

Higher Level Apprenticeship in Accountancy



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Northern Regional College, supported by Accounting Technicians Ireland and Chartered Accountants Ireland, delivers a Higher Level Apprenticeship programme in Accountancy. Up to 16 successful apprentices are recruited each year for the Higher Level Apprenticeship in Accountancy.

What is a Higher Level Apprenticeship?

A Higher Level Apprenticeship is a work-based programme which enables you to earn while you learn and gain a nationally recognised professional qualification. You will be employed for example in an accountancy practice or an organisation with a suitable accounts department for 2 years and Northern Regional College will have a close relationship with your employer in

mentoring you throughout your employment period. The Higher Level Apprenticeship in Accountancy provides an alternative entrance route to starting your career in the accountancy and finance profession. It is also equivalent to a Foundation Degree programme and is recognised by leading accountancy bodies.

How Can Your Career Benefit from a Higher Apprenticeship?

Employability

You will gain lots of valuable knowledge, practical skills and work experience as well as an internationally recognised qualification – just the combination that can help increase your future employability, boost your CV, help you progress into management roles and open new career opportunities for you. This programme will provide you with an immediate 2-year employment contract working with a leading NI accountancy practitioner as well as attending Northern Regional College on a weekly basis.

A Recognised Qualification

You will gain an internationally recognised qualification - Diploma of Accounting Technicians from Accounting Technicians Ireland (ATI) which is a Level 5 qualification and is equivalent to a Foundation Degree programme.

A Stepping Stone to Chartered Accountancy

Upon successful completion of your Higher Apprenticeship, you could continue your studies towards Chartered Status at Level 7 with Chartered Accountants Ireland (CAI).

Earn While You Learn

You will gain valuable accountancy work experience from your employer as well as gaining a recognised professional qualification and earning a regular salary (at least the national minimum wage).

Debt-free

This Higher Apprenticeship programme will allow you to start your highly-skilled career without the student debt that your university peers will have accumulated during their degree course – providing a real alternative to university.

Programme Overview

Level 5 Apprenticeship Framework

Duration 2 years - 1 day per week.

For the Diploma for Accounting Technicians you are required to gain experiential learning through two years full-time employment (or the equivalent part-time), in addition to successfully completing the following subjects:

- Advanced Financial Accounting
- Advanced Taxation
- Management Accounting
- Integrated Accounting Systems (SAGE)

The Diploma for Accounting Technicians is a QCF Level 5 award in the UK and Northern Ireland and is aligned for Level 6 of the Irish National Qualifications Framework (NFQ) in the Republic of Ireland.

During Year 1, you will spend one day per week (9am-5pm) at the Northern Regional College. The apprenticeship framework will be at Level 5 and include the Accounting Technician Diploma as the main knowledge based component of the framework. You will also undergo a specific induction programme (1 week intensive) and an online mentoring programme for example the "Get In Get On" provided through the Financial Legal Services Partnership (provided in the first four weeks).

This apprenticeship aims to provide a structured environment where you will develop the professional values, leadership, technical/functional competencies and the personal and interpersonal attributes that define the role of an accounting technician and chartered accountant. All employer mentors will have undergone mentor training by Accountancy Technicians Ireland (ATI) which ensures consistency of 'on the job' programme standards and quality. If successful, you will be enrolled and subsequently become a full member of Accounting Technicians Ireland (ATI) during your training programme.

Upon successful completion of this programme, you may be eligible to progress to full chartered accountancy status through the Chartered Accountants Ireland professional Level 7 programme.

How To Become a Higher Apprentice

Getting a Higher Apprenticeship with an employer is the same as getting a job. Following submission of your application, you will be invited to go through the employer's recruitment process. It will be competitive and there are likely to be a number of people applying for each Higher Apprenticeship vacancy, so you will need to sell yourself and convince the employer that you are the right person for the role. Apprentices may be recent school leavers who have undertaken A Levels or other suitable Level 3 qualifications or be currently employed in an organisation with a suitable accounts department who will be changing roles to take on the HLA in Accountancy or anyone who has a keen interest in developing a career in Accountancy.

You must:

Candidates must be at least 18 years old on or before 1 July 2016 and meet the minimum entry criteria set by the awarding body, Accounting Technicians Ireland. The criteria is currently 1 A Level or 2 AS levels, grade B at GCSE level in English and Mathematics or Accountancy. For those over 21 years of age, relevant work experience or a recommendation from your employer is required. Employers may strengthen this criteria to include English Language & Mathematics (grade B at GCSE) with a minimum of 240 UCAS points achieved through the completion of A Levels or equivalent level qualification. All applicants will be required to attend an interview.

What Are You Committing To?

As an apprentice, you will commit your time and effort to gaining the required skills and putting these into practice in the workplace. You will also be required to complete formal study one day per week at Northern Regional College for the ATI Diploma as well as informal work-based training (e.g. attending meetings). You will also be expected to play an active role in the mentoring programme determined by your employer. In return, your employer will commit to employing you for 2 years, pay you at least the national minimum wage, carry out regular reviews of your progress and provide career development support.

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