

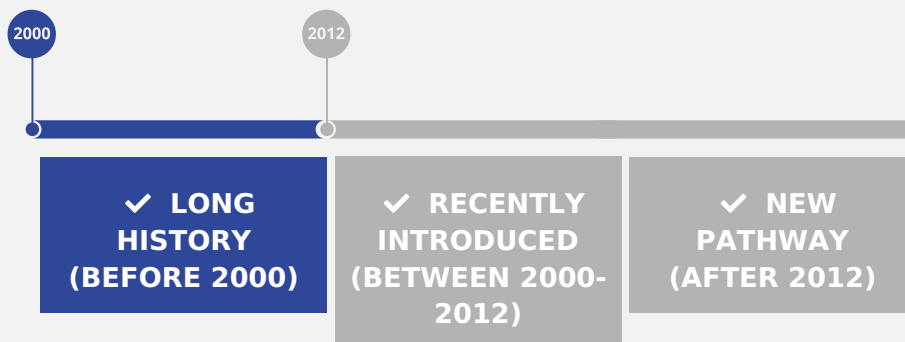
Apprenticeships in Ireland

 Ireland

Reference year 2019

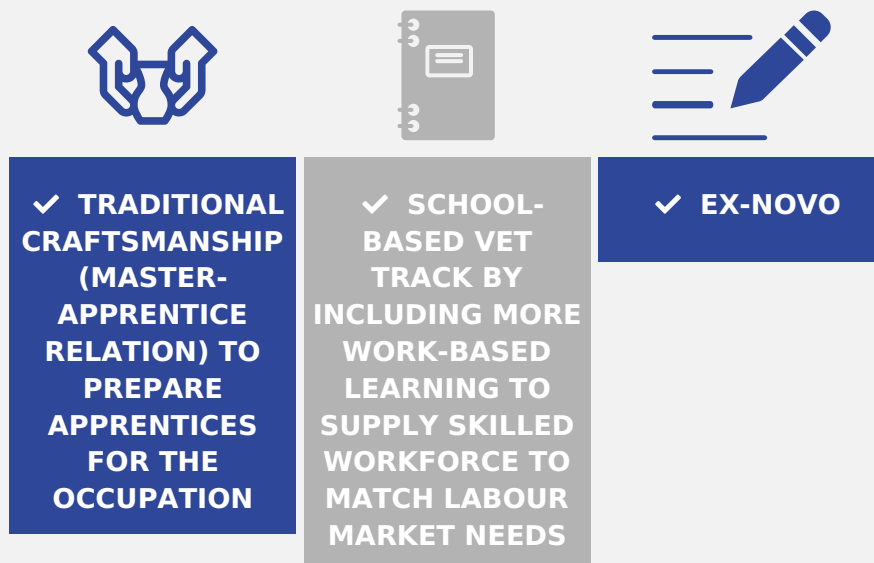
① Scheme history

Q1. When was the scheme introduced?



The national statutory apprenticeship system is underpinned primarily by legislation dating from 1967 (the Industrial Training Act).

Q2. How did the apprenticeship scheme originate?





✓ OTHER

A structured 'Craft' model of apprenticeship has been in operation since the 1980s. Following publication of a review of apprenticeship training in Ireland in 2013 a new model was introduced in 2015.

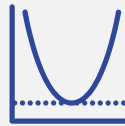
Both models are currently operational, with 25 Craft apprenticeships primarily in areas such as construction, electrical, motor and engineering, and 37 new apprenticeships in a range of areas including Biopharma, ICT, Finance, Property Service, Hospitality and Food, Logistics, and Sales.

2 Beneficiaries

Q3. Does the legal basis define the minimum and maximum age limits for enrolment of the target group of this scheme?



✓ MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM AGE LIMITS DEFINED



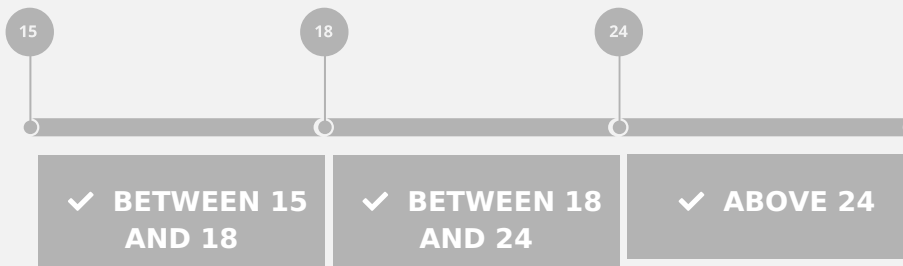
✓ MINIMUM AGE LIMITS DEFINED ONLY



✓ OTHER

Apprenticeship in Ireland is open to all above the statutory school leaving age (16) including young adults leaving education and training and those already in employment. The minimum educational entry requirement is the Junior Certificate or equivalent, though some apprenticeships and employers have differing minimum entry requirements. Different apprenticeships may also be particularly targeted at different groups; for example, some are targeted primarily at people already in employment.

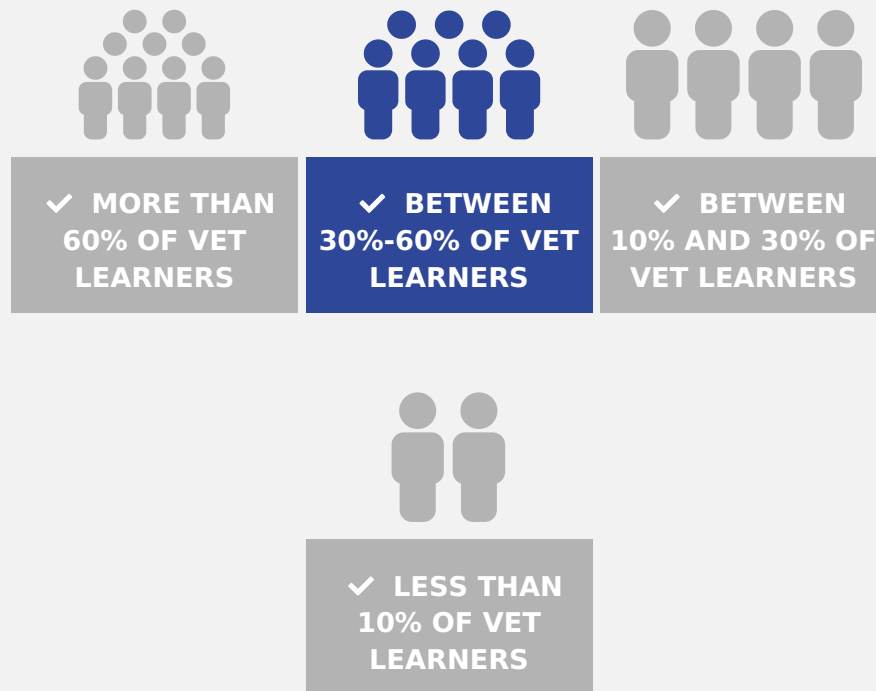
Q4. What is the average age of learners in practice?



Q5. How many learners are enrolled in this scheme?

The total apprenticeship population at the end of 2020 was 19,630, up from 17,829 in 2019.

Q6. What is the share of apprentices enrolled in this scheme in relation to all VET students for the corresponding educational level(s)?



