

ACCOUNTING TECHNICIAN APPRENTICESHIP

QQI Level 6 Advanced Certificate in Accounting

Employer Information Guide







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About the National Accounting Technician Apprenticeship

The Accounting Technician Apprenticeship Programme is a two-year, work-based learning education training programme which is delivered by Accounting Technicians Ireland in partnership with a range of local Further Education Colleges and registered Apprenticeship employers.

Accounting Technicians Ireland is the leading professional body for Accounting Technicians on the island of Ireland providing national and internationally recognised professional Accounting qualifications. With offices in Dublin and Belfast, and strong links with Chartered Accountants Ireland and other accountancy bodies, we supply in demand high-calibre Accounting Technician graduates to a range of different sectors including industry, practice, financial services and the public sector. Many will stay on working with their Apprenticeship Employer after and progress on to the highest levels in their field. We have an established Community of Practice of over 10,000 students and members across the island of Ireland.

Since established in 2018 there has been 965 job opportunities created through the Accounting Technician Apprenticeship programme through partnership with over 554 employers that have hired apprentices across a number of different sectors.

Each year two intakes for this bespoke programme: September and January.

The structure of the apprenticeship programme ensures that the training and education delivered to apprentices are grounded for the needs of accountancy in the evolving workplace.

The culture of apprenticeship learning and development prepares apprentices to be adaptable, flexible, self-motivated and capable to manage change.

The programme prepares the apprentices to meet the challenges of future developments in the occupation and the workplace by equipping them with the necessary skills, knowledge and competence.

The alternating training of this programme generally comprises of **one day** off-the-job training and education in a local college and **four days** on-the-job training in the workplace.



“At Roberts Nathan, our Financial Services department consider Accounting Technicians as integral members of our team. The hybrid approach to completing the apprenticeship with the ATI, comprising of both college and workplace training, proves to be very practical and effective. The apprenticeship programme offers a very valuable pathway for career progression which we fully support.”

Susan Lennon, Financial Outsourcing Manager

Apprentices get paid minimum wage of at least €24,765 per annum by the employer and college tuition is fully funded by SOLAS.

The programme is aimed at new entrants to the industry including leaving cert students, school leavers, graduates, mature learners, career changers and existing employees looking to upskill and complete a lifelong learning qualification. Graduates will attain a QQI Level 6 Advanced Certificate in Accounting.



Employers: How will your company benefit?

The range of skills, knowledge and competencies obtained by Accounting Technician Apprentices means graduates are capable of fulfilling various accounting and finance roles across all sectors of the economy.

Our talented Accounting graduates offer cost-effective staffing solutions for industry, practice and the public sector in a time of specific skills shortage within this field of the labour market.

The Accounting Technician Apprenticeship is tailor-made for organisations that need well-skilled, committed, loyal accounting and finance staff with the capacity to develop their career to a senior level.

Employers can recruit from a distinguished high calibre talent pool including leaving cert students, school-leavers, college graduates, career changers, and mature learners that are progressed to them after first being screened by ATI.


Existing staff looking to update and advance their knowledge for the future can also apply once their employer signs on as a registered apprenticeship employer.

Employers can opt to highlight their participation to hire an apprentice on their company website (and include the application link from our website) to add awareness and to attract near by applicants from their own local region to apply for this programme.

Candidates will bring many significant values to organisations as they progress through the programme from beginner to fully qualified Accounting Technician.

Additional values of the Accounting Technician Apprenticeship:

- ATI assesses prospective trainees to explore their expectations, aspirations, capabilities and skills for developing a career in Accounting.
- Employers have access to a range of high calibre applicants with no recruitment cost to develop their skill's base.
- Increased employee retention as apprentices can go on to qualify as full accountants within a 5 year time frame (2 years apprenticeship +3 year professional training contract).
- Simultaneous learning value as college learning is applied to on-the-job requirements of the role.
- Learning from the bottom up, employees develop an excellent understanding of the business and can bring this into future management roles.
- Many apprentices will excel to work across a number of areas for the employer.
- The programme which is annually updated, prepares apprentices to meet the challenge of future developments in their occupation and workplace by equipping them with relevant accounting specialist skills, knowledge and competencies.
- Strengthens an employer's corporate and social responsibility strategies by offering employment with training into entry level jobs and access to a profession within local communities.
- Can contribute to the diversity and productivity of the business and to the promotion of a corporate culture which emphasizes continuous learning and innovation amongst all employees.



