

# APPRENTICESHIP AND TRADES CERTIFICATION DIVISION

## Questions & Answers

### What is apprenticeship?

**Apprenticeship** is a formal training system that combines on-the-job and in-school training to produce qualified and certified journeypersons.

The process begins with the submission of an Application for Apprenticeship and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or a Letter of Understanding (LOU). Both the MOU and the LOU are written agreements among three parties: a person who wants to learn a trade; an employer who requires a skilled worker; and the Apprenticeship and Trades Certification Division (ATCD).

Approximately 80 per cent of an apprentice's skills are acquired at the workplace, while 20 per cent are acquired at a training institution. Work-based hours must be completed under the supervision of a journeyperson of the same trade.

Apprenticeship training can range from one to five years with the **average** duration being four years (7,200 hours). Specific information on the number of hours required for each trade can be found in the [Provincial Plans of Training](#).

An apprenticeship is completed after an apprentice:

- obtains and records all workplace skills in the logbook;
- completes all in-school training;
- successfully completes all block examinations (if applicable);
- accumulates all hours for the trade; and
- successfully completes the certification examination.

### Who is an apprentice?

An apprentice is a person who works in a trade and has a written agreement with an employer and ATCD. An apprentice learns the knowledge, skills, tools and materials of the trade through on-the-job training under the supervision of a certified journeyperson of the same trade and through in-school technical training.

### Who is a certified journeyperson?

Certified journeypersons are formally certified tradespersons whose combined work experience and in-school training (if applicable) have allowed them to master all of the required skills as set by industry. A journeyperson's certification must be verified by ATCD before they are allowed to mentor an apprentice and sign off on skills acquired on the job.

### Who is a trade qualifier?

A [Trade Qualifier](#) is a person who meets the jurisdictional requirements to write the certification examination. Requirements include:

- on-the-job work experience of at least one and a half (1.5) times of an apprenticeship term for a designated trade; and
- documentation of work skills that have been verified by a certified journeyman in the trade. Documentation must also include verification of time and hours.

## **As a registered apprentice, can I apply to write the certification examination as a trade qualifier?**

If you meet the requirements as noted above, you can apply to become a Trade Qualifier. However, you must cancel your apprenticeship in order to write the Journeyman examination as a Trade Qualifier. If you are unsuccessful in your exam attempt, there is a time penalty of two (2) years before you can be reinstated as an apprentice or qualify to receive a class call to attend training as a registered Trade Qualifier. Cancellation of your apprenticeship must be agreed upon by you and the employer. For more information, see 14.4 of the [Conditions of Apprenticeship](#).

## **Are foreign worker credentials recognized in NL?**

[Foreign workers](#) are experienced tradespersons who have obtained their training and experience outside of Canada. They contribute to reducing immediate and long-term skills shortages in NL. Foreign worker credentials are recognized in NL through the [Trade Qualifier](#) procedures or through [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\)](#).

## **Who administers the apprenticeship program?**

The apprenticeship program is administered under the authority of the [Apprenticeship and Certification Act](#). The [Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board \(PACB\)](#) is the responsible authority for the development of legislation and policy which establishes standards, regulations, operational procedures and protocol for apprenticeship programs. The PACB looks for advice and guidance from Provincial Trades Advisory Committees which are comprised of employers, employees and post-secondary institution representatives for a particular trade.

## **What are the responsibilities of those involved in the apprenticeship process?**

### **The Apprentice**

- Become actively involved in the trade, complete the apprenticeship and obtain certification.
- Attend training when it is available.
- Update the logbook and keep it in good condition.
- Maintain regular contact with ATCD; advise of any changes in your apprenticeship (ie. change in employer; change in address).

### **The Employer**

- Provide high quality work experiences in a safe working and learning environment.
- Document work skills.
- Temporarily release apprentices to attend training and take examinations.
- Ensure a certified journeyman of the same trade is on staff to supervise the apprentice.

### **The Supervising Journeyperson**

- Teach the apprentice the skills of the trade to the best of his/her ability.
- Provide appropriate supervision and beneficial feedback.

### **The Post-Secondary Training Provider**

- Deliver training in a high quality learning environment.
- Maintain open communication with the ATCD.
- Provide student support services.
- Assist the ATCD, whenever requested, with necessary program, development and curriculum updates.

### **The ATCD**

- Provide current and relevant apprenticeship information.
- Register and monitor apprentices.
- Maintain apprentice records.
- Schedule in-school training.
- Administer examinations.
- Issue certificates of qualifications.

### **The PACB**

- Set policies in accordance with the Apprenticeship and Certification Act.
- Ensure that advisory and examination committees are established and maintained.
- Accredite apprenticeship programs.
- Designate occupations for apprenticeship training and/or certification.

