

NEWS & VIEWS

SPRING 2022



training | development | competence

IN THE FOOD AND DRINK INDUSTRY



MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- ▶ Brewing and Spirits Modern Apprenticeships
- ▶ Client Case Studies
- ▶ Investigation Essentials
- ▶ Delicious Recipes
- ▶ Meet Some of our Team

“

“The whole Polaris Learning team are delighted to be increasingly able to get back on-site with our clients and to work with our candidates and trainees face to face. It is brilliant to feel things starting to turn back to more normality and we hope that it can all continue. Thank you to everyone for your continued support and we are looking forward to our work with you.”

”

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FEATURES...



MODERN APPRENTICESHIP IN BREWING 3



HEAR FROM OUR CLIENTS 5



HEALTHY RECIPES 18

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR CLIENTS...

We are lucky to work with a broad range of clients from so many aspects of the food and drink industry, across the whole supply chain.

We repeatedly see the great work that is going on every day in this industry.



BREWING MODERN APPRENTICESHIP



THE MODERN APPRENTICESHIP IN BREWING IS NOW AVAILABLE

Modern Apprenticeships are funded by Skills Development Scotland for eligible employees. They enable you to upskill your employees, and quickly and effectively accelerate learning and development within your organisation. Employees appreciate the opportunity to be involved in self-development and to do their job as well as they can.

Your employees can learn their trade or build on their skills on the job while working towards their qualification.

This can help you to:

- ▶ Train and develop your current workforce
- ▶ Attract new recruits
- ▶ Establish a training and development route for new recruits
- ▶ Demonstrate the competence of your team

SPECIALLY CREATED:

- Designed by the National Skills Academy for Food and Drink
- Extensive input from large and small brewers such as Islay Ales, Diageo and Tennent Caledonian Breweries UK Ltd
- Supported by Skills Development Scotland

WHO IS THIS SUITABLE FOR?

This qualification is rated at SCQF Level 5. This means it is suitable for anyone working in an operational role.

“We have been working in the brewing industry for over 10 years, supporting employee development through Modern Apprenticeship qualifications, and other learning and development approaches.

As the industry continues to flourish and technology advances, the need for highly skilled and motivated people is accelerating, and we see time and time again the great difference that Modern Apprenticeship qualifications can make to our client’s business and their team member’s individual competence and commitment to succeed.

This Modern Apprenticeship has been drawn up to meet the needs of all brewers, from micro-businesses to major employers, and we are very happy to be driving this award forward.”

- Polaris Learning Ltd



EUROPE & SCOTLAND
European Social Fund
Investing in a Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Future



MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS AT JK THOMSON: CONTINUED SUCCESS TEN YEARS ON

We have been working with JK Thomson on their Modern Apprenticeship programme for over 10 years now and in this time, over 200 apprentices have gone through the Modern Apprenticeship programme funded by Skills Development Scotland.

Now, it is a requirement that all employees complete the Modern Apprenticeship qualification and in addition, all supervisors and managers complete the Modern Apprenticeship Level 3/SCQF 7. The Modern Apprenticeship qualifications have become core to the company's training plan and are at the heart of career succession.

We recently asked Enoch Robinson, Quality Assurance Manager, how the Modern Apprenticeship programme has changed during this time:

“The basic, core approach is still the same: Polaris Learning and myself discuss with the candidate what would be the best route and what they will need to do based on their role. The biggest change now is that it is much easier to get people on board. They know what to expect from the Modern Apprenticeship programme and are keen to get involved- at the start it was new and a bit unknown to them, but this is definitely not the case now”

Enoch Robinson - Quality Assurance Manager

JK Thomson are a great company to work with and we look forward to what is ahead in Modern Apprenticeships for everyone involved.

MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS IN MANAGEMENT

We recently caught up with Matt Gibson, who works in the Technical Department at JK Thomson, about his career at JK Thomson and his experience completing the Modern Apprenticeship in Management, SCQF Level 7.

Matt has been with JK Thomson for 5 and a half years now having previously worked as a Quantity Surveyor.

MOVING INTO MANAGEMENT

Matt's first exposure to a management role was in the wholesale team when he had the opportunity to work there for two years as a manager. He had just finished his rotations and it was while working here that he found out about the Modern Apprenticeship in Management. For Matt it made a lot of sense:

“I had already completed the Modern Apprenticeship Level 3 in Food and Drink Operations and the Leadership and Management Essentials Endorsed by the ILM, so this was a natural progression and fitted well with my role and responsibilities in the wholesale department”.

THOUGHTS ON THE MODERN APPRENTICESHIP IN MANAGEMENT

Matt had just started as a manager when we first suggested to him that he might want to complete this qualification and for him the timing was perfect: a great way to learn more about the role he had taken on and what he needed to consider as a supervisor.

We asked Matt how the qualification has helped him in his role:

“It was good having a range of modules to work on and overall, it has helped me to look at things differently. I now recognise the importance of sharing the bigger picture and being clear on each person's contribution to that on a project or with a task. It is not enough just to tell someone what to do. I also realised the importance of communicating well and regularly with people. Overall it has made me think about what I do as a manager on a day to day basis.”



