

## MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

Welcome to this new edition of the Skills Newsletter. As the economic downturn continues to tighten its grip and more companies in Northern Ireland are effected by redundancies, reduced salaries and business closures, I appreciate how difficult it is to see light at the end of the tunnel. In addition to recruiting more front line staff to support those people looking for new employment opportunities, my Department has been working with those companies who have been forced to make redundancies to ensure that employees affected are given the help they need to get back to work quickly.



## ISSUE 10 – MARCH 2009

[Subscribe to Newsletter](#)

### Labour Market Information:

- [Economic Overview](#)
- [Economic Bulletin](#)
- [Labour Market Bulletin](#)
- [NI Skills Monitoring Survey](#)

### How can DEL help employers?

- [Essential Skills Training](#)
- [Training for Success](#)
- [Investors in People](#)
- [New Deal](#)
- [Bridge to](#)

Advice is also available regarding training and employment programmes to increase the individual's chances of finding work and in redundancy situations we can provide on-site information, advice and guidance on employment and training opportunities, benefits and careers opportunities.

For those employees who are looking to use this time as an opportunity to develop their skills for future work opportunities, I have announced measures to assist employers whereby the Department will cover 100% of the training costs on all our approved management and leadership development programmes. If you are interested in finding out more then contact Management Development Branch on 028 9044 1785.

During this challenging time, it is important that we learn from others. I have recently returned from Singapore where I was able to find out more about their current employment and training solutions and how they are developing their workforce for the future economy and how this could read across to Northern Ireland. In many ways it is therefore timely that the Department is fulfilling its commitment to review Success through Skills – the Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland. Whilst the strategy will focus on the long term economic vision outlined in the Programme for Government, it is important that it is flexible enough to deliver in these changing times. The Review is due to be completed by late Spring and you will be kept updated on progress in forthcoming editions of the newsletter.

**SIR REG EMPEY MLA** – Minister for Employment and Learning

## Employment

- Disablement

## Advisory Service

- Employment Rights

- Employment

Service

- Leadership and

Management

Contact us:

Skills and Industry

Division

Department for

Employment

and Learning

Lesley Buildings

61 Fountain Street

BELFAST

BT1 5EX

[Successthroughskills](mailto:Successthroughskills@delni.gov.uk)

[@delni.gov.uk](mailto:Successthroughskills@delni.gov.uk)

**Tel:** 028 90441813

## Major Announcement at Management Leadership Conference

The Minister for Employment and Learning attended the Management Leadership Conference on 26 February 2009. He addressed guests at the event and took the opportunity to announce that the Department for Employment and Learning will cover 100% of the training costs on all its approved management and leadership development programmes.



Further details of these programmes can be obtained by visiting the [Department for Employment and Learning website](http://www.delni.gov.uk) or you can email [management.development@delni.gov.uk](mailto:management.development@delni.gov.uk) or alternatively call 028 9044 1785.

[Read More >>](#)

## Closing date approaches for National Training Awards

This year's National Training Awards ceremony is due to take place in October and as always it will recognise and reward individuals and organisations from any sector who show clear benefits achieved through training and developing the skills of their people, whether themselves or others. The closing date for applications is **Friday 24 April 2009** so it's not too late to enter. You can download an application pack from [www.ntani.gov.uk](http://www.ntani.gov.uk) or contact Catherine Millar by calling 028 9025 7474 or by emailing [catherine.millar@delni.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.millar@delni.gov.uk).

## Skills Conference 2009

This year's Skills Conference is focussing on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) and is due to take place on Wednesday 27 May in W5 at the Odyssey Arena, Belfast. Already a number of influential and inspirational speakers have been confirmed, one of whom is Richard Noble OBE. There is no doubt that Richard will provide us with inspiration particularly as he leads the exciting Bloodhound project which aims to break the land speed record.

[Read more about latest developments in the Bloodhound project >>](#)

Information about the Conference will be uploaded to the DEL website on a regular basis and should you require further details then email [successthroughskills@delni.gov.uk](mailto:successthroughskills@delni.gov.uk) or alternatively you can register to attend the conference [here](#).

[register now >](#)

### Employment and Skills issues still very much to the fore

The Minister has highlighted the significant progress made by the Department on employment and skills issues and noted the Department's effective and speedy response to the global economic downturn.