Apprenticeship training begins once an individual secures a contract of employment. As such, apprentices represent a different type of learner; when compared to other vocational programmes (Traineeship and Post Leaving Certificate - labour market programmes), apprentices constitute approximately 48% of all learners engaged in these vocational training programmes.

Approximately 10-25% of all post-secondary learners in Ireland are enrolled on apprenticeship programmes. This is an estimate, not controlled for age, as apprenticeships are open to all age groups.

3 Qualifications

Q7. Are the qualifications included in the National Qualification Framework (NQF)?



✓ YES

✓ NO

✓ THERE IS NO NQF

Yes. All apprenticeships lead to awards from Level 5 to Level 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Q8. Is the scheme included in the ISCED 2011 mapping?



✓ YES

✓ NO

ISCED 453, 554, 655, 757, 854

Q9. Are the qualifications offered only through apprenticeships?



✓ QUALIFICATION CAN ONLY BE OBTAINED THROUGH THIS APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

✓ THE SAME QUALIFICATIONS CAN BE ACHIEVED ALSO THROUGH OTHER SCHEMES (I.E. SCHOOL-BASED VET)

Some qualifications can be achieved also through other programmes but the mode of delivery differs.

Q10. Which is the type of qualification obtained through the apprenticeship scheme?



✓ FORMAL VET QUALIFICATION (WHICH DOES NOT INDICATE THE PATHWAY)



✓ FORMAL VET QUALIFICATION (WHICH INDICATES THE PATHWAY)



✓ FORMAL APPRENTICESHIP QUALIFICATION (JOURNEYMAN, ETC.)



✓ OTHERS

Apprenticeships lead to educational and, in some cases also occupational/sector qualifications, depending on the apprenticeship. The Insurance Practice apprenticeship, for example, leads to a Level 8 BA (Hons.) degree in Insurance Practice and to a range of professional industry qualifications such as Accredited Product Adviser and Certified Insurance Practitioner.

All Craft apprenticeships lead to a Level 6 Advanced Certificate that specifies the occupation (e.g., Craft - Electrical, Craft - Carpentry & Joinery).

Q11. Does the scheme provide direct access to higher education?



✓ YES



✓ NO

Apprenticeships are delivered in both the further and higher education and training systems.

All apprenticeships are expected to offer progression pathways.

Q12. What is the typical duration of the apprenticeship programme?

Apprenticeships last between 2 and 4 years.

All Craft apprenticeships are currently 4 years.

New apprenticeships vary between 2 and 4, the majority being 2 years.

4 Governance




Q13. Is there any organization at the national level with roles in co-ordinating the scheme?


YES NO

A national apprenticeship council oversees apprenticeship in Ireland. SOLAS (Ireland's further education and training (FET) authority) is the lead agency responsible for apprenticeship on behalf of the government. It collaborates with the Higher Education Authority (responsible for tertiary education), Quality and Qualifications Ireland (industry and education) and training providers across both the FET and third level education system. It is the responsibility of SOLAS to maintain a national register of employers approved to take on apprentices and a national register of apprentices.

Q14. What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives, sectoral councils (if existent), in shaping apprenticeship content, as per regulation?

ROLE IN DESIGNING QUALIFICATION ROLE IN DESIGNING CURRICULA OTHER

 NO ROLE

An industry-led Apprenticeship Council is in place since 2014. Its membership comprises representatives from industry, trade unions, further and higher education representatives, and the Department of Education and Skills. This broad membership allows for the views of all key stakeholders to be included in the national governance structure.

The Council takes account of current and future skills needs, including through data and

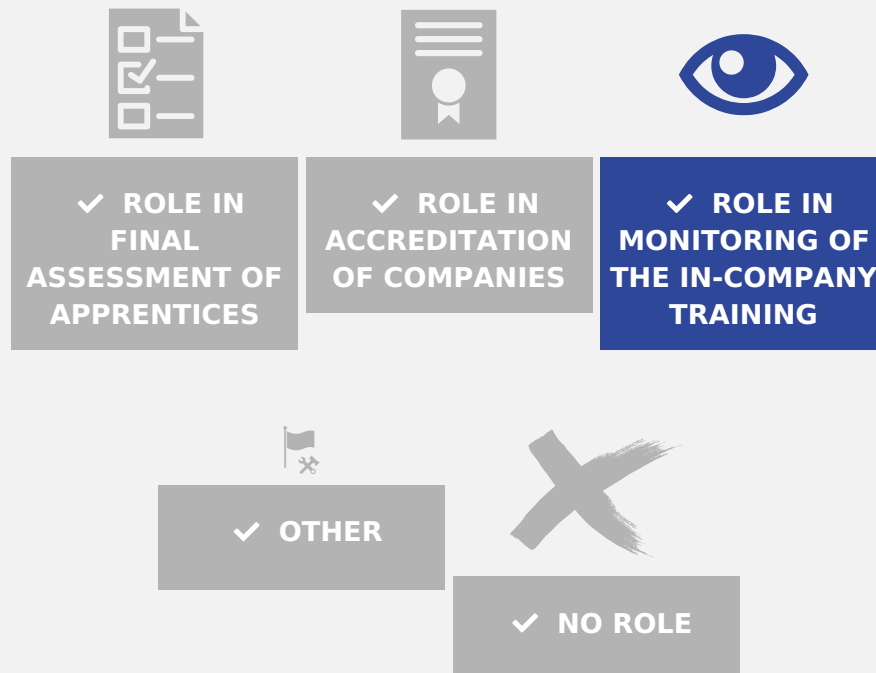
reports produced by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) and the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit within SOLAS; these examine either sectoral and/or regional skills needs. The EGFSN consists of government departments, labour market representatives (employer, trade unions), VET and higher education authorities. Since 1997 it has advised Government on projected skills requirements at national and sectoral levels and made recommendations on how education and training systems might be adapted to better effect. SOLAS works closely with a network of regional skills forums across Ireland to meet the emerging skills needs of each region. SOLAS Skills and Labour Market Research Unit conducts regular research to analyse employer needs and inform programme development. The reports allow the Council to determine labour market needs and skills shortages, which in turn helps to ensure that the new apprenticeship programmes developed and funded are linked explicitly to an identified labour market need.

The need for sectoral engagement and collaboration among enterprises and other stakeholders in the relevant industry has been a critical factor in the development, delivery and ongoing review and adaptation of apprenticeships and one of the key features of new apprenticeships is that they are developed and overseen by an enterprise-led consortium involving industry and education partners.

As a result, post-2016 apprenticeships are industry-led, allowing consortia of labour market actors to take the first step and submit their proposal on new sectors/occupations for which a new apprenticeship programme may be developed and offered, and then develop and submit proposals for an occupational profile and the corresponding learning outcomes/curriculum.

A recently published national Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2021-2025 commits to further embedding the well-established industry-focused approach to developing and delivering apprenticeship and to the development of a single apprenticeship system underpinned by a clear governance framework with strong stakeholder input. This means that the synergy between employers, employee representatives, learners, and the further and higher education system will be enhanced, delivering an apprenticeship system that is well positioned to leverage the close relationship between enterprise and education.

Q15. What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives in implementing the apprenticeship scheme, as per regulation?