Enoch Robinson (Left) presenting Matt Gibson (Right) with his certificate

To read our full interview with Matt, head over to our blog on our website

TRAINING THE TRAINERS AT YOUNG'S, FRASERBURGH



The team at Young's, Fraserburgh, wanted to boost their three on-site trainers' and one of their supervisors' confidence in delivering training, as well as building on their knowledge and skills, so that they could provide on the line training as well as stand-up training to groups, when needed.

The thought of learning how to do group training, in particular, can often be nerve wracking but those participating were great, they all were getting involved, producing good work and taking onboard feedback to help them develop further.

Throughout the three days of training, they received insight into how well they were training whether one to one or to a small group, their ability to communicate their messages, respond to their trainees and their use of the tools available such as PowerPoint - from how to make the most of PowerPoint when training, making sure that the content looks good and helps deliver the message.

They gave a great report afterwards on their experiences!

Well done everyone, you did brilliantly!



ALL GO AT THE GLENMORANGIE COMPANY!

It has been another busy period at The Glenmorangie Company as the apprentices are working towards their Modern Apprenticeship in Spirits Industry SCQF 6.

They have been participating in workshops to consolidate their learning, on the job assessment, evidence gathering and work towards their IBD qualification in General Certificate in Packaging.

Workshops have been delivered as part of the programme, tailored to the work at The Glenmorangie Company and designed to help the apprentices put their learning into practice.

Each workshop lasts four hours and the workshops cover:

- Health, Safety and Environment
- Effective Communication
- Maintaining Quality and Compliance
- Controlling Traceability / Shift Handovers
- Problem Solving and Diagnosis
- Personal Branding and Development for Career Progression



A good example of how this works in practice, is the Problem Solving and Diagnosis workshop, where the apprentices learned tools and techniques that they can use in their work including Root Cause Analysis, Cause and Effect Diagrams and Lateral Thinking techniques to look at potential solutions. To consolidate their learning, they then presented their findings to the senior team supported by video footage and evidenced with strong supporting data.

PLUS, the Polaris Learning online and blended learning portal, has been at the heart of the programme as a central point for the Modern Apprenticeship qualification information, planning, evidence upload and progress tracking.

We wish all of them the best of luck on the remainder of their Apprenticeship journey.

The
GLENMORANGIE
COMPANY

We share many success stories from our candidates working on their Modern Apprenticeship in Management SCQF Level 7 on our social media, and we wanted to mention a few here as well as their highlights from the programme.

David Hearn, Compass Group UK and Ireland

“I have found the Modern Apprenticeship in Management to be very helpful for my position working offshore and I have learned a lot that I will now put into practice on a day-to-day basis. I am hoping to continue my learning with Polaris Learning if possible as it has been a very beneficial experience and the course is set out well on PLUS and easy to navigate. I soon found it easy to find what I had completed on PLUS and what I still needed to do, and what evidence to find.

I, personally, can't rate the staff at Polaris Learning highly enough as they have been with me every step of the way. The feedback and comments have been encouraging and helpful, and when you are doing a course like this its brilliant to know that you have people in you corner, advising you, encouraging you and being consistent with communication. It's been such a brilliant experience all round. My whole experience was perfect from start to finish. Thank you.”



Nathalay Smith, Everwarm



“As a young manager, sometimes it can be a bit harder to persuade people that what I am saying is the right approach and how something should be done. This qualification is giving me the skills, knowledge and tools to be able to gain respect faster and to know how to approach situations.

The communication and information flow between the office and the site teams is important and can be challenging because of the nature of the work. I have learnt from the qualification, the importance of finding different ways to communicate to better meet the needs of the site teams. This has really improved things.”

Kayleigh Thain, Johnstons of Elgin

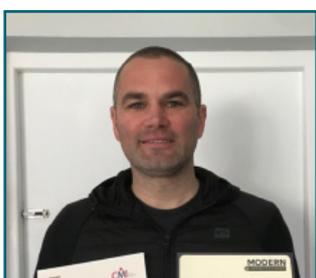
“PLUS (the online learning system) is very easy to navigate, the structure of the learning and assessment is good as well, very clear and well laid out. I got a lot of tips from videos as well as different attachments which I could refer back to.

I learned a great deal from the focus on managing people and in particular, working with objectives, using listening skills and questioning skills and the wide variety of different approaches to deal with different situations. The programme 100% met my expectations and requirements.

The whole structure and approach of the Modern Apprenticeship programme that Polaris Learning take, helped me think about a structured approach to systems generally, at work. The content itself, such as how to make plans and use Personal Development Plans made me think about having more structure in how I approach things, perhaps making more plans and generally planning ahead more. I really like spreadsheets and scheduling activities, and doing this course has helped me think about how I can apply these tools even more.”



Greg Maclean, Worley



“The Modern Apprenticeship in Management was exactly what I needed for developing supervisory management skills. As it is online, it really suited me, and I had a lot of evidence from the range of jobs that I do in my role. I found the activities and exercises were really helpful. There were a lot of management skills that I hadn't realised I would need until I did the course. I particularly liked the SWOT analysis and the leadership evaluation. I did the leadership evaluation on myself and the guys in the team and a supervisor did one for me. I will keep them and refer to them in the future.

