

# Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board (SAAB) Standards and Frameworks Group (SFG) Extended Terms of Reference (2026-2027)

## **Purpose**

The Standards and Frameworks Group (SFG) which forms part of the Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board (SAAB) provides leadership and oversight of standards and framework development for apprenticeships in Scotland, to ensure they are demand and employer led.

The SFG ensure standards and frameworks are aligned with industry, economic growth, job, and progression opportunities and that they develop transferable skills which allow smooth transitions to emerging and new roles.

The SFG oversees the Apprenticeship Approvals Group (AAG), an independent industry-led group with delegated authority from Scottish Ministers – granted through the SFG - to review, evaluate and approve all new and revised apprenticeships including Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships.

SFG and works in partnership with key stakeholder groups, including: the other SAAB groups, the Scottish Government and its agencies, qualification bodies, trade unions, training and learning providers, membership, and industry groups.

Its activities will reflect an ambitious, collaborative, and committed approach.

## **Responsibilities**

### **The roles and responsibilities of the SFG are to:**

- Provide strategic oversight of standards and framework development for apprenticeships in Scotland, to ensure they are demand and employer led.
- Provide leadership and strategic direction to SG, SFC and SDS on the shape of frameworks, standards, and quality approaches to apprenticeships.
- Provide insight guidance and leadership of apprenticeship development priorities, ensure effective prioritisation is aligned to employer need.
- Scrutinise and oversee the AAG approvals plan and adapt guidance based on AAG feedback.
- Oversee processes to ensure quality outcomes from the design through to the development of frameworks.
- Encourage employers to engage in apprenticeship development and promote the benefits of the employer-led approaches.
- Play an active role on the communication and marketing of:
  - The value proposition within the development of apprenticeships
  - The value proposition of apprenticeships within the workforce
  - The value proposition of apprenticeships to the economy through the various stages from demand to fulfilment.
- Work closely with the other groups across the SAAB structure to deliver the SAAB strategy and ensuring Scottish apprenticeships align with economic growth, job opportunities and Fair Work.

### **Membership/ composition**

The Chair of the SFG should be a private sector employer and will be a member of the SAAB Group Board.

The SFG membership will comprise of a minimum of 70% employers, reflecting a mix of sectors, sizes and workforce diversity. All members will have a common mandate to endorse the SAAB strategy, without self-interest and demonstrate behaviours which align with the values contained within the overall SAAB strategy and standing orders.

A representative each from Scottish Government, Skills Development Scotland and Scottish Funding Council will attend scheduled meetings as an 'observer'.

A representative from AAG is required to attend SFG twice a year to provide a progress report covering risks, issues, challenges, and achievements.

Other individuals, including representative from other SAAB groups, may attend meetings by invitation.

The SFG engagement activity and communications will be supported by SAAB secretariat.

### **Meetings**

There will be a minimum of 4 meetings a year, with sub-group activity as and when required.

### **Quorum**

Meetings require at least half of current members and a majority of employer members for quorum.

### **Reporting**

- The chair of the group is responsible for providing biannual updates to the SAAB Group Board and quarterly updates to the Minister.
- SFG will contribute to SAAB's Annual Report.

### **Review**

On an annual basis the SFG will:

- review and amend the group's work plan
- review the groups terms of reference to affirm fit for purpose
- review and amend, as required, the membership of the group

**Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board  
April 2025**

**Next Review Date:** April 2026

This Terms of Reference represents a continuation of the 2025 Terms of Reference and has been extended to support the transition to new governance arrangements. It is intended to remain in force until the functions of both groups are transferred and operational within future governance arrangements