

Modern apprenticeships

A guide to skills and qualifications on Scottish
apprenticeships



 AUDITOR GENERAL

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Apprenticeship skills and qualifications

Introduction

1. Apprenticeships offer people aged 16 and over the opportunity to gain a qualification while in paid employment. There are around 70 different types of apprenticeships in Scotland across a range of jobs including accounting, dental nursing, food manufacturing and plumbing.¹ They are available at four levels:
 - modern apprenticeships at level 2 and level 3
 - technical apprenticeships at level 4
 - professional apprenticeships at level 5.
2. The level of apprenticeship refers to the level of Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) that an apprentice can achieve, although other qualifications are available.² It also reflects the job that an individual does. For example, a level 5 apprenticeship is more likely to be undertaken by someone in a more senior job role. Most apprenticeships are available at level 3 and around two-thirds are available at level 2. Fewer are available at level 4 and level 5. [Appendix 1](#) sets out which levels are available for each of the different types of apprenticeships.

What is included on an apprenticeship?

3. The content of an apprenticeship is known as a framework. Frameworks are developed by Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) in conjunction with employers and consist of the following mandatory and optional components:³
 - **Qualifications** – which are referred to as 'mandatory outcomes' on frameworks. These are the qualification(s) that apprentices will aim to achieve during their apprenticeship.
 - **Essential skills** – skills that have been identified by employers as essential for the workplace.
 - **Mandatory enhancements** – additional learning or qualifications that apprentices must complete for specific jobs within a sector.

¹ At the start of the 2012/13 contracting year, SDS listed around 70 frameworks on its apprenticeship contribution table. Apprenticeship frameworks are added and removed on a regular basis. This means that some of the frameworks listed at that time may have lapsed and the actual number of frameworks currently available for new apprentices may be higher or lower.

² For example, a level 4 apprenticeship contains a level 4 SVQ (or an alternative qualification at a similar level). More information on apprenticeship qualifications are set out later in this guide.

³ SSCs are independent, employer-led organisations. Eighteen SSCs work with employers across the UK to define skills needs and standards for their sectors and to ensure appropriate apprenticeships are in place.

- **Optional content** – additional learning (for example, short courses) which may be added to frameworks at the request of employers. Optional content is referred to as 'optional outcomes' on frameworks.

4. Apprenticeship content is explained in more detail in paragraphs 5 to 12 below. [Exhibit 1](#) provides an overview of how content varies by apprenticeship level.

Exhibit 1

Apprenticeship content by level

	Levels 2 and 3 (Modern apprenticeships)	Level 4 (Technical apprenticeships)	Level 5 (Professional apprenticeships)
Main qualification, or qualifications, achieved	Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) or Competency Based Qualification (CBQ)	Higher National Diploma (HND) or Professional qualification or SVQ or CBQ	Professional qualification or SVQ or CBQ
SCQF level	Level 2 apprenticeship - SCQF 5 Level 3 apprenticeship - SCQF 6/7	SCQF 8/9	SCQF 10/11/12
Examples of other qualifications at the same SCQF level	SCQF 5 - Standard Grade (credit) SCQF 6 - Higher SCQF 7 - Advanced higher	SCQF 8 - Diploma SCQF 9 - Ordinary degree	SCQF 10 - Honours degree SCQF 11 - Masters degree SCQF 12 - Doctoral degree
Mandatory enhancements	Additional components may be added to the main qualification if this is appropriate for the sector, necessary for specific job roles and based on employer demand		
Essential skills for the workplace	Workplace core skills Communication Numeracy Information and communication technology Problem solving Working with others	Career skills Business administration Management, including business continuity management and governance Enterprise Customer service	Career skills Business administration Management, including business continuity management and governance Enterprise Customer service
SCQF Level	Level 2 apprenticeship - SCQF 4 Level 3 apprenticeship - SCQF 5	A total of 15 SCQF credits, which must include units at SCQF level 7 or above	A total of 20 SCQF credits, which must include units at SCQF Level 8 or above
Optional content	Additional learning that is appropriate for the job role, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • optional units from a relevant vocational qualification • short courses • professional qualifications • languages. 		