It was great to get insight into what is expected if you are leading a team, wanting to develop your own skills or skills of guys in the team. It was also 100% helpful to think about my own development. It is not something we get time to do normally, and it really helped me think about how I need to develop for the future.”

SUCCESS OF THE MANAGEMENT MODERN APPRENTICESHIP

Skills Development Scotland

MA
Modern Apprenticeships

Alastair Dickie, Polaris Learning

“I have been with Polaris Learning for 17 years and I was pleased to have the opportunity to do this qualification.

The programme covers a good range of topics and included content that was new to me. It was useful to spend time working on, and therefore thinking about, different areas that affect my work. I would recommend this course even for people with a lot of experience as it is useful as a minimum to refresh what you should be doing, as well as to look at more modern techniques and the latest thinking on best practice. For example, setting team objectives helped me to think about whether I am unconsciously demotivating people because the objectives that I am setting are unrealistic. Then with the work on leadership and motivation, it reflected what I see in my work with multiple candidates: that is, money is not the main motivator and in fact it is surprising how far down the list this is. Having good working relationship with your team, respect within the team and feeling valued are much, much more important than money. Understanding people’s motivators in this way is really useful insight for my role.”



Karen Simpson, Polaris Learning

“I have been at Polaris Learning for 7 years now, looking after the admin team so doing the Modern Apprenticeship in Management made sense.

I was working towards the qualification during the COVID-19 lockdown which was tricky at times but I managed to fit everything in and I am pleased to have completed the qualification”

It has been brilliant to see so many people put so much effort into their Modern Apprenticeship in Management SCQF Level 7 jointly awarded with the Chartered Management Institute. With people in food and drink, construction and the energy industries doing such brilliant jobs, completing the learning, gathering their evidence and applying what they have learnt to their roles.



CONGRATULATIONS TO ERIN KING

Congratulations to our own Assessor Erin in achieving a Distinction in the General Certificate in Spirits Packaging of the Institute of Brewing & Distilling.

Erin managed to combine an extremely busy workload whilst finding time in her day (and many weekends!) to achieve this fantastic result.

She continues to use her training and qualification in helping others work towards their own qualifications.

Brilliant work!



MODERN APPRENTICESHIP IN SPIRITS SCQF LEVEL 6



Developed by the National Skills Academy for Food and Drink (NSAFD) – the sector skills council for the food and drink manufacturing sector, the SVQ in Spirits Operations at SCQF Level 6 qualification is awarded by SQA in partnership with NSAFD.

The Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) in Spirits Operations at SCQF Level 6 allows candidates to demonstrate competence in job related skills in their particular area of work and expertise.



Why a Modern Apprenticeship for the Spirits Industry?

The spirits industry is a technically challenging industry in which to operate requiring the application of scientific principles to process and supply high quality spirits products. It is also a booming industry and the people in it need their own dedicated Modern Apprenticeship to reflect the specifics of their roles.

What is Involved?

This Modern Apprenticeship has been designed with the industry to cover the covering the range of operations and includes processing, bottling, packing, labelling, casking, warehouse operations and distribution.

It takes approximately 24 months to complete and includes two awards, an SVQ from the SQA and either the IBD General Certificate in Distilling or the IBD General Certificate in Packaging, or both, from the NSAFD. For those who have not completed their Core Skills, it also includes Core Skills although the majority of these we build into the main programme of learning and assessment.

This qualification covers areas such as Food Safety, Health, Safety and Environmental Systems, Product Quality, Operate Control Systems, Site Security, Malting, Milling, Mashing, Fermentation, Distilling, Flavouring and Cask Filling.

“The course was very simple to access (online) and the site was very easy to work with. The content was good. Both trainers were very helpful with any queries I had and dealt with them in a timely manner.”

A Modern Apprentice
Spirits Industry Level 3/SCQF 6

Why Polaris Learning to Support Your Modern Apprenticeship in Spirits?

We have delivered Modern Apprenticeship programmes in food and drink for over 3000 learners across 40 companies in the last 26 years.

Our expert team are specialists in the food and drink industry. We have worked closely with Skills Development Scotland and the National Skills Academy for Food and Drink to develop the spirits pathway and we are delighted to already be delivering this with our clients.

We have been working in the spirits industry for over 10 years, supporting employee development through Modern Apprenticeship qualifications, and other learning and development approaches.

As the industry continues to flourish and technology advances, the need for highly skilled and motivated people is accelerating, and we see time and time again the great difference that Modern Apprenticeship qualifications can make to our client’s businesses and their team members’ individual competence and commitment to succeed.

This Modern Apprenticeship has been drawn up to meet the needs of all in the spirits industry, from micro-businesses to major employers, we are very happy to be driving this award forward.



WORKING TOGETHER WITH SEAFOOD SCOTLAND

It has been a busy period working together with the team at Seafood Scotland and the Scottish Seafood Training Network to help encourage more people into the industry, and to develop the skills and knowledge of those already involved in this varied industry.

