

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN

Labour Market Partnership

Working Together



# Ards and North Down Employability and Skills Register for Employers

12 September 2024

## **Introduction.**

The Ards and North Down Labour Market Partnership was established in August 2021 with the aim of improving employability outcomes and labour market conditions, creating employment and opportunity in the Borough.

A key resource required by both residents and employers as highlighted during extensive consultation, was the creation of an Employability and Skills register so that everyone within the Ards and North Down Borough could easily identify and access interventions to improve labour market conditions.

The register on the following pages details a comprehensive range of regional and local employability and skills delivery organisations and initiatives to provide stakeholders, including employers with a complete understanding of the existing support landscape available to them and their employees who wish to reskill/upskill to access higher employment opportunities.

For further information, please contact Ards and North Down Labour Market Partnership, tel. 0300 013 3333, extension 40958 / 40960 or email: [LMP@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:LMP@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)

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## **Section 1.** **Department for Communities Initiatives - Support for workers and their employers.**

### **1.1 Work Experience Programme.**

The Work Experience Programme helps those who are unemployed to develop their employability skills and gain the experience required to get a job. DfC (Department for Communities) collaborates with employers to offer opportunities to obtain meaningful work experience for those who are seeking employment. Short work experience placements of between two and eight weeks are available with local employers for those aged between 16-65 years. During the placements, participants can learn about specific industries and job roles to assist in making more informed choices about their future, whilst also improving confidence and motivation.

Eligible applicants will be assisted in identifying suitable work experience opportunities, developing job-search skills, and gain advice on CV building and interview techniques.

To be eligible for the Work Experience Programme, you must be:

- Aged 16-17 and receiving Universal Credit.
- Aged 18-65, receiving Universal Credit or Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, or Income Support and actively seeking employment or
- Actively seeking employment if you are unemployed and not claiming benefits.

Those participating in a work experience placement will receive up to £50 per week (£10 per day) for taking part. Employers who provide a person with a work experience placement may receive an incentive payment of £250, provided the participant has completed at least one week on the work experience initiative. Taking part in the programme is voluntary and does not impact benefits.

Any eligible weekly travel costs and childcare costs will also be reimbursed.

Employers interested in participating will be asked to sign an agreement setting out the terms and conditions of the programme. Employers will not be asked to make any payments to participants in the programme and participants retain their benefit entitlement during the period of work experience.

## 1.2 The Work Psychology Service.

The Work Psychology Service offers a retention assessment service for anyone in Northern Ireland who has a disability or healthcare condition and where their employment is at risk because of this. The assessment aims to identify strengths, support needs and reasonable adjustments to enable them to retain and progress in work.

Employers and their employees who wish to be referred for an assessment can contact the Work Psychology Service by email to [wps@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:wps@communities-ni.gov.uk) or tel. 028 90 376305. Alternatively, individuals can be referred to this service through their local Jobs and Benefits office.

## Section 2.

### Department for the Economy Support Initiatives delivered by FE/HE Colleges.

#### 2.1 Apprenticeships NI.

Employers who wish to employ an apprentice can do so by following the seven steps outlined below:

1. Choose an apprenticeship framework level or qualification which meets business needs.
2. Choose and contact an approved training provider.
3. Advertise apprenticeship opportunity. The apprenticeship portal 'Connect to Success,' is a free online system enabling employers to advertise apprenticeships roles. Roles can also be advertised for free through [jobapplyni.com](http://jobapplyni.com): [JobApplyNI](http://JobApplyNI)
4. Additional employer support and advice relating to recruitment can be found at the Employer Services Department for Communities – tel. 028 90 376183, or email [dfcemployerservices@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:dfcemployerservices@communities-ni.gov.uk)
5. Recruit apprentice.
6. Agree on an apprenticeship training plan between employer, apprentice, and the training provider. This is managed by the chosen training provider.
7. Apprenticeship begins.

Further info can be found at

<https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/apprenticeships-explained-employers>

## **2.2 Workplus.**

### **Apprenticeships.**

These apprenticeships work on two concurrent levels:

- Employers approach Workplus if they are willing to offer apprenticeships.
- Individuals approach Workplus if willing to undergo an apprenticeship.

Apprentices under the scheme can be any age and it is an opportunity to learn as you earn. Using the Workplus platform, employers can explore available apprenticeships from various providers, receive support to choose the right pathway and promote apprenticeship opportunities. Applicants can access information about the apprenticeship and apply to employer and course. This is an efficient way to fill skills gaps by directly working with local companies.

Applications can be completed online at [www.workplus.app](http://www.workplus.app)

Enquiry email address: [Richard@workplus.app](mailto:Richard@workplus.app)

## **Section 3.**

### **Ards and North Down Borough Council Support Initiatives.**

#### **3.1 Ards and North Down Labour Market Partnership.**

Ards and North Down (AND) Labour Market Partnership (LMP), established as part of the DfC's Employability Programme, aims to help people into meaningful employment through a range of training and support programmes.

The AND LMP Action Plan for 2024/2025, which is aimed at addressing local industry skills and employment needs, plan to offer the following academies from early Autumn 2024:

- Transport Academy.
- Classroom Assistant Upskilling Academy.
- Admin Academy.
- Academy for People with Disabilities.

In addition, an Employer-Led Upskilling Grants Programme, Job Fairs, Skills and Employment Support Clinics and an Employer Engagement Session will also be delivered.

All programmes will target:

- Economically inactive.
- Long-term unemployed.
- People with disabilities.
- Those impacted by unforeseen changes in the economy.
- Skilled labour supply issues.