Source: Audit Scotland, from *Scottish Modern and Higher Level Apprenticeships Guidance and Proposal Template For Sector Skills Councils*. Modern Apprenticeship Group, 2013

Apprenticeship qualifications

5. SSCs work with awarding bodies, to design and review the qualifications that are included on frameworks.⁴ Traditionally all apprenticeships contained an SVQ. In response to employer feedback that more flexibility was required, and that a knowledge-based qualification is more

⁴ Awarding bodies include the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), City and Guilds and the Association of Accounting Technicians.

appropriate than a competency-based qualification in some sectors, a range of alternative qualifications can now be included:

- On modern apprenticeship frameworks, the preferred qualification is still an SVQ although other Competency Based Qualifications (CBQs) are permitted. For example, one of the mandatory qualifications on an engineering construction framework is a diploma in moving engineering construction loads.
 - On technical apprenticeships, in addition to SVQs and CBQs, the qualification may include a Higher National Diploma (HND). For example, a technical apprenticeship in life sciences may include an HND in applied chemistry as the mandatory qualification.
 - Professional qualifications are also permitted on technical and professional apprenticeships. For example, an apprentice undertaking an accountancy apprenticeship may aim to achieve the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants' (ACCA's) diploma in accounting and business.
6. All qualifications are credit rated so they can be included on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) – see [Appendix 2](#) for details. The SCQF brings together all mainstream Scottish qualifications to show how they relate to one another. It gives each qualification credit points that show how much learning has been achieved (one credit equals 10 notional learning hours), and a level (from 1 to 12) to show how demanding the learning is. Apprenticeships are included on the SCQF at levels 5 to 12. In future, all apprenticeships will be classified by their SCQF level, although they are still commonly known by their SVQ levels (2, 3, 4 and 5).

Essential skills

7. All apprenticeship frameworks must contain a set of essential work-based skills which have been identified by employers as the skills that are most likely to be needed in any work environment. As with qualifications, essential skills are credit rated on the SCQF.⁵ They are referred to as 'workplace core skills' on modern apprenticeship frameworks and as 'career skills' on technical and professional apprenticeships ([Exhibit 2, page 6](#)).
8. [Appendix 3](#) provides more information on the five workplace core skills. It also lists examples of the units that are available under each of the four categories of career skills. The full list of career skills can be found on SDS's website.⁶

⁵ Please note that qualifications and essentials skills are not necessarily cumulative. For example, an individual does not need to obtain a qualification at SCQF level 9 in order to obtain a qualification at SCQF level 10.

⁶http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/699443/career_skills_units_for_technical_and_professional_apprenticeships.pdf

Exhibit 2

Essential work-based skills on apprenticeship frameworks

Modern apprenticeships	Technical and professional apprenticeships
Five workplace core skills (available at SCQF levels 3 to 6)	Four categories of career skills (available at SCQF levels 7 to 12)
Communication	Business administration
Numeracy	Management (including Business Continuity and Governance)
Information and Communication Technology	Customer service
Problem Solving	Enterprise
Working with Others	

Mandatory enhancements

9. Additional mandatory components may be added to the main qualification on a framework if this is appropriate for the sector, necessary for specific job roles or based on employer demand. For example:
 - Apprentices on an automotive framework are required to achieve an SVQ or CBQ as the mandatory qualification (such as an SVQ 3 in heavy vehicle maintenance and repair). They are also required to achieve one additional vocational qualification, at both levels 2 and 3, as the mandatory enhancement (such as a diploma in heavy vehicle maintenance and repair principles).
 - Apprentices undertaking an agriculture apprenticeship must obtain an emergency first aid qualification and two accredited short courses. Suggested short courses include safe use of pesticides and forklift truck operations.