It started with us being able to offer funded training for those in the industry from a range of courses including:

- Train the Trainer
- Internal Auditor
- Root Cause Analysis
- Assessor Training

The feedback from our clients who participated has been great, including the following feedback for the Train the Trainer programme from Young's Seafood, Fraserburgh:

“
The course was exactly suited to my role within the company. Trainers were well prepared and the materials were easy to understand.
 ”

“
Love the enthusiasm of the Assessor. Impressed with the knowledge they have and the way they present it.
 ”

“
The course helped me a lot in my self-confidence. I learned a lot of new things. The Assessor did a great job. Highly educated people with a lot of knowledge.
 ”

SEAFOOD BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

Now we are working on the Seafood Business Improvement Programme with our partners in the Scottish Seafood Training Network.



Seafood Scotland was granted £60,000 to help any onshore seafood business train and upskill their team in response to the impact of the last two years of COVID.

Working with Skills Development Scotland and the National Transition Training Fund, each business that participates receives a bespoke training plan to meet the needs of their business, taking into account their ambitions and their teams.

There are four key areas of training available and at Polaris Learning we are helping to deliver the seafood-specific courses, including knife skills, fish quality assessment and fish frier and monger training.

SEAFOOD BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME ON PLUS

As part of this programme, we have the Seafood Business Improvement Programme on PLUS with a wide range of SVQ Units to choose from.

Seafood Business Improvement Programme

Induction: Candidate Induction

Course Facilities: Progress Report Course Forum

*For help using the site click on the "HELP" section on the blue navigation bar above, alternatively, contact your trainer.
 *For IT issues, please contact your IT department first, alternatively email: admin@polaris-learning.com

Announcements

Course Information Course Information <small>New Activity</small>	Unit J4WA 04 (2001) Unit J4WA 04 (2001): Topic: Plan and Organise Your Own Work in a Food Business	Unit JOVJ 04 (3001) Unit JOVJ 04 (3001): Topic: Provide Leadership in Your Area of Responsibility of a Food and Drink Business	Unit J04A 04 (3004) Unit J04A 04 (3004): Topic: Communicate in a Business Environment
Unit JOVH 04 (3005) Unit JOVH 04 (3005): Topic: Motivate Colleagues in a Food and Drink Business	Unit JOV6 04 (3007) Unit JOV6 04 (3007): Topic: Develop and Manage a Team in a Food and Drink Business	Unit JOV4 04 (3009) Unit JOV4 04 (3009): Topic: Allocate and Monitor Work in a Food and Drink Business	Unit J03B 04 (3010) Unit J03B 04 (3010): Topic: Develop Productive Working Relationships with Colleagues



POLARIS LEARNING ADMIN TEAM



Our Admin Team is at the heart of the work that we do within the food and drink industry, helping to keep everything running smoothly and making sure that we all have what we need, when we need it.

Karen and Izzy joined us 7 years ago and Sandra joined us nearly 6 years ago, and they work hard, making a great team.

We spent a bit of time to find out more about what they do:

Karen: “The process starts when the Consultants advise that they have new candidates to sign up onto the Modern Apprenticeship programme. We

check that the candidates will be eligible for funding, then if they are, we check if they have already completed their Core Skills and if they have any Accredited Prior Learning that can be taken into account.

Once this is done, we make up the sign-up packs, and following successful induction with the consultants, we register the candidates on the SDS, SQA and MA Systems as well as our own internal systems”.

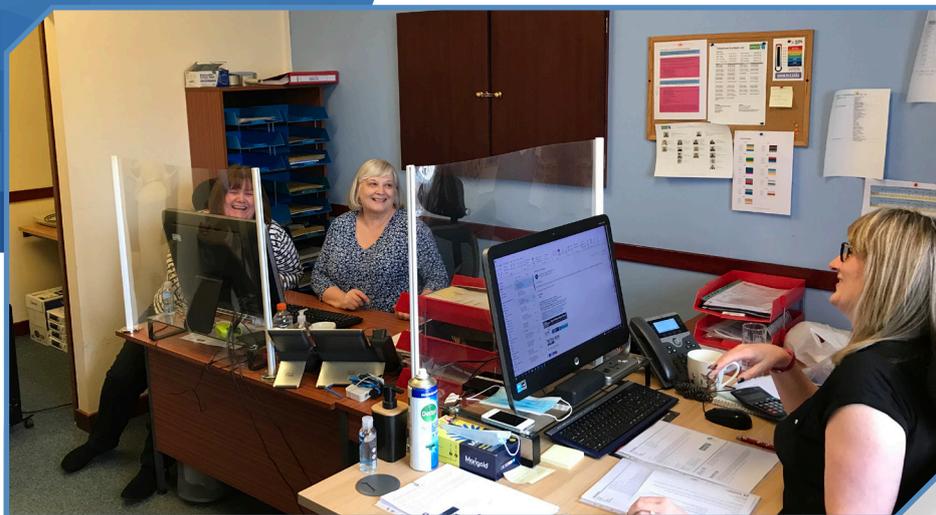
Karen went onto explain that once the candidates start the qualification, the Admin Team monitor progress, process claims, update records as necessary, then result when the course work has been passed and verified. Izzy spends a lot of time managing all the certificates, and the process of keeping everything on track and in order. Everyone gets involved in making up resources when we are delivering workshops on-site to support the qualifications as well as handling any queries from the Consultants. If our candidates will be working through a course on PLUS, Sandra will be the person that looks after this process, getting each person set-up with log-in details and signed-up to the right course.

