

Food and Drink Apprenticeship Frameworks

The NSAFD, in its capacity as Issuing Authority, announced today the timetable for the withdrawal of pathways in the Food and Drink Apprenticeship Frameworks at Levels 2 and 3 in England following consultation with the industry and discussions with the ESFA.

The food and drink industry has been at the forefront of apprenticeship activity developing a range of new 'standards' to meet industry need; in line with direction from government apprenticeship frameworks are to be replaced by new occupational standards.

As the framework contains a range of different occupations it was identified that rather than the ESFA considering a wholesale framework turn off, a phased pathway turn off informed through the consultation (undertaken by the NSAFD during Spring 2017) would provide an employer informed and flexible approach to the transition.

The schedule for pathways being turned off is outlined below – the minimum notice for a pathway is 6 months in line with ESFA guidance. Thus the initial tranche of pathways will close on the 30th April 2018. No dates have been set for the removal of remaining pathways and at least 6 months' notice will be provided.

Level 2 Pathways to be removed on 30th April 2018

- Low Volumes (2014/16 certification numbers in brackets)

The Level 2 Operator standard can be used to support both the dairy and team leading pathways; also a new dairy apprenticeship is available at level 5

- o Dairy (34)
- o Livestock Droving (0)
- o Team Leading (66)
- o Milling Industry Skills (0)

- Alternative Standards developed (New standard in brackets)

- o Meat and Poultry (Butchery)
- o Food Industry Skills (Food Process Operator)
- o Fish and Shellfish (Fishmonger, Senior Chef Production Cooking)
- o Baking Industry Skills (Baker)

- Pathways with no opportunity to develop alternative standards but whose content is included in other standards

- o Food Manufacturing Excellence (CI built into all L2 food standards and also a level 3 dedicated standard)
- o Fresh Produce Industry Skills (Food Process Operator, Retailer)

Remaining Pathway

- **Brewing:** Will remain open until the new Standard in development has been accepted. At least 6 months' notice will be given before this is withdrawn

Level 3 Pathways to be removed on 30th April 2018

- Low Volume
 - o Fresh produce (0)
- Alternative Standards developed
 - o Meat and Poultry (Advanced Butchery)
 - o Food industry Skills and Technical Management (Advanced Food Operator / Food Technologist)
 - o Baking (Advanced Baker)
 - o Food Manufacturing Excellence (Continuous Improvement Technician)

Remaining Pathway

- **Fish and Shellfish-** Will remain open until the industry has determined a future. At least 6 months' notice will be given before it is removed.

Caveats

It is important that prior to any pathway being turned off there are both End Assessment Organisations approved and providers able to deliver the standards. All the standards outlined above have been published and assessment plans have been approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships. The NSAFD will check the Register of End Point Assessment Organisations to ensure that there is at least one approved End Point Assessment Organisation approved for the new standards before the 6 month cut-off date.

The end point assessment marketplace is a competitive and regulated marketplace open to all organisations who successfully apply to the Institute for Apprenticeships.

Summary of Consultation Findings

A formal consultation was made available on the NSAFD website during Spring and this was widely publicised. Employers and providers were invited to register any concerns with the proposals that were outlined; only one employer, two employer representative bodies and two providers contacted us outlining any concerns.

A summary of the issues is outlined below.

1. Food Manufacturing Excellence levels 2 and 3; these apprenticeships have been widely used under previous apprenticeship policy direction for upskilling staff across a range of occupations in continuous improvement techniques. The issues raised were largely of policy change and disappointment that the new policy indicated that apprenticeships were for occupations which the level 2 FME pathway is not. A desire for sufficient time to be provided for employers to see and work with the new standard at level 3 was requested.

Agreed Route (NSAFD/ESFA): The Level 3 Improvement Technician Standard was published on the 5th May 2017. The NSAFD have delayed publication of final plans to enable employers to use the 5 months to review the suitability of the standard. The food industry has contributed to its development and the widespread view is that the standard provides a good alternative recognising of course that the standard should provide stretch, requires 20% off the job training and develops the occupation of an Improvement Technician. A further 6 months is available before the pathway is turned off.

To support any concerned employer or provider the NSAFD will be running free one to one consultancy for any business looking to understand how to transition from the framework to the standard.

2. The Level 2 Fishmonger Standard was identified to meet the core industry need however fish fryers, covered by the current apprenticeship pathway, had been unsuccessful in developing a standard and were potentially disadvantaged.

Agreed Route: Further work undertaken by a group of fish friers identified that an alternative standard (the Level 2 Hospitality Team Member standard) would satisfy their needs.

3. The Bakery Standard was felt by a provider not to offer a solution for the needs of plant confectionery businesses. The development group had considered confectioners when developing the baker standard however the decision was confirmed that confectionery should not be included in the baker standard.

Agreed Route; Attempts were made to secure 10 businesses to develop a new standard however there has been insufficient industry demand to warrant development. This suggests that removal of this pathway would not cause widespread concerns to many businesses; furthermore a review of the new Food and Drink Level 2 Operator standard shows that this can be contextualised in terms of delivery to the plant confectionery businesses enabling technical product knowledge to be delivered.