Food and Drink Advanced Process Operator

Apprenticeship Standard Specification ST0196/AP04

1.1 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.

1.2 Purpose

This apprenticeship has been designed by food and drink manufacturing employers to ensure that both new entrants and those interested in progressing a career in the sector have an opportunity to develop the right skills, knowledge and behaviours. This apprenticeship is a fantastic way of developing these skills whilst learning and gaining experience at work.

At the end of the programme apprentices will be able to:
- understand health and safety systems, quality systems and Good Manufacturing Processes (GMP)
- interrogate data to identify trends
- carry out basic fault finding
- carry out routine and specialist maintenance of equipment
- participate in external audits
- contribute to the development and improvement of quality controls
- work as an effective member of a team and exhibit strong communication skills.

In addition apprentices will have developed an understanding of continuous improvement processes used in the industry.

1.3 Entry requirements

There are no formal entry requirements for apprentices selecting this apprenticeship standard. Employers and training providers must ensure that learners have the potential and opportunity to achieve the apprenticeship standard successfully. It is an advantage if apprentices have already achieved a Level 1 English and mathematics qualification.

1.4 Gateway requirements

Gateway requirements are stipulated by the apprenticeship standard's assessment plan and End-point Assessment Organisation's must ensure that all apprentices have completed and achieved the requirements. Food and Drink Advanced Process Operator apprentices must have exceeded the 12month Government minimum duration and completed a programme of learning as set by their employer, supported by the appointed training provider. The programme will develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours detailed in the standard.

Apprentices are required to achieve the following mandated qualifications for this standard:

- Level 2 English

- Level 2 Mathematics

- Level 3 Diploma in Food and Drink Operations.

Evidence of these three qualifications must be submitted to OAL along with a declaration that the apprentice has met the gateway requirements. Qualification certificates can be submitted at any point once the apprentice has been registered on our portal. OAL will accept qualification certificates from any awarding organisation. Apprentices, who have previously achieved their English and/or mathematics as specified above, must submit their qualification certificates to OAL as evidence of achievement and exemption.

In the main OAL expects evidence to be in the form of the qualification certificate. Where the certificate is not available then a formal transcript or notification of results. Where either a certificate or formal notification of results is not available, but the apprentice has other evidence that may be acceptable, you should contact us directly so we can offer advice on the verification of the evidence. ␄

Apprentices and their employer/training provider should refer to the OAL English and Mathematics Policy for end-point assessment gateway evidence available at https://www.oawards.co.uk/about-us/ for evidence requirements of English and mathematics achievement.

1.5 End-point Assessment (EPA)

End-point assessment for this standard includes a:

- Knowledge test

The test will be 90 minutes under controlled examination conditions and invigilated by the end-point assessment organisation. It can take place in the workplace or at an assessment centre. The test will comprise of two components: 1) 30 multiple-choice questions and 2) 5 extended answer questions. The test is available online or paper-based.

- Practical observation

The observation takes place over a maximum 4-hour period and 2 sessions. It must be carried out in the workplace. The employer premises will need to be recognised by OAL as a recognised EPA site. This process is simple and typically involves a 60-minute assessment by OAL or the training provider on our behalf.

The observation will be based on a set of key process tasks detailed in the OAL Apprentice EPA Handbook and OAL Food and Drink Advanced Process Operator Standard Handbook. Once the apprentice has successfully passed through gateway a planning session will take place between the employer, training provider and OAL. The outcome of the planning session is to not only ensuring that the EPA runs smoothly on the day but also to allow for the process tasks to be mapped to the apprentices duties and activities. The plan will provide details for the apprentice to move from one area or function to another during the observation giving the apprentice the best opportunity to demonstrate their application of skills, behaviours and knowledge.

- Presentation and interview

The presentation is formal based on how continuous improvements can be applied in the workplace, drawing on examples acquired during the programme. A specification for the presentation can be found in the OAL Apprentice EPA Handbook and OAL Food and Drink Advanced Process Operator Standard Handbook. The presentation will be no longer than 45 minutes.

The interview will be 45 minutes under controlled conditions. It will centre around 6 competency-based questions.

End-point assessment will take place at the end of the programme and is designed to test apprentices' skills, knowledge and behaviours independently of learning and qualifications. The apprentice will not be allowed to take the end-point assessment without evidencing completion of these.