Karen works closely with the wider Polaris Learning Food Team and Skills Development Scotland to ensure that we are complying with all aspects of our contract with Skills Development Scotland and liaises with the team at Skills Development Scotland on any contract related points.

All of the Admin Team will get involved in bigger projects such as when the SQA Units making up the Modern Apprenticeship qualifications need to be updated and helping with updating the courses on PLUS - jobs that they enjoy getting involved in!

When I asked them to sum up what they like about their work they were very clear: “The banter among us and also with the Consultants is great fun. The work is enjoyable, varied and no day is the same. Sometimes we wonder how we are going to get through everything that comes in, but we always do and by Friday we feel that we have worked hard, enjoyed the work and done a good job. We really like that we recognise the names of candidates from when they first start with us, seeing them signed-up, watching as they complete milestones and then finish their qualification, and then in many cases, seeing them progress to the next level of qualification. It feels like we get to know each of the candidates a little bit even though we support a very large number every year”.

The Admin Team make a great team and help us all out, often behind the scenes and we would all be lost without them!



INVESTIGATION ESSENTIALS



BE ABLE TO RUN A LIVE INVESTIGATION IN YOUR ORGANISATION WITHOUT THE COSTLY PRICE TAG

This online programme (also available through virtual workshops) is designed for those new to incident investigations as well as those with more experience but no formal training.

It is an in-depth programme which will take you through the key stages should you be faced with an incident, packed with takeaways and useful tools to help you and your organisation confidently know how to run a live investigation should you need to do so.

Designed and supported by a leading expert, the online course is made up of 12 modules covering:

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Introduction |  Evidence Management |
|  Losses and Biases |  Interview Basics |
|  Behaviours |  Immediate Causes |
|  Jargon |  Incident Analysis |
|  Getting Started |  Recommend the Way Forward |
|  Timeline |  Science and Black Art |

Each module finishes with an online quiz to ensure that you have understood what has been covered and you achieve a Certificate of Achievement once you have finished.

We should stress that this is a course full of learning, important knowledge and tools designed for people who need to be able to apply what they are learning in their day jobs.

You will also access invaluable tools to help you apply what you are learning and leave you ready to carry out an incident investigation:

Investigator' Essential Guide:

This handbook introduces the elementary and essential tools used within the investigation framework. It will provide you with a reference source for this training course, and act as a quick refresher for when you are conducting a live investigation.

Investigation Flow Chart:

The various investigation and analysis activities are presented in this easy to read flowchart, providing a quick reference guide for both this training course, and for live investigations.

PEACE Prompt Card:

This prompt card depicts the PEACE Interview Framework and so acts as an essential guide to conducting investigative interviews.

This online programme is a cost effective way to access high quality learning and knowledge as well as excellent tools based on years of experience without the high price tag that can often be associated with this type of training or consultancy.

USEFUL REFERENCE LINKS



ADOPT AN APPRENTICE

The Scottish Government has recently announced additional funding to encourage organisations to ‘adopt an apprentice’ with funding enhanced from £2000 to £5000 for organisations that recruit a Modern or Graduate Apprentice recently made redundant.

You can find out more information on Adopt an Apprentice here:

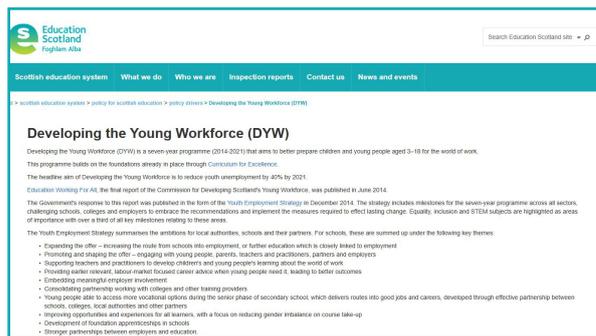
<https://www.ourskillsforce.co.uk/invest-in-young-people/adopt-an-apprentice/>



YOUNG PERSON'S GUARANTEE

This gives all young people aged 16 to 24 a guarantee of access to work, training or education, with apprenticeships integral to this. You can find out more information here: <https://youngpersonsguarantee.scot/youngpersons-hub>

DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE



Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) is a seven-year programme (2014-2021) that aims to better prepare children and young people aged 3–18 for the world of work. This has recently been boosted by a four-year extension to the programme carrying their positive impact through to 2024. This programme builds on the foundations already in place through Curriculum for Excellence.

The headline aim of Developing the Young Workforce is to reduce youth unemployment by 40% by 2021.

