



**GENERATION
APPRENTICESHIP**
www.apprenticeship.ie



**Social Work
Apprenticeship**

Social Work Apprenticeship

**Employer
Handbook**





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INTRODUCTION

Employer Benefits:

- Improves staff retention
- Addresses skills shortages
- Government subsidised qualification
- Makes a Social Work qualification accessible to all
- Improves service delivery to those accessing our services across health and social care services in Ireland
- Employer Grants available

The Apprenticeship in Social Work is designed by a consortium of industry and education providers to meet the needs of the social work sector in Ireland. University College Cork has been appointed as the lead educational provider. The programme has work-based learning at its core, enabling apprentices to work 'on-the-job,' while accessing college both online and on campus. Apprentices graduate with a Level 9 award, the Master of Social Work or Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work Studies, both of which are CORU approved.

This guide gives employers information on the added value apprentices bring to the workplace, along with information on the roles and responsibilities of employers, apprentices and the education provider.



OVERVIEW

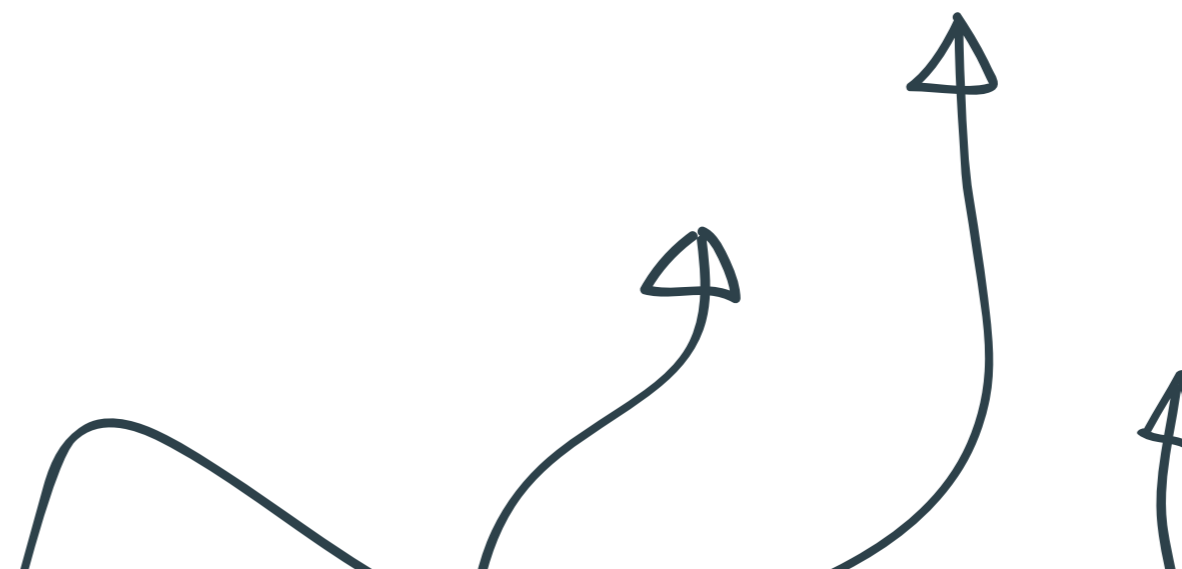
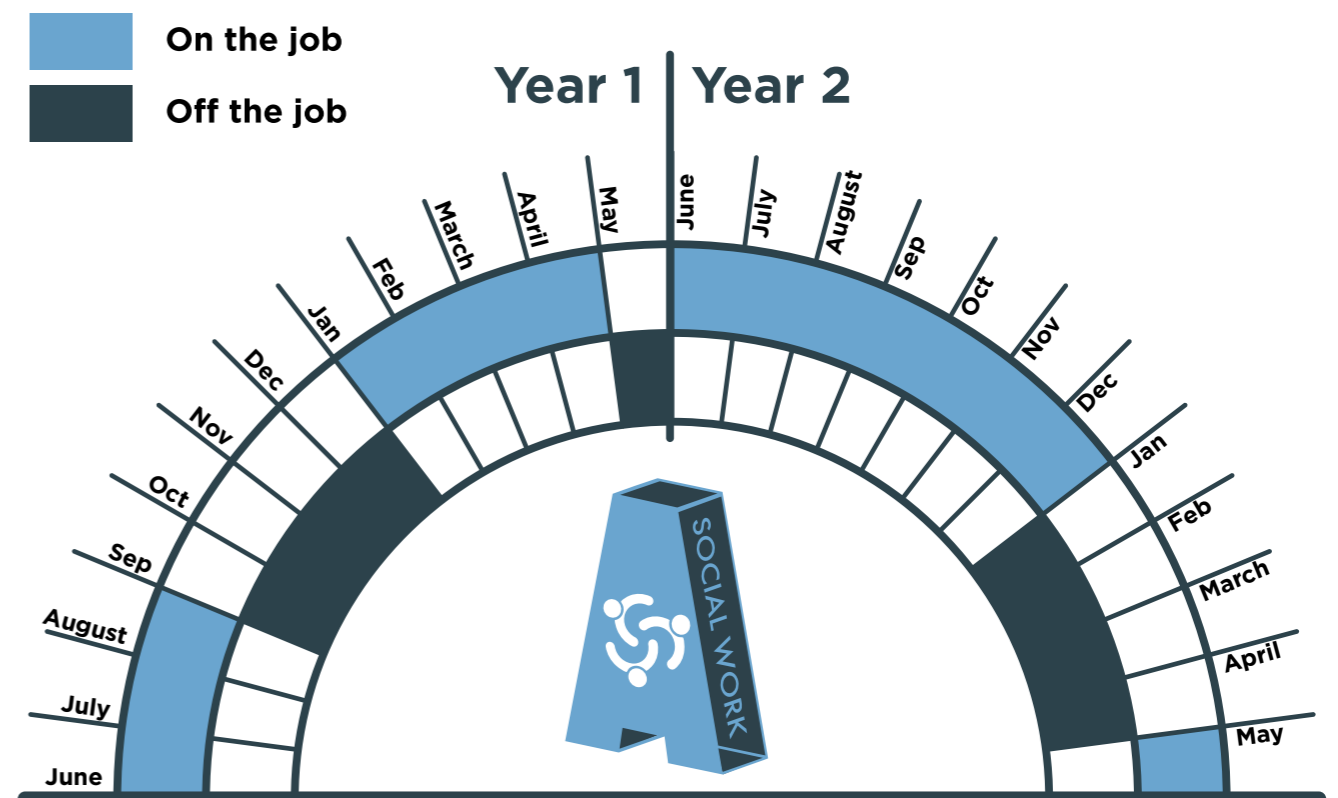
Apprenticeship	Social Work
Duration	24 months
NFQ	Level 9 Masters of Social Work or Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work Studies
ECT Credits	120
Qualification upon completion	Eligible to apply for registration with CORU as a social worker
Education Provider	University College Cork