## **What happens if I refuse to attend in-school training?**

Your apprenticeship will be cancelled if you refuse to attend in-school training for a second time unless your refusal is because of an emergency situation or other extenuating circumstance. Documentation must be provided to the ATCD.

If your employer refuses to release you due to the current work situation, documentation must be submitted to the ATCD.

Every request will be reviewed for approval on an individual basis. For further information, refer to Policy #23 in the [Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board Policy Manual](#).

## **What are the benefits of Apprenticeship to an APPRENTICE?**

*Earn While You Learn on the Job:* Apprentices earn a salary from the employers who hire them. The salary is equitable within the industry and in accordance with the provincial wage guidelines for each apprenticeship level they complete.

An apprentice's salary may increase each year based on work progress and the block/level training required to advance to the next level. Increases may reach the salary rates of a certified journeyperson as they get closer towards certification.

*Lower Student Debt:* Another benefit of apprenticeship training is reduced debt, since an apprentice continues to earn an income while they learn on the job. If eligible, apprentices may also receive Employment Insurance during in-school training.

## What are the benefits of Apprenticeship to an EMPLOYER?

The apprenticeship program is open to any employer who hires an apprentice to work in a designated trade under the supervision of a certified journeyman in the same trade. Other benefits include:

*Increased Competitiveness:* By joining an apprenticeship program, employers get workers with on-the-job and in-school training, laying the foundation and improving the company's competitiveness.

*Improved Quality Service/Productivity:* The completion of an apprenticeship program results in highly trained skilled workers and ensures a higher level of quality, service and production.

*Improved the Skills of the Workforce:* Participating in an apprenticeship program ensures that not only are employees trained to industry standards, but they also understand the unique values of their place of employment.

*Reduced Turnover and Increased Employee Loyalty:* Investment in employees encourages investment in the company by employees. Helping to train apprentices creates skilled and experienced employees, many of whom will stay for the long term.

*Planning for the Future:* Implementing an apprenticeship program will assist in planning and meeting future workforce needs.

Contact the [Industrial Training office](#) nearest you for more information and to get the process started.

## What are the entrance requirements for apprenticeship?

A pre-apprentice must:

- be at least 18 years old;
- have successfully completed high school or equivalent; and
- be a resident of Newfoundland and Labrador.

## How do I become an apprentice?

1. **Find an Employer to Hire You:** You must find employment with an employer who has a certified journeyman in the same trade as you. The journeyman will become your mentor and instructor on the job as she/he will directly supervise your work-based training. To receive credit for hours worked and skills obtained, an apprentice must be assigned to a journeyman. The current ratio is **one** journeyman for **two** apprentices.
2. **Apply:** Once you find employment, you must complete an **Application for Apprenticeship**. There are two Apprenticeship Applications, one for applying to register as an apprentice with a NL employer, and another for applying with an employer in another Canadian jurisdiction. For a

detailed explanation on the MOU and the LOU, please visit the Apprenticeship Registration website page at <http://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/app/registration/index.html>.

Submit the application and required documentation to the ATCD as per the instructions noted on the application.

3. **Register:** Your documentation will be reviewed by an **Apprenticeship Program Officer (APO)** from the ATCD to ensure it is ready for registration.
4. **Receive a Registration Card and an Apprenticeship Logbook:** After the **Application for Apprenticeship** and accompanying documentation are approved, you will be a registered apprentice and will receive a notification of acceptance, along with an apprenticeship registration card and a logbook.

### Can I become a registered apprentice in NL if I am working in another province or territory?

**Atlantic Apprentice Mobility:** Apprentices may need or choose to work in another province in order to continue their apprenticeship program. Under this agreement, registered apprentices can work **temporarily** in any of the four (4) Atlantic Provinces. The hours and workplace skills accumulated will be reviewed, and upon approval, will be recognized by the apprentice's home province for credit towards their apprenticeship. Apprentices would be able to continue to access funding and block/level training in their home province and complete the apprenticeship under their home province's requirements.

**National Apprentice Mobility:** Under this agreement, apprentices will be able to pursue jobs anywhere in Canada, facilitating their ability to work **temporarily** or move **permanently** without interruption to their apprenticeship training. Registered apprentices would receive recognition for hours worked and other training completed regardless of the jurisdiction in which they were completed. The protocol applies to apprentices and recent graduates of post-secondary trades programs who are moving permanently or temporarily to another province.

Please visit the [ATCD website](#) for detailed information on both agreements.

### What is Atlantic and National Trade Harmonization?

The goal of the [Atlantic and National Trade Harmonization](#) projects is to improve labor and apprentice mobility across Canada. To achieve this, it is essential to provide greater consistency in apprenticeship and certification requirements in the areas of training, required hours and trade names.

NL is an active participant in the harmonization initiatives which includes the [Atlantic Apprenticeship Harmonization Project \(AAHP\)](#) for the Atlantic Provinces and the [Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship Harmonization](#) for jurisdictions across Canada.

