INSURANCE PRACTITIONER APPRENTICESHIP

WHAT EMPLOYERS NEED TO KNOW

THE EMPLOYER’S ROLE
We understand that employers need employees with practical skills, not just academic qualifications.

The Insurance Practitioner Apprenticeship strikes a balance between theory and practice, combining distance learning with three years’ practical work experience in your organisation.

Employers are responsible for the professional development of apprentices and ultimately, the sustainability of this essential programme.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES
The employer is responsible for the recruitment, selection, direction, remuneration and supervision of the apprentice. This includes:

• Recruitment and selection of the apprentice on a three year fixed-term full-time contract
• Providing the apprentice access to work that will allow them gain experience and develop skills across the full range of competencies in underwriting, claims handling and direct client advice.
• Providing the time, facilities and equipment to support the apprentice for both on and off-the-job training at their premises.
• Providing a qualified or experienced employee who will supervise and assess the apprentice in the workplace (e.g. a team leader, coach, senior member of the team or manager).
• Providing a mentor and/or programme manager (if more than one apprentice) to provide support and guidance.
• Agreeing to abide with the SOLAS Code of Practice which details the duties and responsibilities of both parties.

BENEFIT TO YOUR BUSINESS
• Trained employees with vastly improved business knowledge and insurance skills.
• Study methods that cause minimal disruption to daily work responsibilities.
• The development of specialist skills needed to keep pace with the latest technology and working practices.
• Build loyalty and reduce staff turnover.
• Create a national standard of training for the general insurance industry.
• Create future leaders who know your business.
• Create an accessible channel to attract talent into the sector.
• Show your company’s commitment to your team and to the development of employees.
• Contribute to Ireland’s pool of qualified, certified employees in our sector and help grow our economy and expand our skills base.

SALARY AND PROGRAMME COSTS
Off-the-job training, insurance and degree exam costs and all associated membership fees are covered by the government (HEA and SOLAS)*.

Employers are required to cover full-time (including study release) employment costs of the apprentice.

Current guidelines state payment to an apprentice should be commensurate with the industry rate for an entry level position and in accordance with the National Minimum Wage.

Visit citizensinformation.ie for more information.

*Excludes repeats/deferrals and travel to and from the venues as arranged by IT Sligo
PROGRAMME ALTERNANCE STRUCTURE AND DELIVERY

The structure consists of nine semesters in total (three per annum consisting of two academic of 15 weeks duration and 1 summer of 20 weeks duration).

The off-the-job release averages one day per week.

The Insurance Institute exams are blended with business and personal skills modules captured from the Industry Steering Group competency framework ranging from basic in year 1 to more advanced in year 3 finishing with a Capstone project/Dissertation which will facilitate collaboration across both Industry and apprentices.

APA is frontloaded in Year 1 to meet CBI minimum compliance requirements and to ensure removal of supervision early in accordance with Industry request. CIP or QFA is achieved in Year 2. This will facilitate focus in the final year on the Capstone Project/Dissertation.

The Insurance Institute/LIA examinations will form the basis of the professional qualification modules and will be tested via the current formal examination practice and timetable. The module content is expanded beyond the additional 5 credits at level 7 to 10 credits. This expansion will allow an applied industry focus to the curriculum via work based case studies and certain modules will have the level of their content enhanced to provide level 8 modules in insurance.

The business and personal skills will be tested by IT Sligo using continuous learning methods (reflective journal, mini project etc) in addition to end of semester tests.

The programme will be 75% delivered by the Employer with 25% delivery by IT Sligo/ The Insurance Institute – the alternance model is typically one day a week release (depending upon semester) in the Employer premises away from the desk (where practical).

PROGRAMME ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

As the apprentices are employed by their sponsoring Company, the Employer/Industry will recruit the apprentices with guidelines for selection.

Minimum age of entry
The minimum age for an Apprentice is 18 years of age.

Minimum educational requirements
A person entering employment in an Insurance Practitioner occupation shall have the following as a minimum:

- Irish Leaving Certificate requirements
  2 honours in higher level Leaving Cert subjects and 4 additional passes including Maths and English/Irish.

- FETAC awards and entry
  A full cognate (in a business or related discipline) FETAC (Level 5 or 6) award to include distinction grades in at least three components, with a minimum total earned credit value of 120 credits.

Mature Students
For students who are over 23 on January 1st of the year of entry, interviews or other selection tools may be used to assess suitability, replacing the minimum requirements above.

More information on entry requirements can be found on iii.ie/apprenticeships.