



New industry-led Polymer Apprenticeship

Award:

Bachelor of Science in Polymer Processing Technology



Introduction to Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a programme of structured education and training which formally combines work place learning in an education or training centre. This new Polymer Processing Technologist apprenticeship is aligned with the needs of the Irish plastics industry. As a result of this a Polymer Processing Technologist (apprenticeship) was developed. Apprenticeships are paid employment allowing the apprentice to “earn while they learn”.

Benefits for industry and the apprentice



- Demand Driven
- Tailored to industry needs
- Addresses and tackles skill shortages
- Job specific qualification
- Improved staff retention
- Future-proof your organisation
- Government subsidised training



- Gaining a national qualification while working
- Earning while learning
- Good career progression
- Learning in a real working environment
- Working in state of the art, high tech production facilities

Who should get involved?

- School leavers (leaving certificate)
- Existing Production Operators and Technicians who want to train or retrain in the Plastics and Polymer processing sectors and progress along NFQ to level 7.

Start dates

- First Apprentices will start in **May 2017**.

Polymer industry overview

- Ireland is now one of the largest exporters of polymer products in Europe, with annual exports of 1.7 billion euro to over 100 countries worldwide
- Each year the Irish polymer industry pays out 266 million euro in wages.
- The Irish polymer industry is well established and offers a broad range of career opportunities.

Apprenticeship

Bachelor of Science in Polymer Processing Technology

This is a three year apprenticeship programme with an approved employer. 70% of the time is spent on the job and the remaining 30% is spent in the allocated Institute of Technology.

Job profile

The Polymer Processing Technologist will be responsible for the efficient set up and operation of polymer processing lines in the fields of injection moulding, blow moulding or extrusion for the production of plastic components relevant to industry standards.

Entry requirements

Leaving Certificate (or equivalent), Grade O6 at ordinary level in 5 subjects, 2 of which must be Maths and a language (English or Irish).

Timelines and Course modules

Year 1		
Phase 1 Industry May – Aug	Phase 2 College Sep – Dec	Phase 3 Industry Jan – Apr
Year 2		
Phase 3 Industry May – Aug	Phase 4 College Sep – Dec	Phase 5 Industry Jan – Apr
Year 3		
Phase 5 Industry May – Aug	Phase 6 College Sep – Dec	Phase 7 Industry Jan – Apr
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Polymer processing	Polymer processing	Polymer processing
Maths and Eng. Science	Maths and Eng. Science	Maths and Eng. Science
Workshop and Metrology	Workshop and Metrology	Workshop and Metrology
Materials	Materials	Materials
ICT & Communications, Learning to Learn	Quality & GMP	ICT & Communications, Learning to Learn
Quality & GMP	Automation and control	Automation and control
CAD & Mould Design	CAD & Mould Design	On the job
On the job	On the job	

Some of the modules listed above contain an on-line element.

The polymer processing apprenticeship programme has been developed by Plastics Ireland (a business association within Ibec) along with Athlone Institute of Technology (coordinating provider), Institute of Technology Sligo and representatives from the plastics industry.

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- The Apprenticeship Council
- The Department of Education and Skills
- SOLAS: The Further Education and Training Authority
- The Higher Education Authority

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