

FROM FORUM MEMBERS OF WORKPLACE AND EMPLOYABILITY TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Extern Works Programme

The Extern Works programme supports those who are considered to be the furthest removed from the labour market and who may come from a disadvantaged background such as those who are homeless, ex-offenders, refugees, individuals with mental health issues and individuals with learning difficulties. The programme provides a range of accredited vocational, soft skills and personal training to adults who are unable to access mainstream provision due to their homelessness, learning disability, poor mental health or offending behavior.

Extern Works is based over 3 main training sites, where we offer training and qualifications set within a supported training environment. The project also offers out-reach training within the community.

The project provides work based training placements for service users of between 7-35 hours per week and aims to work with most service users for between 6 – 26 weeks. Through assessment of need we are able to prioritise learning areas for service users and agree with them a 'Pathway Plan' which is reviewed on a quarterly basis through their engagement with the programme. A range of activities that has been carefully developed through research of labour market needs, discussions with employers and service users over a period of time which has led Extern Works to reviewing activities and creating new and up-to-date menu of activities that meet today's labour market requirements. We currently offer training and qualifications in the following skills: Catering, Engineering, Joinery, Electrical Installations, IT Skills, Business Administration, Warehousing, Waste Management, Health & Safety, Food Safety, Manual Handling and Forklift Truck Driving. As service users achieve personal objectives we can continue to work with them until they are at a point where they may choose to move on to mainstream education, further training, work experience or employment.

Transport is also available from various pick up points throughout the city to enable service users to access the training and support services.

Extern Works has led the way in developing learning and employability skills to people with a range of disadvantaged backgrounds. We design and deliver employment skills training to meet the requirements of our commissioners and service users. Our approach and high standards has made us a leading provider of these services in Northern Ireland

National Museums Northern Ireland

In 2008, due to the unavailability of museum specific Vocational Qualifications (VQs) in Northern Ireland, National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI) began the process of working towards becoming an Accredited Centre for the delivery of qualifications. Areas where we particularly wished to deliver to, and beyond, National Standards were customer service, health & safety, working with others, collections knowledge and cultural diversity. Since our Centre's inception, a total of 91 qualifications have been completed or are underway. These have been primarily in Cultural Heritage (up to Level 5), but we have also delivered VQs in Management Principles and Assessor and Internal Quality Assessor Awards. Now we have built our assessment team we are self-

sufficient in terms of core programme delivery, thereby ensuring the sustainability of our suite of qualifications, despite an increasingly challenging financial backdrop.

VQs have undoubtedly boosted performance across National Museums. Staff completing VQs are engaged, aware, proactive and tend to be more mobile in the organisation. Of 59 current staff who have achieved certification for one or more qualifications, 10 have been successful in achieving new roles within the organisation and many more have become involved in secondments, temporary posts, event planning or project activities such as: Night at the Museum, tours, community engagement, literacy and numeracy programmes. These developments and increased competence and confidence are also reflected via formal exit survey data. National Museums commenced delivery of the VQ Programme in 2009/10 with frontline staff. In that year 82% of visitors were very satisfied with their experience across our sites and 76.5% would recommend a visit. Results to the end of 2015/ 16 reflect 92% of visitors were very satisfied with their experience and 93% would recommend a visit.

We see great value in partnerships, sharing best practice and being an ambassador for learning and VQs. We have partnered with and advised the British Museum and NI Museums Council on Heritage Lottery Fund programmes and also work with Business in the Community amongst others to offer learning and work experiences to the unemployed. We have World Host accredited trainers who run two day programmes for the unemployed three times a year. We also have our own paid placement and training programme 'Museums 2 Work'.

In 2015 we were shortlisted for Creative & Cultural Skills 'Training Provider of the Year' award and we also won the Northern Ireland 'VQ Employer of the Year' award. 2016 has also seen us being granted a 'Princess Royal Training Award'; a new honour for employers in the UK that have created lasting impact by successfully linking their skills development needs to business performance.

Dept of the Economy

The Essential Skills Strategy and Action Plan was published, by the then Department for Employment and Learning, in 2002 and since the campaign began there have been just over 431,500 enrolments in total (just under 178,500 individuals). Since 2002 just over 274,000 Essential Skills qualifications have been achieved up to August 2015. These qualifications, Numeracy, Literacy and ICT are designed for adults to improve, among other things, their employability skills and are the basics which everyone needs to progress at work and in life. ICT in particular was developed to equip learners with the skills employers wanted and to enable them to obtain jobs in this sector.

The vision for the strategy is "to provide opportunities for adults to update their essential skills, to assist them in improving their overall quality of life, their personal development and their employment opportunities and by doing so to promote greater economic development, social inclusion and cohesion". Classes are free and are accessible through FE colleges and the Departments' Programmes.

Evidence shows that having good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills has a positive impact on employability, health and well being. Some of the benefits of learning are tangible – greater self esteem and a growing sense of aspiration. These skills can also transform people's lives and empower them to achieve their goals in life.

BBC/BBC NI - Learning in/for employment

BBC Academy

The Academy focuses on providing a portfolio of high-quality training and development. This includes face-to-face courses, online programmes and a variety of development initiatives, and ensures that training is relevant and effective for both the individual and the business. Courses and initiatives cover the full range of the business; journalism, production and technology, alongside self-development programmes including leadership and business.

As well as training our staff, we have a remit under the terms of the BBC's Charter Agreement to train the wider industry. We aim to share as much of our training as possible with the wider UK broadcasting industry for free.

Development Opportunities

The BBC runs a number of schemes and initiatives which provide staff with hands on opportunities to grow their experience and develop skills.