“We chose to take on an apprentice due to significant continued growth in our practice. We specialise in providing bookkeeping, accounting and taxation services to the medical profession and decided it would be more beneficial to train someone in this area, from the ground up. The process of taking on an apprentice was a very straightforward one and made even easier by the assistance we received from Accounting Technicians Ireland along the way. We would definitely recommend it to other employers who may be considering this route.”

Adam Tierney, Chartered Accountant, BCC Accountants Ltd

Apprenticeship Employer Grant



The Employer Grant was introduced as part of the national Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2021-2025 which is administered by the newly established National Apprenticeship Office.

Apprenticeship employers are eligible to receive a €2,000 grant annually for each registered apprentice, which was effective from 01 January 2022. This includes apprentices who were registered 2019-2021 and who continue in employment as of 01 January 2022.

The grant to employers is paid in arrears in 2 payments of €1,000 per apprentice annually, in May-June and November-December which employers will need to apply for each time.

To attain this employer grant an employer will need to ensure they are first registered as an apprenticeship employer. Not yet an apprenticeship employer?

You can submit an expression of interest and complete the process online via www.apprenticeshipjobs.ie/#/employer/register

The Apprenticeship Office in your local Education and Training Board if contacted will also be able to provide further information.

Once an apprentice has been employed, they must be registered as an apprentice with SOLAS. This is done through contact with a designated SOLAS Authorised Officer in your local Education and Training Board (ETB).



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Six reasons employers are joining and recruiting Apprentices

1

The Accounting Technician Apprenticeship is a modern, practical and supportive route to a career in accountancy where employers recruit apprentices on a two-year earn-as-you-learn programme.

2

We source high-calibre individuals interested in a career in accountancy and employers select the candidates who best fit their employment requirements with no recruitment charges.

3

Employers can tap into a vast talent pool to diversify their workforce and ensure their organisation has a skilled body of staff for accountancy and finance roles.

4


Employers can grow and nurture talented participants with the potential to become versatile accountants with wide-ranging skills, and boost their employee retention.

5

The Accounting Technician Apprenticeship leads to a Level 6 QQI Advanced Certificate in Accounting and is a National Apprenticeship funded by SOLAS. Therefore employers pay no college tuition fees.

6

Year on year apprentices are high achievers and attain top academic results



“The ATI Apprenticeship programme has been extremely beneficial for all involved. Aramark has had many apprentices and we believe they get a lot of valuable knowledge during their study but also exposure working in a company setting at the same time. These apprentices are then equipped with skills and competences which make them a great employee and able to progress within the company. We always strive for success and remarkability and being involved in this programme is a pillar to us achieving it.”

Milena Kostova, Finance Manager, Aramark

HOW IT WORKS

You register as a participating employer with ATI and must be approved by SOLAS. We source, screen and process applications on your behalf, based on our minimum programme entry criteria*

You select candidates for interview and offer successful applicants a two-year apprenticeship contract for the programme commencing in September

During term time your apprentice will work at your office four days a week and study at their local college one day a week

A qualified workplace mentor and college mentor provides the apprentice with training time and support covering all aspects of the programme

Workplace learning is assessed throughout the programme and exams are held online in May or August each year**

You can retain your fully qualified Accounting Technician, release them, or offer them the chance to continue their studies with ATI's Level 8 Apprenticeship Degree – Bsc (Hons) in Accounting Technology


You should be in a position to:

- Offer the apprentice a two-year contract which pays at least the minimum wage (€24,765¹)
- Meet all of the requirements for 'Employer Suitability to Train', sign an agreement with ATI and agree to comply with the SOLAS Code of Practice
- Ensure that the role offers participants exposure to all elements of Accounting Technicians Ireland's two-year programme
- Appoint a suitably qualified workplace mentor that is a qualified Accountant or Accounting Technician with minimum five years work experience

¹ Correct as of 20th October 2023. Employers can offer candidates a higher wage at your discretion.