For further details on all programmes as well visit [Labour Market Partnership | AND Business](#)

Ards and North Down LMP can be contacted on tel. 0300 0133333 or email: [imp@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:imp@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)

### 3.2 Go Succeed – NI Business Support.

Go Succeed is the new go-to source for expert business advice led by Northern Ireland's 11 local councils. Whether you are a budding entrepreneur just starting out, are looking to grow your business, or are planning to scale up, our team of industry experts will provide tailored support and guidance to help you achieve your business goals.

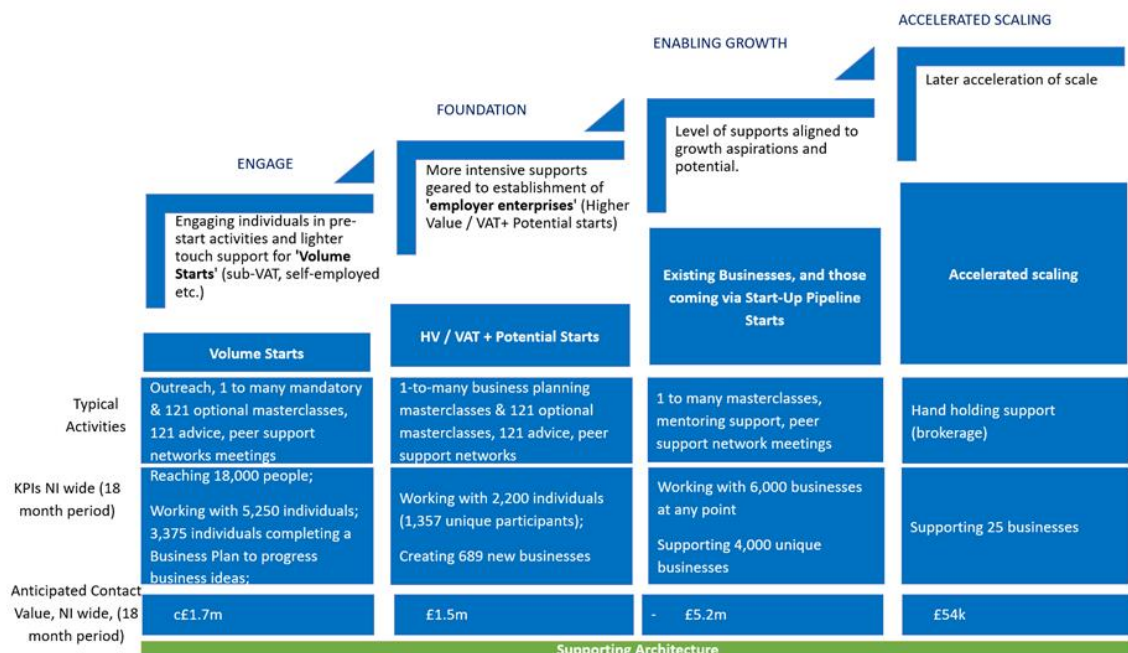
**Start** – Have an idea but don't know if it could be a business.

**Grow** – Business is performing but don't know how to take it to next step, for example in areas like product/service development, sales/marketing, people development, finances and operations & processes.

**Scale** – Next step potential to become Invest NI clients.

There are four elements of the service:

1. Engage - Engaging individuals at the pre / early start-up phase.
2. Foundation - Support for founding of higher value / VAT + potential businesses.
3. Enabling Growth - Existing Businesses aligned to aspirations and potential.
4. Accelerated Scaling - Supporting start-ups and existing businesses that can generate at least £1m in revenues after three years.





“What’s in it for you”.

- Series of Webinars Masterclasses – online and in person.
- Large Scale Events.
- Themed Networks.
- Focused Mentoring for all four pillars/elements.
- Under Engage there is Idea Development.
- E&F develop Business Plans.
- Growth and Scaling work with mentor to produce Strategic Growth Plans.
- Grants for those in Foundation and Growth element.
- The Go Succeed Grant can provide funding of up to 70% of costs for capital and/or revenue items up to a maximum grant of £4,000 and minimum of £1,000.00.
- Referral and Signposting to other support services.

Next step is to register on [Go Succeed - NI Business Support \(go-succeed.com\)](https://go-succeed.com) or [www.andbusiness.co.uk](http://www.andbusiness.co.uk) once you have registered on the portal you will be assigned a mentor to assess your needs and get you started on Go Succeed. For more information on Go Succeed, please use the following link:  
[Go Succeed - NI Business Support \(go-succeed.com\)](https://go-succeed.com)

## **Section 4.** **Shared Prosperity Funded Projects.**

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) succeeds the EU Structural Fund (ESF) with almost £127 million which has been made available to invest into three priorities; Communities and Place, Supporting Local Business and People and Skills. Approximately £56 million investment has been allocated towards helping the economically inactive within Northern Ireland back into the labour market across 18 projects; 11 of which operate within the ANDBC (Ards and North Down Borough Council) area.

### **4.1 Multiply Scheme.**

ANDBC has been successful recently in receiving funding for four projects under the Multiply Scheme. This will focus on numeracy deficiencies within the Borough and will specifically focus on the following four projects/areas:

- Engaging with mature learners.
- Numeracy Bootcamp – skills for life cooking.
- Numeracy Bootcamp – skills for life debt.
- Maths for Speakers of Other Languages (MSOL).



The purpose of this scheme is to provide extremely basic projects in Maths to empower adults in the areas of Personal Growth, Knowledge etc. Multiply is suitable for anyone over 18 years of age who does not hold a maths qualification. The sessions are for basic maths skills delivered within the community for those that educational establishments would be a barrier.