### What is a logbook?

A [logbook](#) is a written record of an apprentice's progress through an apprenticeship. It contains the in-school training completed, the work skills obtained on the job, and the total number of hours worked in the trade.

## What can I expect to be paid as an apprentice or a certified journeyperson?

An apprentice is paid a percentage of the wage that a certified journeyperson receives at the same company. Your salary may increase each year based on your work progress and the block/level training completed.

For a journeyperson, wage rates vary depending on the trade, place of employment and experience.

## What is a designated trade? What designated trades are offered in Newfoundland and Labrador?

Under the terms of the Canadian Constitution, each province and territory has exclusive responsibility for all levels of education. Appropriate legislation permits each jurisdiction to designate trades for apprenticeship. The [designated trades](#) in NL are governed by provincial legislation under the [Apprenticeship and Certification Act](#).

## What is a compulsory certification trade?

Through consultation with industry and government legislative bodies, the PACB determined that some [designated trades](#) involve work where public or employee safety could be at risk. These specific trades are [compulsory certification trades](#), and people working in those trades must have a Certificate of Qualification or be a registered apprentice.

There are currently five (5) compulsory certification trades:

- Boom Truck Operator
- Construction Electrician
- Mobile Crane Operator
- Residential Electrician
- Tower Crane Operator

## What is a voluntary (optional) certification trade?

[Designated trades](#) that have no legislated requirements for Journeypersons to possess a Certificate of Qualification or a worker to be registered as an apprentice are [voluntary \(optional\) certification trades](#).

## Can I be a registered apprentice in more than one designated trade?

You can only be registered in **one** trade at any one time. To pursue apprenticeship in another designated trade, an apprentice can choose to either become certified in the first trade or cancel the apprenticeship before registering for a second trade.

## What is Entry-Level Training?

Entry-level programs are offered by public and private post-secondary training institutions and provide students with theoretical and practical knowledge in specific trades areas. Most programs involve formal, institution-based instruction lasting approximately 9 months.

Entry-level students are NOT apprentices. Upon successful completion of an entry-level program, graduates who find appropriate employment may become registered apprentices. Their entry-level program will be reviewed by an APO and the hours completed during their program may be credited towards an apprenticeship.

## **What is Block/Level Training?**

Block/Level Training is a period of in-school training with an established set of hours per block/level that every registered apprentice must attend if it is a requirement of their particular trade. Block/Level training is scheduled for the apprentice by the APO once an apprentice acquires a specific number of employment hours.

An applicant registering as an apprentice after completing an entry-level program (pre-employment) will receive credit for block 1/level 1 and progress to the next block/level of training. If the entry-level program (pre-employment) has not been completed upon registration as an apprentice, block 1/level 1 will have to be completed prior to the next block/level of training being arranged.

## **Can I complete Block/Level training courses online?**

For information on completing in-school training courses online, please contact your APO.

## **Is funding available for Block/Level training in NL for registered apprentices? Is funding available for out-of-province Block/Level training if it is not offered in NL?**

Registered apprentices who are permanent residents of NL and who are EI eligible may qualify for EI benefits while attending block/level training.

Out-of-province training is assessed by the ATCD on an individual basis in conjunction with other agencies and/or organizations. Please contact the nearest [Industrial Training office](#) for further information.

Information about other financial supports can be found at [Job Search and Financial Supports](#).

## **What is a Certificate of Qualification?**

A Certificate of Qualification verifies that a tradesperson has mastered all of the required skills set by industry, has met the criteria for that trade and has successfully completed the Provincial/Interprovincial examination.

## **What is a Certificate of Apprenticeship?**

A Certificate of Apprenticeship is issued to registered apprentices who have met all the requirements as set out in a Plan of Training for a trade and has successfully completed all mandatory examinations.

## What is the Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program?

The Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program, commonly known as the Red Seal Program, is the Canadian standard of excellence for skilled trades. The Red Seal Program was established to create national standards for certain trades that are common to most jurisdictions. Trades approved for Red Seal status are called [designated Red Seal trades](#).

The Red Seal Program and the designation of trades as Red Seal is the responsibility of the [Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship \(CCDA\)](#). The Director of the Division of Apprenticeship and Trades Certification is the NL representative on this council.

The Red Seal Program promotes a highly skilled, mobile trade workforce in Canada.

## What is an Interprovincial Red Seal Examination?

Interprovincial [Red Seal examinations](#) are used to determine whether apprentices and experienced tradespersons meet the national standard in a Red Seal trade. The interprovincial examination is developed by trade experts from all jurisdictions where a trade is designated as red seal.

Tradespersons who meet the Red Seal standards receive a [Red Seal endorsement](#) on their provincial/territorial Certificate of Qualification.

