



**Post of**

**Assistant Manager, Strategic Promotion and  
Stakeholder Engagement**

**in the National Apprenticeship Office**

**(Permanent)**

**Ref: 576**

**Information Booklet**

**Closing date for Applications:**

**12noon Monday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025 via [nao@cpl.ie](mailto:nao@cpl.ie)**

All candidate data is handled in accordance with the SOLAS data protection policy.

## About the National Apprenticeship Office

The National Apprenticeship Office is a new body that has been set up jointly by SOLAS and the Higher Education Authority on behalf of Government to manage, oversee and develop all aspects of the apprenticeship system. The Office is also responsible for implementing the national *Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2021-2025*. The Office will act as a single point of contact for employers, apprentices and providers in accessing information and guidance on apprenticeship.

The *Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2021-2025* was published by Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science in April 2021. Following a seven-year period of expansion 2014-2021, the Action Plan sets out a roadmap for a single integrated system of apprenticeship nationally. There are over 60 actions in the Plan, covering core objectives on the quality and positive status of apprenticeships nationally; ensuring strong industry involvement; enhanced equity of access to apprenticeship opportunities; and a single cohesive apprenticeship system which includes 'migration' of 25 craft apprenticeships into a consortium-led model.

Currently, there are over 28,400 apprentices training in Ireland, on 77+ programmes, employed by 9,500+ employers. Over 40 education and training providers around the country are involved in off-the-job training of apprentices. The Action Plan includes targets for apprenticeship registrations over the coming years; it is intended that there will be 10,000 apprentice registrations per annum by 2025. There is a pipeline of up to 25 proposed new apprenticeship programmes which are either in-development or at initial proposal stage.

Since the National Apprenticeship Office (NAO) was set up in 2022, implementation of the Action Plan for Apprenticeship has advanced significantly. The NAO has published two annual reports to-date, these are available online.

The NAO is currently advertising for some key posts via open competition. This includes an Assistant Manager Stakeholder Engagement and Promotions post. Details on the post and how to apply are set out below.

### **Assistant Manager, Strategic Promotion and Stakeholder Engagement in the National Apprenticeship Office (NAO), SOLAS**

**Status of position:** Permanent

**Organisation:** National Apprenticeship Office (NAO), employed by SOLAS.

**Location:** Blended working in NAO offices and remotely

**Grade:** 7

The National Apprenticeship Office wishes to appoint an Assistant Manager for strategic promotion and stakeholder engagement. The person in this role will lead implementation of actions in the Plan relating to strategic promotion and repositioning of apprenticeships in Ireland as well as engagement with key stakeholders who include over 9,500 employers, 28,400+ apprentices, support staff including 'SOLAS Authorised Officers', training providers, consortia coordinators and other consortia representatives, social partners, Government agencies and departments. There are an estimated 40,000 people currently involved in/participating in national apprenticeships; this community is growing month on month. The Assistant Manager for strategic promotion and stakeholder engagement will play a key role in this expansion.

In line with the deliverables in the Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2021-2025, the person appointed as Assistant Manager will take a lead in identifying and addressing employer barriers to participation in apprenticeship and increasing the number of employers using apprenticeship as a talent pipeline (KD4 & KD5); increasing the voice of under-represented cohorts in apprenticeship (KD7); monitoring and assessing targets via surveys and other forms of feedback (KD9); repositioning apprenticeships so that they are sufficiently visible, and recognised by learners and influencers (parents, family, friends, teachers, guidance counsellors) as an attractive route to qualifications and a career (KD10) and enabling apprentices will be supported to complete their programmes through clear communication, support networks and increased ownership of their learning journey (KD11).