In new apprenticeships, the co-ordinating provider has responsibility in regarding ongoing monitoring of apprenticeship and provides key reporting data to SOLAS and the HEA, to ensure that apprentices are provided with the opportunity to acquire the training as set out in the apprenticeship programme.

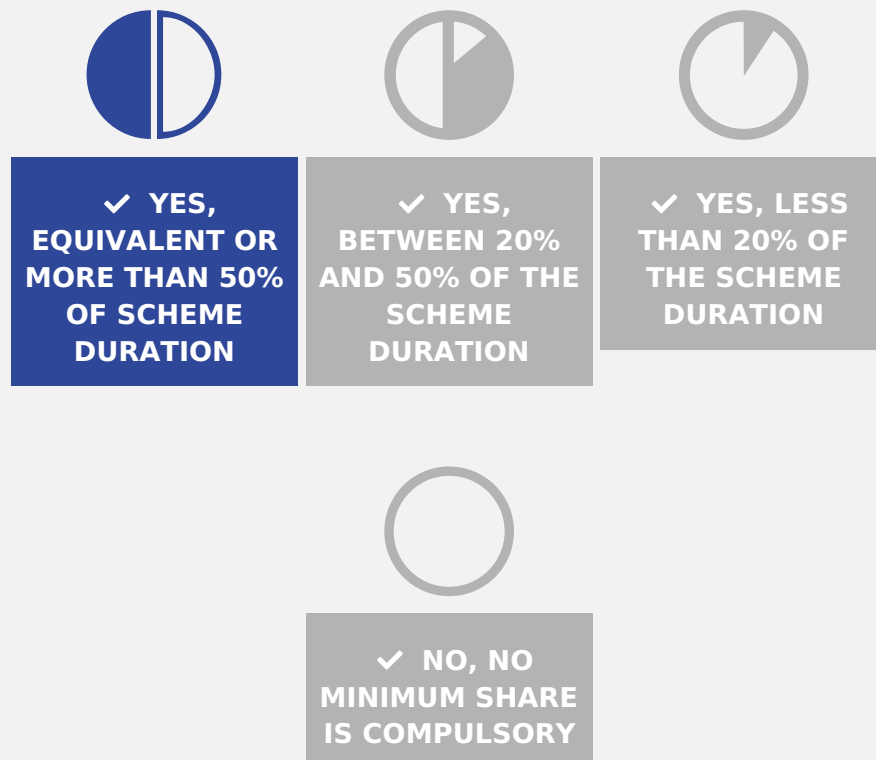
5 Training at the workplace

Q17. Is it compulsory to alternate training between two learning venues (school and company)?



Apprenticeship is defined as a structured programme of education and training which formally combines and alternates learning in the workplace with learning in an education or training centre. It is a dual system, a blended combination of on-the-job employer-based training and off-the-job training.

Q18. Is the in-company training defined as minimum share of the apprenticeship scheme duration?



Apprenticeships must include a minimum of 50% on-the-job learning.

Q19. Is there a distinction between the training time and working time for the period spent at workplace, as per regulation?



✓ YES, THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK MAKES THIS DISTINCTION

✓ NO, THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK MAKES NO DISTINCTION

Q20. What is the form of alternation of training between workplace (company) and school?



✓ EVERY WEEK INCLUDES BOTH VENUES



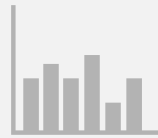
✓ ONE OR MORE WEEKS (LESS THAN 1 MONTH) SPENT AT SCHOOL FOLLOWED BY ONE OR MORE WEEKS AT WORKPLACE



✓ ONE OR MORE MONTHS (LESS THAN 1 YEAR) SPENT AT SCHOOL FOLLOWED BY ONE OR MORE MONTHS AT WORKPLACE



✓ A LONGER PERIOD (1-2 YEARS) SPENT AT SCHOOL FOLLOWED BY A LONGER PERIOD SPENT TRAINING AT WORKPLACE



✓ VARIOUS - DEPENDS ON AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND THE COMPANY



✓ OTHER



✓ NOT SPECIFIED

Different apprenticeships have different arrangements in place. For example, all Craft apprenticeships have a specified series of on-the-job and block-release off-the-job phases. Some new apprenticeships include block release of varying durations, some include day release of varying durations, with durations also differing within some individual apprenticeships according to the stage in the apprenticeship and /or the industry context.

Q21. What is the basis for the training offered?



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED VIA A SPECIFIC APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED ON THE BASIS OF THE SCHOOL-BASED VET PROGRAMME



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED BASED ON THE VET STANDARDS (VALID GENERALLY FOR ALL VET SCHEMES)



✓ OTHER

For craft apprenticeship, a national standard is delivered for each craft based on the occupational analysis of that craft, written as key learning outcomes and structured in modular format.

For new apprenticeships, consortia of labour market actors take the first step and submit their proposal on new sectors/occupations for which a new apprenticeship programme may be developed and offered. Then they submit an occupational profile for approval by the Apprenticeship council, which, once accepted becomes the basis for for the apprenticeship programme and includes information on the learning outcomes and content of modules for on- and off-the-job training. Accreditation by the QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) or any other awarding body is required.

Q22. Is the company hosting apprentices required by regulation to follow a training plan at the workplace?



✓ YES, THE TRAINING PLAN IS BASED ON THE NATIONAL/SECTOR REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IN-COMPANY TRAINING



✓ YES, THE TRAINING PLAN IS AGREED AT THE LEVEL OF SCHOOL AND COMPANY



✓ NO, IS NOT REQUIRED FORMALLY

Ongoing monitoring of apprenticeship training both on-and off-the job is required to ensure that apprentices are provided with the opportunity to acquire the training as set out in the apprenticeship programme.

SOLAS, and in the case of new apprenticeships, the coordinating provider of a new programme, work collaboratively to this end.

The apprenticeship Code of Practice includes requirements on the development of a Training plan by the training company.

Q23. What are the requirements on companies to provide placements, as per regulation?



✓ HAVE TO
PROVIDE A
SUITABLE
LEARNING
ENVIRONMENT



✓ HAVE TO
PROVIDE A
MENTOR / TUTOR
/ TRAINER



✓ OTHER

The 1967 Industrial Training Act sets out the overall structure of the national system and the protections for, as well the responsibilities of, apprentices, employers and education and training providers; the 2012 Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act specifies and supports validation and quality assurance arrangements for apprenticeship programmes, and the employer approval process - including the Apprenticeship Code of Practice specifies the requirements relating to:

- Providing a Mentor, Tutor/ Trainer
- Providing Learning Environment
- Ensuring Learning Support
- Developing a Training Plan

Q25. Are there any sanctions on companies that do not provide training to apprentices at the workplace?



✓ YES



✓ NO

The sanctions which may be imposed by SOLAS on employers are as follows:

- Written warning, which will remain on file for 6 months;
- Final written warning, which will remain on file for 1 year;
- Suspension from registering apprentices for 6 months;
- Prohibition on registering apprentices for an indefinite/defined period.

6 Contract and compensation

Q26. What is the status of the learner?



✓ ONLY STUDENT



✓ ONLY EMPLOYEE



✓ APPRENTICE IS A SPECIFIC STATUS (STUDENT AND EMPLOYEE COMBINED)



✓ OTHER

The 1967 Industrial Training Act defines an apprentice as ‘.....a person employed by way of apprenticeship in a designated activity and includes any person to whom the regulations under section 28 of this Act apply’.

