



**ACTION PLAN TO  
EXPAND  
APPRENTICESHIP AND  
TRAINEESHIP IN  
IRELAND 2016-2020**



# ACTION PLAN TO EXPAND APPRENTICESHIP AND TRAINEESHIP IN IRELAND 2016-2020



Through the National Skills Strategy 2025, the Action Plan for Education 2016-2018 and as part of the current Programme for Government, Ireland aims to significantly grow work-based learning over the coming five years using the apprenticeship and traineeship modes of learning and skills development. Throughout the world there is evidence of the positive impact of learning which is closely linked to the workplace. Employers can access a pipeline of talent and learners, whether as prospective or actual employees, develop cutting edge skills and knowledge on-the-job, making them more skilled, more employable and with enhanced career options.

To excel in the global competition for talent many developed countries are now investing in work-based learning. Ireland has a strong reputation internationally for its education and training system and an excellent track record in work-based modes that include apprenticeship and traineeship.

Through this action plan Ireland aims to establish work-based learning as a core contributor to our growth as a society and economy.

The action plan identifies elements of current provision which will support expansion and useful lessons from the development of new apprenticeships and traineeships over the past eighteen months. The document is in three sections:

**Section 1** sets out an overview of current education and training provision which includes work-based learning.

**Section 2** provides reflections on the experience of developing apprenticeship and traineeship in Ireland over the past 18 months. It identifies the main elements of infrastructure which are in place and which will support the forthcoming expansion project.

**Section 3** proposes targets for apprenticeship and traineeship participation and provision from 2016-2020, accompanied by key elements of implementation and a time-based set of actions. Key partners and areas for support and investment are identified.

Achievement of the targets will require buy-in and collaboration among employers, the enterprise community and a range of education and training partners, drawing on strong data analytics and forecasting of current and future skills demand. Financial and other resources will be needed. Some amendments to legislation may also be required.

# 1

## CURRENT PROVISION - SUMMARY OVERVIEW

**“THE PACE OF CHANGE IN THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY, THE NEED FOR CONSTANT UPSKILLING IF BUSINESSES ARE TO MAINTAIN MARKET SHARE AND GROW, AND THE CHALLENGE OF UNEMPLOYMENT, MAKE ENHANCED LINKS BETWEEN EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS AND EMPLOYERS AN IMPERATIVE”** (2014 Review of Apprenticeship Training in Ireland, p.6).

In Ireland, as well as internationally, post-secondary education and training, which includes work-based learning and has design input from enterprise, has been proven to deliver strong employment and growth outcomes. Survey and college-based data gathered by both the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and SOLAS demonstrate the correlation between education/enterprise engagement and employment opportunities.

Partnerships between employers and regionally-based Universities and Institutes of Technology have resulted in numerous short and longer courses delivered around the country either partially or wholly in the workplace. Online learning has blurred the boundaries between the classroom and the workplace and between the campus-based teacher and the workplace tutor or mentor.

State-supported initiatives which include Skillnets, Springboard and Momentum have enabled significant expansion of education/enterprise partnerships. Within Education and Training Boards there are many examples of successful partnerships with local and regional industries, in particular with small and medium-sized employers. Employers value regional links, the accessibility of a nearby education and training partner(s) and the ability of educators to be responsive to emerging skills needs as well as to provide expertise in programme development and design.

### APPRENTICESHIP

The apprenticeship system in Ireland is governed by legislation, the 1967 Industrial Training Act. Apprenticeship is defined as a programme of structured education and training which formally combines and alternates learning in the workplace with learning in an education and training centre. An apprenticeship prepares participants for a specific occupation and leads to a qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications. An apprenticeship is created when an employer takes on an apprentice and agrees a contract of employment. Apprentices are paid for the duration of their apprenticeship. Since the 1970s it is estimated that over 105,000 apprentices have been trained in Ireland. In 2016 there were over 3,700 new registrations on the 27 craft-based apprenticeships. There is a current population of 10,316 apprentices with 3,919 participating employers (December 2016). The 27 apprenticeships are generally four years in duration and lead to an award at Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

In 2012 it was decided to carry out a national review of apprenticeship training. A review group was set up by the Minister for Education and Skills chaired by the Chairman of the Labour Court, Kevin Duffy. Following a detailed evaluation and consultation process the review was published in January 2014. In addition to an analysis of the strengths and challenges of the existing system the review included recommendations for the future.

Since publication of the Review, work has been underway to expand the national apprenticeship system into new industry sectors, leading to awards from Levels 5-10 on the NFQ. The Department of Education and Skills prepared an implementation plan to deliver on the review recommendations which included establishment of a new Apprenticeship Council. The Council began its work in November 2014. A national Call for Proposals for new apprenticeships issued in January 2015. There was strong enterprise interest in the initiative, with 86 apprenticeship proposals received in response to the Call.

Following assessment of the proposals, in July 2015 the Minister for Education and Skills announced development of an initial 25 new apprenticeship programmes. Two of these apprenticeships, in insurance practice and in industrial electrical engineering, are now underway (September-November 2016). Other new apprenticeship programmes are at an advanced stage of development and will be launched over the coming months, spanning international financial services; accounting; advanced manufacturing and in new craft and services areas. By the end of 2017 it is expected that up to 15 new apprenticeships will have been introduced, providing an additional 800+ places.