#### **4.2 Exploring Self-Employment and Enterprise Skills Together.**

Enterprise Northern Ireland, The Prince's Trust and Local Enterprise Agencies have formed a partnership to deliver the Explore Enterprise Support Service. This programme aims to assist 1,000 individuals to develop a range of interpersonal, enterprise and employability skills.

Personalised one-to-one support tailored to the individual's specific needs will provide an insight into starting a business or allow participants to take the first steps to gaining employment.

The Explore Enterprise Support Service will afford participants the opportunity to receive:

- Tailored mentoring support and guidance.
- A bespoke Personal Development Plan.
- Opportunity to work towards a Level 2 qualification in Enterprise and access to a range of workshops covering topics such as finance, marketing, business idea generation and employability.
- Collaboration with the wider support ecosystem to offer additional assistance and guidance, providing the individual with a holistic support network.
- Searching for further education courses or other relevant training.

To qualify for the Explore Enterprise Support Service, individuals must be economically inactive and over 16 years of age.

The programme is currently being delivered at Ards Business Hub, tel. 028 91 819787 or email: [info@ardsbusiness.com](mailto:info@ardsbusiness.com) and North Down Development Organisation, tel. 028 91 271525 or email: [mail@nddo.co.uk](mailto:mail@nddo.co.uk) in the Ards and North Down Borough Council area.

Participants can also register online by following this link:

<https://www.enterpriseni.com/pages/pre-start>

## **Section 5.**

### **Enterprise Northern Ireland Initiatives, Local Enterprise Agencies and Training Organisations.**

#### **5.1 Enterprise NI.**

Enterprise Northern Ireland (ENI) is the representative organisation for the region's 27 Local Enterprise Agencies (LEA), two of which are based in the Ards and North Down Borough Council area. The organisation aims to support the LEA network to provide aspiring entrepreneurs and existing micro and small businesses with access to workspace, development programmes, access to finance, and the informed support they need to start, sustain, and grow their businesses.

ENI lobbies on behalf of self-employed, micro, and small businesses and aim to ensure the Northern Ireland Executive, Economy Committee, MLAs, Local Councils, Development Agencies, and other stakeholders are fully briefed concerning enterprise and entrepreneurship in Northern Ireland.

Please visit the Council's website (link below) for information on Council Initiatives and Programmes re: starting up a business.

[AND Business | Ards and North Down Borough Council's Economic Development Department](#)

#### **5.2 North Down Development Organisation Limited (NDDO Limited).**

NDDO Limited is a Local Enterprise Centre based in Bangor and was established in 1984, with the primary aim of developing and retaining enterprise in the local area and assisting in the creation of jobs through working in partnership with other economic development organisations where possible. To promote and encourage new business, the organisation continues to provide not only workspace, but a range of value-added business support services and training for future entrepreneurs.

NDDO Limited is a member of the Local Enterprise Network, Enterprise Northern Ireland and is based in Balloo Avenue, Balloo Industrial Estate, Bangor.

NDDO offers:

- Commercial Property space.
- Pre-Start, start-up, and business growth advice.
- Training and mentoring in addition to ongoing support for locally based entrepreneurs.

#### **5.3 Northern Ireland Explore Enterprise Support Service.**

NDDO, in conjunction with the Local Enterprise Network, delivers the Northern Ireland (NI) Explore Enterprise Support Service, which is an initiative delivered by

Enterprise Northern Ireland; providing self-employment or employment support to economically inactive individuals across Northern Ireland. This is a free service that provides an insight into starting a business or allows individuals to take the first steps to gaining employment.

The NI Explore Enterprise Support Service offers mentoring and training at a pace tailored to the individual's needs and they can work towards achieving a Level 2 qualification. The programme supports participants through a range of activities including:

- One-to-one tailored mentoring and guidance.
- Workshops and Level 2 training.
- Support from the wider ecosystem.

For more information, tel. 028 91 271525 or email [mail@nddo.co.uk](mailto:mail@nddo.co.uk)

#### NDDO and the Go Succeed Programme.

NDDO Limited is a delivery agent on the Go Succeed programme, which is a new go-to source of expert advice lead by Northern Ireland's 11 local councils. NDDO is part of the network of Local Enterprise Agencies, who are a strategic partner for all delivery in the Ards and North Down Borough Council area. The Go Succeed programme supports local entrepreneurs at pre-start, start up, growth and scaling business development support. Providing advice, mentoring and access to funding.

Go Succeed represents a significant investment in local entrepreneurs and businesses, funded by the UK Government and powered by the UK Levelling Up Fund. For further detail, contact tel. 028 91 271525 or email [mail@nddo.co.uk](mailto:mail@nddo.co.uk)

#### **5.4 Young Enterprise Northern Ireland.**

Young Enterprise Northern Ireland (YENI) is an Enterprise Education Charity, based in Belfast, but with regional teams serving the whole of the country. After losing their funding from government departments, the organisation is now supported primarily by Ulster University, Queen's University Belfast, NI's local councils, and their business backers located throughout NI. Most of their programmes are operated in schools; however, they also offer the Start Up Programme, which is for FE (Further Education) and HE (Higher Education) students (see details below). They also offer a range of entrepreneurship online learning resources on their website, through their YE (Young Enterprise) Academy platform, which allows students, parents, and teachers to provide interactive solutions for classroom-based or home-learning.