[Read More >>](#)

### Forecasting Future Skill Needs in Northern Ireland

In September 2008, Oxford Economics in association with FGS Consulting, were appointed by the Department to forecast the demand for skills in Northern Ireland in the short, medium and longer terms under a number of economic growth scenarios. The initial findings were presented at a Stakeholder Conference in November 2008. The final report incorporates the most recent Oxford Economics forecasts and demonstrates recent trends in workforce skills as well as the skills for tomorrow's economy. A copy of the Forecasting Study is available to download from the Department for Employment and Learning's website or by contacting Research and Evaluation Branch on telephone 028 9025 7609 or email [reb@delni.gov.uk](mailto:reb@delni.gov.uk).

### Developing successful partnerships

During February the Minister visited Singapore and Malaysia to promote international relations and business and educational collaboration. He joined Queen's University (QUB), Belfast at an event to confer an honorary degree on the King of Malaysia.

[Read More >>](#)



Sir Reg Empey, Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin and Prof Peter Gregson QUB at the conferment ceremony in Malaysia.

### Minister promotes WorldSkills

Sir Reg Empey urges individuals to enter skills competitions to qualify for WorldSkills 2011. The event involves over 850 of the best young professionals from trades, service and vocational programmes from around the world.

[Read More >>](#)



Pictured with the Minister is Sean Owens, Chef Patron Gardiners Restaurant, Magherafelt and David Hatton, Chief Executive, Engineering Training Council (Northern Ireland)

### Essential Skills vital in Economic Downturn

Now, more than ever, the Department is encouraging people to look at their skill levels and ensure they have the [Essential Skills](#) needed to support them in their work, personal lives and more importantly through the difficult economic climate that has befallen us. Aside from numeracy and literacy courses there is now an ICT Essential Skills course available. After two years of successful delivery, the *Essential Skills ICT* Pilot will end

in July 2009. The third essential skill in ICT will be available from 1 August 2009. If you are interested in the ICT Essential Skills course or any other essential skills courses then contact 0800 731 2426.

### Minister announces additional support

The Minister has announced that people participating in government employment and training programmes will soon be eligible for higher levels of assistance towards childcare costs.

[Read More >>](#)

### Helping people back to work is number one priority



Pictured with the Minister is Jayne Taggart  
CEA, Mayor Councillor David Barbour.



Pictured with Sir Reg is Mark McHale from  
Coleraine.

Sir Reg Empey has reiterated his determination to help those people out of work to find a way back into employment. The Minister was speaking as he attended the Coleraine Jobs, Opportunities and Advice Forum, held in Portrush. The event was held in the midst of increasing concern over the state of the local economy and following the news of further job losses within the Coleraine Borough. At the event the Minister launched a new leaflet by his Department which outlines key advice and guidance for those seeking work or who have recently been made redundant. The Minister also launched a booklet which provides information on employment matters for workers.

[Read More >>](#)

### Review of Success through Skills – Update

It is now four years since the Department first drafted the Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland. Whilst the economic landscape may have changed considerably in the time since the Strategy was written many of the issues it identified are still relevant. Whilst the aims of the Strategy and its longer term vision remain the same, there have been many developments which we must take into account when determining the best way to take the Strategy forward. There is no doubt that the short term prospects for the economy are uncertain and the Department is pulling out all the stops to ensure that it provides as much support as possible. It is important that the review of Success through Skills is an outcome based implementation plan that works towards the long term vision but yet is flexible enough to deliver in these changing times. It is expected that the Review will be completed late in Spring 2009.

### Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy and Implementation Plan – Preparing for Success

The Strategy and Implementation Plan have been developed jointly by the

Department and the Department of Education. The document sets out the strategy to address the careers education, information, advice and guidance needs of individuals of all ages. This Strategy aims to develop effective career decision makers, leading to increased and appropriate participation in education, training and employment.

[Read More >>](#)

### **Minister supports Vocational Qualifications**

In the current economic climate, the importance of providing the workforce with skills that employers want cannot be overstated. Vocational qualifications are an excellent preparation for the world of work. VQ Day is a UK-wide celebration of the achievement of the millions of people who gain a vocational qualification every year and highlights the many paths to success taken by learners of all ages.

[Read More >>](#)



If you wish to prevent further communications from DELNI please [Unsubscribe](#)