



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (Short Course Provider)

PROVIDER:	Edinburgh New Town Cookery School
ADDRESS:	7 Queen Street Edinburgh EH2 1JE
HEAD OF PROVIDER:	Ms Fiona Burrell
ACCREDITATION STATUS:	Accredited
DATE OF INSPECTION:	10 December 2021
ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE:	Continued accreditation, 3 March 2022

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the provider

Edinburgh New Town Cookery School Limited (ENTCS/the Provider) is a privately owned organisation offering certificated and uncertificated courses in cookery. The Provider is a private limited company established by its current Principal in 2009. It is based in a converted Georgian townhouse in Edinburgh city centre.

ENTCS' aim is to provide food enthusiasts and aspiring professional cooks with appropriate culinary skills. All courses emphasise the development and application of practical cookery skills. The Provider's objective is to enable participants with varying abilities and ambitions to become successful cooks.

The Principal is also the owner and Managing Director of ENTCS. The Principal reports to the Board of Directors, which provides oversight and support for the Provider.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Provider offers ENTCS-certificated courses and uncertificated courses. All the courses are delivered in person.

The four ENTCS-certificated courses range from one month to six months' duration. The one-month course develops cookery skills and provides a grounding for entry-level jobs in the food industry. The three-month beginners' course is designed for those who wish to become professional cooks, but is also suitable for amateurs wishing to enhance their cookery skills. The three-month intermediate course is 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. The six-month diploma is a combination of the three-month beginners' and the three-month intermediate courses and is for participants aiming for a career in cookery.

All the certificated courses offer a combination of practical cookery and theory and are formally assessed.

ENTCS also offers a wide range of uncertificated practical short courses and workshops ranging from half-day sessions to one-week courses.

Three courses were running at the time of the inspection: the one-week Beginners' course, the three-month Beginners' Certificate in Practical Cookery, and the six-month Practical Cookery Diploma. There were nine participants in total, with four on the Diploma course, three on the one-week Beginners' course, and two on the Beginners' Certificate course.

The majority of participants were male. The total capacity is 20, but ENTCS is currently limiting participant numbers to between eight and ten to enable greater social distancing. The majority of participants are from the United Kingdom, with the other countries represented being the United States of America, Greece, Panama and the Cayman Islands. All the participants are over the age of 18.

There are no formal academic entry requirements and applications are assessed based on expertise and experience in cookery. Participants whose first language is not English are expected to achieve the standard of the International English Language Testing System band score of 6 for entry to any course lasting one month or longer. Courses start on dates set throughout the year.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was carried out over one day by one inspector. Interviews were held with the Principal, trainers, and participants on the three-month and six-month courses. The inspector observed practical teaching sessions. The premises and facilities were inspected. All necessary documentation was provided and the Provider fully co-operated with the inspection process.

4. Inspection history

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	3–4 March 2011
Interim	31 July 2012
Re-accreditation	13 & 15 April 2015
Interim	27 June 2017
Supplementary	14 February 2018
Re-accreditation	8–9 April 2019

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector during the inspection and from documentation provided by the provider.

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

The post of Vice-Principal is currently vacant. The Provider will monitor the situation with a view to filling the post when participant numbers justify it. The quality of provision has been maintained due to the experience of the Principal, and support is sufficient for the current number of participants.

First-year participants from the Queen Margaret's University (QMU) International Tourism and Hospitality degree course no longer spend half a day a week at ENTCS for two semesters. This is because of changes to QMU's degree course. QMU participants still come to ENTCS to cook and serve the presentation dinners that are a part of their course, so a less formal link continues.

The kitchen previously used for cookery demonstrations has been converted and equipped as a teaching kitchen. This provides a valuable additional practical teaching and learning resource and enables greater social distancing between participants when cooking.

2. Response to action points in last report

There were no action points identified in the last report.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

The Provider should consider how it can provide regular advice and support for a small number of the part-time staff.

Each part-time member of staff receives an information pack tailored to their position when they join the Provider. This ensures clarity about their role. The Principal communicates regularly with part-time staff by e-mail and telephone to keep them up to date and to provide advice and support. There is also regular in-person communication with the Principal. A weekly planner that includes information about teaching rotas, events and significant visitors is e-mailed to all part-time staff scheduled to teach that week, so that they are kept informed about ENTCS activities. In-person feedback is provided to part-time staff by the Principal on a regular basis. It incorporates any relevant points arising from participant feedback. Part-time staff therefore receive sufficient regular advice and support from the Provider.

The Provider should consider increasing the range of information from the self-evaluation report and course reviews for consideration in the annual performance review to increase focus on some areas of the provision.

The most recent report covers the period 2019–2021. It primarily focuses on ENTCS' functioning and the ways in which it has continued to meet participants' learning needs during a very difficult period.