For more information, visit [Young Enterprise NI - Young Enterprise NI \(yeni.co.uk\)](http://Young Enterprise NI - Young Enterprise NI (yeni.co.uk)) contact 028 90 327003, or email [info@yeni.co.uk](mailto:info@yeni.co.uk)

#### **5.4.1 Start-Up Programme.**

The Start-Up Programme provides an employability and entrepreneurship experience for HE and FE students. It allows university/local FE college students to develop employability skills and prepare for the world of work through a practical programme where participants set up and run their own student company for up to 12 months. As part of the programme, students:

- Are provided with an extensive range of online resources.
- Attend local competition events as well as potentially attended events at a European level.
- Have access to a YE Trading Station – a bespoke online sales platform for YE student companies.
- Have opportunities to receive mentoring from a Business Volunteer and to attend bespoke enterprise workshops.

The programme can be operated at the FE colleges located in the Ards and North Down area, and the Young Enterprise NI contact is South East Area Manager, Freddie Harris, tel. 07809 656666, or email: [freddie.harris@yeni.co.uk](mailto:freddie.harris@yeni.co.uk)

## **Section 6.**

### **Invest NI and Intertrade Ireland Initiatives.**

#### **6.1 Invest NI.**

Invest NI outline that its skills development portfolio will help a business identify training needs and improve:

- Employee skills.
- Motivation.
- Willingness from staff to provide feedback.

To become an Invest NI customer and benefit from the various initiatives, a business must meet the following criteria:

- Turnover greater than £250,000.
- Achieve at least 25% of sales outside of Northern Ireland.
- Demonstrate growth potential.

To contact the Invest NI Business Support Team, tel. 0800 1814422 or complete the enquiry page at this link: [Skills development | Skills growth | Skills advancement | Invest NI](#)

Growth potential requires businesses to demonstrate one of the criteria below:

- Employment growth of 20% current employment or an increase of 20 jobs within three years.
- External sales growth of 20% or £500,000 within three years.

- Increase in GVA (Gross Value Added) per employee by 20% within three years.

Invest NI's Business Support Team can be contacted to discuss any of the initiatives below by telephone 0800 1814422, lines open Monday to Friday 9am to 4:30pm, or by submitting online enquiry forms at:

[Support for business | Invest Northern Ireland \(investni.com\)](#)

### 6.1.1 Assured Skills Programmes.

The Assured Skills Programme (as previously detailed in section 5.2) is fully funded by the Department for the Economy to upskill individuals and help them compete for guaranteed job vacancies in new foreign direct investment (FDI) companies and expanding businesses. New inward investors or existing employers considering expansion, who are Invest Northern Ireland clients, may be eligible for Assured Skills.

Businesses interested in the programme, who are Invest NI customers, must contact their Invest Northern Ireland Client Executive in the first instance. The Client Executive will be able to advise if Assured Skills is relevant to their needs and if so, they can contact the Assured Skills team accordingly on their client's behalf.

Contact tel. 028 90 416972 or email: [assuredskills@economy-ni.gov.uk](mailto:assuredskills@economy-ni.gov.uk)

### 6.1.2 Skills Development.

Invest NI's Skills Development portfolio helps identify training needs and improve employee skills, motivation, and willingness of staff to provide feedback.

Training is delivered through workshops, which are free to attend, open to all businesses and are held at various locations across Northern Ireland. There are two distinct types of the half-day workshop as follows:

#### Training Needs Analysis Workshop.

These workshops offer advice on identifying the training needs of an organisation and the skills an employer needs to teach their staff to strengthen their business. A series of online video tutorials are available, split into five chapters that are delivered by an Invest NI Skills Adviser providing insight into the tools and techniques used by learning and development professionals to analyse training needs.

#### Training Needs to Training Plan Workshops.

These workshops offer advice on how to develop, cost, and manage an effective training plan. They allow a business to gain an understanding of the steps required to go from carrying out a training needs analysis exercise to the formulation of how to develop, cost and manage an effective training plan. Each interactive session covers writing training objectives, costing training interventions and effective training plan management.

Workshops are delivered both in person and online using a webinar format. To participate, businesses must register online by filling out a registration form found at [Skills development | Skills growth | Skills advancement | Invest NI](#)

### **6.1.3 Skills Adviser Support.**

An experienced Invest NI Skills Advisers can provide one-to-one support for companies to assist them in identifying training needs and to help them develop a plan to address these needs. This service is only available to Invest NI customers and is free. To speak with an adviser, contact tel. 0800 1814422.

### **6.1.4 Skills Advancement Grant.**

The Skills Advancement Grant is available to smaller companies who are already customers of Invest NI. Support of 50% of costs is available for external training, travel, and accommodation costs up to a maximum of a £15,000 grant. The grant is available for 18 months only with no option to extend the offer. It does not cover mandatory training and VAT is excluded. The minimum training expenditure supported is £2,000 and multiple Skills Advancement Grants cannot operate simultaneously for the same company or in conjunction with Skills for Growth projects. For further information, contact tel. 0800 1814422.

### **6.1.5 Skills for Growth for SMEs (Small/Medium Enterprises), Large Enterprises, and/or Foreign Direct Investors (FDI).**

The Skills for Growth scheme supports:

- Trainee wages.
- Internal and external trainers.
- Travel and accommodation costs with the aim of enabling company growth.

Grant support is variable up to a maximum of 50% of eligible costs. Mandatory training, induction training and repeat training are not eligible, and VAT is excluded. This support is available for a period of up to 24 months for SMEs and up to 60 months for large businesses and FDIs, although extensions can be sought on a case-by-case basis. Trainee wage costs cannot exceed the costs of all other eligible costs. For further information, contact tel. 0800 1814422.