### **Job Description**

#### **The Assistant Manager, Strategic Promotion and Stakeholder Engagement will:**

- Lead strategic marketing and promotion of apprenticeships within the National Apprenticeship Office
- Lead liaison with the SOLAS Communications team on strategic promotion of the national apprenticeship system
- Oversee management of apprenticeship public platforms and channels, including the apprenticeship.ie website, social media platforms and related promotional campaigns
- Lead implementation of actions on key stakeholder engagement and feedback
- Lead the internal team members working on strategic promotion and stakeholder engagement
- Lead the work on apprenticeship access and inclusion, including via the Access and Inclusion subcommittee of the National Apprenticeship Alliance
- Coordinate a comprehensive strategy to gather robust, periodic feedback from key stakeholders in a variety of formats, including surveys, focus groups, engagement with individual
- Carry out research, monitor and measure the effectiveness of NAO Stakeholder engagement and promotions activity
- Coordinate meetings, events and other stakeholder and promotional activities

- Develop and manage a NAO client/customer relationship management system (CRM) to streamline stakeholder interactions, tracking, and management
- Oversee effective spending of the NAO annual budget for stakeholder engagement and promotion
- Develop and implement mechanisms to monitor impact and progress in key areas of responsibility.
- Carry out any other duties deemed appropriate for the position by the Director of the National Apprenticeship Office.

## Requirements

- Minimum of 3 years' experience in strategic promotion and stakeholder engagement and ideally within tertiary education and training in Ireland
- Strong organisational and project management skills, capable of providing strategic input to programme planning and implementation and making informed decisions.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including ability to present information clearly, concisely, and confidently when speaking, and excellent report writing skills.
- Strong IT skills and experience of working with social media and web content management and analytical tools.
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Strong team player, who supports and collaborates with colleagues to achieve organisational goals
- Experience in coordinating surveys and other feedback mechanisms
- Ability to work well under pressure on multiple tasks and to achieve deadlines
- Proven ability to work on own initiative and deliver assigned goals and tasks
- Ability to prioritise and delegate work to ensure timelines are met whilst ensuring quality is achieved.

## Key Competencies for the Role

- **Leadership** - Inspiring and energising self and others to achieve personal and organisational success.

*Articulates and gives a sense of purpose and direction to the unit; delegates appropriately*

- gives the unit a sense of purpose by linking their efforts and contributions to the NAO overall vision, strategy and goals
- demonstrates a passion, high energy and accountability for achieving the desired future state
- listens without prescribing answers to ensure people feel comfortable voicing their opinions
- asks questions (rather than providing solutions) to help others make informed decisions
- delegates full authority and gives latitude to the individuals/team to do the job in their own way
- takes leadership responsibility for issues, inside and outside of his/her portfolio
- uses realistic but positive language to inspire others and make them feel part of a highly successful team.

- **Communication** - Exchanging information and ideas with others to promote effective discussion and decision making; promoting 2-way communication.

*Proactively and consistently communicates within the unit, across NAO/SOLAS and with other stakeholders*

- takes the initiative and makes consistent and regular two-way communication a priority in the unit
- finds reasons to walk around to talk to people, being visible and available
- prepares and delivers engaging and motivating presentations
- considers other peoples' opinions, adapting the message to demonstrate respect for the audience
- Considers internal and external stakeholders to ensure effective communication with all

- **Results-focused and business-aware** - Maintaining a focus on the important issues to achieve and improve results and awareness of and applying sound business principles and effective operational practices to drive successful outcomes.

*Keeps current, builds effective business cases and seeks opportunities to raise NAO performance to meet organisational goals*

- keeps abreast of NAO/SOLAS's overall business and shares the information with his/her unit
- considers decisions from a business perspective to ensure economic viability
- uses financial information to evaluate options and opportunities
- builds effective business cases, separating the main issues, highlighting benefits, providing realistic cost and time estimations etc.
- pushes self and others for high value results, not just activity
- checks-in with individuals and asks them to do the same, holding people accountable for milestones and achieving results.

- **Developing self and others** - Finding ways to keep skills current and maintain up-to-date knowledge of specific and broad-range topics; providing developmental opportunities to others and taking ownership for own learning and others.