### TRAINEESHIP

Traineeships have been part of the Irish education and training system for over twenty years. Over that period there have been an estimated 30,000 trainee participants, with over 1,500 participant companies. The national traineeship programme was introduced in 1995 by the training and employment agency FÁS, supported by the EU Operational Programme for Human Development. Traineeship subsequently featured in the 1997 White Paper on Human Resources Development.

Traineeship has a number of key features. Its primary aim is to provide work-based learning in partnership with employers, improving employment outcomes for participants and recruitment, retention and productivity within industry. Traineeships are generally 40 weeks in duration, beginning in an education and training environment, with work placement following either during or after the on-campus learning. A traineeship includes a substantial period of time (generally 30% minimum) in the workplace. Development of a traineeship programme is triggered by identification of a skills need within a particular industry. Successful trainee participants receive an award or industry certification at Levels 4-to-6 on the National Framework of Qualifications. The work-based component is supported by an in-company mentor/supervisor who oversees completion of each trainee's skills checklist on-the-job.

38 individual traineeships were developed between 1999-2009 in partnership with employer groups. Skills areas include aircraft maintenance; supply chain logistics; legal administration; healthcare and IT support. Employment outcomes from traineeships are strong, a 2013 follow-up survey of 2012 graduates indicates that 60% of learners on traineeship programmes obtained employment within 12 months of exiting their programme.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, a review of labour market programmes, which was published by Forfás in 2010, concluded that, along with Specific Skills Training, traineeships had the best employment outcomes of the eleven programmes that were reviewed. The Forfás review concluded that traineeship provided a good alternative option to apprenticeship in having on-the-job learning for specialist skills but over a shorter period of time. The review noted the cost-effectiveness of traineeship for both the State and for enterprise. A further recommendation in the 2010 review was that traineeship should prioritise unemployed people, in particular the long-term unemployed.

The eligibility requirements for trainees were subsequently amended to make traineeship available only to those in receipt of income support from the Department of Social Protection. This requirement is still in force, however, it is planned to amend the policy in 2017 to enable wider participation in traineeship over the lifespan of this action plan.

As part of implementation of the Further Education and Training Strategy and in response to a Europe-wide Quality Framework for Traineeships, introduced by the European Commission, an initiative to further develop the traineeship route, got underway in 2014, co-ordinated by SOLAS and in partnership with Education and Training Boards. Titled 'career traineeships', two pilot programmes were developed with the hospitality industry. Career traineeships build on the existing traineeship model with partnership between employers and education and training providers. Developmental materials have been devised as part of the project, including a systematic approach to develop occupational skills profiles within different industries and a training programme for workplace supervisors to enable them to support on-the-job learning.

108 learners are currently completing the two hospitality traineeships, with 57 participating employers. Development work is underway on three further traineeship programmes in engineering, visual effects and digital sales marketing for small businesses, in partnership with local and regional employers. An interim evaluation of the career traineeship approach is also underway.

<sup>1</sup> FÁS, 2013 *The 2013 Follow-Up Survey of Former FÁS trainees who exited training in May and June 2012*, p.15.

## SPRINGBOARD+ AND MOMENTUM

Outcomes data from Springboard and Momentum further underline the positive impact of work-based learning. These targeted education and training initiatives have been funded by Government over the past six years as a response to the 2008 recession and the unemployment shock which Ireland subsequently experienced. With similar features to Traineeship, Springboard and Momentum offer tailored courses for unemployed people, generally of up-to-one year in duration. All courses are actively supported by employers and generally include work-based periods either during or after course delivery. Since its introduction in 2011, Springboard has supported over 30,000 unemployed people to reskill to gain employment, change career or start a business, with a further 5,800 places being provided during 2016-2017. Courses are free to participants and lead to awards at Levels 6-9 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). Momentum, which was introduced in 2013, leads to awards at Levels 4-6 on the NFQ. It has supported over 12,000 participants.

Employment outcomes completing from these initiatives have been on an upward trajectory each year. For the 2014-2015 Springboard+ cohort 60% of participants reported being in employment/self-employed within 3-6 months of completing their course. Data from the Department of Social Protection shows that, as of July 2016, 80% of those who have participated on a Springboard+ course since 2011 are no longer on the Live Register.

## INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Internationally, there is further evidence of the impact of work-based learning and education/enterprise partnerships. Recent evaluations and data analysis by the European Commission and the OECD echo the Irish experience with the European Commission now actively promoting apprenticeship and work-based learning among member countries.<sup>2</sup> A 2013 report by the European Commission on the effectiveness and costs-benefits of apprenticeships found that, notwithstanding variations in models and types of apprenticeship across member countries, apprenticeship supports better employment outcomes for young people and lower rates of unemployment for the under-25s.<sup>3</sup> At a G20-OECD-EC conference in 2014, employment outcomes of between 80-95% were quoted for countries such as the United States, Japan and Brazil.<sup>4</sup> A 2016 report commissioned by Barclays in the UK on productivity and lifetime earnings of apprentices and graduates finds that employment outcomes and earnings potential are not significantly different to those of third-level degree holders.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> European Commission, 2015, *High-performing apprenticeships and work-based learning*; European Commission, 2014, *A Quality Framework for Traineeships*; European Commission, 2016, *Implementation of the 2014 Council Recommendation of a Quality Framework for Traineeships: Synthesis of EEPD Country Reports*.