### **6.1.6 Leader Programme.**



The Leader programme is specifically designed to enable leaders to grow their businesses through the development of strong leadership competencies. The programme offers the opportunity to assess a business's performance, identify opportunities, overcome challenges, and build capability. The programme is aimed at the overall leader of an SME, the Managing Director, CEO (Chief Executive Officer), or owner-manager who can demonstrate:

- A clear strategic need and willingness to change.
- Commitment and time available.
- Turnover ideally greater than £1 million.
- A history of profitable trading.
- An existing robust business model.

The Leader programme provides advice, support and learning in a dynamic business environment through peer networking events, specialist business mentoring and one-to-one leadership coaching and is open to companies that are currently customers of Invest NI. For further information, contact tel. 0800 1814422.

#### **6.1.7 Leadership Team Programme.**

The Invest NI Leadership Team Programme is focused on transforming the skills, behaviours, and relationships of a business' leadership team to achieve business growth and become a more adaptive and resilient business. The programme is provided in partnership between Invest NI, Dublin City University Business School, and Wilson Sloan Consulting. To be eligible for the programme the business must be an Invest NI client and:

- Be an SME (up to 249 staff).
- Have turnover above £1 million.
- Can commit time and resources to the programme.
- Have the ambition to grow their business globally.

INI (Invest NI) outline that top teams involved in the programme will:

- Gain a deeper understanding of how to develop and implement strategies that drive sustainability and international growth.
- Become a stronger and more effective top team, ready to develop and implement a strategy for growth.
- Be able to use a wide range of practical tools and techniques to ensure every aspect of the business is aligned with its strategy.

## **Section 7.**

### **Sector-Specific Training Councils and other supports.**

There are several sources of sector-specific advice on skills development for employees working in a particular industry. Individual Sector Training Councils, training organisations and their offerings are outlined as follows:



## 7.1 Construction Industry and Training Board (CITB) NI.

The Construction Industry and Training Board (CITB) offers a range of training support relating to the construction sector, to increase productivity and improve health and safety standards.

### Training Course Directory.

CITB's website has a Training Directory accessed at <https://www.citbni.org.uk/Training/Approved-Courses.aspx> which allows users to search for a training course suitable for them. The resource enables users to search for a training course by:

- Training Provider.
- Course Title.
- Location.
- Type of qualification.
- Specific subject area (subject areas are not limited to construction and include areas that are relevant to construction businesses including finance, human resources, IT, health and safety and marketing).

### Mobile Training Unit.

The Mobile Training Unit provides a convenient and cost-effective way of meeting training requirements with minimum disruption to site work by bringing a range of short-duration health and safety and operative training onsite in a lorry. The fully accessible vehicle is fitted with an induction loop and has an expanding floor space and an interactive multimedia system to facilitate training in a traditional classroom environment whilst onsite.

Employers registered with CITB can book the Mobile Training Unit free of charge if they meet CITB's terms and conditions. A cost of £900 per day will be applied to those who are registered but do not pay a levy. Training hours are limited to a maximum of five and a half hours per day. To become a registered employer, book the unit and/or receive more information contact CITB on tel. 028 90 825466 or email: [mtub bookings@citbni.org.uk](mailto:mtub bookings@citbni.org.uk) or visit the website:

[efaf79a6-4fba-4370-ae28-3be08afe326b.pdf](https://www.citbni.org.uk/efaf79a6-4fba-4370-ae28-3be08afe326b.pdf) ([citbni.org.uk](http://citbni.org.uk))

### Training Grants Scheme.

CITB NI offers direct grants to their registered employers to support employees in a wide range of training and qualifications. Available support assists in training new recruits, developing established staff, creating apprenticeships and industrial placements for students, and looking for improvements in other areas of their business. The grant support also covers short-duration training courses including

first aid, business courses and site safety courses, whether they are accredited or not. Grant support may also support longer courses such as degrees, NVQs, HNCs, HNDs and Master's Degrees.

To apply for a grant an employer must contact CITB's Grant Team by telephone 028 90 825466 to create an account and set up a username and password or email: [grants@citbni.org.uk](mailto:grants@citbni.org.uk) Grant claims must be received by CITB NI within three months of commencement of training or upon registration into a course or apprenticeship scheme. Otherwise, the grant will be declined. The grant training scheme covers a proportion of the total training course, at varying amounts of grant support up to £2,000 depending on the type of training.

For further information tel. 028 90 825466 or email: [info@citbni.org.uk](mailto:info@citbni.org.uk)

## 7.2 The Electrical Training Trust.

The Electrical Training Trust (ETT) is an independent, charitable trust that aims to improve quality and raise standards within the Northern Ireland electrical contracting industry. We seek to improve the productivity, safety and performance of the electrical contracting industry, and to increase the employability of existing and new entrants within the NI sector.

We dedicate our time and resources to supporting individuals, employers and professionals working within the NI industry to improve their knowledge, enhance their skills and prove their competence. We do this by providing advice, guidance, accredited training, skills assessments, and management of the SparkSafe Electrical Licence to Practise system. The organisation is an approved City & Guilds, LCL Awards and NET AM2 centre. The organisation operates under ISO 9001 quality assurance accreditation.