Hot Shoes- these 2 week placements give staff the chance to learn new skills, experience a different part of the BBC, work in a new way and build up their network. Some opportunities arise for staff to take part in a placement with other companies.

Attachments are regularly advertised across the business, ranging from 2 – 12 months. Many of these provide development opportunities for staff.

Trainee Schemes and Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are aimed at those without a degree. A wide range of apprenticeships are advertised throughout the year; combining training, on-the-job experience and an accredited qualification. Apprenticeships run across the UK and cover all aspects of BBC business including digital journalism, production and software engineering. A number of opportunities are specifically targeted at groups who are less likely to see the BBC as an employer - the Extend Scheme focuses on Entry Level Talent for Disabled People, production schemes exclusively for those from a BAME background and programmes designed for 16-24 year olds.

Trainee schemes are generally open to all and normally run for 12-24 months. These paid schemes are on offer across the UK. Opportunities include Journalism – Engineering – Production – Business Management

AMH Working It Out Project

The AMH 'Working it Out' Project is an ESF Funded project delivered on a Regional basis across Northern Ireland in 9 AMH New Horizons service facilities. This ESF project delivers a comprehensive programme of specialist training, support and mentoring, leading to an increase in the employability of participants. This enables individuals to access employment or further education/training opportunities and enhance social inclusion, thereby reducing poverty and discrimination.

All participants have a mental health condition. Due to the debilitating nature of their illnesses, participants are not currently ready to engage in existing mainstream training and employment preparation provision. They require specialist support within an appropriate environment to assist them to prepare for and progress to employment or further training / education.

The project recognises that a holistic approach is required for this client group and this is delivered through a range of mentoring and support initiatives. Activities include accredited and non-accredited personal development programmes, vocational training and employability training. Participants receive specialist support to assist them through these activity options, building their capacity and readiness to avail of employment opportunities. Specialist employment staff support participants to engage in work based training placements and voluntary work, in addition to providing career guidance, and job search towards paid employment.

AMH Supported Employment Solutions (SES)

Supported Employment Solutions (SES) is a partnership consisting of Action Mental Health (AMH), Action on Hearing Loss, the Cedar Foundation (Cedar), Mencap, NOW, the Orchardville Society and RNIB NI. AMH and Cedar are joint Lead Partners of the consortium.

SES is contracted by the Disability Employment Service (DES), on behalf of Department for the Communities (DfC), to deliver the Workable (NI) programme across all areas of Northern Ireland.

SES implements a Supported Employment approach in the delivery of Workable (NI) to support people with a range of significant disabilities to secure and retain employment. In line with the Supported Employment Model our ethos focuses on the abilities of the individual and the support they require while at the same time providing ongoing support and advice to their employer. This person-centred approach requires front-line staff to work with small caseloads of participants. This approach helps develop positive working environments to enable participants to overcome barriers associated with their disability in the workplace. Support and guidance to employers will also enhance progression within the programme for participants, as well as from the programme into unsupported employment, as it encourages employers to develop natural supports in the workplace.

NOW Group

NOW Group support trainees every step on their road to paid employment. This includes accredited training to build up skills and confidence, as well as work experience and voluntary work placements to help decide what career path you would like to take. We also support people already in employment and employers themselves, providing services such as Disability Awareness training and workplace support for employee, employers and co-workers.

We offer a range of employability training modules including communication and team work skills, health and safety in the workplace, customer service and ICT. We also provide training in career preparation and planning, CV preparation and interviews skills.

All employability skill training utilises a range of teaching and assessment methods ensuring that all ability levels and learning styles are catered for.

Big Lottery

One of the Big Lottery Fund outcomes for our funding is that people have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. We have supported this in developing and delivering programmes that have focused on learning, either as a main focus (e.g. Live and Learn) or as part of wider programmes (e.g. Awards for All, Empowering Young People).

Our current Empowering Young People programme has shown a high level of demand from projects wishing to address the employability needs of young people. It is currently funding projects that provide job coaching support, training opportunities and in some cases, placements for young people. Examples include The Bytes Project and Include Youth.

The Live and Learn programme aimed to increase learning opportunities and promote wellbeing among NI's most disadvantaged communities. A number of projects focused on enabling individuals to take part in personal development, job skills and training courses in order to improve employability. Examples include The NOW Project, Colin Neighbourhood Partnership and Taughmonagh Community Forum.

Learning for employment can also be supported through our current People and Communities programme. The Community Support Initiative run by North & West Taxi Proprietors, was recently funded to assist people to get back to work with an emphasis on supporting self-employment or social economy enterprises.

Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCN NI)

OCN NI is one the leading Awarding Bodies in Northern Ireland. Regulated by CCEA and Ofqual we develop and award Professional and Technical (vocational) Qualifications from Entry Level to Level 5 across a wide range of subjects.

As one of the few indigenous Awarding Bodies in NI our unique flexibility and responsiveness to economic need ensures our qualifications are tailored to the needs of education and training providers, employers, investors and learners. We work closely in partnership with education and training providers to:

- Develop and award professional and technical (vocational) qualifications from Entry Level to Level 5 across a wide range of subject areas.
- Provide a tailored qualification design service, responsive to local economic need.
- Develop qualifications which provide opportunities for learners to progress into FE/HE and/or employment.
- Improve levels of Literacy and Numeracy in NI.
- Ensure learning opportunities are accessible to everyone throughout NI, especially those hardest to reach.
- Improve the health and wellbeing of people within our society.

Over the past 20 years we have developed economically relevant and learner engaging curricula, which have benefited the lives of over 370,000 students throughout NI.