



National Sales Apprenticeship Programme

Employ A Sales Apprentice

| An Employer's Guide



msletb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Mhaigh Eo, Shligigh agus Liatroma
Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim
Education and Training Board



**GENERATION
APPRENTICESHIP**
www.apprenticeship.ie







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SALES APPRENTICESHIP

Programme Overview

This new apprenticeship programme was designed by a consortium of sales industry partners and Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB). It was developed to ensure a consistent number of apprentices are hired, developed and retained for sales organisations. It ensures that approved industry partners hiring apprentices are seen as employers of choice with regard to outstanding training, development and progression opportunities within their organisation. The goal is to deliver committed, adaptable and ambitious individuals into the sales sector year on year. This programme will become a key contributor to the strategic succession planning process for the extensive sales industry in Ireland over the coming years.

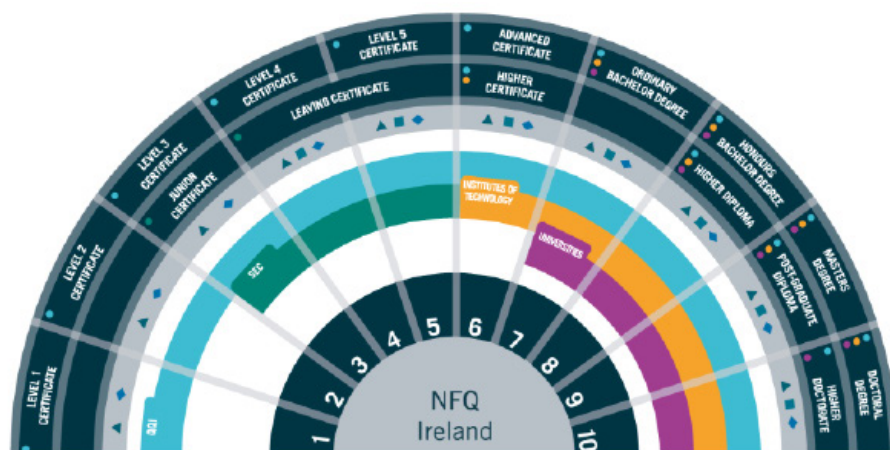
This programme is an “earn and learn” model, designed to empower the sales apprentice with underpinning knowledge, skills and competencies required to become an effective employee in a dynamic sector. It is open to a wide range of employers, across all industry sectors, both large and small firms, on a national basis. It specifically targets demographics who wish to commence, develop and/or upskill their career in sales; it offers a unique opportunity to learn in a practical, supportive environment while simultaneously working towards a recognised Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Major Level 6 Award. Successful graduates can further their careers within the sales sector and/or progress to further studies in higher education.

QQI is the state agency responsible for promoting the quality, integrity and reputation of Ireland’s further and higher education system. All QQI validated programmes are quality assured, are nationally and internationally recognised, offer access to further and higher education and training opportunities and are recognised by employers.