### Links and Partnerships.

ETT has been in business since 1997. During this time, we have developed extensive, good quality links with employers and other external bodies. These links are used very effectively to help develop products and services that are closely aligned to meet the needs of industry. We run a wide range of accredited and non-accredited training programmes, as well as part funded workshops and fully funded seminars that very successfully address local skills and training needs. We provide a range of flexible training solutions: in-person at our electrical and renewables training centre, online, or we can deliver training off-site to suit the customers' needs.

Many employers and wider industry stakeholders consider ETT a trusted advisor, seeking advice, guidance and support regarding electrical safety and technical skills

training, apprentice recruitment as well as health, safety, and wellbeing issues affecting the sector.

At ETT, we recognise the role LMPs play in championing initiatives that support sectoral economic development and are keen to draw attention to several ETT's industry support initiatives that may be of interest to Ards and North Down LMP.

### Experienced Worker Assessment Programme:

Recognising the challenges of both the skills shortage in industry, and the significant number of underqualified workers, we are now offering the City & Guilds Experienced Worker Assessment (EWA) programme. Many workers in the sector are 'time served', having gained valuable experience and expertise as electricians, but without gaining any recognised or formal qualifications. The EWA programme offers the industry-approved Level 3 qualification and a much-needed route to becoming a qualified electrician, at any age, enhancing an individual's qualifications, employability and career prospects, and earning potential.

Our evidence shows that 32% of electrical workers involved in Public Sector work are unqualified or under-qualified. Successful completion of this course will provide clear benefits for the person, their employer, the industry and society as a whole. Further information on the EWA can be found here - <https://www.ett-ni.org/course-finder/cg-2346-nvq-level-3-experienced-worker-assessment/>

### Renewable Technology and NET Zero Transition:

The role of a qualified electrician is central to the installation of low carbon and renewable technologies. Understanding of scientific theory and electrical principles, as well as demonstrable occupational competence are critical for the safe installation of technologies such as solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, battery storage systems and electric vehicle charging points (EVCP). The core competence of a qualified electrician is the foundation from which to upskill and train in these areas.

The drive for additional electricians is fuelled by a broad range of factors, from the expansion of renewable energy sources, like wind and solar power, to the nationwide push for electrification in heating, transportation, and industry.

ETT's renewables training centre provides excellent facilities and resources for electricians to upskill and help the NI economy reach its renewables and clean tech targets. Working with industry and awarding bodies, we are committed to ensuring that installations are carried out competently and are safe, high-quality and effective. Accredited Level 3 training is available for solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, battery storage systems and electric vehicle charging points (EVCP).

### 'Save Our Sparks' NI Safe Isolation Campaign:

Safety is paramount in the electrical industry, and our organisation is committed to promoting best practice. The 'Save Our Sparks' campaign is inspired by Michael's Story. Michael Adamson was a 26-year-old experienced electrician who tragically died in a preventable electrical incident in 2005. He cut a cable marked 'NOT IN USE', which was in fact wired into a distribution board and was not safely isolated. This fundamental safety procedure that electricians are taught was not being implemented by the electrical contracting industry.

We are committed to working with industry partners and stakeholders to prevent anyone else from having to lose a loved one in an accident that could and should have been prevented. We will not stop sharing this message until such fatalities are a thing of the past. As part of our 'Save Our Sparks' NI Campaign, we are campaigning for funding to ensure every electrical apprentice in Northern Ireland receives a safe isolation kit when they start their apprenticeship. A kit costs approximately £60 - a small cost to save a life.

### How we can help?

We welcome opportunities for collaboration and engagement in achieving our mutual objectives. If you or anyone within Ards and North Down Council area requires advice, guidance, or support in relation to the electrical installation sector, the SparkSafe Licence to Practise Initiative, electrical apprenticeships or the experienced worker assessment programme, or for any other purpose, please do not hesitate to contact us on 028 25 650750 or email [charlotte@ett-ni.org](mailto:charlotte@ett-ni.org)

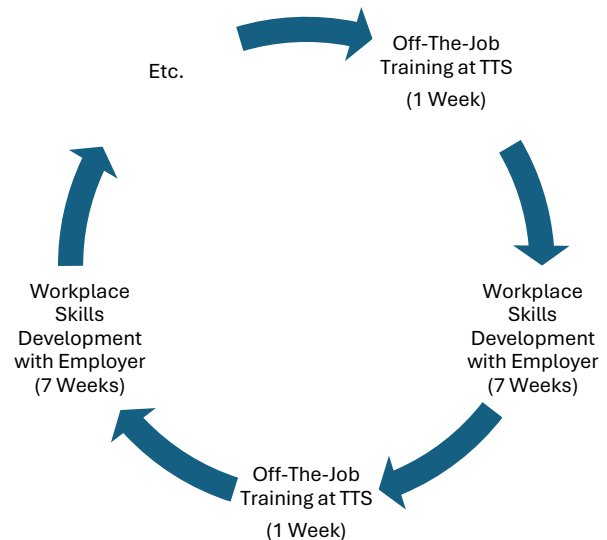
### **7.3 Transport Training Services.**

The Transport Training Services (TTS) is a social enterprise focusing on apprenticeships and career development training specifically for the retail motor trade in Northern Ireland. They deliver a range of accredited courses and bespoke training to develop talent for the motor industry profession as well as providing industry-leading apprenticeships to support the automotive industry in securing its future workforce.

### Apprenticeships.

Transport Training Services (TTS) has developed a comprehensive three-step apprenticeship programme designed to prepare candidates for successful employment. The programme begins with pre-entry aptitude tests in numeracy, literacy, and mechanical comprehension, ensuring all candidates meet essential entry requirements. Additionally, candidates receive instruction in the skills and attitudes necessary for the workplace.

