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For further information

Get online at www.nidirect.gov.uk/trainingforsuccess

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Programme - Led Apprenticeships

Participant brochure

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Introduction

The Programme-Led Apprenticeships (PLA) provision launched in September 2009. It is a Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) intervention measure set up during the economic downturn to ensure that Northern Ireland continues to develop and retain its skills base in preparation for the upturn.

PLA provides you, the participant, with the opportunity to work towards achieving an industry-approved Level 2 Apprenticeship Framework qualification. You will get quality training that is suited to your needs and can enable you to progress to higher levels of training, further education or employment.

As a PLA participant, you need to be aware of a number of procedures concerning your training. This booklet covers most of these, but if you have any further questions, please ask a member of your Training Supplier staff.

Participant Charter

DEL funds a number of Training Suppliers to provide Programme-Led Apprenticeships. These Suppliers will deliver, together with your work placement provider, your training throughout your time on PLA.

On joining PLA, you can expect the following under the Participant Charter.

As a PLA participant, your Supplier will:

- follow an Apprenticeship Framework for the specific occupational area agreed with the relevant Sector Skills Council (SSC), or Industry-Led Representative Body;
- provide, in years one and two, a combination of in-house directed training and work-based learning placement opportunities with an industry-appropriate employer;
- draw up a Personal Training Plan (PTP) that is tailored to meet your personal and social development needs. The PTP will be agreed between you, the Careers Adviser, the Supplier and the work placement provider. It will detail the progression route for achieving the agreed qualifications as well as preparing you for progression to higher level training, further education and/or employment;
- meet the costs of assessment or other fees directly related to your PTP;
- provide ongoing assessment to compare your progress against your PTP;
- provide guidance and advice to help you achieve your goals;

- provide, free of charge, any necessary personal equipment, books and protective clothing;
- ensure a safe and properly equipped training and work placement environment.

In addition, you have the right to:

- choose a Supplier to deliver your training;
- be treated with courtesy and consideration at all times;
- have any complaints treated sympathetically;
- be protected against exploitation; and
- be protected against discrimination on the grounds of community background, gender, ethnicity, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation, political affiliation and whether or not you have any dependants.



Points you need to know

Your Supplier will expect you to:

- fully apply yourself to the training objectives set out in your PTP;
- regularly attend and to keep good time;
- let your trainer know within two hours of your agreed start time, if you are forced to be absent;
- behave responsibly at all times;
- use safe working practices which do not endanger yourself or others;
- take good care of any clothing and equipment issued to you.

If you feel that the Supplier is not meeting its obligations under this Charter, you should raise the matter with your supervisor. If a complaint has not been dealt with to your satisfaction, you should contact your local Careers office.



Attendance

You must attend for 30 hours each week as agreed with your Supplier. You are, however, allowed a reasonable time without a deduction being made from your Educational Maintenance Allowance, for the following:

- interviews with JobCentre/Jobs & Benefits office/Careers office;
- interviews for employment or further education;
- written examinations or external assessments relating to vocational qualifications being pursued;
- attendance at a court of law;
- domestic emergencies including immediate family bereavement;
- annual training courses or camps – a participant who is a member of the Auxiliary or Reserve Forces and who is required to attend annual training courses or camps may be granted special leave for a maximum of two weeks;
- hospital/doctor/dentist appointments – only in emergencies or where these cannot be arranged outside the hours of attendance.

- regular hospital visits or health checks for participants with disabilities;
- attend events directly associated to the PLA.

If you are absent without permission for more than **five** consecutive working days, you will be treated as having left the programme.

Sickness

If you are sick, then you must tell your Supplier the reason for your absence on the first morning of your illness.

If the illness is for more than seven days (including weekends), you will have to bring a fitness certificate (fitnote) to your Supplier. However, shorter absences must be covered by a Self-Certification form, which will be given to you by your Supplier. Excessive sick absence may result in disciplinary action.