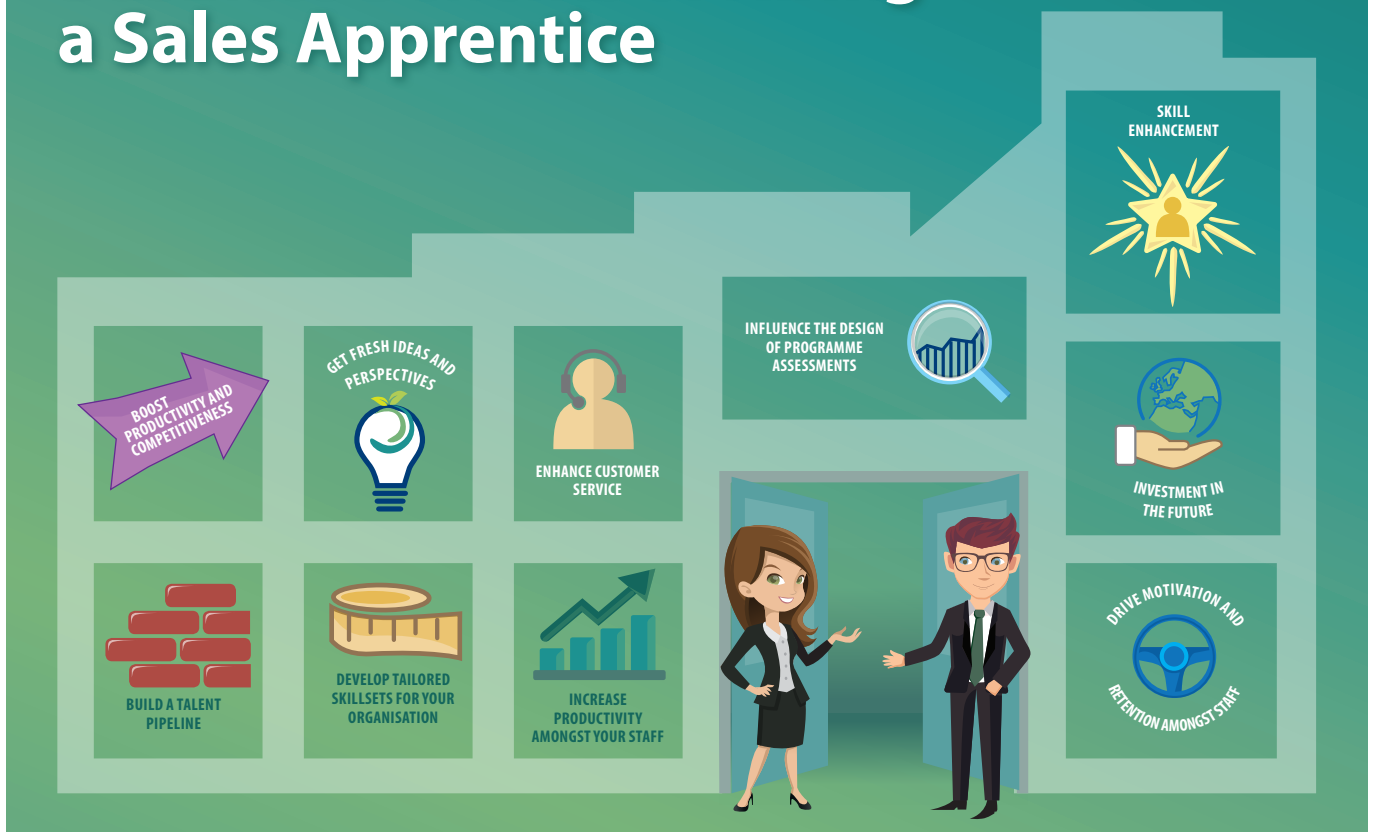
National qualifications frameworks describe what learners should know, understand and be able to do on the basis of a given qualification. These frameworks also show how learners can move from one qualification, or qualification level, to another within a system. Over 150 countries are now developing, or have developed, a national qualifications framework.

The Irish NFQ, is a framework through which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other in a coherent way and are organised based on their level of knowledge, skill and competence. Because all NFQ qualifications are quality assured, learners can be confident that they will be recognised at home and abroad.

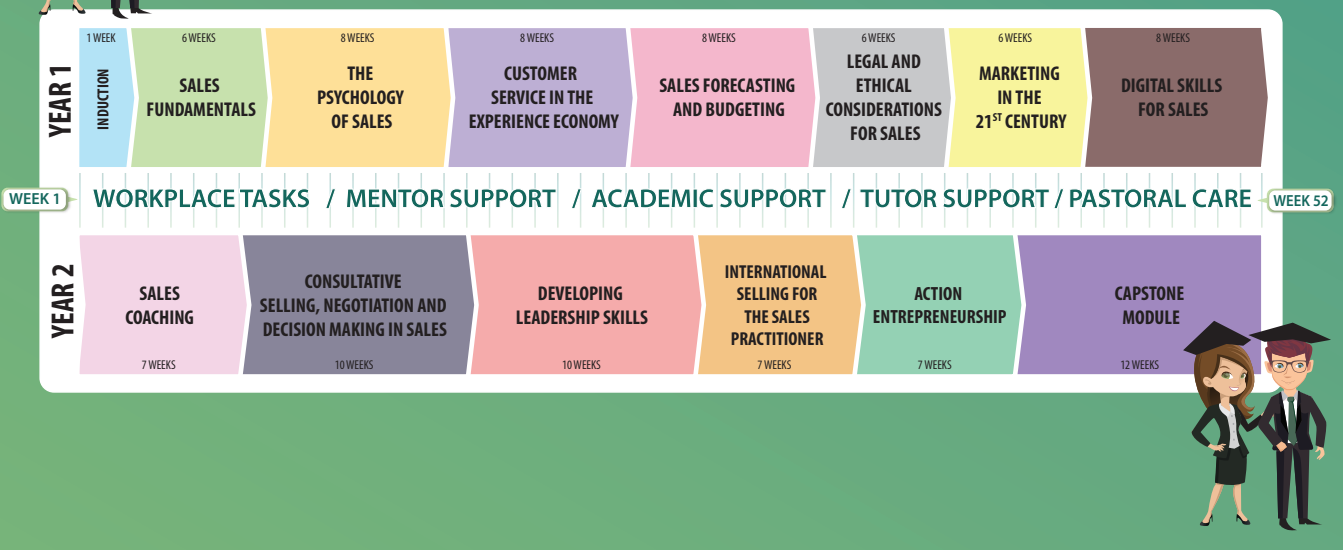
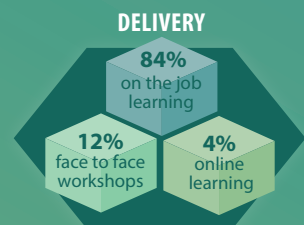
Upon completion of this apprenticeship the graduate will achieve a Level 6 Advanced Certificate in Sales.



