



# Employer guide to recruitment support

Support and incentives to help you  
in rebuilding your workforce





# Introduction



*Recruitment and retention is one of the main concerns among the hospitality and tourism industry at the present time. This recruitment guide is an initiative of the HATS network to help hospitality and tourism businesses access the range of support programmes and services available to help you recruit the right talent for your business and build a talent pipeline.*

- Ciaran O'Neill, HATS Network chair



# Support from the Department for Communities (DfC)

## Programme

## Summary

## Eligibility

## Support

Employer Advisers in the Job & Benefits Offices

For small, medium or micro sized employers, there are dedicated Employer Advisers based in the network of 35 local Jobs & Benefits offices who are available to assist you personally and may be able help with a range of no cost services to help you find suitable employees.

[Contact your local jobs and benefits office](#)

For small, medium or micro sized employers.

Free service

Strategic Employment Service  
*(Typically for large or public sector organisations)*

DfC offers a dedicated client executive account manager to Strategic Employers (typically a large or public sector organisation) across Northern Ireland. The service acts as a single point of contact seeking to understand your business, recruitment and retention needs, and will work across the NI Civil Service employability and skills offering to draw partners together to agree a single tailored package of support for your account.

[Further details](#)

Typically for large or public sector organisations.

Free service

Job vacancy portal

A free recruitment site from the Department for Communities (DfC) which enables Employers to notify and manage their job vacancies online. To help Employers to fill vacancies and jobseekers to find employment through the display of full and accurate vacancy information.

[Further details](#)

All employers with vacancies

Free to post vacancies

# Programme

# Summary

# Eligibility

# Support

Cross Border Partnership for Employment Services (CBPES)

The partnership aims to assist employers by providing them with access to a larger pool of labour i.e. jobseekers living on both sides of the border. Advice is available to employers on a range of cross-border recruitment issues.

They also run a series of events to help the cross border employers, workers and jobseekers including;

- Cross Border Job Fairs | Employer Incentives Events
- Employer Awareness raising | English for Employability
- Cross Border Query Support | Employer Signposting

Reciprocal Process' for promoting vacancies across the border.

Cross border jobfairs are available onsite or on a new virtual platform [www.crossborderjobfair.com](http://www.crossborderjobfair.com)

[Further detail on the support offered](#)

The Partnership covers all of Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland (Louth, Cavan, Monaghan, Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim).

Free service

Work Experience Programme

The Work Experience Programme, from DfC, provides employers with the opportunity to offer meaningful work experience. Placements must be organised in a variety of real work environments which help a jobseeker develop or update their work skills or habits.

The Work Experience Programme is open to 16-65 year olds who are unemployed or in receipt of benefits.

The Opportunity Guarantee strand of the Work Experience Programme is for young people aged 16-24. Employers may provide Opportunity Guarantee placements where they will be in a position to offer the young person an interview for a job or apprenticeship at the end of the placement.

For further information [contact your local jobs and benefits office.](#)

The work experience placement may be within private, public, voluntary or community sector businesses or organisations.

Employers need to be willing to host a work experience participant for a period of two to eight weeks.

For Opportunity Guarantee, employers need to be willing to host a participant for a period of thirteen weeks, be in a recruitment position and willing to offer participants an interview for a job or apprenticeship.

Employers will not be asked to make any payments to participants on the programme. Participants will retain their benefit entitlement during the period of work experience.

Employers who provide a person with a work experience placement may receive an incentive payment of £250.

Employers who provide an Opportunity Guarantee placement will receive an additional £250 incentive payment at the end of the placement.

# Support from the Department for Economy (DfE)

## Programme

## Summary

## Eligibility

## Support

### Assured Skills Academies

The Assured Skills programme offers the opportunity to work closely with the Department for the Economy (DfE), Invest Northern Ireland and the further and higher education sector to recruit high quality employees.

The programme is a short, demand-led pre-employment training academy, fully funded by DfE, to upskill individuals and help them compete for guaranteed job vacancies in new FDI companies or expanding businesses.

For more information email:  
[assuredskills@economy-ni.gov.uk](mailto:assuredskills@economy-ni.gov.uk)

New inward investors, or existing employers considering expansion, who are Invest Northern Ireland clients may be eligible for support from Assured Skills.

Funding will be provided by DfE to support a pre-employment training and skills development programme working in conjunction with companies.

For the individual in a training academy, they:

- will receive a weekly training allowance of £155
- will be reimbursed weekly travel expenses
- may be eligible for childcare allowance.



# Programme

# Summary

# Eligibility

# Support

## Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a valuable way to fill your talent pipeline.

- Funding for the directed (or 'off-the-job') training element is provided by the Department for the Economy (DfE)
- ApprenticeshipsNI - for apprentices aged 16-24, DfE pays the full cost of the off-the-job training. An incentive payment is available for employers when an apprentice successfully completes their Level 2 and/or Level 3 ApprenticeshipsNI full framework.
  - HLA Programme (Level 4 to Level 7) - DfE provides funding at a specified rate calculated with reference to mainstream Further and Higher Education funding.