It is important to note that the mandated qualifications are important as they demonstrate that apprentices have developed the skills, knowledge and behaviours according to the standard requirements. However they do not count towards the end-point assessment.

Apprentices will be given access to the OAL Apprentice End-point Assessment Handbook once they have been enrolled onto the standard. The EPA Handbook sets out the assessment requirements of EPA and the criteria on which the apprentice will be graded.

1.6 Order of end-point assessment

The assessment plan for this standard stipulates that the EPA is taken in the following order:

1.   Knowledge test and Practical observation

2.   Presentation and interview.

1.7 Assessment personnel

An Independent Assessor appointed by OAL must invigilate and assess all components of the end-point assessment.

1.8 Apprenticeship grading

The apprenticeship is graded: Fail, Pass, Merit or Distinction. Apprentices must achieve a minimum of a pass in each of the 3 components to be awarded a Merit or a Distinction.

Results are subject to moderation and will be issued every 10 working days to the named training provider. OAL will send results to the Education and Skills Funding Agency in line with guidelines for certification.

An apprentice can retake a component of their EPA if they fail. In this instance the apprentice cannot be awarded an overall grade of distinction the final grade will be capped at Merit. 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. OAL can make exemptions to this ruling should reasons for the fail are deemed to be outside the control of the apprentice.

1.9 EPA fees

The Food and Drink Advanced Process Operator apprenticeship standard attracts a total funding of £9,000. 20% of the total apprenticeship funding is withheld until the EPA has been concluded, this is to encourage completion of the apprenticeship training and mandated qualifications. In respect of this standard this represents the maximum cost of an EPA.

OAL typically charges 15% of the total funding for this standard. However fees are worked out on an individual basis to ensure that employers and apprentices get the best value for money. For approved centres our fees can be found in the online Portal. Non-approved centres should contact us directly for a bespoke quote.

At OAL there are no hidden fees. Our fees are inclusive of all support, documentation and materials. This includes access to our team of experts to support the induction of apprentices, preparation for EPA, handbooks and assessment specifications and materials.

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

Skills statements	Assessed by:
• Ensure compliance with Health and Safety regulations, e.g. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP)	PO
• Contribute to risk assessment	PO
• Analyse and report data	PO/PI
• Anticipate potential problems or delays and plan accordingly	PI
• Use problem solving techniques to eliminate root cause of problems	PI
• Evaluate and improve production in line with Continuous Improvement (CI) techniques and take responsibility for CI activity	PI
• Take action to minimise waste	PI
• Carry out routine and specialist maintenance of equipment, in line with organisational guidelines	PO
• Execute incident management protocols	PI
• Support a variety of internal audits	PI
• Participate in external audits, in line with organisational procedures	PI
• Contribute to the development and improvement of quality controls	PI
• Carry out testing for quality control	PO
• Take part in mentoring, buddying and on-the-job training	PI
• Interpret and implement Standard Operating Procedures to ensure working towards best practices	PO
Behaviour statements	Assessed by:
• Safe working: ensures safety of self and others, food safe, challenges safety issues	PO
• Ownership of work: accepts responsibility, is proactive, plans work	PO
• Pride in work: aims for excellence, time management	PO
• Self-development: proposes objectives to support the business, seeks learning, drives the development of self and others	PI

Behaviour statements	Assessed by:
• Integrity and respect: respect for colleagues, adapts style where appropriate[1]sep	PO
• Working in a team: builds good relationships with others, works collaboratively, contributes ideas and challenges appropriately, leads by example[1]sep	PI
• Problem solving: works to identify and ensure root causes are resolved, demonstrating a tenacious approach[1]sep	PI
• Responsiveness to change: flexibility to changing working environment and demands[1]sep	PI
• Company/industry perspective: desire to learn about the company and food industry, acts as an ambassador[1]sep	PI
• Effective communicator at all levels[1]sep	PO
• Demonstrates and encourages curiosity to foster new ways of thinking and working	PI
• Acts in alignment with the business vision and values	PI

Key:

PO   Practical Observation

PI   Presentation and Interview

MCQ   Multiple-choice Questions

EAQ   Extended Answer Questions