Business Benefits of Hiring a Sales Apprentice



The Learner Journey





Apprentice Testimonials

What is the thing you like most about the Sales Apprenticeship programme?"



The thing I like most about the sales apprenticeship is how much I have grown as a result. I have learned so much about myself both personally and professionally and have gained a new found sense of confidence to do things I never would have before such as

public speaking and using new technology and software. I have also made a lot of new friends and met some wonderful people within my own company. I would definitely recommend this course to anyone thinking of applying.

Joan Walsh,
Sales Apprentice with Tesco Mobile



The things I like the most about the Sales Apprenticeship programme are, it allows you to develop and learn new skills as a Sales Specialist while working in a full time position. I also like the way it catches on all the main components and gives an all-round education on

becoming successful as a Sales Specialist. I feel it has developed my skills greatly so far and given me knowledge on many aspects of sales, which without the Sales Apprenticeship course I would not have learned.

Adam Magee
Sales Apprentice with Clarkes of Cavan

Questions to Ask Yourself Before Employing a Sales Apprentice

1. Can you provide the apprentice with continuity of employment (both On-the-Job and Off-the-Job) over a 2 year period?

The position is a 2 year fixed full time permanent contract (including the Off-the-Job release commitments). Employers are required to pay the apprentice for the duration of the programme. Your normal contract of employment for the job role together with a Code of Practice for Apprentices and Employers outlining your obligations will form the basis of the employment. This Code of Practice is intended to assist both employers and apprentices to understand their duties and responsibilities relating to the apprenticeship programme. As part of the employer approval and apprentice registration processes, employers and apprentices agree to comply with this Code of Practice.

A copy of the code of practice can be found at:

www.apprenticeship.ie/Documents/ApprenticeshipCodeOfPractice.pdf

2. Can you provide access for the apprentices to the type of work that allows them gain the necessary experience and develop their skills across the full range of competencies included in the programme?

You are required to facilitate the rotation of tasks to ensure the apprentice is afforded the opportunity to gain experience of the different types of work related to the apprenticeship programme within the organisation. MSLETB will offer full support to the organisation to ensure this can be achieved.

3. Can you provide adequate resources such as the time, facilities and equipment necessary to support the apprentice in respect of both on and off-the-job learning in your organisation?

On-the-job learning resources include a desk, PC or portable device within a team environment

On-the-job learning resources include releasing the apprentice for 2 hours per week at a scheduled time, in a quiet area with a skype capable device which has a webcam, microphone and headphones to participate in online lectures.

In addition your apprentice is required to attend face to face workshops at a venue arranged by MSLETB to enhance professional and technical knowledge.

4. Can you provide a qualified or experienced staff member who will act as the apprentice's Workplace Mentor and whose key role is to supervise their training and assess their competencies in the workplace?

Each apprentice is allocated a Workplace mentor (a maximum of 4 apprentices to 1 mentor) whose key role is to manage the training needs of the apprentice. The Workplace Mentor will be an experienced member of the employer's management or senior supervisory team who has achieved a Major Level 6 Award in a cognate area and a minimum of 2 years' industry experience in the sector or has a minimum of 5 years' experience working within the sales sector.

A bespoke Workplace Mentor Handbook and customised training for the mentor will be provided by MSLETB prior to the commencement of the programme. Continuous support throughout the duration of the programme is also provided.

Role of the Workplace Mentor

- Familiarise themselves with the sales apprenticeship programme.
 - Assist the apprentice in understanding and become conversant with work practices and sales terminology.
 - Facilitate the apprentice's learning in the workplace by shadowing, coaching, observing and guiding.
 - Promote independence and autonomy in learning and in the completion of workplace tasks.
 - Promote a culture of ongoing development with a focus on developing knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes to positively influence performance.
 - Foster a supportive environment to complete workplace tasks.
 - Facilitate peer learning with other experienced members of staff.
 - Provide pastoral care to the apprentice in the workplace.
 - Develop a sense of professionalism in the apprentice including attributes such as dependability, maturity, politeness, respect, loyalty and the ability to communicate effectively.
 - Attend a mandatory briefing day workshop prior to the apprentice commencing.
 - Participate in and/or contribute to the National Programme Board.
 - Liaises with the academic supervisor.
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Registration Process

In order to register an apprentice, employers must first be approved by SOLAS to register and train apprentices on the Sales Apprenticeship programme.