For most purposes the apprentice is treated as an employee but with slightly less protection in terms of dismissal and pay.

Q27. Is there any written arrangement between the learner and company, required as per regulation?



✓ YES



✓ NO

Yes. An apprentice is considered an employee and is employed and paid under a Contract of Apprenticeship.

The national apprenticeship system is governed by legislation, principally the 1967 Industrial Training Act, which sets out the overall structure of the national system and the protections for, as well the responsibilities of, apprentices, employers and education and training providers.

The 2012 Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act also underpins apprenticeship, supporting validation and quality assurance arrangements for apprenticeship programmes nationally.

Q28. What is the nature of the written arrangement?



✓ APPRENTICESHIPS ARE AN ORDINARY EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT



✓ APPRENTICESHIPS ARE A SPECIFIC TYPE OF CONTRACT



✓ ANOTHER TYPE OF FORMAL AGREEMENT, NOT A CONTRACT

The 1967 Industrial Training Act defines an apprentice as ‘.....a person employed by way of apprenticeship in a designated activity and includes any person to whom the regulations under section 28 of this Act apply’.
For most purposes the apprentice is treated as an employee but with slightly less protection in terms of dismissal and pay.

Q29. Where is the contract or the formal agreement registered?



✓ AT THE SCHOOL



✓ AT THE MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT



✓ AT THE CHAMBERS



✓ AT THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION



✓ OTHER

SOLAS is the statutory authority for apprenticeship in Ireland. SOLAS’ responsibilities include maintenance of a register of employers approved [by SOLAS] to take on apprentices, and a register of apprentices. A condition of employer approval and apprentice registration is agreement to abide by the Apprenticeship Code of Practice for Employers and Apprentices.

Q30. Do apprentices receive a wage or allowance?



✓ YES, ALL APPRENTICES RECEIVE A WAGE (TAXABLE INCOME)



✓ YES, ALL APPRENTICES RECEIVE AN ALLOWANCE (NOT A FORM OF TAXABLE INCOME)



✓ APPRENTICES RECEIVE A REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES



✓ NO FORM OF COMPENSATION IS FORESEEN BY LAW

All apprentices receive a salary (taxable income).
Some apprentices (on Craft apprenticeships) receive an allowance from the State which is taxable income.

Q31. How is the apprentice wage (taxable income) set?



✓ BY LAW (APPLYING FOR ALL)



✓ BY CROSS-SECTORAL COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS AT NATIONAL OR LOCAL LEVEL



✓ BY SECTORAL COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS AT NATIONAL OR LOCAL LEVEL



✓ OTHER

✓ BY FIRM-
LEVEL
COLLECTIVE
AGREEMENTS OR
INDIVIDUAL
AGREEMENTS
BETWEEN
APPRENTICE AND
COMPANY

The salary varies from industry to industry and increases yearly.

7 Financing and incentives

Q32. Who covers the cost of the wage or allowance of the apprentice?



✓ OTHER

✓ EMPLOYERS

✓ STATE

The employer pays the apprentice's salary during the on-the-job phases of the apprenticeship in Craft apprenticeships. The State pays the training allowances that are paid to apprentices during the off-the-job phases of the apprenticeship in Craft apprenticeships.

In new apprenticeships, the employer pays the apprentice's salary for the duration of the apprenticeship.

Q33. What are the sources of financing of the direct costs for the in-company training part of the apprenticeship scheme?



✓ SINGLE EMPLOYERS HOSTING APPRENTICES



✓ SECTORAL FUNDS



✓ STATE



✓ OTHER

The employer provides the on-the-job employer-based element of training and pays the apprentice's salary during this time (and, in new apprenticeships developed from 2016 onwards, the employer pays the apprentice's salary for the full duration of the apprenticeship, that is, during both the on-the-job and off-the-job elements). The national apprenticeship system is funded through the National Training Fund and from the Exchequer.

Q34. Are there any financial incentives for companies that offer apprenticeship places?



✓ YES, SUBSIDIES



✓ YES, TAX DEDUCTIONS





✓ YES, OTHER INCENTIVES



✓ NO FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

The State currently pays the employer a specified amount for each newly-registered (first year) apprentice via the Apprenticeship Incentivisation Scheme. An employer bursary is also available to eligible employers who register female apprentices in a Craft apprenticeship.

Q35. Does the wage or allowance of the apprentice cover both the time spent at school and in the company?


 

YES

NO, IT COVERS ONLY THE TIME SPENT IN THE COMPANY

In new apprenticeships, the salary covers both on- and off-the-job training. In craft apprenticeships, the salary covers the on-the job part of the training, and the State contributes for the time spent at school.


Q36. Are there any incentives for learners?



YES, GRANTS PAID TO LEARNERS TO TOP UP THEIR REMUNERATION

YES, GRANTS PAID TO LEARNERS RELATED TO OTHER COSTS (TRAVEL, FOOD ETC.)

YES, RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING / FAST-TRACK OPPORTUNITIES



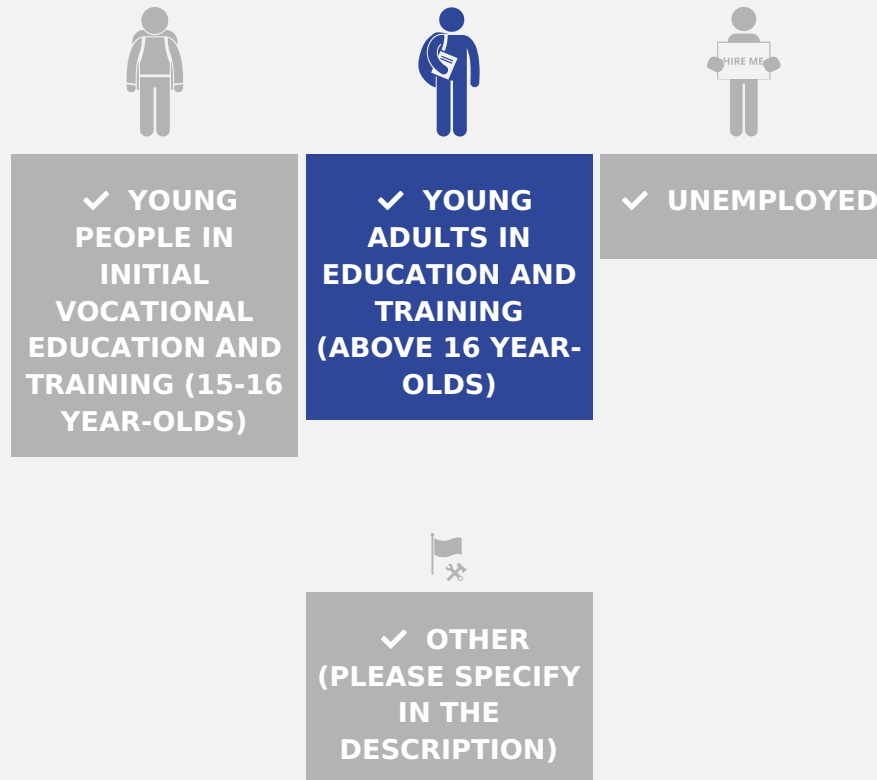
YES, OTHER TYPES OF INCENTIVES

NO

Reference Year 2016

1 Target group

Q7. What is the target group of this scheme?