Holidays

You are entitled to a maximum of 25 days' paid holiday per year (this is calculated on the basis of two days' holiday per month on the programme) and is based on a five day attendance pattern. Where attendance is for less than 5 days per week, holiday entitlement will be on a pro-rata basis. In addition to holiday allowance, you are entitled to a maximum of 12 days' Bank and Public Holidays.

Allowances

You will receive a weekly Educational Maintenance Allowance until you complete your period of PLA training. If you feel you have personal circumstances that might entitle you to additional financial assistance, you should contact your local Social Security office/Jobs & Benefits office.

Childcare

Childcare allowances may be payable in certain circumstances and are paid directly to the Carer. Please ask your Supplier for an application form to apply for childcare once you begin training.

Travel costs

Any necessary travel costs in excess of £3.00 per week incurred during training will be paid by the Supplier, provided training is undertaken within the Contract Management Area in which you live.

Health and Safety Policy

Lodging

Lodging allowances may be paid only if the training is not available in the Contract Management Area and the place of training is clearly beyond daily travelling distance. Please ask your Supplier for further details.

Placements

NOTE: Where applicable, it is the **responsibility of the Supplier** to arrange a suitable work placement for you with an employer.

Parental/Guardian consent

As you are under 18, you will need parental consent to take part in:

- courses in GB;
- residentials;
- visits abroad;
- sea-going activities;
- evening or weekend work, or work at other unusual hours; and
- a hazardous activity.

Where consent is not given, your Supplier **must** make suitable alternative training arrangements.

National Insurance

You are exempt from paying National Insurance contributions. However any National Insurance Credits will be awarded by the Social Security Agency (SSA).

Health and Safety

The Supplier will provide you with appropriate health and safety induction. If you have an accident, you must inform the Supplier or (if on placement) your work placement provider – see **Health and Safety Policy in Pages 7-11.**



Legal standards

Suppliers are obliged by law to ensure as far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of employees and participants (Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978). There are other laws which also affect the employment and training of young people.

Enforcement

The Health and Safety Inspectorate is a group of professionals who visit workplaces to check on and improve standards. All serious and fatal accidents must be reported to them and will be investigated by them.

Avoiding accidents

Avoiding accidents is mostly a matter of knowing the safest way to tackle each job. The programme you are participating in will have rules for health and safety at work. This is required by law. Make sure you see and read them. You may find them different to what you are used to, but find out where they are available and refer to them before starting a job.

The important thing is to make sure your supervisor explains the safe working methods for each job before you start on it – and if they don't, or if you don't understand them, you must ask. If other people offer you advice about safety, listen; they're only trying to help because they don't want to see you get hurt. The trade union safety representative, if you have one, will also help. Remember too, that safety isn't only about people; it is about preventing damage to goods and equipment as well. A bad fire, for example, could close down a factory and put a lot of people out of a job. Never be afraid to ask about safety. The following tips will give you an idea what it's about.

Safety clothing and equipment

Some tasks need special clothing like overalls, safety helmets, goggles, breathing masks and safety boots. For some tasks, it will be obvious that you should have one or more of these. For some tasks, it is required by law. Whether or not special regulations apply, you should be provided with the same protective equipment as anyone doing the same job in industry and if you are not offered it, you must ask.

Long hair, loose clothing, ties, scarves, necklaces and rings can all get caught in machinery. Don't chance it. Always wear the right kind of clothes for working. Tie long hair back or keep it out of harm's way under a hat or other protective garment.

High heels and floppy sandals can cause accidents. Wear sensible shoes or boots that are suitable for the job.

Moving around

There is often not a lot of space at work; there may be machinery, benches, moving vehicles and other people around you – things that could hurt or could be damaged.

Never run – walk. Make sure you don't bump into other people – you could push them into an accident – always look the way you're going.

Always obey safety signs, for example, keep fire doors shut. Make sure you don't get hurt and that you don't hurt other people.

If you see anything that you think could cause an accident, tell your supervisor.