<sup>3</sup> European Commission 2013, *The effectiveness and costs-benefits of apprenticeships: Results of the quantitative analysis*, p.4.

<sup>4</sup> Keese, M., 2014, *Improving access and making apprenticeships valuable for youth and attractive to employers*. Presentation made at G20-OECD-EC Conference on Quality Apprenticeships for Giving Youth a Better Start in the Labour Market OECD Conference Centre, April 9, 2014 [https://www.oecd.org/els/emp/M\\_KEESE\\_Apprenticeships.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/els/emp/M_KEESE_Apprenticeships.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Barclays, 2016, *Productivity and Lifetime Earnings of Apprentices and Graduates*, pp.3-4

# 2

## LEARNING FROM RECENT IMPLEMENTATION

There has been useful learning over the past eighteen months in developing new apprenticeships and traineeships. In the case of apprenticeship, the Department of Education and Skills, its education agencies the HEA, QQI and SOLAS, representatives of Education and Training Boards and the Institutes of Technology have been working in partnership with the Apprenticeship Council to develop enabling structures including creation of new Legislative Orders to establish the apprenticeships as part of the national system, quality assurance guidelines and adaptation of the existing statutory employer approval and apprentice registration processes. A challenge for the expansion project will be to ensure that the various State partners are working in close collaboration to ensure smooth operational roll out and governance of the expanding system. Employer buy in is critical as the apprenticeship model is dependent on employers taking on apprentices.

It will be important to ensure that industry-led consortia and their education and training partners have the resources and expertise necessary to develop high-quality programmes which effectively span periods of on and off-the job. Consortia will need to be equipped to fulfil national quality assurance guidelines and course validation requirements. The quality assurance guidelines for apprenticeship, which were published by the QQI in June 2016, require employers and education and training providers to have co-ordinated robust structures in place, ensuring high standards that meet employers' skills needs and apprentices' career ambitions while also being accessible and user-friendly. Experience from implementation in 2016 indicates that consortia need good quality opportunities to engage with and understand the particular requirements for apprenticeship. In some cases consortia need to have access to expert support for the initial period of development.

Innovative promotion and communication of apprenticeship options will be required to engage with prospective employers and apprentices. There are also opportunities to use technology to develop the information and data management systems supporting apprenticeship and to enhance connections between employers and apprentices. New data collection arrangements; monitoring and analysis of demand and employer engagement; forecasting of future skills needs; participation patterns (eg withdrawal, completion) and graduate outcomes will be required, supported by appropriate data-sharing agreements between agencies/groups which include SOLAS, the HEA and apprenticeship consortia.

The legislation that governs apprenticeship will need some minor amendment, in particular to enable creation of apprenticeships in the professions and in areas such as agriculture and aquaculture.

In the case of traineeship a lot of experience has been gained from the career traineeship project and the pilot programmes in hospitality and engineering. There has been strong interest among employers in the pilot programmes. They see the benefits of traineeship in building a pipeline of employees and in enhancing the skills of existing staff. There is a need, however, to create a sustainable model for ongoing investment and development in traineeship by both employers and education and training providers. Capacity will need to be increased in a systematic way within Education and Training Boards so that staff can engage with employers as partners, establish a robust model for identifying skills needs, enhance expertise in curriculum design and development and support integrated on and off-the-job learning. Eligibility requirements for prospective trainees will need to be amended to enable wider participation. Similar to apprenticeship, processes for validation and quality assurance of programmes will need to be streamlined. The evaluation of the pilot career traineeships, which is due to be completed by early 2017, should add to learning from the project to-date.

### INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORTING EXPANSION

Expansion of apprenticeship and traineeship will be aided by a range of existing support structures. These include the network of over forty Authorised Officers who are located within Education and Training Boards around the country and who are authorised by SOLAS to carry out key employer assessment and liaison for the apprenticeship system, apprentice registration and ongoing support and monitoring duties. This network will need to grow and develop as the system expands across industry sectors, spans qualification levels and caters for much larger numbers of apprentices and participating employers.

Data collection, analysis, monitoring and evaluation functions within SOLAS and the HEA form a vital part of the infrastructure in identifying current and future skills needs. Supply and demand for skills development are assessed on an ongoing basis, including scanning the horizon with regard to emerging skills needs and the impact of major investment plans such as the Rebuilding Ireland action plan for Housing. This function also needs to track how comprehensively employers are engaging with apprenticeship and traineeship and the outcomes for learners and employers.

Consortia who are responsible for developing and rolling out apprenticeships and education and training providers leading on traineeship provision will become an increasingly important part of the infrastructure. Support mechanisms will be required to ensure that traineeships are scalable and sustainable regionally and nationally.

# 3

## CRITICAL PATH: TARGETS, ACTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION 2016-2020

The forthcoming National Skills Council and the nine Regional Skills Fora which have been introduced to support implementation of the National Skills Strategy 2025 will also aid the expansion work.