* Eligibility and screening processes are detailed at <https://www.accountingtechniciansireland.ie/study-ati/accounting-technician-apprenticeship/apprenticeship-applications>. Employers have the discretion to enhance the entry requirements beyond the minimum academic standards.

**Employers are free to commence the contract before the programme start date, however the contract must run for the entire duration of the apprenticeship programme.



“The maturity, diverse backgrounds and experience of the candidates on the apprenticeship is the key reason IBC uses the scheme. The parallel learning and practical application in the workplace is particularly valuable, hugely effective and efficient. After qualification the apprentice is well prepared for the world of work.”

Michael McKeon, Managing Director, Intelligent Building Controls

“The programme offers the apprentices the opportunity to gain high quality teaching and learning and the college experience while at the same time acquiring a leading professional qualification through work-based learning. They'll embed and strengthen the skills they acquire through their practical experience of work.”


Jean FitzGerald, Principal, Coláiste Íde

ATA Recruitment Process

- Applicants apply online, attach all relevant requested information and are screened by the ATI Apprenticeship Team.
- All applicants who meet the minimum programme entry requirements are then invited to complete a pre-recorded video interview by the ATI Apprenticeship Team.
- The progressed applications, attached documentation and video interview receive a final review by ATI's Apprenticeship Team, which signs off on all applicants progressing to employers.
- The progressed applications and video interviews are separated per region and are made visible to all registered Apprenticeship employers within that region for review.

- Employers receive access to review applications in their region from April to September.
- Employers select any applicants they wish to interview. Employers notify ATI when selecting applicants for interview.
- Employers contact selected applicants and arrange interviews directly with them.
- Employers interview selected applicants.
- Employers decide on who they wish to extend offer to and who are unsuccessful.
- Employers are encouraged to provide unsuccessful applicants with self-development feedback.
- Employers extend verbal offer to applicant(s) they wish to take on for the programme.
- Employers follow up with applicant for decision and sends letter of appointment if accepted.
- Employers update ATI on any offers accepted and on unsuccessful applicants after every round of interviews.
- Employers will provide an employment contract to successful applicant(s) after guidelines from ATI are received.

- ATI will contact applicants who have received offer from employer. They will be registered with the partner college they are allocated by ATI, with SOLAS as an Accounting Technician Apprentice and then invited to attend the ATI programme and college induction.

A grayscale photograph of a woman in profile, wearing a headset with a microphone, working at a desk. A laptop screen in front of her shows a video call with a smiling woman. The background is a bookshelf filled with books. A large, semi-transparent purple circle is overlaid on the image, containing text.

“We decided to take on apprentices to provide support to our qualified accountants who produce statutory accounts for our clients. The apprentice system provides a cost effective method of providing this support. The direct education costs are not borne by the employer. We have found that the apprenticeship programme has provided candidates who are task focused, efficient and willing to learn. In our experience we found that apprentices have progressed quickly and become an integral part of the team. We would have no hesitation in recommend other employers to take on an apprentice. An apprentice will be a continuing part of our staffing model into the future.”

Eoin O’Riordan, Director Leahy O’Riordan

Additional Guidance Tips for Employers

If an employer wishes to upskill a member of staff, they need to update ATI of their contact details so we can inform that staff member to apply on the ATI website under apprenticeship and select apply now to complete the online application form.

To become an approved employer on the apprenticeship programme, you must first express interest on the SOLAS website <https://www.apprenticeshipjobs.ie/#/employer/register> and then complete the registration forms that ATI provide.

Once an employer has successfully signed up for the apprenticeship programme ATI will invite employers to review the progressed applicants that have met minimum programme entry and screening requirements.

Employers will attain access to available applicants around their region which will consist of the applicant's CV, and video interview responses.

By reviewing applicant's video interview responses, this can give the employer a great idea of the applicant's strengths, weaknesses and a more informed decision if they would be a good fit for their company.

If an employer has limited time for reviewing they may only focus on the CV of applicants.

For an employer that hires an applicant before college commences in September the apprentice may work with that employer five days a week.