2 YEAR APPRENTICESHIP WILL INCLUDE:

Year 1	Year 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-the-job learning where apprentices learn from experienced social workers and real-world practice and benefit from mentoring and being part of a wider community of practice Apprentices will bring their college-based learning into the workplace Year 1 learning focuses on social work theory and practice skills; human development; child and family welfare; safeguarding adults at risk; domestic, sexual and gender-based violence; law and social policy and Research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Year 2, apprentices bring more advanced college-based learning in areas that include law, probation, adoption, fostering, disability, ageing, working with young people, social work theory and practice and community work. They learn about wider global changes such as climate change, migration and geopolitics, their impacts on social work and social work's role in preserving human rights and social justice for all In each year, 14-weeks of 'on-the-job' learning focuses specifically on the CORU Standards of Proficiency with learning supports adapted for the requirements of placements outlined in the CORU Social Workers Registration Board Criteria for Education and Training Programmes

APPRENTICESHIP STRUCTURE

This two-year apprenticeship is structured to support a blended delivery of online learning and face to face sessions which minimizes time off-the-job. Apprentices will benefit from small-class sizes when in college and learning and teaching methods will facilitate students to put their knowledge into practice through for example, small group activities, role-plays, student presentations, report writing tasks. Apprentices will be trained and assessed both on and off the job.