[https://education.gov.scot/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/Developing%20the%20Young%20Workforce%20\(DYW\)](https://education.gov.scot/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/Developing%20the%20Young%20Workforce%20(DYW))

FAIR WORK PRACTICES

Fair Work Practices is a key part of the Scottish Government's strategy and, as organisations that deliver and use Modern Apprenticeship qualifications, we are all encouraged to use fair work practices in our work places.

Fair Work is defined as work that: “offers effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment and respect; that balances the rights and responsibilities of employers and workers and that can generate benefits for individuals, organisations and society.”

In reality, this includes:

- ▶ A pay policy that includes a commitment to supporting the Living Wage
- ▶ Developing a workforce which reflects the diversity of population of Scotland in terms of age, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability
- ▶ A strong commitment to Modern Apprenticeships
- ▶ Support for learning and development
- ▶ Flexible working (including for example practices such as flexi-time and career breaks) and support for family friendly working and wider work life balance
- ▶ Gender balance and wider representative workforce
- ▶ Promoting workplace innovation
- ▶ Respect: treat each employee with respect and value diversity within the workforce

VIRTUAL AND REMOTE LEARNING

We are increasingly starting to get back on site with our clients, however virtual and remote learning is still an important factor.

OUR APPROACH TO DESIGNING ONLINE LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Some of the factors that we consider when planning and designing online and virtual learning are:

- ▶ What are the learning outcomes and the links with assessment?
- ▶ How will the learning approach meet the different learning needs of the learners?
- ▶ Will it engage them and encourage them to learn?
- ▶ How will they be supported through the learning?
- ▶ How will this learning be transferred back to the workplace?
- ▶ How will learners and the client contact be kept informed of progress against plan?
- ▶ What is the best delivery approach: all online or a mix of online and webinars?
- ▶ How do we handle assessment and the capturing, documenting and management of evidence for qualifications?

TECHNIQUES TO SUPPORT REMOTE LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

To support our learners and to complete assessment remotely, we have found that a combination of approaches is needed, depending on the individual as well as the company that he or she works for.

The Learning

A lot of the learning for the Modern Apprenticeship qualifications for Food & Drink Operations SCQF Level 5, Level 6 and Level 7 is delivered through PLUS, our online and blended learning portal. We also provide virtual workshops for people completing their individual units, to replace the classroom workshops that we were delivering.



Each learner also has a Polaris Learning trainer/assessor to help with any questions and it is important that we provide a quick response so that they can keep going at a pace that suits them. This can be a challenge with lots of learners, but it is our priority to make this work.

The Assessment

For assessment, we use a combination of:

- ▶ Knowledge Questions and Personal Statements (as required by the qualifications)
- ▶ Remote Observation
- ▶ Witness Testimonies

For remote observation, this can be done by the candidate recording the task and then uploading this recording into PLUS for us to review or if practical, arranging for us to observe the task remotely using appropriate technology.

OUR FEEDBACK



"I have just completed my course and I am just awaiting feedback on the last bits I submitted, myself and my colleague both enjoyed working with the PLUS system as we could do the training at our own pace to fit in with our work schedule and not under pressure to have it done by a certain time. Certainly something I think we could look to continue using in the future"

- Quality Assurance Technician

Course Effectiveness: 5/5

Course Content and Materials: 5/5

The Trainer / Assessor Effectiveness: 5/5

SUPPORTING DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN YOUR BUSINESS

Diversity in business can bring under-represented thoughts and experiences to the table, inspiring increased creativity and innovation within teams and business.

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace are critical to the success of best-in-class organisations. In 2020, the coronavirus global health pandemic, economic uncertainty and high-profile racial justice events are all issues that have informed the direction of DEI initiatives, and these factors will likely influence DEI trends in the coming years as well.

Here we will highlight several areas where business leaders should focus their DEI efforts in 2022 to ensure that their organisations are characterised by fairness, compassion and equal opportunity

1. REDEFINING LEADERSHIP

With more employees working from home or hybrid working, business leaders will need to build on their emotional intelligence and other soft skills. As alternative working arrangements continues, the most businesses leaders will continue pivoting to help employees navigate any challenging new circumstances that may be affecting their daily work. For example, it has been demonstrated that the coronavirus global health event has disproportionately impacted women – particularly women of colour, who are leaving the workforce to raise and support their families.

Supervisors must remain cognisant of these trends and put support structures in place to assist their employees through these times. Of course, employees should still be held accountable for their work, but business leaders can help by empathising with their employees' individual situations and supporting them in a personalised way.

2. REHUMANISING WORK

Businesses will also need to draw upon their emotional intelligence skills to manage employees effectively in 2022. Highly publicised events like the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery show that meaningful change is needed and that organisations must do more to combat racial inequality in the workplace and in the world at large.

Best-in-class organisations do so by having open and honest conversations with their employees about societal issues that may be affecting them. These discussions can create space for employees to process what's going on and express what it means to them, which can give everyone a chance to connect with each other and their leaders on a human level.