Apprentices are entitled to a maximum of three weeks paid study leave which includes their exam dates. We highly recommend employers to meet with their apprentice as early as possible at the start of the academic year to agree dates and to ensure appropriate work cover while the apprentice is on leave those days.

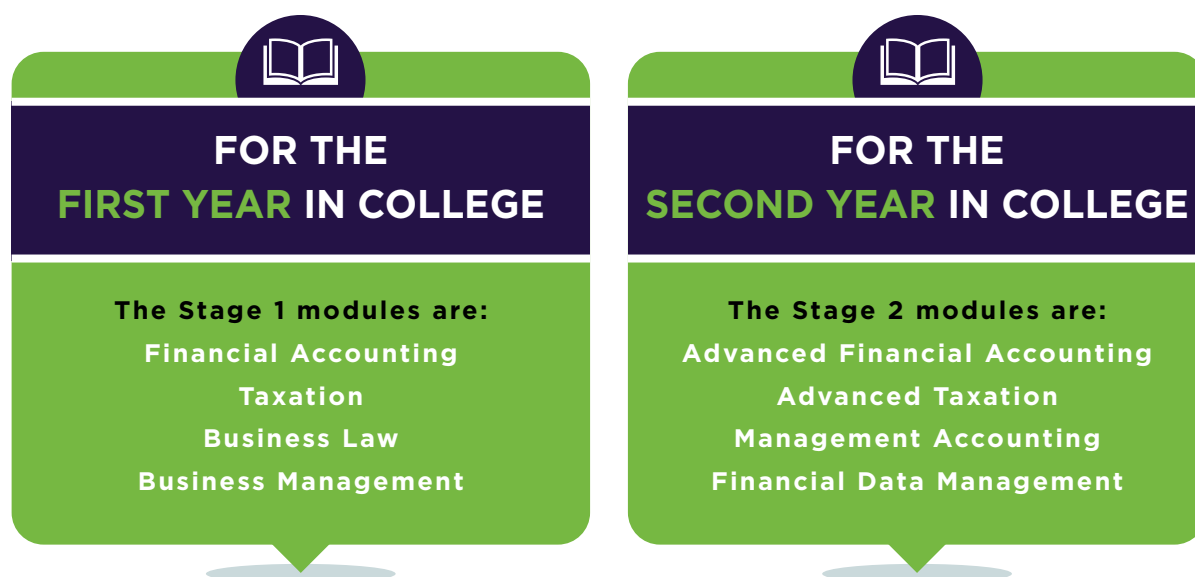


“The Accounting Technician Apprenticeship has opened up opportunities for students and introduced them to the workplace with a combination of classroom and practical experience. From an employer perspective we have benefited from the progression through the accounting course so it is a win win for both student and employer.”

Gerry Kelly. CEO, Aviation Services

Programme Overview and Role of Workplace Mentor

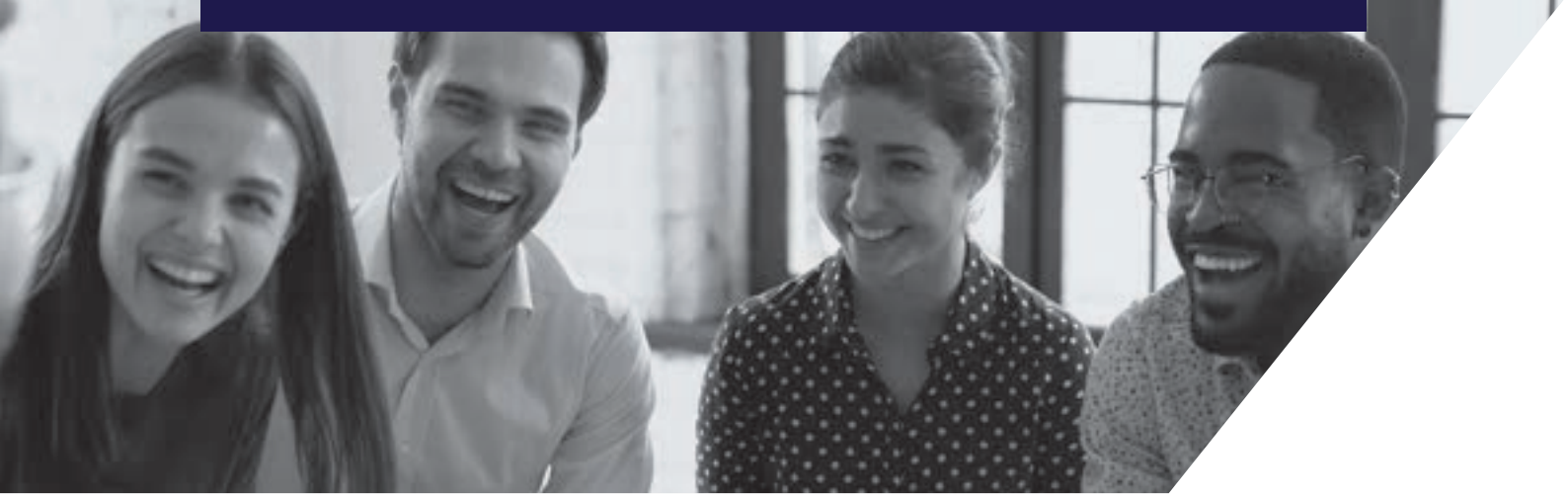
The on-the-job apprenticeship training lasts for 104 weeks based on a two year employment contract and takes place with the employer 4 days a week in term time and 5 days a week outside term time.