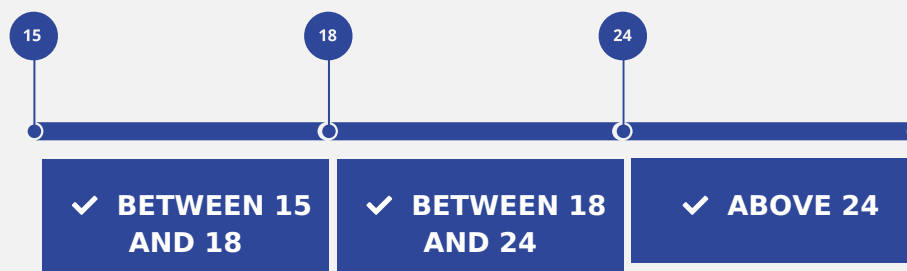


Mainly young adults in education and training.

The minimum entry requirement for an apprenticeship is the junior certificate (or equivalent) and to be of 16 years of age.[1] Learners who do not meet the minimum education entry requirements may be registered as an apprentices by an employer if they have either completed a pre-apprenticeship course or if they are over 16 years and have at least 3 years approved work experience.

[1] SI 168/1997 Labour Services Act 1987 - Apprenticeship Rules 1997 S. 3-4.

Q8. What is the age of learners?



The Apprenticeship Council states: Apprenticeships are open to persons of all age

groups above the statutory school leaving age. Apprenticeships are not just for young people. Work-based learning also improves adults' job prospects by updating and upgrading their work-relevant skills.

2 Overview of the scheme

Q9. Is the scheme included in the ISCED 2011 mapping?

The form for Q9 consists of two columns. The left column features a blue circular icon with 'ISCED' at the top and 'scheme' in the center, positioned above a blue button with a white checkmark and the text 'YES'. The right column features a grey circular icon with 'scheme' and a white circular icon with 'ISCED' at the top, positioned above a grey button with a white checkmark and the text 'NO'.

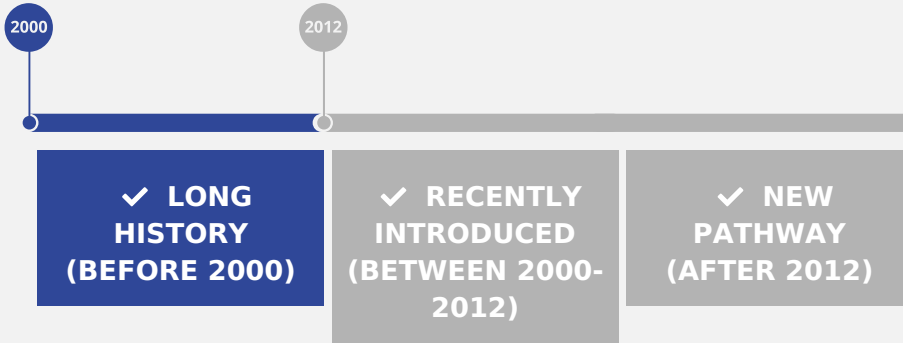
Programme code: prog.04.03, ISCED 2001 level 453.

Q10 - Is the scheme part of the VET system?

The form for Q10 consists of three columns. The first column has a vertical dashed line with a 'VET' label at the top and a grey button with a white checkmark and the text 'YES, IT IS THE MAIN ROUTE IN THE VET SYSTEM'. The second column has a curved dashed line with a 'VET' label at the top and a blue button with a white checkmark and the text 'YES, BUT IT IS CONSIDERED A SECOND-CHANCE ROUTE'. The third column has a curved dashed line with a 'VET' label at the top and a grey button with a white checkmark and the text 'NO, IT IS AN ALTERNATIVE PATHWAY OUTSIDE OF FORMAL VET'.

It's neither the main route into the VET system nor a "second chance", it is one aspect of VET in Ireland.

Q11 - When was the scheme introduced?



As mentioned above, apprenticeships have been an integral part of Ireland's landscape for decades. Unclear for how long the current structure has existed (divided into phases, etc.)

Q12 - How did the apprenticeship scheme originate?



✓ **TRADITIONAL CRAFTSMANSHIP (MASTER-APPRENTICE RELATION) TO PREPARE APPRENTICES FOR THE OCCUPATION**



✓ **SCHOOL-BASED VET TRACK BY INCLUDING MORE WORK-BASED LEARNING TO SUPPLY SKILLED WORKFORCE TO MATCH LABOUR MARKET NEEDS**



✓ **PROGRAMMES FOR THE UNEMPLOYED (ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET MEASURES) TO FACILITATE INTEGRATION ON THE LABOUR MARKET**



✓ **OTHER**

As noted above, apprenticeships in Ireland have a long history rooted in medieval guild system.

The current apprenticeship model is established by the SI 168/1997 Labour Services Act and amendments and is governed by statutory regulations approved by the Oireachtas. It covers 26 designated trades, in the trade families of Construction, Engineering, Electrical, Motor and Print trades.

Q13 - What are the major sources of financing of the in-company training part

of the apprenticeship scheme?



✓ BY
COMPANIES
HOSTING
APPRENTICES



✓ BY
EMPLOYERS
THROUGH
SECTORAL
FUNDS



✓ BY THE
STATE FROM THE
EDUCATION
BUDGET



✓ BY THE
STATE FROM THE
LABOUR / SOCIAL
SECURITY
BUDGET



✓ BY EU
FUNDING



✓ OTHER

The employer meets the cost of on the job training for 170 of the 210 weeks of the programme, and pays the apprentice a wage during this period.

The State bears the cost of the 40 weeks of on the job training, and the cost of the apprentice's wage for this period, and is reimbursed part of this cost from the National Training Fund.

Q14 - Are there any financial incentives for companies that offer apprenticeship places?



✓ YES,
SUBSIDIES



✓ YES, TAX
DEDUCTIONS



✓ YES, OTHER
INCENTIVES



✓ NO
FINANCIAL
INCENTIVES

Yes, there are grants for employers offering apprenticeship places to female applicants. The review[1] also suggested introducing incentives for employers in the form of subsidies, or PRSI or tax relief, to encourage them to recruit hard to reach groups, such as persons with low skills, those who have been unemployed for prolonged periods, and those with disabilities.

[1] <http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Review-of-Apprenticeship-Training-in-Ireland.pdf>

Q15 - Is the scheme temporary, meaning that it is financed for a limited period of time?



✓ YES



✓ NO

Q16. How many learners are enrolled in this scheme?

3273

In terms of new apprenticeship registrations, in 2012 there were a total of 1434 new registrations. This compares to 1307 in 2011[1].