DEI practitioners can support these conversations by training leaders, from the MD down, on how to take an understanding and empathetic approach to discussions with their colleagues. To that end, it may be helpful to create a DEI task force with buy-in and regular support from senior leaders. Tool kits designed to help facilitate conversations around sensitive issues could also be shared with business leaders.



SUPPORTING DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN YOUR BUSINESS

Taking time to ensure that your employees are able to voice their concerns and be heard is essential to sustaining a culture of equality, inclusion and belonging. When differences of perspective and circumstance are accepted and thoughtfully addressed in the workplace, employees will feel a sense of belonging and know that their organisation wants to understand and support them.

3. DIVERSITY AMONGST TEAMS

Another DEI matter business leaders should focus on in 2022 is building diverse teams within their organisations, particularly in remote work settings. Numerous studies have shown that diverse teams, on average, outperform more homogeneous ones and tend to generate 20-30% more revenue than less diverse organisations and teams.

Diversity in businesses can bring underrepresented thoughts and experiences to the table, inspiring increased creativity and innovation within teams. For this reason, building diverse, equitable and inclusive teams will remain imperative to business success.

4. CLOSING GAPS

Other issues that need to be on the radar of DEI and business leaders include gender equity, pay parity, flexible work arrangements, and added emphasis on physical, mental and financial health initiatives. Organisations must look to close any inequity gaps present in their business, whether they are based on gender, ethnicity or any other factor.

These efforts should also extend beyond the walls of the business. We are starting to see an increased focus on supporting small, minority owned, women-owned and veteran-owned businesses, and my hope is that this trend will continue. These businesses form the backbone of our country and our economy, so it is in the best interest of all organisations to close equity gaps and create a more open and prosperous business environment. Organisations would do well to be on the right side of this trend in 2022 and beyond.



There will be an increased number of diversity, equity and inclusion practices in the workplace trends to account for in 2022, and issues stemming from the coronavirus pandemic and social injustice will continue to add stressors to the mix. To position their organisation to tackle these issues effectively, DEI-focused business leaders will need to determine what goals their business should set and what resources they will need to achieve them.

Dianne Greene

Vice President, Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Strategy and Operations - ADP



ONLINE AND VIRTUAL TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS



We can do these courses online, as virtual workshops as well as face to face.

Your assessors need to be trained on your assessment process if you want them to be able to apply this effectively back in their workplace.

We can ensure your assessors understand what the company needs in order to achieve its objectives and where their role fits in with this process. This helps create assessors who are better able to assess and who are more committed to the task, leading to an increase in the number of assessments completed to the required standard.

We offer three main options relating to assessor training and certification:

- SQA L&D9D/9DI Assessor Qualification
- Training with a Knowledge Assignment
- Training with a Practical Assessment (Certificate of Competence)



Internal verification is an important part of your competency management system. It is a process that you put in place to ensure that all your assessors are assessing in the same way and to the same standard.

Your internal verifiers will need to know what is expected of them by your organisation as well as understanding what is involved in internal verification.

We can help you with introductory training for your internal verifiers through to full qualifications.

The three main options relating to internal verifier training and certification available:

- SQA L&D11 Verifier Qualification
- Training with a Knowledge Assignment
- Training with a Practical Assessment (Certificate of Competence)



Our training courses focus solely on the development of practical training skills.

Whether your employees are new to training or are experienced trainers who want to refresh or update their skills and knowledge, we can help. We also find that training specialists or supervisors who need to deliver training as part of their job role can benefit.

We can offer short intensive training courses leading to recognised qualifications such as our ILM Train the Trainer Endorsed Award as well as vocational units from the Scottish Qualifications Authority, and full SQA Learning and Development Awards at Level 3 and Level 4.

You may also find our short introduction videos on our website beneficial. In these videos, we talk about presentation skills and group training as well as coaching and mentoring options available.

For more information on any of these services, please visit our website or feel free to get in touch.

INDIVIDUAL WORKSHOPS



COMMUNICATION

Within this topic, we can cover a range of subjects including:

- The role of the team leader
- The communication process
- Communication in groups, to individuals and in meetings
- Other methods of communication
- Barriers to communication
- Listening skills and speaking skills



EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

This workshop is for leaders where they have a team behind them. It covers:

- The key essentials of leadership and motivations
- The importance of vision and creating a common sense of purpose
- Effective communication and scoring themselves
- Areas of improvement, flexible leadership and improvements required to motivate their teams



SELF AND RELATIONSHIP AWARENESS

The objective of this programme of virtual, online workshops is to help managers better understand themselves and their team members, in turn, putting them in a good position to work towards creating a high-performance team. We can also deliver this programme as face to face workshops or as part of a larger leadership development programme.

We have a number of different options including a focus on leadership development, a focus on team development and team analysis.



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional Intelligence is such an important subject for all of our teams at the best of times and it is particularly important just now. Giving your people, particularly your supervisors and managers, the ability to better understand and manage their own emotions, as well as knowing how to support, manage and respond to the emotions of the people in their teams, is critical. Now more than ever, we need to help our managers be the best that they can be and in turn, help them create high performing teams.

This two hour virtual, online workshop is a great starting point on that journey.