## What is a Practical Examination?

Some trades require a practical examination to be completed **in advance** of the theoretical examination. A practical examination is an evaluation to assess an individual's practical, hands-on skills in a broad cross-section of the trade. Individuals will be expected to perform tasks in a practical examination to a journeyperson level.

NL has four (4) designated trades with a practical requirement that must be successfully completed by an apprentice or trade qualifier or both prior to writing the theoretical certification examination. These are:

- Hairstylist (practical exam to be completed by both apprentices and trade qualifiers)
- Welder (practical exam to be completed by both apprentices and trade qualifiers)
- Cook (practical exam to be completed by a trade qualifier only)
- Machinist (practical exam to be completed by a trade qualifier only)

## What is the Interprovincial Standards Examination Committee (ISEC)?

ISEC is a working committee that reports to the [CCDA](#). This committee is responsible for the ongoing development of Red Seal standards and the interprovincial examinations based on those standards. ISEC sets guidelines for administrative and security procedures related to Red Seal products. It keeps industry active in the apprenticeship process by seeking their participation and input on trade designation and product development. The ISEC is also tasked with completing annual work plans to ensure current standards and exams according to industry requirements.

## What are Provincial Plans of Training?

A Plan of Training details the full scope of learning for a trade, including in-school training and industry experiences required to write an interprovincial (IP) or provincial examination.

Each [Plan of Training](#) contains:

- entrance requirements;
- apprenticeship term;
- duration of in-school and on-the-job training;
- course content;
- course designation as entry level or advanced level;
- provincial trade name; and
- tools and equipment required to support the delivery of the program.

## What is an Atlantic Apprenticeship Curriculum Standard (AACS)?

The goal of all four (4) apprenticeship authorities in Atlantic Canada is to have a common curriculum standard for all designated trades. An AACS is based on National Occupational Analyses (NOA), Interprovincial Program Guides (IPG) and extensive industry consultation. An AACS represents the minimum content to be delivered for a harmonized trade in Atlantic Canada. Jurisdictional plans of training must align with AACSs as they are developed.

## What is a National Occupational Analyses (NOA)?

The [NOA](#) outlines everything that a tradesperson needs to know about their trade. This includes:

- trade activities (tasks and sub-tasks)
- skills and knowledge requirements
- essential skills
- safety information
- trends affecting the trade
- technical terms
- names of tools and equipment
- acronyms

Each NOA sets the Canadian standard for a Red Seal trade. Provincial and territorial apprenticeship training programs may be built upon the NOA. Additionally, Red Seal Examinations are based on the NOA.

## What is an Exchange Certificate or a Letter of Equivalency?

Exchange certificates or letters of equivalency are issued by the ATCD at the request of a certified journeyman after the skills, knowledge and time requirements of a designated trade have been certified by the appropriate authorities in **another** jurisdiction as being equivalent to the same requirements in NL.

## What is certification renewal?

Each NL Certificate of Qualification has an expiry date. Journeypersons wishing to have their Certificate renewed must complete the [Request for Renewal, Exchange or Replace of a Certificate of Qualification or Power Engineering Certificate](#) and pay the applicable [fee](#).

## If in-school training is not provided for a designated trade, can I still become a certified Journeyperson?

To become certified as a journeyperson in a designated trade where training is **not** provided, you need approval to challenge a certification examination, if available (see [designated trades](#)). To obtain approval, you must:

- work an established number of hours of industry experience in that trade;
- complete an [Application to be Examined](#) and a [Record of Work Experiences](#) form; and
- submit the documents to the ATCD for approval.

## What is Post-Journeyperson Training?

Post-journeyperson training is enhanced skills training provided outside of the **Provincial Plans of Training** for those who hold journeyperson certification. You are eligible for post-journeyperson training if you are a qualified journeyperson and have worked or are working in your designated trade. To apply for post-journeyperson training, you must contact training institutions for course availability and delivery dates or you must be referred by training institutions, employers, or trade unions.

## What is apprenticeship program accreditation?

[Apprenticeship program accreditation](#) is a process for assessing apprenticeship programs against the standards established by the PACB. Program accreditation ensures that: 1) these programs are meeting the accreditation requirements as set by the PACB; 2) the programs are following the standards as identified in the NOAs and reflected in the Provincial Plans of Training; and, 3) the graduates have the required level of competence to enter the industry job market.

Program accreditation benefits:

- the public, through industry, as they will receive high quality service from the graduates of accredited programs;
- employers by having the assurance that graduates from an accredited program have the competencies demanded by industry to meet current and future requirements;
- faculty by mandating ongoing professional development necessary to ensure their programs are current with industry requirements;
- graduates by having assurance that their education has met standards thereby adequately preparing them for employment in industry; and
- journeypersons by having the standards of their trade continually improving and ensuring the credibility of the trades is maintained.

A [list of accredited programs](#) is available for viewing on the ATCD website.