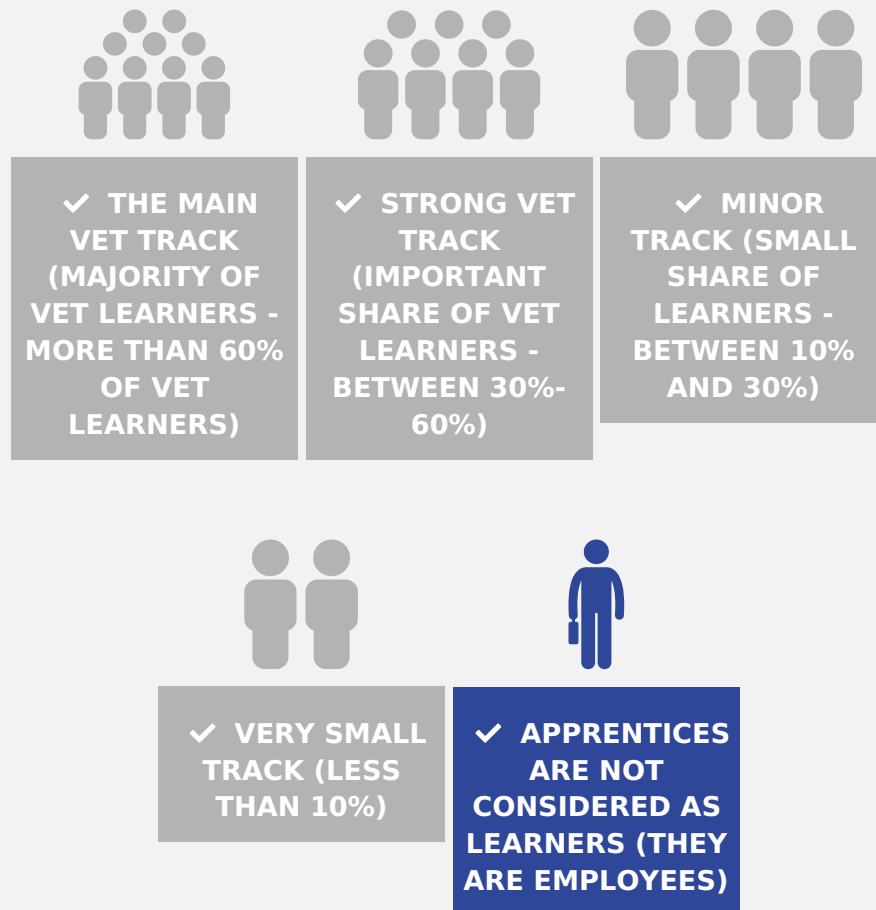
ISCED 2011 puts the enrolments (absolute number) at 3273.

It is noted that the 2016 National Skills Strategy for Ireland, includes an ambitious target to support the delivery of 50,000 apprenticeship and traineeship places up to 2020[2].

[1] Source: Review of Apprenticeship Training in Ireland[1]. The data is broken down by sector.

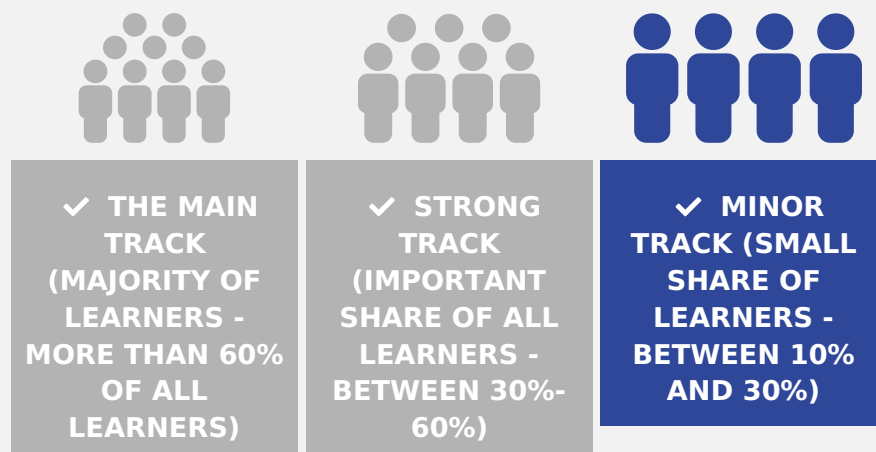
[2] https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/pub_national_skills_strategy_2025.pdf

Q17 - How many learners are enrolled in this scheme in relation to all VET students?



In any case the enrolments in apprenticeships are a minor part of all vocational tracks

Q18 - How many learners are enrolled in the scheme in relation to all programmes for learners of the same age group?





✓ VERY SMALL TRACK (LESS THAN 10%)

The enrolment numbers for many of the schemes are not known so it is difficult to give a precise answer. Based on the numbers that are available, however, it would appear to be a minor track.

Q19 - Does the apprenticeship scheme result in a qualification?



✓ YES



✓ NO

Q20 - Which is the type of qualification obtained through the apprenticeship scheme?



✓ EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION

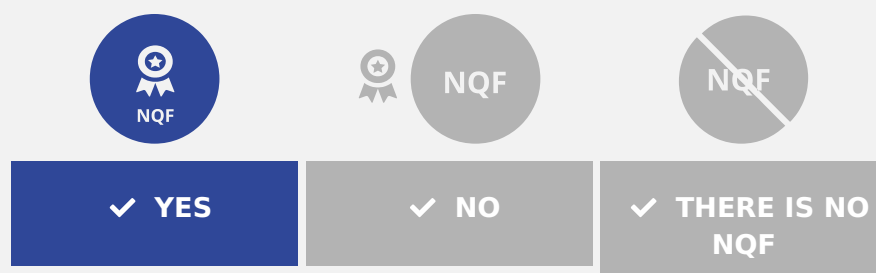


✓ OCCUPATIONAL / SECTORAL QUALIFICATION

Successful completion of apprenticeship training, leads to an Advanced Certificate from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) (2). Advanced Certificates have been placed at level 6 on the NFQ (equivalent to level 5 on the EQF). The Review of Apprenticeships notes that a framework is proposed which provides the scope for an expanded range of apprenticeships operating at any level of the national framework of qualifications from Level 5 upwards.

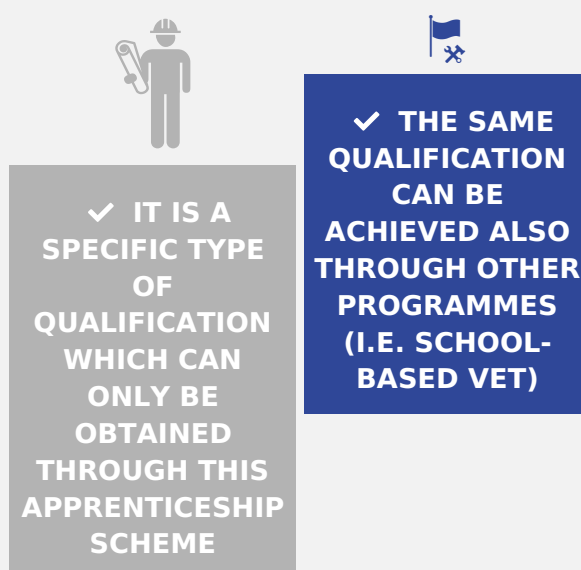
3 Qualifications

Q21 - Is the qualification included in the National Qualification Framework (NQF)



Level 6 NQF is the equivalent of Level 5 EQF.

Q22 - How does the qualification link to the scheme?



The qualification grants **craftsperson status**.