Once employed, apprentices undergo their training at TTS, learning to identify and use basic trade tools and safely operate common workshop equipment. The apprenticeship duration is normally three years for technical programmes, and two years for customer-facing roles. Apprentices attend TTS one week every two months, complemented by robust pastoral care to support their progress and workplace integration. For the remainder of the time, apprentices work full-time with their employers, typically Monday to Friday. Training at the TTS centre in Nutts Corner includes a mix of practical workshop tasks, classroom theory, and e-learning, ensuring a well-rounded educational experience.



Apprenticeships are available for candidates of all ages, including existing employees, who are eligible for the DfE-funded Apprenticeships NI, and are offered in the following areas:

- Light Vehicle Technician.
- Heavy Vehicle Technician.
- Body Repair Technician.
- Paint Technician.
- Tyre Technician.
- Customer Service Advisor.
- Auto-Electrics and Mobile Electrics Maintenance and Repair.
- Parts Advisor.
- Vehicle Sales Executive.
- Team Leading and Management.

Those interested can apply for apprenticeships on the Transport Training Services website [Apprentice Form - Motor Industry - Transport Training](#) or contact tel. 028 90 825653 or [email: mail@transporttraining.org](mailto:mail@transporttraining.org)

Scan the following QR Code with your phone or tablet device to go directly to their online apprenticeship application form.



### Training Courses.

Current training course offerings are detailed on the website available at: [Automotive, Transport & Logistics Training | Belfast | Northern Ireland \(transporttraining.org\)](http://transporttraining.org)

Training courses are offered in each of the following areas:

- Driver Training including CPC.
- Compliance.
- Transport Manager CPC.
- Vehicle sales programmes.
- Customer service.
- ADR Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road.
- Specialist Transport Courses.
- Specialist Motor Training.
- Down forklift training <https://downforklifttraining.co.uk/contact-us>

Those interested in any of the above training courses can contact TTS at tel. 028 90 825653 or email: [mail@transporttraining.org](mailto:mail@transporttraining.org)

#### **7.4 FXL Ireland Executive Solutions.**

FXL Ireland is an Executive Leadership Coaching business. They design and execute in-house facilitated workshops, executive and team coaching, and organisational simulations specifically tailored to each client (embodied learning). Each programme intervention is unique and experienced through a dynamic, interactive style, supported with bespoke designed materials. It is available to any business at their business premises, online or preferred location.

For more information, contact John Kelly, tel. 07718 806109 or email: [john@fxlireland.com](mailto:john@fxlireland.com)



### 7.5 MJM Training.

MJM is a privately-operated training organisation who primarily offer courses related to the transport and storage industry including RTITB-accredited courses for operating forklifts etc., road haulage and transport training. In addition, health and safety courses and first aid training is offered. Several accredited and non-accredited courses are delivered in-house, with most of their training courses taking a classroom-based face-to-face format (except for drivers' CPC courses, which can be held online, or face-to-face). First aid training can be provided on customer premises or at MJM Training Centre.

For machinery training and classroom-based courses, trainees must be at least 16 years of age and hold a National Insurance number. For lorry and bus training and tests, candidates must hold the provisional entitlement to the relevant vehicle type on their license and complete the relevant theory tests with their local test centre. For driver CPC courses, trainees must hold a full lorry/bus license.

For more information, tel. 028 85 567183 or email: [jarlath@mjmtraining.com](mailto:jarlath@mjmtraining.com)

### 7.6 Safety Training NI.

Safety Training NI is a Lantra Awards approved training provider based outside Dungannon, who offer a wide range of training courses, including ATVs, 4x4 Off-road Driving, Animal Transport, Rodent control, Chainsaws, Trailer and Off-Road Trailer Handling, MEWP Forklift Training and Telehandler to Health and Safety courses including First Aid, AED Defib, Manual Handling and NSTS sprayer Testing.

We also provide First Aid supplies and AEDs.

For more information, contact, tel. 07784 338606 or email:

[safetytrainingni@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:safetytrainingni@hotmail.co.uk)

### 7.7 Retail NI.

Retail NI is Northern Ireland's only locally-based retail and wholesale business organisation which provides professional advice and gives a voice to the independent sector at the NI Assembly and Westminster. Assistance provided to businesses includes:

- Retail NI Advice Line: providing help on rates, planning, employment, law, and many other issues that impact upon your business.
- Dedicated Business Liaison Support.
- Free subscription to our News Magazine.
- Supplier members are entitled to free advertising in Retail NI News which has a readership of over 3000.
- Networking events with leading political leaders and policy makers.
- Ensuring your voice is heard at Local Councils, Stormont, Westminster, and European Parliament.
- Support local suppliers in developing new routes to market.
- Fortnightly Member Update Emails.
- Sponsorship opportunities.



For further information, tel. [028 90 220004](tel:02890220004) or email: [info@retailni.com](mailto:info@retailni.com) or visit [Ards and North Down business support | nibusinessinfo.co.uk](https://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/business-support)

## 7.8 Construction Employers Federation.

The Construction Employers Federation Limited (CEF) is the sole certified representative body for the construction industry in Northern Ireland. CEF is the Voice of the NI Industry on the UK Construction Leadership Council, BuildUK and the NI Procurement Board.

