



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION (Short Course Provider)

PROVIDER: Edinburgh New Town Cookery School

ADDRESS: 7 Queen Street
Edinburgh
EH2 1JE

HEAD OF PROVIDER: Ms Fiona Burrell

DATE OF INSPECTION: 14 February 2018

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation 22 March 2018

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the provider

Edinburgh New Town Cookery School Limited (ENTCS/the Provider) was established in Edinburgh in 2009 by its current Principal. It is a private limited company, which was incorporated in April 2009. There are three Directors and a Secretary on the Board. The Principal is also the owner and Managing Director.

The Provider aims to offer courses that will put every participant on the right path to becoming a successful amateur cook or professional chef.

ENTCS provides a wide range of short and long courses relevant to a range of abilities. The Provider caters for complete beginners, more experienced amateur cooks, and those with aspirations to have a career in the food industry. Course duration ranges from half a day to a 22-week full time programme. All courses emphasise developing and applying practical cookery skills.

The Provider is based in a converted Georgian townhouse in Edinburgh city centre.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Provider offers professional certificated courses. These include a one-month basic cookery course to develop cookery life skills or provide a grounding for entry-level food industry jobs. The three-month beginners' course is designed for those who wish to become professional cooks but also suitable for amateurs wishing to enhance their cookery skills. There is a three-month intermediate course for those with a solid grounding in basic skills who want to improve their knowledge and expertise and their job prospects. It builds on the content of the beginners' course and develops more advanced techniques. Finally, the six-month practical cookery diploma is a combination of the three-months beginners' and the three-months intermediate course and includes work experience placements in local restaurants.

All the certificated courses are a combination of practical cookery, expert cookery demonstrations and talks or lectures on various topics. They all include the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland Basic Food Hygiene course. They are all formally assessed and lead to internal ENTCS awards.

For the past seven years, students from the Queen Margaret's University Tourism and Hospitality degree course spend half a day a week at the school for two semesters.

The Provider also offers a wide range of uncertificated short courses, ranging from evening classes to a two-week course.

The majority of participants are female and are resident in the United Kingdom (UK). At the time of the inspection, the Provider was running four courses. The certificated six-month diploma course had two participants, both female UK residents. The certificated three-month intermediate course had four participants, all female UK residents. The uncertificated one-week course had five participants and the uncertificated two-week course had three participants. Of these participants, the majority were male and all were UK residents. Enrolment on 13 uncertificated courses in February and March is ongoing.

3. Inspection process

An inspection was conducted over half a day by one inspector. Meetings were held with the Principal and there were informal discussions with other staff. Participants learning practical skills were observed in the teaching kitchen and informal discussions were held with them. Various relevant documentation was scrutinised.

4. Background to supplementary inspection

ENTCS withdrew from BAC accreditation on 1 September 2017. This was due to lack of demand for its certificated courses. An upturn in enquiries early in 2018 from participants outside the European Union prompted its decision to return to BAC, on 1 February 2018. BAC determined that due to the short time period between withdrawal and returning to BAC, the Provider would be treated as having been dormant in the intervening months. A supplementary inspection was arranged to ensure that the Provider had maintained previous standards.

5. Inspection history

Full accreditation inspection: 3-4 March 2011

Interim inspection: 31 July 2012

Full accreditation inspection: 13 & 15 April 2015

Interim inspection: 27 June 2017

PART B – JUDGMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgments and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector(s) during the inspection and from documentation provided by the provider

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

The Provider still finds it a challenge to fill the places available on its longer courses. This has been the case since the numbers of participants peaked in 2014 to 2015. This challenge is offset by the continuing popularity of ENTCS's variety of short uncertificated courses and corporate activities, to enable it to remain financially viable.

Following the last inspection, the Provider developed a strategy to mitigate the decline in long course numbers, including improving marketing and developing new business lines. The August 2017 annual report included a business plan and there is a 2018 business analysis implementation plan.

ENTCS no longer includes the Wine and Spirit Education Trust course but does incorporate the relevant subject matter into the curriculum where appropriate.

2. Response to action points in last report

7.4 The Provider must introduce a mechanism to analyse and respond to participant feedback.

Good progress has been made in analysing and responding to feedback in a more strategic way. The senior teacher is reviewing all feedback for the last two years to identify common themes and trends that can be used for quality assurance, marketing and business development purposes.

The business analysis implementation plan identifies 31 March 2018 as the target date for refreshing the feedback forms and processes to maximise the usefulness of its data.

The Provider is taking appropriate steps to raise the comparatively low rate of written feedback by participants on the certificated courses. The current rate of return is 20 to 25 per cent as compared to the 80 to 85 per cent rate on the uncertificated courses. Certificated course participants are reminded to provide written feedback, including by giving them the form at the same time as their certificate.

19.3 The School should provide information about the BAC complaints procedure to participants on all courses, non-certificated as well as certificated.

All participants are now informed of the BAC complaints procedure.

3. Response to recommendations for improvement in last report

The School should continue to develop their annual report process.

The Provider's annual report for the year 2016 to 2017 was more detailed than the previous one and meets expectations.

The Provider should continue to gather and collate as much evidence as possible of successful progression by participants as evidence of the quality and value of its courses.

Good progress has been made. ENTCS is tracking the careers of participants from certificated courses. The resulting information had been used, with the participants' permission and input, to produce professional biographies of participants and case studies, which are available on the website.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements – spot check

4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
The Provider continues to develop its annual report and business planning process appropriately. This provides greater transparency about its strategy and plans. ENTCS is systematically analysing individual and cohort feedback as part of an ongoing review of courses and for business development and marketing purposes.				

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
This standard area is met based on the findings from the previous inspection. No contrary indicators were noted during this inspection.				

4.3 Participant Welfare (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
Participants praised the high standard of the training and facilities at ENTCS, which met or exceeded the expectations they had formed from the course information provided.				

4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
This standard area is met based on the findings from the previous inspection. No contrary indicators were noted during this inspection.				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS
The Provider has enhanced its strategic and business planning process. It has produced an implementation plan that sets out clear steps that the Provider is taking to increase numbers on its certificated courses.
The Provider's strong commitment to continuous quality improvement is evident.

ACTIONS REQUIRED	Priority H/M/L
None	

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
The Provider is recommended to implement the proposed refreshing of the feedback forms and processes to maximise the usefulness of its data.
The Provider should continue its efforts to obtain feedback from certificated course participants, including seeking to maximise the use of social media.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS
Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.
YES
Further comments, if applicable
None