Apprenticeship and Traineeship aim to be complementary in terms of their duration and skills development (see Appendix 2 in this document). As well as strengthening this complementarity, it will be important to ensure that both approaches continue to complement other modes of further and higher education and training and other options such as State-funded internships which in recent years have been provided through the Department of Social Protection.<sup>6</sup>

### FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Financial resources and funding structures which underpin the expansion project will be carefully monitored and planned over the period to 2020. The main sources for funding are the National Training Fund (NTF), exchequer funding and the European Social Fund. The expansion of apprenticeship provision in 2016 and previous years, including the introduction of two new apprenticeship programmes, has been funded within the overall annual provision from the NTF. The funding for planned and forecast expansion in 2017 will also be met primarily from within the existing NTF ceiling with an additional €20 million provided. This additional allocation could be made because savings were achieved resulting from reduced demand for the provision of training for unemployed people as the employment picture has continued to improve. The potential for achieving further savings on other NTF funded schemes will continue to be explored for future years in line with the commitment in the National Skills Strategy to review the share of NTF resources allocated to training people in employment on an on-going basis. In addition, work is underway on looking at funding models for further and higher education and the role of the NTF is being examined in that context.

Nonetheless, achieving the targets set out in this Plan will require ongoing support through additional resources. The cost of apprenticeships and traineeships for the State and employers will vary based on factors such as duration, the nature of the programmes, the pattern of on and off-the-job provision and the requirement for capital investment. The State will continue to support the growth in registrations in craft apprenticeships and, as the mix of new apprenticeships feeds through the assessment and development process, resources will be planned accordingly.

The *National Skills Strategy 2025* includes a target of 50,000 apprenticeship and traineeship places to be provided over the period 2016-2020.<sup>7</sup> These targets are ambitious. They are challenging for the State, education and training providers and employers. We would like to be even more ambitious and would like the employers in different sectors to embrace the challenge to develop new apprenticeships in collaboration with education and training providers. The benefits of apprenticeship training in matching skills formation to the specific needs of companies, the productivity of apprentices as well as recruitment and retention savings are all positive elements that companies can benefit from.

To reach the cumulative target by the end of 2020 a set of proposed annual target figures are presented in Tables 1 and 2 below. These figures allow for some time in 2017 to scale-up within the education and training system and to enhance engagement from employers, large and small, around the country.

**Table 1 Target apprentice registrations and cumulative number of apprenticeship programmes by year**

| Craft-based apprenticeships           | 2016  | 2017  | 2018  | 2019  | 2020  |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Number of apprenticeship programmes   | 27    | 27    | 27    | 27    | 27    |
| Forecast new registrations per annum* | 3,390 | 4,147 | 4,697 | 5,087 | 5,587 |

| New apprenticeships                                      | 2016 | 2017 | 2018  | 2019  | 2020  |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Planned number of apprenticeship programmes (cumulative) | 2    | 15   | 25    | 35    | 40    |
| Planned new registrations per annum                      | 82   | 800  | 1,500 | 2,297 | 3,413 |

|   |              |              |              |              |              |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Total target apprentice registrations p.a.</b> | <b>3,472</b> | <b>4,947</b> | <b>6,197</b> | <b>7,384</b> | <b>9,000</b> |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|

= 31,000 cumulative new apprenticeship registrations by 2020

\*Forecast (as of October 2016) of new registrations on craft-based apprenticeships provided by Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) and Apprenticeship Services Unit, SOLAS

<sup>6</sup> Indecon International Research Economists, 2016 *Indecon Evaluation of JobBridge Activation Programme* Dublin: Indecon.

<sup>7</sup> Ref policy commitments in National Skills Strategy 2025; Action Plan for Education 2016-2018; Programme for Government 2016; Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019; Strategy for Higher Education in Ireland 2030; Review of Apprenticeship Training in Ireland (2014); Action Plans for Jobs 2012-2016; Regional Action Plans for Jobs 2015, 2016.

# CRITICAL PATH: TARGETS, ACTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION 2016-2020

**Table 2 Target trainee enrolments and cumulative number of traineeship programmes by year**

| Existing traineeships                    | 2016    | 2017  | 2018  | 2019  | 2020  |
|--|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Number of 'live' traineeship programmes* | 24      | 24    | 24    | 24    | 24    |
| Target new enrolments per annum          | 2,400** | 2,400 | 3,000 | 3,500 | 3,500 |

| New/relaunched traineeships                   | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019  | 2020  |
|---|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of traineeship programmes (cumulative) | 2    | 4    | 10   | 20    | 30    |
| Planned new enrolments per annum              | 100  | 200  | 900  | 1,500 | 1,500 |

|                                      |       |       |       |       |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total target trainee enrolments p.a. | 2,500 | 2,600 | 3,900 | 5,000 | 5,000 |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|

=19,000 cumulative new traineeship registrations by 2020

\*Source: FARR database, SOLAS as of July 2016

\*\*2,400 trainees in 2016 is an estimate by Education and Training Boards of participation numbers as of July 2016.