Advanced certificates (level 6) may however be obtained through other schemes which are not classified as apprenticeships.[1]

[1] http://www.teagasc.ie/training/courses/ac_agrimech.asp

Q23 - Does the scheme provide direct access to higher education?



4 Duration

Q24. What is the duration of the VET pathway? (please refer to the typical duration)

4 years

Generally, the duration of an apprenticeship is a minimum of 4 years, however the Print Media apprenticeship programme follows a minimum duration of 3 years. The Review of Apprenticeships suggests that Apprenticeships should last no less than 2 years which is the current (pre-reform) minimum. The new 25 Apprenticeships are expected to last between 2 and 4 years in duration.

Q25 - How is the length of stay in apprenticeships defined in the regulation?



✓ IS DEFINED
AS MINIMUM AND
MAXIMUM



✓ IS DEFINED
AS MINIMUM



✓ IS DEFINED
AS MAXIMUM



✓ IS NOT
DEFINED BY
REGULATION

Q26 - Is there a distinction between the training and working period for the time spent at workplace, as per regulation?



✓ YES, THE
LEGAL
FRAMEWORK
MAKES THIS
DISTINCTION

✓ NO, THE
LEGAL
FRAMEWORK
MAKES NO
DISTINCTION

The Industrial Training Act 1967 (as amended) and any Apprenticeship Rules in relation to apprenticeships require that apprentices are required to:

As noted above, an apprenticeship normally lasts four years. As discussed in more detail below, apprenticeships consist of seven phases: three off-the-job and four on-the-job. Phases 1, 3, 5 and 7 take place with the employer. Phases 2, 4 and 6 take place off-the-job. The total duration of off-the-job phases is approximately 40 weeks, of which 26 are in the Training Centre (phase 2) and two seven week periods (phases 4 and 6) in institutes of technology.

This is described in the Code of Practices for Apprenticeships.

5 Alternation of work-based (in-company) training and school-based training

Q27 - Is in-company training a compulsory part of the scheme, as per regulation?



✓ YES

✓ NO

Section 10 (1) of S.I. 168/1997 states that apprentice training “shall consist of modules of training both on and off-the-job”.

Q28 - Is there a minimum share of time of the apprenticeship spent in in-company training compulsory as per regulation?



✓ YES,
EQUIVALENT OR
MORE THAN 50%



✓ YES,
BETWEEN 20%
AND 50%



✓ YES, LESS
THAN 20%



✓ NO, NO
MINIMUM SHARE
IS COMPULSORY

There is no compulsory minimum share as per regulation, however apprenticeships are generally divided into 7 alternating phases of on-the-job and off-the-job training and development. These alternating phases of training consist of 3 off-the-job and 4 on-the-job phases. The duration of the 3 off-the-job training phases does not normally exceed 40 weeks. This means that about 76 weeks are allocated to on-the-job training (equivalent to 65% of the total training time).

Q29 - What is the form of alternation of training between workplace (company) and school / training centre?



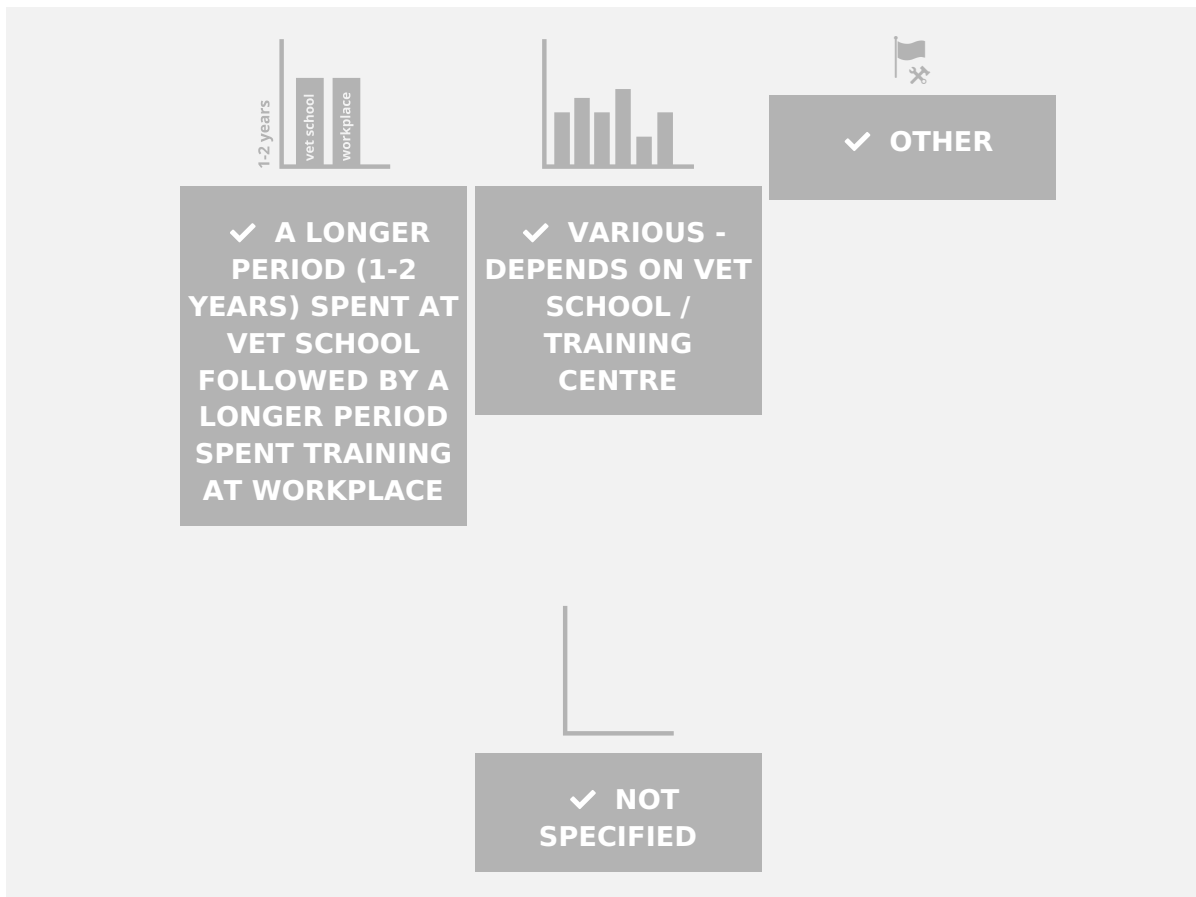
✓ EVERY WEEK
INCLUDES BOTH
VENUES



✓ ONE OR
MORE WEEKS
(LESS THAN 1
MONTH) SPENT
AT VET SCHOOL
FOLLOWED BY
ONE OR MORE
WEEKS AT
WORKPLACE



✓ ONE OR
MORE MONTHS
(LESS THAN 1
YEAR) SPENT AT
VET SCHOOL
FOLLOWED BY
ONE OR MORE
MONTHS AT
WORKPLACE



The seven phases of an apprenticeship are divided in the following way:

- phase 1: delivered by the employer over 12 weeks;^[1]
- phase 2: education and training boards (formerly FAS) 20 weeks;
- phase 3: employer 26 weeks;
- phase 4: institutes of technology 10 or 11 weeks;
- phase 5: employer 26 weeks;
- phase 6: institutes of technology 10 or 11 weeks; and
- phase 7: employer 12 weeks.