Optional content

10. Optional content provides employers with the opportunity to request additional learning or training for apprentices if this is appropriate for the job role. SSCs often suggest the optional content that employers may select. This can include:
 - units from a relevant SVQ/CBQ at level 2 or above
 - professional qualifications
 - overseas placements or exchange programmes
 - languages.
11. For example, e-skills SSC strongly encourages employers with IT and telecommunications apprentices to add further qualifications to the apprenticeship framework to help meet the business needs of the employer and developmental needs of the apprentice. This can include specific product or technology training which leads to an industry-recognised (eg, Microsoft)

certificate. Similarly automotive apprentices are encouraged undertake an Automotive Technician Accreditation (ATA) assessment on completion of their apprenticeship.

12. Exhibit 3 provides an example of how apprenticeship frameworks (that is the qualifications and other content) can be tailored to meet the needs of individuals and employers or to meet regulations or standards in specific jobs.

Exhibit 3

Example of how a framework can be tailored for different jobs in the food and drink sector

Food and drink operations – Level 3 Modern Apprenticeship	
Main qualification achieved	<p>An SVQ level 3 in Food and Drink Operations must be achieved in one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bakery skills • Meat and poultry skills • Supply chain skills • Achieving food manufacturing excellence
Mandatory enhancements	<p>Apprentices must complete two relevant short courses, with a minimum of 10 learning hours each. Examples of short courses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food hygiene intermediate certificate • Additional SVQ units from qualifications at levels 3 or 4 (eg, management or team leading) • Health and safety certificate • Food safety for manufacturing award • ICT qualification (ECDL/PC Passport)
Workplace core skills	<p>All at SCQF level 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Numeracy • Information and communication technology • Problem solving • Working with others
Optional content	<p>Additional learning may be selected by employers for specific job roles. This can include SVQ units, short courses or professional qualifications. Examples of additional learning include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager or supervisor skills development • Report writing at management level • How to deal with complaints • Employment law • Communications in the workplace

Source: Audit Scotland, from Food and Drink Operations Level 3 Framework Document for Scotland. Improve Ltd SSC, July 2013

Appendix 1

Apprenticeship frameworks⁷

Apprenticeship	Level			
Accounting	2	3	4	
Achieving Excellence in Sports Performance (Football)		3		
Active Leisure, Learning and Wellbeing	2	3		
Advice and Guidance		3		
Agriculture	2	3		
Aquaculture	2	3		
Automotive	2	3		
Automotive (Vehicle Parts Operations only)	2	3		
Aviation		3		
Aviation Operations on the Ground	2			
Bus and Coach Engineering and Maintenance		3		
Business and Administration	2	3		
Children's Care, Learning and Development		3		
Construction (Civil Engineering and Specialist Sector)	2			
Construction (Craft Operations)		3		
Construction (Technical Operations)		3	4	5
Contact Centres		3		
Creative	2	3		
Creative and Digital Media		3		
Customer Service	2	3		
Dental Nursing		3		
Electrical Installation		3		
Engineering		3	4	
Engineering Construction		3		
Equine	2	3		
Extractives and Mineral Processing	2	3	4	5
Facilities Services/Management	2			
Fashion and Textile Heritage	2			
Food Manufacture	2	3		
Freight Logistics (Supply Chain Management)	2	3		
Freight Logistics (Logistic Operation Management)		3		
Freight Logistics (Traffic Office)	2	3		
Freight Logistics (Driving Goods Vehicle)	2	3		
Freight Logistics (Warehousing and Storage)	2	3		
Furniture, Furnishings and Interiors		3		
Game and Wildlife Management	2			
Gas Industry		3		
Glass Industry Occupations	2	3		
Hairdressing and Barbering	2	3		
Health and Social Care	2	3	4	
Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration		3		
Horticulture	2	3		
Hospitality	2	3		
Information and Communication Technologies Professional		3		
Landbased Engineering	2	3		
Learning and Development		3		
Life Sciences	2	3		
Management		3	4	5
Occupational Health and Safety Practice		3	4	
Oil and Gas Extraction		3		
Pharmacy Services	2	3		
Photo Imaging		3		
PCV Driving (Bus and Coach)	2			
Plumbing		3		
Polymer Processing		3		
Power Distribution	2			
Printing	2	3		
Process Manufacturing		3		
Providing Financial Services	2	3		
Retail (Sales and Visual Merchandising)	2	3		
Retail (Management)		3		
Sea Fishing	2			
Security Systems		3		
Signmaking	2	3		
Travel Services	2	3		
Trees and Timber	2			
Water Industries	2	3		
Wind Turbine Operation and Maintenance		3		
Youth Work	2	3		