## Implementation and actions

Over the coming months, ten actions will drive achievement of the targets set out in Tables 1-2 above. These actions draw in particular on the experience of the past 18 months. Some will be implemented within the system as a whole and others relate individually to apprenticeship and to traineeship. The actions are as follows:

### System-wide actions

We will:

- (i) Strategically build capacity within the education and training system in the areas that include education and training needs identification with industry, curriculum design, integrated delivery of on and off-the-job training, quality assurance and enterprise engagement and mechanisms to underpin expansion with robust ongoing monitoring and evaluation.
- (ii) Proactively engage with employers and the enterprise community to secure buy in and engagement with the apprenticeship and traineeship routes. Options to expand apprenticeship into the public sector will be examined. Key enterprise agencies will be involved, in particular Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and the Local Employment Offices. Employer bodies will continue to be key partners and we will engage with unions, professional bodies and staff associations.

- (iii) Enhance and streamline collaboration and working arrangements between the three education agencies SOLAS, HEA and QQI in liaison with the Department of Education and Skills. Good collaboration and communication with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation will be maintained. The nine Regional Skills Fora will have an important role in assessing and identifying regional skills needs and in promoting apprenticeship and traineeship, particularly in the context of the new call for proposals.
- (iv) Implement a monitoring and evaluation framework to monitor progress, including data collection and analysis to better capture participation and graduate outcomes from apprenticeship and traineeship; female participation in apprenticeship; pathways to apprenticeship; horizon-scanning and forecasting of skills needs; early identification of any roadblocks and necessary solutions; learning from what works and incorporating this into the expansion work as it progresses from year-to-year.

### Apprenticeship

We will:

- (v) Implement the critical path and associated timeline for development and roll out of new apprenticeship programmes (Appendix 1). An overall development to roll out timeline of 12-15 months will apply. This is from the time that it is initially approved for development by the Apprenticeship Council, through to occupational profile and programme development; creation of an Industrial Training Order; validation and quality assurance; employer approval; apprentice registration. All new apprenticeships from the 2015 and 2017 calls for proposals go through the steps on the critical path.
- (vi) Implement a rolling project timeline with individual target dates per apprenticeship in development. This underpins completion and rollout of new apprenticeship programmes 2016-7, completing the development process for Category one proposals from the 2015 call. Category 2 and 3 proposals will move to development in 2017. The status report which is used by the Apprenticeship Council at each of its meetings will record and monitor this timeline. Technology is used to support and enhance the development process including an online platform that streamlines engagement between consortia, SOLAS and the HEA.
- (vii) Issue a second Call for apprenticeship proposals in Q2 2017. The process is shaped by the experience of the first Call for Proposals, its identified strengths and challenges. The 2017 Call process includes a guidance document on current and future skills needs; an online platform for engagement on the development work; additional targeted support on governance and operational arrangements. Groups making proposals are asked to set out their support requirements in detail as part of their submission. The outcome of the new Call is announced in Q4 2017 and successful proposals are approved for development.

# CRITICAL PATH: TARGETS, ACTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION 2016-2020

- (viii) Address minor legislative issues based on the experience in 2016 of developing new apprenticeships. In particular, remove any legislative impediment to apprenticeships being developed in professional areas or in agriculture, horticulture or fishing.

## Traineeship

We will:

- (ix) Implement between ETBI, member ETBs and SOLAS, in close partnership with industry, a critical path and associated timeline to (a) refresh and relaunch existing traineeship programmes; (b) amend eligibility requirements for prospective trainees to enable wider participation; and (c) develop new traineeship programmes. Employer groups in all dormant traineeships will be approached to ascertain interest in relaunching or revising them. For new traineeships, an overall development to roll out timeline of 8-12 months will apply.
- (x) Agree targets, on a local and regional approach, within each ETB for provision of traineeships and traineeship enrolments each year 2017-2020. Progress will be overseen by a steering group comprising ETBs, ETBI, SOLAS, industry representatives and relevant stakeholders.

In Table 3 below, the detail of these ten actions are presented annually and by quarter from 2016 to Quarter 1 2018. The action plan is reviewed and updated at the end of 2017.

**Table 3** Quarterly plan to achieve actions 2016-2018

### Q4 2016 (October-December)

| Action  | Comment   | KPI   |
|---|---|---|
| Expansion project is managed via the Apprenticeship Council and SOLAS (traineeship). Includes arrangements for necessary investment in resources (funding/personnel) locally/regionally/nationally. | Apprenticeship Council oversees apprenticeship element of the action plan. SOLAS oversees traineeship element in partnership with ETBI and ETBs. Traineeship steering group formed to support and monitor progress. | Work packages based on action plan developed and agreed via Apprenticeship Council and Traineeship steering group.            |
| Engagement with Category 1 consortia on progress towards roll out of new apprenticeships.   | Assessment of need by each consortium, access to expertise provided. Workshop(s) and briefings provided by SOLAS, HEA, QQI. Focus on programme/ occupational profile development, quality assurance, validation.    | 2 new apprenticeships launch by end 2016; 82 places<br><br>13 further new apprenticeships progressing towards launch in 2017. |