Protect your hands

Most jobs make your hands dirty. Do not use abrasives, but wash them carefully whenever you get the chance, especially before you eat and after using the toilet.

For some jobs where hands get wet or oily or covered in paint, it's a good idea to use a barrier cream to protect the skin.

If you are given a barrier cream or hand cleanser, follow the rules about how and when to use it.

Wear gloves if they are needed.

Tidiness

Tidiness and safety go together; keep your workplace tidy by putting tools, finished workpieces and unused materials in their proper places when you have finished with them.

The floor is important too – keep it clean and tidy. Don't leave things or materials on it that could cause people to slip or trip.

Remember

- Never tackle any job without knowing the safety rules for that job;
- Keep to the safety rules to stay safe and healthy;
- If in doubt – ask. You might not get a second chance.



Lifting and carrying

There are right ways and wrong ways of lifting and carrying things. The wrong ways can injure your back or your stomach. Ask your supervisor to show you the right way to lift and move things.

Do not lift anything that is too big, too heavy or too awkward for you to manage – ask for help and don't be put off.

For some loads, gloves and other special clothing will need to be worn. Before you pick something up, be sure you can lift it safely, that you know where it has to go, that the way there is clear and that you can put it down safely when you get there. While you are carrying it, make sure that you can see where you are going.

Stacking

If things are badly stacked they can fall over, injure people and get damaged.

Listen to your supervisor's advice on how to stack neatly and safely.

If you have to use steps or a ladder to stack high up, seek your supervisor's advice. Ladders must be secured at the top or footed by another person standing at the bottom.

Dangerous substances

Many of the chemicals, solvents or other substances used at work can damage your health or can easily catch fire.

Dangerous substances will often be marked with a symbol or with words such as **VERY TOXIC, TOXIC HARMFUL, CORROSIVE, IRRITANT, OXIDISING, HIGHLY FLAMMABLE, or FLAMMABLE.**

If you don't work with them, leave them alone. If you do work with them, follow your supervisor's instructions very carefully.

Always read labels and warning leaflets. Never keep chemicals in bottles used for drinks.

Machines

There are special rules about using certain types of machinery, e.g. woodworking machines and abrasive wheels. Never remove a safety guard. Never reach inside or step inside a machine, even though it is switched off, without asking your supervisor's permission first. Always follow any safety instructions you are given.

Before you use any machine, your supervisor must point out to you the dangerous parts and train you to use the machine safely.

Use and carry hand tools carefully.

Electricity

Did you know that most accidents involving electricity are fatal?

Although a lot of people have had electric shocks and felt alright afterwards, there is no guarantee that the next one will not be fatal.

Electrical apparatus should be treated with respect. Even a low voltage car battery can cause a nasty accident. Electricity can also cause fires and explosions. Never tamper with switches or overload or attempt to take apart electrical equipment.

If in doubt, check with your supervisor.

Practical jokes

People have killed their workmates by messing around with things like machinery and high pressure air supplies. What starts as a joke can turn to tragedy quicker than you realise. So don't take risks with yourself and especially don't take risks with other people.

Fire

Take very special care if you use any equipment with a naked flame or any hot tools or hot materials. Always take heed of your supervisor's advice in everything, and follow the rules on how to do the job safely.

Smoking is bad for your health but if you smoke, do so only when and where it is allowed. If you are not sure, ask your supervisor.

Put dead matches and cigarette ends in the trays or bins provided for the purpose. Throwing them on the floor or especially into waste bins can be very dangerous. Make sure you know what to do if you hear the fire alarm and that you know how to get out in case of fire.

Make sure you know how to sound the alarm if you discover a fire.



First Aid

Find out who to go to for First Aid. Don't wait for an accident to happen before you do. You may need to know for yourself or to help someone else.

If you have an accident

Tell your supervisor and get treatment at once, even if it is only a scratch. If you avoid or delay treatment, it may get worse and take a lot longer to heal. Make sure details are entered in the accident book.