The registration steps are as follows:

1. Employers register an expression of interest via www.apprenticeship.ie
 2. The SOLAS Authorised Officer in their local Education and Training Board will then schedule a site visit to ascertain if the company meets the specified qualifying criteria. They will ask the employer to complete some application forms. If the employer is deemed suitable, the SOLAS Authorised Officer recommends the employer to SOLAS for approval. If the employer is deemed unsuitable, the SOLAS Authorised Officer will identify what requirements remain to be met and subsequently, a re-visit can be scheduled to re-assess.
 3. Approved employers can then enrol apprentices for the programme by contacting their local SOLAS Authorised Officer. The apprentice can be a new or existing member of staff who meets the minimum entry requirements for the programme.
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Apprentice Profile

The programme is suitable for:

- School leavers.
- Existing employees seeking to progress within their organisation and develop skills relevant to the workplace.
- Career changers.
- Mature applicants aged 21 or over with relevant work experience without formal qualifications will also be considered via Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) procedures.



Apprentice Entry Requirements

- Must be employed by a SOLAS 'Approved Employer' and registered as an apprentice.
 - Aged 18 or over.
 - Must have Grade O6/H7 or above in 5 Leaving Certificate subjects (including Maths F2/O6/H7 along with English or Irish O6/H7) or a full QQI Level 5 or higher qualification.
 - International applicants must present the equivalent of a full Level 5 qualification or higher.
 - English is the language of tuition and assessment. Apprentices for whom English is not a first language must demonstrate proficiency in English and hold a minimum of a B1 CEFR or recognised equivalent.
 - Non-EU applicants are subject to work permit regulations.
 - Mature applicants aged 21 years and over without a Level 5 qualification will also be considered following an interview and submission of supporting documentation.
 - Certified and non certified Recognition of Prior Learning will also be considered.
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Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Is there a cost associated with taking on a sales apprentice?*

There are no costs involved for either the apprentice or the organisation. All training is government funded. However, the apprentice needs to be a full time employee of the organisation. Employers are required to pay the apprentice for the duration of the programme.

2. *Does the apprentice have to leave work for long periods to attend college?*

This work based learning programme has been designed to be flexible in terms of time, location, and mode of learning.

It will be delivered by using a blend of

- 84% learning whilst on the job in the workplace
- 12% Face to Face workshops (2 days offsite every 6 – 8 weeks. This equates to 14 days in year 1; 12 days in year 2)
- 4% online learning which equates to 2 hours per week in the workplace

Employers will be required to release the apprentice for 2 hours per week for the online classes and also for 2 days every 6- 8 weeks for the face to face workshops. However 84% of the programme will be completed in a workplace environment where a Workplace Mentor will be assigned by the organisation to mentor and guide the apprentice. Training will be provided free of charge to the Workplace Mentor and there will be continuous extensive support offered throughout the programme. Academic calendars will be issued in advance of the programme commencement date.

3. *Do employers and apprentices have to be based in Mayo, Sligo or Leitrim?*

No – the sales apprenticeship is a national apprenticeship programme so employers and apprentices can be based in any part of the Republic of Ireland.

4. *What qualification does the apprentice get?*

Upon successful completion of the programme, the apprentice graduate will get a Major QQI Level 6 Advanced Certificate in Sales. Progression opportunities are available for those who wish to continue their studies into higher education. Indeed apprenticeships are acknowledged as vital elements in the economic regeneration of countries across the globe. The continued expansion of apprenticeships into new occupational areas will enhance their image and profile and are a real option to academic-only learning pathways.

5. What type of companies is this sales apprenticeship open to?

This programme has been developed to meet current and future industry demand for sales personnel employed across all industry sectors. Today the sales industry does not have a recognised apprenticeship programme and employers have identified that the lack of a talent pipeline has resulted in an increasingly difficult employee recruitment and retention environment for the sector. This apprenticeship will be an industry game changer; empowering sales apprentices with the essential blend of knowledge, skills and competencies they need to become an effective employee.

The programme is ideal for industries who employ sales people in various sectors including:

- Pharmaceutical
- Agriculture
- Contact Centres
- Communications
- Entertainment
- Financial Services
- Technology
- Property Services
- Hospitality & Food
- ICT
- Electrical
- Construction
- Logistics
- Media
- Healthcare
- Insurance
- Motor
- Manufacturing
- Retail
- Travel & Tourism



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