### Q4 2016 (October-December) continued

| Action  | Comment  | KPI   |
|---|--|---|
| Engagement with Categories 2 & 3 new apprenticeships                        | Briefing held for Categories 2 & 3 groups Nov 2016. Information gathered on continuing commitment to development and guidance given on project planning. | Work underway by year end on project plans for up to 20 additional apprenticeships                                |
| Planning for 2017 Call for Apprenticeship Proposals begins                  | Apprenticeship Council gathers reflections from consortia and key stakeholders on experience of 2015 Call for Proposals and implementation during 2016.  | Design of 2017 Call for Proposals underway with reference to experience of First Call – strengths and challenges. |
| Enhancement of national IT systems and supports for apprenticeship underway | SOLAS systems and supports in need of upgrade/redesign to support expansion  | Project plan completed  |
| 2016 registration targets achieved for craft-based and new apprenticeships  | Forecast registrations achieved for craft-based apprenticeships. Planned registrations achieved for new apprenticeships                                  | 3,742 apprentice registrations in 2016  |

### Q1 2017

| Action   | Comment   | KPI  |
|--|---|--|
| Enterprise agencies advise on engagement with SMEs and FDI companies wishing to take on apprentices and trainees. Regional Skills Fora to focus on encouraging employers to engage | Enterprise Ireland and IDA lead advisers. Ideas to be developed with reference to good examples of practice internationally. RSFs to assist with engagement | Decision on approach to engagement with SMEs and larger employers, including specific messages |
| Evaluation framework for expansion project scoped and agreed   | Framework agreed with D/ES, key agencies and stakeholders   | Evaluation framework agreed from end Q1  |

# CRITICAL PATH: TARGETS, ACTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION 2016-2020

## Q1 2017 continued

| Action  | Comment  | KPI  |
|---|--|--|
| Promotional campaign for apprenticeship underway. Includes focus on SMEs, FDIs, guided by EI, and IDA and the Regional Skills Fora.   | SOLAS, in partnership with the HEA, Apprenticeship Council, THEA, ETBs, ETBI, EI, IDA, Regional Skills Fora, employer bodies, unions and professional bodies   | Communication indicators show strong response to campaign, level of enquiries and interest up, numbers of registrations up |
| Actions to expand traineeship opportunities agreed with key stakeholders, with reference to development, duration; NFQ levels; eligibility and target cohorts for wider participation, allocation of additional human/financial resources to enable expansion of traineeship nationally | Establishment of traineeship steering group. ETBs, ETBI, HE and enterprise input is key. Experience of the pilot career traineeships; Springboard; Momentum and review of PLC provision considered in agreeing the final recommendations | Key elements and principles of traineeship 2017-2020 agreed by stakeholders for immediate implementation                   |
| Further development of apprenticeship system implemented, drawing on assessment and analysis of regional skills needs by the 9 Regional Skills Fora   | Authorised Officer network expanded to meet regional needs. Supply of focused analysis of current and future regional skills needs by the Regional Skills Fora   | AO network expanded to meet regional needs.  |
| Launch of up to 5 further new apprenticeships   | Key role of consortia supported by SOLAS, HEA, QQI as appropriate  | 200+ apprenticeship places added, 70+ participating employers  |
| Category 2 & 3 apprenticeships in development   | Key role of consortia supported by SOLAS, HEA, QQI   | Timelines agreed for roll out new apprenticeships  |
| IT platforms supporting apprenticeship in development, includes mechanisms to support connections with employers and apprentices nationally   | May require external support/expertise   | Development work proceeding in line with sub- plan on IT systems   |
| Targeted guidance document on current and future skills needs prepared to support 2017 Call for Proposals   | Document developed by SOLAS and HEA with reference to wider context of education and training provision  | Guidance document providing good direction to industry and education and training providers and the wider system           |

## Q2 2017

| Action   | Comment  | KPI  |
|--|--|--|
| Scoping exercise completed on expansion of apprenticeship into public service  | Consultation with key public service areas   | Decision on whether to expand 2017 Call to include proposals from the public service |
| New Call for Proposals for apprenticeship issues, spanning public and private sector as appropriate. Includes guidance document on current and future skills needs to assist proposers | Call is widely advertised. Includes opportunities for briefings, webinars, advice to potential proposers | Call issues April 2017   |
| Development of new apprenticeships progressing   | All partners working collaboratively – consortia, HEA, QQI, SOLAS  | Development work on-target as per agreed timeline                                    |
| Development of 5-10 new traineeships underway  | Development work underway within ETBs, in partnership with employers                                     | Employers strongly engaged in development of new traineeships                        |

## Q3 2017

| Action  | Comment  | KPI  |
|---|--|--|
| Work ongoing on development of new apprenticeships and traineeships                                       | Development work generally agreed to be streamlined, efficient and user friendly                                   | Proposed apprenticeships advancing well. Employers strongly engaged in development of new traineeships |
| Assessment of further phase of new apprenticeship development based on outcome of 2017 Call for Proposals | Assessment work overseen by Apprenticeship Council   | Apprenticeship Council makes recommendation to the Minister  |
| Apprenticeship web portal launched  | Key partners involved in development work, agencies, consortia, authorised officers and enterprise representatives | Web portal demonstrates excellence in IT support and practice  |
| Proposals for minor legislative amendments prepared   | To be undertaken by the Department of Education and Skills in consultation with stakeholders                       | Drafting underway  |