[Further details](#)

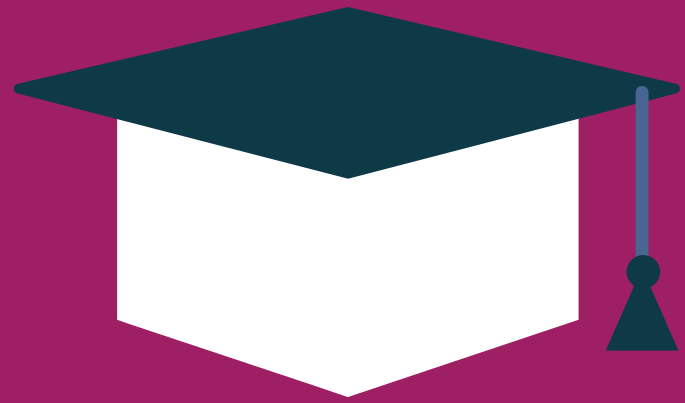
Employers who take on an apprentice participating in the Department for the Economy funded ApprenticeshipsNI or Higher Level Apprenticeship programmes. This is open to both new and existing employees, however, to qualify an existing employee must be starting a new job role that requires a substantial amount of learning and skills development.  
Programme eligibility excludes public sector employees.

Fully funded for the off the-job training element of Apprenticeships [Level 2 & Level 3] for 16-24 year olds.

Off the job training element of Higher Level Apprenticeships are fully funded.

An incentive payment is available for employers when an apprentice successfully completes all targeted qualifications within their Level 2 and/or Level 3 ApprenticeshipsNI full framework, and they have completed 104 weeks of employment





# Connect with student and graduate talent

Engage with the FE colleges and universities to target and access a wide talent bank of students and highly skilled graduates for internships, placements and graduate opportunities.

Engagement activities may include promoting your vacancies, presenting to students through virtual campus fairs and presentations, facilitating student visits to your facilities for off-campus events and sponsorship opportunities.

Establishing this connection will have huge benefits for your business/organisation and ensure you are visible to the right candidates.

## FE Colleges:



cedsi@belfastmet.ac.uk



businessservices@serc.ac.uk



betterbusiness@src.ac.uk



innotechcentre@swc.ac.uk



businesssupport@nwrc.ac.uk



business.engagement@nrc.ac.uk

## University providers:



[Find out more about support on offer from Ulster University.](#)



[Find out more about support on offer from Queens University.](#)



# Other practical support

## Programme

## Summary

## Support

NI Business Info

*Online channel for business advice and guidance by Invest NI*

[NI Business Info](#) has a suite of practical resources and guides to help businesses in recruiting staff including:

[Recruiting staff](#)  
[Recruiting New Employees - the Employers' Handbook](#)  
[Employing and supporting older workers](#)  
[UK points-based immigration system](#)

Free service offered by Invest NI

CIPD

*The Professional body for HR and Professional development*

The CIPD offer guidance on good-practice recruitment and induction processes, from work placements and internships to internal recruitment and secondments.

[Recruitment & Induction | CIPD](#)  
[Making work experience work: Top tips for employers -Guide](#)

Free factsheets

HATS Network

**Skills Funding Guide:** Details a range of funded skills support to help you develop your people and your business.  
[View HATS Skills Funding Guide](#)

**Recruitment & Retention Webinars:** Covering a range of topics to help businesses implement 'Our Hospitality and Tourism Commitment' to enhance the appeal and attractiveness of the industry as a good quality employer and great place to work.





# Digital Hospitality Employment Academies

**The Springboard Charity delivers sector specific employment programmes to support young people and unemployed individuals of any age with the skills to successfully transition from education to employment.**

Find out how you can become a business partner and meet potential new recruits.



# Disability Employment Services

There are a range of disability employment organisations providing employability programmes for all areas of disability (i.e. physical, mental health, learning, sensory and hidden disabilities) across Northern Ireland.

For information on services in your area contact Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment.

[View a list of organisations.](#)



Phone: 02871377709  
Email: [info@niuse.org.uk](mailto:info@niuse.org.uk)  
Web: [www.niase.org](http://www.niase.org)



# Labour Market Partnerships

The Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) initiative is a new province wide approach developed by the Department for Communities which will see targeted employment action plans created in every council area to support people towards and into work.

The LMP focuses on improving labour market conditions and aims to address issues with jobs and training by combining resources and delivering a collaborative and flexible approach to employability support.

## Contact details for local labour market partnerships:

Antrim and Newtownabbey: [skills@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](mailto:skills@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk)

Ards and North Down: [LMP@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:LMP@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)

Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon: [Imp@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](mailto:Imp@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk)

Belfast City: [LMP@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:LMP@belfastcity.gov.uk)

Causeway Coast & Glens: [LMP@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk](mailto:LMP@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk)

Derry and Strabane: [LMP@DerryStrabane.com](mailto:LMP@DerryStrabane.com)

Fermanagh and Omagh: [LMP@fermanaghomagh.com](mailto:LMP@fermanaghomagh.com)

Lisburn and Castlereagh: [LMP@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk](mailto:LMP@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk)

Mid and East Antrim: [LMP@midandeantrim.gov.uk](mailto:LMP@midandeantrim.gov.uk)

Mid Ulster: [LMP@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:LMP@midulstercouncil.org)

Newry, Mourne and Down: [business@nmandd.org](mailto:business@nmandd.org)





HATS is an employer led network which brings together a diverse mix of employers from across the hospitality and tourism sector alongside industry associations and key delivery partners from government and education to collectively address talent attraction and retention in tourism through collaboration.



[www.hatsnetwork.co.uk](http://www.hatsnetwork.co.uk)  
[info@hatsnetwork.co.uk](mailto:info@hatsnetwork.co.uk)



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