[1] Minimum duration, as mentioned above the apprenticeships usually last much longer.

6 Formal relationship with the employer

Q30 - Is any contractual arrangement between the learner, company and/or education and training provider, required as per regulation?



✓ YES

✓ NO

Apprentices are considered to be part of the employed population in Ireland and pay the appropriate level of employment insurance. They sign an employment contract with the employer and therefore have the legal status (and associated rights and responsibilities) of employees. Both the apprentice and the employer sign a SOLAS apprenticeship registration form and by doing so agree to accept the Code of Practice.

One of the Recommendations of the Review of Apprenticeships proposes that legislation should define an apprentice as a person to whom an approved Contract of Apprenticeship applies. A contract template should be developed by the national authorities for this purpose.

Q31 - Which parties enter a contractual relationship?



✓ LEARNER AND EMPLOYER



✓ LEARNER, EMPLOYER AND THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSTITUTION



✓ EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSTITUTION AND THE EMPLOYER (NOT THE LEARNER)



✓ OTHER



✓ NO CONTRACT IS REQUIRED

The Industrial Training Act of 1967^[1] defines an apprentice as:

“[...] a person employed by way of apprenticeship in a designated industrial activity and includes any person to whom regulations under section 28^[2] of this Act apply”.

[1] <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1967/act/5/enacted/en/print#sec2>

[2] S. 28: An Chomhairle [*the body that preceded FAS/ SOLAS*] may by regulations under this section declare that every person employed in a particular manner in a designated industrial activity by a particular employer shall be deemed to be an apprentice for the purposes of this Act.

Q32 - What is the nature of the contract?



✓ APPRENTICESHIPS ARE A SPECIFIC CONTRACT COVERED BY THE LABOUR CODE



✓ APPRENTICESHIPS ARE A FORM OF EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT



✓ FORMAL AGREEMENT, NOT COVERED BY THE LABOUR CODE

According to the Review:

An apprentice is employed and paid under a Contract of Apprenticeship. For most purposes, he/she is treated as an employee but with slightly less protection in terms of dismissal and pay.[1]

[1] Redundancy Payments Acts 1967; Unfair Dismissals Act 1977; National Minimum Wage Act 2000; Protection of Employment (Fixed Term Work Act) 2003.

Q33 - Where is the contract registered?



✓ AT THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSTITUTION



✓ AT THE EMPLOYMENT OFFICE



✓ AT THE CHAMBERS



✓ AT THE
MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION



✓ OTHER

With SOLAS

Q34 - What is the status of the learner?



✓ APPRENTICE
IS A SPECIFIC
STATUS



✓ STUDENT



✓ EMPLOYEE



✓ OTHER

As mentioned above, the apprentice is considered an employee but with some differences. The contract refers specifically to “apprenticeship”.

7 Remuneration

Q35 - Do apprentices receive a salary, allowance or compensation?



✓ YES, ALL APPRENTICES RECEIVE A SALARY (TAXABLE INCOME)

✓ YES, ALL APPRENTICES RECEIVE AN ALLOWANCE (NOT A FORM OF TAXABLE INCOME)

✓ APPRENTICES RECEIVE A REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES



✓ COMPENSATION IS POSSIBLE BUT NOT REQUIRED

✓ NO FORM OF COMPENSATION IS FORESEEN BY LAW

This varies from industry to industry and increases yearly.

The SOLAS website (referring to now disbanded FAS) and the Review have slightly different numbers but this could simply be due to the time difference (FAS cites allowances from 2007). I'll present the wages suggested by the review as it is the latest document:

Year 1: 30-75% of fully qualified rate;

Year 2: 45-80% of fully qualified rate;

Year 3: 65-90% of fully qualified rate;

Year 4: 80-90% of fully qualified rate.

E.g. Engineering (£14.86 fully qualified rate):

Year 1: £4.40 (roughly 30%) an hour = (roughly) £176 a week;

Year 2: £6.60 (roughly 45%);

Year 3: £9.60 (roughly 65%);

Year 4: £11.90 (roughly 80%) an hour = (roughly) £476 a week.

For the whole duration of the training.

Q36 - Who pays the salary / allowance of the apprentice?



✓ EMPLOYERS



✓ STATE



✓ OTHER

During the phases of on-the-job training, the employer pays apprentices' wages and bears whatever other costs are incurred. During off-the-job periods, the State, through SOLAS (formerly FÁS), pays an allowance to apprentices, equivalent to their wages.

Q37 - Is the company hosting apprentices required to provide training at the workplace?



✓ YES, OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE TRAINING AT THE WORKPLACE IS REQUIRED IN THE CONTRACT



✓ YES, IT IS REQUIRED BY LAW



✓ YES, REQUIRED BY OTHER REGULATIONS



✓ NO, NOT REQUIRED FORMALLY

The employer must provide the apprentice with the full range of work specified in the SOLAS Workplace Assessment Book as well as provide access to the appropriate tools, etc.[1] Whether this *has* to take place at the workplace instead of a different, equally equipped place.

[1] <http://www.fas.ie/NR/rdonlyres/ED75B798-6549-48EA-A5D0-10A8CCB0EEE0/5500/TSS8iD13V2CodeofPractice.pdf>

8 Responsibility of employers

Q38 - What are the requirements on training companies, as per regulation?



Non per regulation, however the Code of Practice requires the following of the employer:

- That they be willing and able to train the apprentice in the required on-the job aspects of apprenticeship and to ensure that the apprentice has access to the full range of work specified in the SOLAS Workplace Assessment Book for the on-the job phases of the apprenticeship.
- Employers must also provide access for the apprentice to the appropriate equipment and necessary tools to facilitate the required number of assessments for the on-the-job phases of the apprenticeship.
- Provide the apprentice with the opportunities to practice curriculum elements under supervised conditions while having regard to the apprentice's skill level at the time the task is being undertaken.

Employ a suitably qualified and relevant craftsperson who has been approved by SOLAS to act as the workplace assessor with responsibility for training, marking assessments, recording and processing assessment checklists and on-the-job.

Q39 - Are there any sanctions on companies that do not provide training to apprentices at the workplace?



✓ YES



✓ NO

The sanctions which may be imposed by SOLAS on employers are as follows:

- Written warning, which will remain on file for 6 months;
- Final written warning, which will remain on file for 1 year;
- Suspension from registering apprentices for 6 months;

Prohibition on registering apprentices for an indefinite/defined period.

Q40 - What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives (social partners), sectoral councils (if existent), in apprenticeships, as per regulation?



✓ ROLES IN
DESIGNING
QUALIFICATIONS/
CURRICULA



✓ ROLES IN
FINAL
ASSESSMENT OF
APPRENTICES



✓ ROLES IN
QUALITY
ASSURANCE OF
WORK-BASED
VET



✓ RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE
REGULATION OF
THE CONTRACT



✓ OTHER



✓ NO ROLE

The review group recommended that *"apprenticeships be enterprise-led, with a key role for employers in identifying occupational standards and in shaping the content of the curriculum in collaboration with education and training providers."*

The Apprenticeship Council was launched in 2014. Its main functions are to advise on the design, duration, entry levels, and ongoing provision of apprenticeships. The Council

is enterprise-led but educational institutions sit on the Committee.