### Construction Skills Register.

The Construction Skills Register (CSR) is a register of construction workers who have completed the industry-approved CSR health and safety training course and assessment. CSR aims to raise health and safety standards and reduce accidents in the industry by ensuring that all construction workers undertake health and safety training every four 4 years. Within this function, the following support is available:

- Online Card Checker - <https://secure.cefni.co.uk/CSRCard/OnlineCSRCardChecker.aspx>
- Training Providers - [https://www.cefni.co.uk/CEFNI/Schemes\\_/CSR/Training-Providers.aspx](https://www.cefni.co.uk/CEFNI/Schemes_/CSR/Training-Providers.aspx)
- Card Types - [https://www.cefni.co.uk/CEFNI/Schemes\\_/CSR/card-types.aspx](https://www.cefni.co.uk/CEFNI/Schemes_/CSR/card-types.aspx)
- Industry Accreditation - [https://www.cefni.co.uk/CEFNI/CEFNI/Schemes\\_/CSR/industry-accred.aspx](https://www.cefni.co.uk/CEFNI/CEFNI/Schemes_/CSR/industry-accred.aspx)
- CSR News - <https://www.cefni.co.uk/CEFNI/CEFNI/News.aspx?hkey=f5c963f8-f941-487a-a9e5-69cee46bfbbc>

This link features an important notification for CSR skilled cardholders and above, there is a deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 to have an NVQ qualification, or equivalent, to renew their card.

- Lost Cards - [https://www.cefni.co.uk/CEFNI/Schemes\\_/CSR/lost-cards.aspx](https://www.cefni.co.uk/CEFNI/Schemes_/CSR/lost-cards.aspx)
- Relationship with other card schemes - [https://www.cefni.co.uk/CEFNI/Schemes\\_/CSR/CSR%20Relationship%20with%20Other%20Card%20Schemes.aspx](https://www.cefni.co.uk/CEFNI/Schemes_/CSR/CSR%20Relationship%20with%20Other%20Card%20Schemes.aspx)

CEFNI also offer several Essential Health and Safety training courses for managers and senior executives. Current training schedule can be found at <https://www.cefni.co.uk/CEFNI/CEFNI/Events-and-Courses.aspx?hkey=f5073921-19d8-41c4-a8d0-cc9f254b7d36>

For more information, tel. 028 90 877150 or email: [csr@cefni.co.uk](mailto:csr@cefni.co.uk)

## 7.9 Tourism Northern Ireland.

Tourism Northern Ireland's top priority is to support tourism and hospitality businesses to survive and grow business revenues in the short to medium term. Through their Tourism Enterprise Development Programme (TED) 2024-25, businesses can undertake training, masterclasses and webinars around people, sustainability, operations, digital capability, innovation and sales and marketing.

Tourism NI also have a range of business supports, toolkits, practical tips, and advice from panels of experts alongside some great insights from industry practitioners to support businesses, improving business operational performance to drive both immediate performance and long-term success. Information can be obtained by signing up to [tourismni.com](http://tourismni.com), the Industry Business Hub and joining the mailing list to hear about upcoming events and to sign up to Tourism NI e-learning platform [MyTourismNI](#).

A list of resources and information on best practice recruitment and retention for your business is also available on their campaign website [Make it Here! Careers in Tourism & Hospitality | Tourism NI](#)

For further information, contact Tourism NI, tel. 028 90 231221.

### 7.10 Mencap NI.

Mencap NI have been supporting people with a learning disability to find and keep jobs in Northern Ireland for over 30 years. Mencap's Employment and Personal Development (EPD) service support people with a learning disability in different ways.

Mencap NI can help you to think about what types of work you might like to do and then set up a work placement for you to learn how to do this job. We will work with you to create a plan that says what you want to achieve, how long this will take and what support you will need.

SkillSET Mencap (funded by UKSPF) is a disability employment programme providing support to adults with a range of disabilities. This is a specialist employment support project which is person-centred and innovative. We deliver employment preparation and training to individuals with a learning disability, dual/multiple disability including autism/mental health who are economically inactive and want to enter paid sustainable employment. Everyone on SkillSET Mencap will have a designated Employment Officer, who will support them to develop their skills and build experience to achieve paid work - your support will be tailored to you.

SkillSET Mencap is being delivered NI-wide, with local offices located in Belfast, Newry, Omagh and Derry/Londonderry.

Mencap NI's EPD service also deliver the Workable NI (WNI) programme funded by the DfC across Northern Ireland through the Supported Employment Solutions (SES) partnership. We support people with a learning disability to keep a paid job, to do the best they can in their job and to become more independent in their workplace. The programme also allows Mencap to support the employer by advising on reasonable adjustments and providing Learning Disability Awareness Training (LDAT).

Mencap Learning Disability Awareness Training (LDAT) sessions are delivered by Mencap Disability Equality Officers who have first-hand experience of living with a learning disability. The aim of the training session is to provide participants with a greater awareness and understanding of learning disability.

Training is available for employers, organisations, groups, schools, or any individual who wants to increase their knowledge and understanding of learning disability. It is recommended that a maximum of 20 participants attend a training session to allow for greater interaction between participants and Disability Equality Officers. The interactive training session typically lasts between 1.5 and 2 hours, depending on the number of participants present. Session lengths can be adjusted to accommodate participant requirements.

For more information on LDAT or to book a session, please contact:

Orla McElhatton, Service Manager, tel. 07557 943360.

[OrlaMcElhatton@mencap.org.uk](mailto:OrlaMcElhatton@mencap.org.uk)

For further information on any of our Employment & Personal Development programmes across NI, contact: Rachel Havern, Area Operations Manager, tel. 07595 652283, or email [Rachel.Havern@mencap.org.uk](mailto:Rachel.Havern@mencap.org.uk)

**All information correct at time of printing.**