# CRITICAL PATH: TARGETS, ACTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION 2016-2020

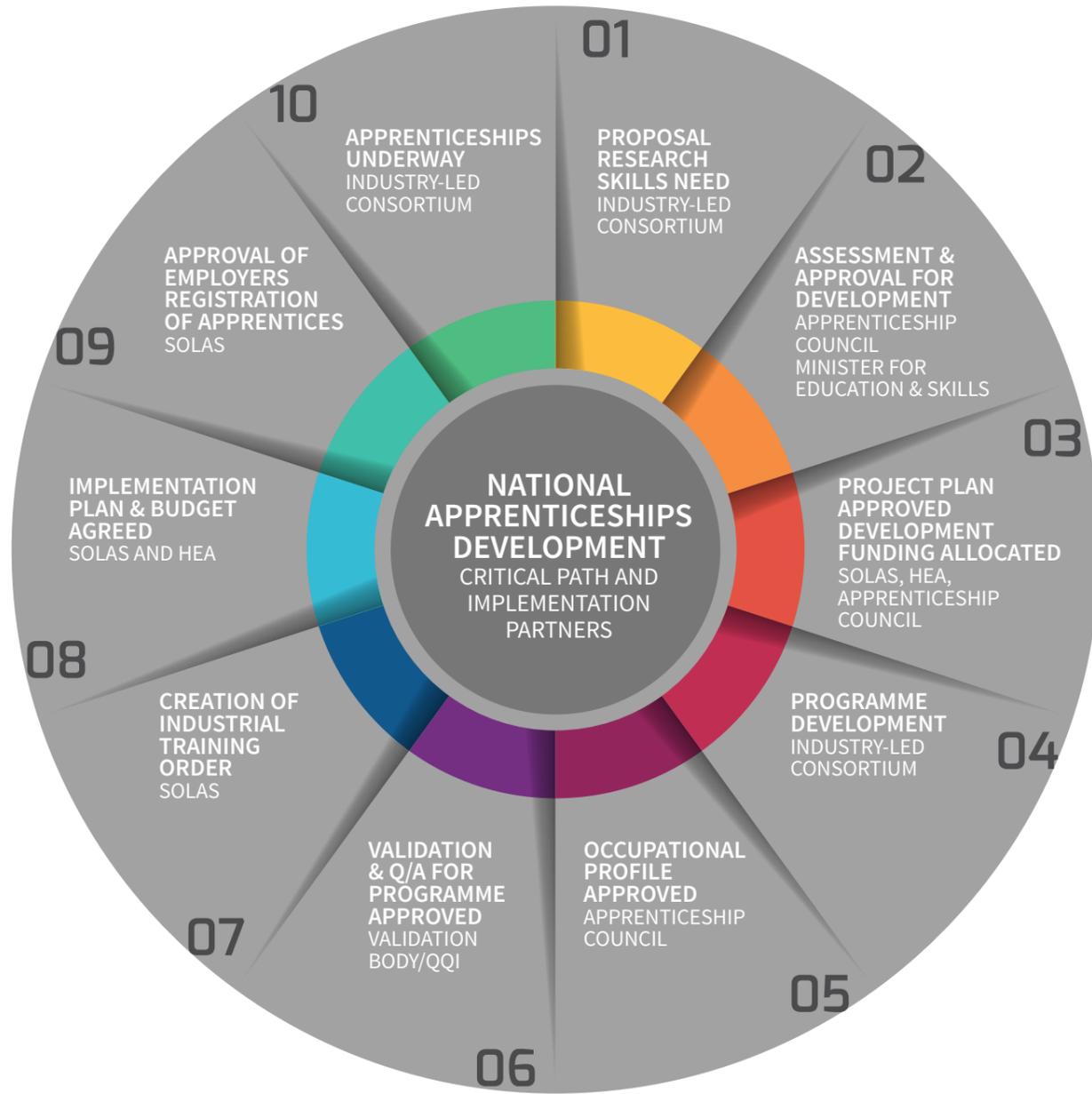
## Q4 2017

| Action   | Comment   | KPI   |
|--|---|---|
| 20+ new apprenticeships are announced for development  | Outcome of 2017 Call for Proposals announced by Minister  | Industry-led consortia forming/expanding to develop second phase of new apprenticeships       |
| 13 new apprenticeships rolled out in 2017  |   | Number of new apprenticeships = 15 during 2016-17   |
| New engineering traineeship rolled out   |   | 100+ trainees on new programme  |
| Review commissioned on pathways to participation in apprenticeship, including female participation | Review examines patterns of participation by diverse groups in apprenticeship, including female participation, identifies any barriers existing and makes recommendations for the future, including any 'pre-apprenticeship' initiatives that may be required | Review completed by end Q2 2018, any recommendations to be implemented immediately thereafter |
| 2017 registration/enrolment targets achieved for craft-based and new apprenticeships, traineeships | Forecast registrations achieved for craft-based apprenticeships. Planned registrations achieved for new apprenticeships. Planned enrolments achieved for traineeships   | 4,947 apprentice registrations in 2017<br>2,600 trainee enrolments                            |
| <b>ACTION PLAN REVIEWED – PROGRESS, FEASIBILITY, TARGETS</b>                                       | Review draws on available information on progress to-date, includes review of targets, employer engagement and related take-up of apprenticeship and traineeship options  | Updated action plan to 2020   |