ENTCS records and documents all relevant quality monitoring data, including participant attendance, assessment outcomes and participant feedback. These are used in internal evaluation and enhancement but are not included in the management report. This reduces the usefulness of the report as a tool for review and future development. The Principal is currently considering the contents of the next management report with a view to including this information. This is therefore work in progress.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Applicants for certificated courses are invited to ENTCS for discussion with trainers or the Principal. The meeting covers their level of ability and experience and their suitability for the course. The Principal reviews all applications. Terms and conditions for courses are displayed on the Provider's website, which includes a specific section for international participants. These mechanisms effectively support the recruitment and enrolment of suitable participants. Participants met by the inspector were very satisfied with the process. They confirmed that their course met their needs and expectations.

ENTCS gathers, analyses and acts on participant feedback. Participants are encouraged to provide spoken feedback to their teachers or the Principal at any time during the course. Formal feedback is gathered at the end of short courses and at mid-term and the end of term for longer courses.

Participants' suggestions are reviewed by trainers and the Principal and implementation of any changes is considered. If the suggestion is found to be desirable and feasible, changes are made. On the six-month course, for example, demonstrations from chefs with particular expertise in certain world foods were expanded. Participants confirmed that the Provider takes appropriate action in response to feedback.

The Provider's willingness to make adjustments, when appropriate, fosters a culture of continuous improvement that enhances the participant experience.

ENTCS produces an annual business analysis report and action plan. This is used to track progress towards achieving organisational priorities and targets, and it is regularly reviewed by the Principal. It is an effective tool for monitoring performance against desired outcomes and taking remedial action if necessary.

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Principal is responsible for academic management and is experienced and effective. Trainers are well qualified and experienced. As a result, there is a high standard of teaching, learning and assessment.

The annual formal teaching staff review undertaken by the Principal is structured, thorough and well documented. It includes reflection on progress and achievements and sets targets for the next year.

Individual training logs and personal development plans are devised. This ensures that teachers maintain and develop their subject knowledge, pedagogic skills and communication skills.

The practical teaching observed by the inspector was interactive and the participants were engaged and enthusiastic. Participants interviewed were very positive about the quality of teachers and teaching.

Participants are given constant spoken feedback during and after each practical teaching session. Participants on certificated courses have formal mid-term and end-of-term reviews. These provide constructive feedback on their overall progress and their performance in particular aspects of the course. The participants interviewed praised the developmental value of review and feedback.

A schedule of assessments, including key dates and marking criteria, is provided to participants and trainers in course information packs at the beginning of the course. Assessments include theory and practical cookery tests. Trainers and the Principal track outcomes to ensure that participants are making the necessary progress. Any issues arising are addressed with the participant, and advice and support are given.

ENTCS therefore provides effective feedback and uses appropriate assessment methods. This effectively promotes the achievement of course objectives and participant satisfaction. This was confirmed by documented results and by the participants who were interviewed.

4.3 Participant Welfare (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

The Principal is the named member of staff responsible for participant welfare and is suitably trained and experienced in this role. She has an open-door policy and actively encourages participants to meet with her. This was confirmed by participants.

Induction and a participant handbook ensure that participants are equipped with the information they need for successful completion of their course.

Effective anti-radicalisation and anti-extremism arrangements are in place and documented. There are suitable policies, risk assessments and staff training that supports participant safety. Staff interviewed confirmed that they understood the procedures and their responsibilities.

Good arrangements are in place to support the international participants. The international participants who were interviewed praised the Provider's attention to their needs.

The participant handbook includes information about internal and British Accreditation Council (BAC) complaints procedures. The feedback form completed by participants includes a link to the BAC complaints page, so participants are aware of their rights.

ENTCS therefore provides participants with pastoral support that supports their well-being. The participants who met with the inspector confirmed that they were very satisfied with the Provider's attention to their welfare and the arrangements that were in place.

4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

There is always a member of staff on duty at reception. Participants and visitors sign an attendance log, which includes entry and exit times. This ensures the security of participants and staff.

The premises are in an excellent state of repair and are clean and well decorated. High standards of hygiene are maintained throughout the building, with additional specific rules for kitchen hygiene. Toilet and washing facilities are adequate for the number of staff and participants and are clean. This supports a healthy environment for participants and staff.

Training rooms are of a high standard and an appropriate size. The kitchens are well equipped for the development and testing of practical cookery skills. These facilities support the highly effective delivery of learning and assessment, and enable participants to meet their goals. Participants were very positive about the quality of the teaching and learning infrastructure.

Participants have space and suitable facilities for private study. Trainers have access to satisfactory personal space for preparation and relaxation. Participants have access to satisfactory space for relaxation and refreshments. Staff and participants have lockers for their possessions. Access to space for staff meetings or private meetings is good.

ENTCS therefore provides a safe and clean environment for staff and participants and the facilities and resources support effective learning.

4.5 Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.

Yes No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

The Provider’s responsiveness to making changes based on participant feedback ensures that courses meet participants’ needs.

High-quality course delivery incorporates constructive feedback that enhances participants’ performance.

There is a high priority given to participants’ welfare, and the effective policies and procedures that support it.

The high standard of facilities, equipment and resources supports effective course delivery.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

None

High

Medium

Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT *(to be reviewed at the next inspection)*

ENTCS should include an analysis of participant data in the annual management report to increase the report’s usefulness in review and forward planning.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS – FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE

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