OTHER MODULES AVAILABLE ONLINE

- Communication for Managers
- Motivation for Performance
- Leadership Skills
- Leading Change
- Coaching Skills for Managers
- Effective Managers
- Performance Management
- Operational Management
- Self Development and Coaching Others
- Assessor Refresher Training
- Internal Audit
- Food Hygiene
- Lean Management
- Root Cause Analysis

Refer to our website for more workshop topics or get in touch.

RECIPES - BBC GOOD FOOD



TOMATO BRUSCHETTA

Ingredients

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1/2 small red onion, finely chopped | 30ml balsamic vinegar |
| 8 medium tomatoes (about 500g), chopped | 60-80ml extra virgin olive oil |
| 2-3 garlic cloves, crushed | 1 loaf crusty bread |
| 6-8 leaves of fresh basil, chopped | |

Method

1. In a large bowl, mix the onions, tomatoes, garlic and basil, taking care not to mash or break up the tomatoes too much. Add the balsamic vinegar and extra virgin olive oil. Add salt and pepper to taste. Mix again. Cover and chill for at least an hour. This will allow the flavours to soak and blend together.

2. Slice the baguette loaf diagonally into 12 thick slices and lightly toast them until they are light brown on both sides. Serve the mixture on the warm slices of bread. If you prefer the mixture at room temperature, remove from the fridge half an hour before serving.

Ingredients

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 500g swede, peeled and chopped | 400g frozen fish pie mix, defrosted |
| 500g potatoes, peeled and chopped | 200g frozen peas |
| 250g low-fat soft cheese (Garlic and Herb) | Chopped parsley, dill or chives |
| 1 tbsp cornflour, with 4 tbsp water | Salt and freshly ground pepper |

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/180C Fan/Gas 6.
2. Put the swede and potatoes in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Cook for 15-20 minutes until tender, drain and mash. Season and set aside.
3. Meanwhile, put the cheese and stock in a small saucepan, whisk until fairly smooth and heat gently until melted and combined. Add the cornflour mixture and cook until thickened. Remove from the heat and season.
4. Stir the fish and peas into the cheese mixture and place in a medium ovenproof pie dish.
5. Spoon the mash over the fish mixture and bake for 25-30 minutes, or until lightly browned. Garnish with chopped herbs, if desired, and serve immediately.



HEALTHY FISH PIE

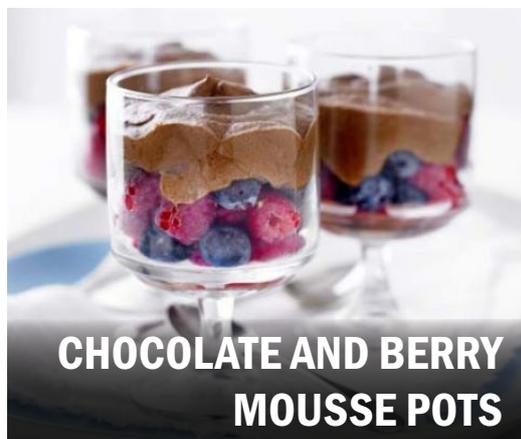
Ingredients

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 75g dark chocolate, 70% grated | 350g berries (try blueberries, raspberries, cherries or a mix) |
| 4tbsp low-fat yogurt | |
| 2 large egg whites | |
| 2 tsp caster sugar | |

Method

1. Melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering water, making sure the bowl doesn't directly touch the water. Once melted, allow it to cool for 5-10 mins, then stir in the yogurt.
2. Whisk the egg whites until stiff, then whisk in the sugar and beat until stiff again. Fold the whites into the chocolate mix - loosen the mixture first with a spoonful of egg white, then carefully fold in the rest, keeping as much air as possible

3. Put berries into small glasses or ramekins, then divide mousse on top. Chill in the fridge until set.



CHOCOLATE AND BERRY MOUSSE POTS

NEWS FROM POLARIS LEARNING

JIM COUTTS

We are very sad to be saying goodbye to Jim Coutts who is retiring after 7 years with Polaris Learning.

Jim will be missed by us as well as his by many clients and candidates whom he has worked with across the length of Scotland. Jim has helped many people complete their Modern Apprenticeships, as well as helping with IOSH training and other health and safety related topics.

We wish Jim a great retirement and we will all miss him.



FARNE SALMON & TROUT



Well done to our candidates at Farne who have recently completed their Modern Apprenticeship in Food and Drink Operations. Here is what some of them had to say:

“



For me the material was very easy to understand across all the Units and the questions were easy to answer as they all related to my day-to-day activities. My Assessor was always available if I had any doubts and this was great in helping me understand the Units more fully. It really was a great help.”

“



The Modern Apprenticeship qualification has helped me to understand some of the procedures relevant to my role in much more detail than I previously did. I have little experience with computers yet I found accessing and navigating the online part of the qualification to be easy. The feedback that I received from my Assessor was really helpful and if I had any issues with a Unit, I would quickly get the help that I needed.”

“



Throughout the Modern Apprenticeship, it was clear what I had to do and I always got helpful feedback.”

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