*Takes an active role in guiding others in their developmental activities*

- makes time to discuss career aspirations with team members
- identifies developmental opportunities for team members (e.g. cross-functional projects)
- acts as champion and sponsor for high performing team members
- volunteers individuals for organisational projects even where the team is disadvantaged in the short-term
- acts as a mentor to individuals at various levels within the NAO.

- **Learner and stakeholder focus** - Maintaining learner/ stakeholder focus, understanding their needs, providing realistic commitments and taking responsibility for delivering on those commitments.

*Juggles multiple resources to best meet the needs of students or clients*

- continuously updates the team with learner/stakeholder information enabling them to provide the most effective service
- reallocates resources as appropriate to best meet learner/stakeholder needs
- persuasively lobbies for additional resources where necessary to meet learner/stakeholder needs
- challenges individuals to look at issues through the eyes of the learner/stakeholder
- considers the needs of both the learner/stakeholder and the overall organisation and finds mutually acceptable solutions.

- **Thinking big** - Generating and implementing creative solutions to achieve NAO Strategic goals, conceptualising and articulating future opportunities and trends.

*Scans the environment for potential opportunities, engaging individuals in the development of innovative yet achievable goals and work plans.*

- scans the economic, academic, business and/or technical environment to spot opportunities and plan for future needs
- analyses emerging trends and threats over the longer term and effectively interprets this information to demonstrate the potential for the NAO
- focuses the team's attention on the importance of the bigger, longer term picture rather than the immediate
- challenges fundamental and traditional assumptions and encourages others to do the same.

## Pay

The salary scale for this position is that for public servants at Grade 7 as of 01 Mar 2025 as follows:

11 point scale - Min point on scale: €72,970

Max point on scale: €92,343

**Salary:** The appointment will be made on the salary scale at a point in line with current Government Pay Policy. New entrants to the Civil or Public Sector, as defined in Circular 18/2010, will commence on the first point of the salary scale. Different pay and conditions may apply if, immediately prior to appointment, the appointee is a serving civil or public servant.

**Annual Leave:** Annual leave will be 30 working days. This leave is exclusive of public holidays.

**Hours of Attendance:** Working hours are in accordance with the standard arrangements for government agencies including SOLAS and the HEA and will equate to no less than a 35 hours (net of rest breaks) per week.

No additional payment will be made for extra attendance as the rate of remuneration payable covers any exceptional extra attendance liability that may arise from time to time.

**Location:** Office premises for the National Apprenticeship Office are in SOLAS headquarters, Castleforbes House, Dublin 1. The location of the office premises may change; however, they will continue to be in Dublin. A Blended Working policy is in place and an arrangement is available for request with this role, with a minimum of 2 days per week in the office. One of the days must be a Tuesday. Please note that as a public sector employee, you must work in the Irish jurisdiction to avail of blended working, and in accordance with Department Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) requirements, you must be available to attend in person if and when required. SOLAS headquarters is currently based in Castleforbes House, Dublin 1.

**Tenure:** This is a permanent post in the National Apprenticeship Office, employed by SOLAS.

**Probation:** A probation period of 9 months applies to this role.

### **Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER):**

It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that Scheme, are not eligible to

apply for another position in the same employment or the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

### **Declaration**

Applicants are required to declare in writing whether they have previously availed of a Public Service scheme of incentivised early retirement. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service employment.

### **How to apply for this Post:**

An application can be made by submitting the National Apprenticeship Office application form which accompanies this competition booklet no later than **12 noon on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025**, to [recruitment@nao.ie](mailto:recruitment@nao.ie).

Applications cannot be accepted after the closing date and must be made using the application form provided to the email address above.

### **Selection Process:**

The selection may include shortlisting of candidates based on the information contained in their application and by (i) interview and (ii) satisfactory references (referees will not be contact without the candidate's prior agreement). Candidates may be required to attend a second interview.

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to this position SOLAS will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary to determine the suitability of that candidate. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed a final determination cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made.

Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it or if an additional vacancy arises SOLAS may, at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of the selection process.