APPRENTICE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

1 Applicants must have at least a Second Class Honours Grade 1 in a primary honours degree in Social Science or its equivalent (eligible for the Masters of Social Work route)

or

2 have an approved Level 8 conversion programme with at least a Second Class Honours Grade 1, and have completed a minimum of three-months' relevant work experience in a social work or social work-related field (eligible for the Masters of Social Work route)

or

3 Applicants who have not met the grade requirements outlined above but who hold at least an honours primary degree (NFQ, Level 8) in Social Science or its equivalent, or hold an approved Level 8 conversion programme i.e. the Higher Diploma in Social Policy and have completed a minimum of three-months' relevant work experience in a social work or social work-related field (eligible for the Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work Studies route)

or

4 non-graduates with at least 5 years' professional experience in social work or a social work related field may be considered for admission under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) (eligible for the Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work Studies route)

Note: Applicants who are non-native speakers of the English language must meet the university-approved English language requirements. Visit our [PG English Language Requirements](#) page for more information

Note: There are opportunities for apprentices who enter on either the Masters in Social Work or Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work Studies to move between programmes. Details of the criteria are available at <https://www.ucc.ie/en/ckc06/>



EMPLOYER OPPORTUNITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Apprentices are very focused on building a specific career in Social Work and are committed to developing a long-term career in the social work service area. This improves retention rates for the employer and provides a consistent pipeline of motivated, highly skilled employees. Apprentices thrive in a workplace setting as it allows them to bring their college learning into practice in the real world and employers and staff benefit hugely from their enthusiasm and positive outlook.

It is the employers' responsibility to:

- Recruit the apprentice
- Ensure that the apprentice is a suitable candidate for training and meets the entry requirements for the programme. Entry requirements will be assessed jointly with the Education Provider
- Introduce the new apprentice to the community of practice in the workplace and to ensure that the apprentice is recognised as a novice member of the community
- Provide individualised support to the apprentice where necessary, especially in the early stages of the apprenticeship
- Ensure the apprentice is given the learning opportunities required for the programme apprenticeship
- Release the apprentice for scheduled off-the-job learning
- Appoint experienced and qualified staff as mentors to the apprentice and to free them for any necessary mentor or assessment training
- Provide employee induction training





STATUTORY REGULATOR ROLE

SOLAS is the statutory regulator for apprenticeship programmes with responsibilities governed under the 1967 Industrial Training Act. Under their remit SOLAS/National Apprenticeship Office (NAO) appoints 'Authorised Officers' (AOs) who carry out activities on its behalf. This includes approving new employers who wish to recruit and train apprentices and the registering of apprentices. Authorised Officers are employed by Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and are assigned to work with employers based on the geographical region in which the employer is located.

Upon receipt of an Expression of Interest (EOI) from an employer the Authorised Officer (AO) in the region will schedule a visit with the employer and complete the statutory approvals process. The AO will also complete the registration process for apprentices recruited by the employer and work with the employer and apprentice across the duration of the apprenticeship programme.

The Employer and Apprentice must sign the **Apprenticeship Code of Practice**. For further information on your role and responsibilities as an Apprentice, please refer to this document.

HOW TO BECOME AN APPRENTICE EMPLOYER

1

Complete the Employer **Expression of Interest** form

2

Approval is carried out by a Solas Authorised Officer and usually includes a site visit.

3

When approved you should email **aol@nao.ie** who will give you access to the employer website and you can advertise your vacancies on the **[apprenticeship jobs page](#)**.

USEFUL CONTACT AND INFORMATION LINKS:

Generation Apprenticeship: **[website link](#)**

Email address for employers to register for Apprenticeship Online **AOL@nao.ie**

Employer Grant-link **[Employer Grant](#)**

Link Employer Register for approval - **[Expression of Interest](#)**

[Apprenticeship Online](#)

[Gender Based Bursary](#)

UCC Apprenticeship Website **[UCC Social Work Apprenticeship](#)**

UCC Apprenticeship contact email: **apprenticeship@ucc.ie**

[Applied Social Studies website](#)

Additional details will be provided on the role and responsibility of apprentices and mentors including information about the supports available from the education provider. These supports will maximise the opportunities for apprentices to thrive during their training, to add-value to the employer, graduate and have a long and valuable career in social work.