⁷ Note: This is a list of frameworks as at the start of 2012/13. Frameworks are added and removed on a regular basis. Some of these frameworks may no longer be available, some may have changed or new frameworks may have been added to the list.

Appendix 2

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

SCQF Levels	SQA Qualifications			Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	SVQs/MAs		
12	Some SQA qualifications are changing between 2013-2016. See www.sqa.org.uk/readyreckoner				Professional Apprenticeship		
11						Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship SVQ 5
10						Masters Degree, Integrated Masters Degree, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate	Professional Apprenticeship
9					Professional Development Award	Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Technical Apprenticeship SVQ 4
8		Higher National Diploma		Bachelors / Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Technical Apprenticeship SVQ 4		
7	Advanced Higher Scottish Baccalaureate	Higher National Certificate		Diploma Of Higher Education	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ 3		
6	Higher			Certificate Of Higher Education	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ 3		
5	National 5 Intermediate 2				Modern Apprenticeship SVQ 2		
4	National 4 Intermediate 1	National Certificate	National Progression Award		SVQ 1		
3	National 3 Access 3						
2	National 2 Access 2						
1	National 1 Access 1						

Appendix 3

Workplace core skills and career skills on apprenticeships

Core skills

Each of the five workplace core skills is available at SCQF levels 3 to 6. They are divided into a number of components (see below). The SQA sets out details of the specific skills required, and examples of the types of tasks undertaken, for each of the components, at each SCQF level.⁸

Core skill	Components
Communication	Oral communication Written communication
Numeracy	Using graphical information Using numbers
Information and Communication Technology	Accessing Information Providing/Creating Information
Problem Solving	Working Co-operatively with Others Reviewing Co-operative contribution
Working with Others	Critical Thinking Planning and Organising Reviewing and Evaluating

Career skills

There are four categories of career skills on technical and professional apprenticeships. Apprentices and employers are required to select between two and five units from the available list. An example of the units available for each category is set out on the next page. On:

- technical apprenticeships, the choice must include career skills units at SCQF level 7 or above, and a total of at least 15 SCQF credits must be achieved
- professional apprenticeships, the choice must include career skills units at SCQF Level 8 or above, and at least 20 SCQF credits must be achieved.

⁸ <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/42321.2720.html>

Business administration units	SCQF level	SCQF credit
Plan change across teams	9	6
Chair meetings	8	4
Plan, run and evaluate projects	8	10
Manage budgets	7	5
Supervise a team in a business environment	7	6

Management (including business continuity management (BCM) and governance) units	SCQF level	SCQF credit
Determine the organisation's purpose, vision, values and ethical behaviour (governance)	12	13
Develop a strategic business plan for your organisation	11	14
Put the strategic business plan into action	10	9
Manage knowledge in your area of responsibility	9	4
Manage finance for your area of responsibility	8	14
Lead a response team (BCM)	7	4

Customer service units	SCQF Level	SCQF Credit
Develop a customer service strategy for part of an organisation	8	11
Gather, analyse and interpret customer feedback	7	10
Promote continuous improvement	7	7

Enterprise units	SCQF Level	SCQF Credit
Explore overseas markets	9	14
Advertise your products and services	8	5
Manage cash flow	7	3
Delegate work to others	7	4

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Audit Scotland, 110 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4LH
T: 0845 146 1010 E: info@audit-scotland.gov.uk
www.audit-scotland.gov.uk 