific roles each plays in the quality assurance process.

Notable enhancements have been made to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in the governance of apprenticeship quality.

Removes historical references to the SAAB Employer Equalities Group activity

#### Principle 14:

**Documentation, Guidance & Support – Apprenticeship documentation is clear, accessible and easy-to-understand.**

#### Guidance:

An explanation of all apprenticeship frameworks, their purpose, content and indicative requirements are outlined in a series of easy-to-understand guides, including the following

##### Apprenticeship Framework:

- An outline of the overall apprenticeship containing an overview of the required occupational skills, knowledge and behaviours
- Roles and responsibilities of each party in relation to activity before and during the apprenticeship
- Indicative approaches to learning and assessment
- Indicative timelines and information on associated apprenticeship qualifications

##### Occupational Profile:

- A detailed breakdown of the occupational functions and requirements
- Indicative performance, knowledge and understanding requirements

#### Updates in the guidance:

Details the various types of documentation used to describe and explain the apprenticeship framework. It includes their purpose, content, and requirements, and is supported by an occupational profile that specifies the expected performance, knowledge, and understanding.

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