## Q1 2018

| Action  | Comment   | KPI                                  |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| Updated action plan to 2020 being implemented                           | Key implementation partners engaged   | Adapted actions and targets on track |
| 40+ national apprenticeships in operation, up to 25 more in development | Ongoing monitoring confirming that apprenticeship provision is meeting skills needs and apprentices' careers ambitions, strongly supported by enterprise, education and training community and the wider public | On target for Q1 2018 registrations  |
| 30+ traineeships in operation (4 new traineeships rolled out in 2018)   | Ongoing monitoring confirming that traineeship provision is meeting skills needs and trainees' careers ambitions, strongly supported by enterprise, education and training community and the wider public       | On target for 2017-2018 enrolments   |

# APPENDIX 1



# APPENDIX 2

## Features of apprenticeship and traineeship (2016)

**Note:** The table below presents current state – a number of the elements below will change during 2017-2020

|  | Apprenticeship   | Traineeship  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Legislation</b>                     | Governed directly by legislation – currently 1967 Industrial Training Act                                      | Not governed directly by legislation   |
| <b>Employment basis</b>                | Starts with a contract of employment   | Starts with enrolment on an education and training course  |
| <b>Industry involvement</b>            | Industry-led – requires good industry support and involvement from the outset                                  | Led by education and training providers but based on identified industry skills need and requires industry support and involvement from the outset |
| <b>Time on the job</b>                 | Minimum of 50% on the job and up to 80%  | Generally, a minimum of 30% on the job   |
| <b>Qualifications level(s)</b>         | Can be at Levels 5-10 on the National Framework of Qualifications  | Currently between Levels 4-6 on the National Framework of Qualifications   |
| <b>Duration</b>                        | Between 2 and 4 years  | Between 6 months – 2 years   |
| <b>Target cohorts</b>                  | Open to all, including those already in employment   | Unemployed people  |
| <b>Payment to apprentices/trainees</b> | Employer pays apprentice a salary  | No payment by employer to trainee; trainee currently in receipt of income support from D/SP  |
| <b>Numbers</b>                         | 3,472 apprentice registrations forecast for 2016. 10,316 apprentices in the system nationally; 3919+ employers | An estimated 2,500 enrolments on traineeship in 2016, 1,000+ employers   |

## APPENDIX 3

### Listing of current Traineeships (2016)

|  |
|--|
| Accounts Executive Traineeship                               |
| Aircraft Maintenance Technician Traineeship                  |
| Beauty Therapist Traineeship                                 |
| Business Administration                                      |
| Business Systems Service Technician Traineeship              |
| Early Childhood Care and Education                           |
| Equestrian International Instructor BHSAI                    |
| Financial Administration                                     |
| Financial Advisors Assistant Traineeship                     |
| Health Care Assistant Traineeship                            |
| Hospitality Career Traineeship                               |
| ICT Systems & Principles for Network Engineers - Traineeship |
| IT Network Security (FIT) Traineeship                        |
| IT Support Specialist – Traineeship                          |
| Legal Administration Traineeship                             |
| Logistics and Distribution – Traineeship                     |
| Medical Administration Traineeship                           |
| Office Administration (FIT)                                  |
| Office Administration Traineeship                            |
| Outdoor Activity Instructor Traineeship                      |
| Overhead Lines Operator Traineeship                          |
| Professional Food and Beverage Service - Career Traineeship  |
| Software Developer Traineeship                               |
| Wind Turbine Maintenance Traineeship                         |
| Supply Chain Logistics Traineeship                           |

(Source: SOLAS/ETB FARR database)

## APPENDIX 4

### Listing of 29 current apprenticeships (2016)

|   |
|---|
| Agricultural Mechanics                        |
| Aircraft Mechanics                            |
| Brick and Stonelaying                         |
| Carpentry & Joinery                           |
| Construction Plant Fitting                    |
| Electrical                                    |
| Electrical Instrumentations                   |
| Electronic Security Systems                   |
| Farriery                                      |
| Floor & Wall Tiling                           |
| Heavy Vehicle Mechanics                       |
| Industrial Insulation                         |
| Industrial Electrical Engineer (new 2016)     |
| Instrumentation                               |
| Insurance Practice (new 2016)                 |
| Mechanical Automation and Maintenance Fitting |
| Metal Fabrication                             |
| Motor Mechanics                               |
| Painting & Decorating                         |
| Pipefitting                                   |
| Plastering                                    |
| Plumbing                                      |
| Print Media                                   |
| Refrigeration & Air Conditioning              |
| Stonecutting & Stonemasonry                   |
| Sheet Metalworking                            |
| Toolmaking                                    |
| Vehicle Body Repairs                          |
| Wood Manufacturing and Finishing              |

**ACTION PLAN TO  
EXPAND  
APPRENTICESHIP AND  
TRAINEESHIP IN  
IRELAND 2016-2020**