Assessment is carried out 'through a combination of written examinations and graded work based tasks for each module as follows:

MODULE	EXAMINATION	WORK BASED TASKS
Financial Accounting	70%	30% (2 x 15%)
Business Management	70%	30% (2 x 15%)
Taxation	100%	
Business Law	100%	
Advanced Financial Accounting	70%	30% (2 x 15%)
Advanced Taxation	100%	
Management Accounting	100%	
Financial Data Management	50%	50% (2 x 25%)

- Exams for each module will take place online in May with an opportunity for repeats in August of each year.
- There will also be a requirement to complete four work based submissions per year. The apprentice will need to submit four completed and approved work based tasks by set submission deadlines each year.



Throughout the two years with an employer an apprentice will need to be assigned a dedicated workplace mentor to oversee and support them in their on the job training.

The mentor will need to be a qualified professional accountant or accounting technician.

The main **responsibilities** of the workplace mentor are as follows:

- Be responsible for the training of the apprentice;
- Make sure the apprentice settles in, is introduced to their colleagues and peers and becomes familiar with their surroundings.
- Ensure the apprentice has adequate exposure to relevant work experience for the programme.
- Agree a customised Training Plan with the apprentice at the beginning of each year.
- Ensure that their apprentice is able to adequately review their work-experience for assessment purposes.
- Review the apprentice's completed four work place assessment tasks per year.
- Provide pastoral care in the workplace on an ongoing basis and bring any support needed or concerns to ATI.
- Meet their apprentice formally every 10-12 weeks for periodic review meetings to review the apprentice's progress, provide development feedback, and modify the agreed Training Plan where necessary.
- Ensure their apprentice submits successfully the approved four workplace assessment tasks per year in line with the programme timetable and submission deadlines.
- Review the apprentice is on track with study preparation each year towards their exams and for any repeat exams.
- Meet with an ATI representative/college mentor periodically to update on their apprentice and collaborate to foster their apprentice's potential to succeed.



Partner Colleges

The Accounting Technician Apprenticeship is in partnership with the following colleges:

- Birr Further Education and Training Centre
- Blackrock Further Education Institute
- Bray Institute of Further Education
- Coláiste Íde College of Further Education
- Cork College of Further Education
- Dunboyne College of Further Education
- Galway Technical Institute
- Limerick College of Further Education
- Mayo College of Further Education
- Monaghan Institute
- Rathmines College of Further Education
- Waterford College of Further Education

Next Step

Visit ATI's website and select **Apprenticeship study option** to register interest to hire an Apprentice:

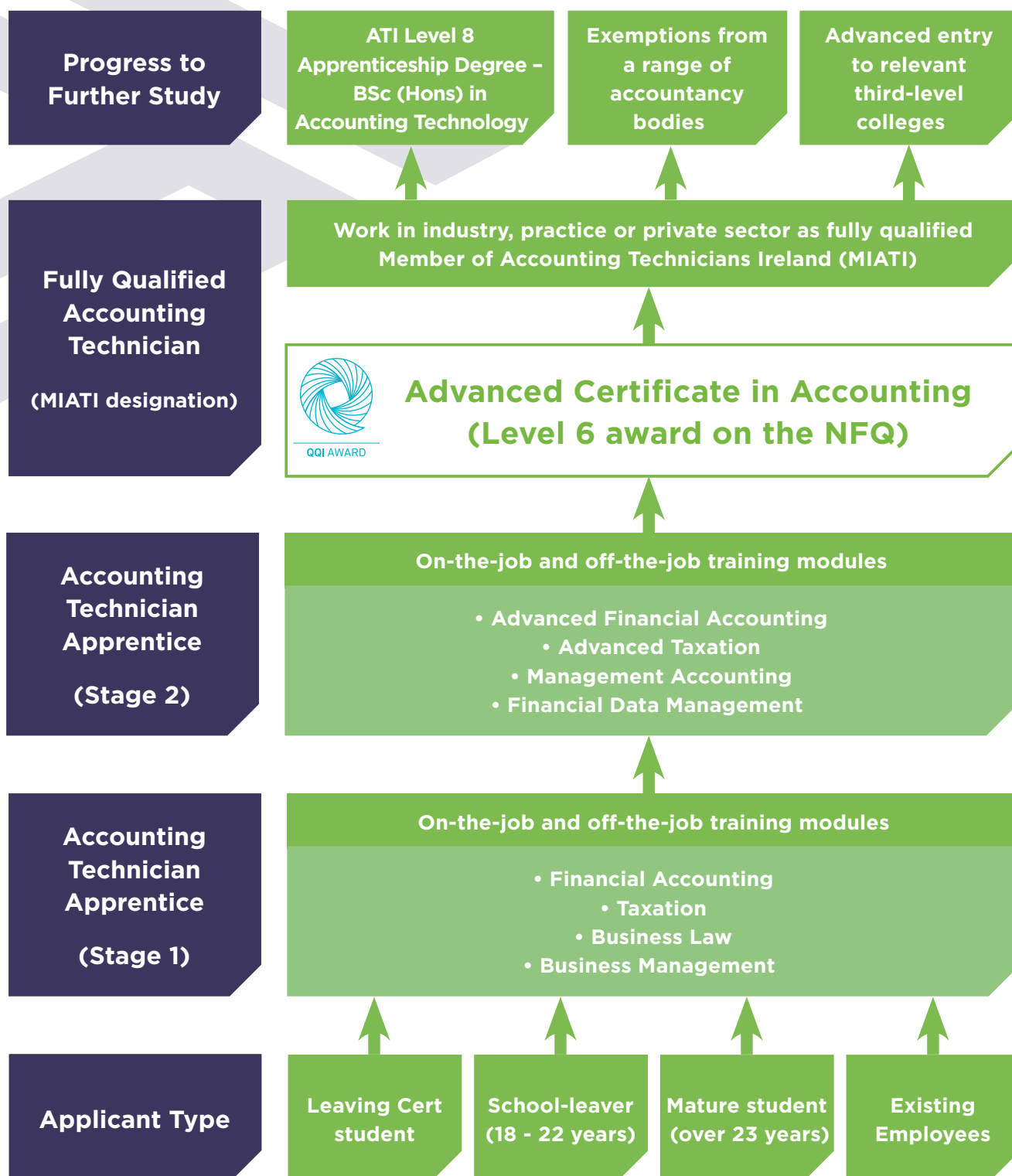
<https://www.accountingtechniciansireland.ie/study-ati/accounting-technician-apprenticeship/employ-an-apprentice>

Contact Us

 **www.accountingtechniciansireland.ie**  **01 649 8191**
 **apprenticeship@accountingtechniciansireland.ie**

ACCOUNTING TECHNICIAN APPRENTICESHIP

PROFESSIONAL CAREER PATHWAY



Accounting Technician Apprenticeship

The Accounting Technician Apprenticeship Programme leads to a Level 6 QQI Advanced Certificate Award.



**Accounting
Technicians**
Ireland

DUBLIN OFFICE

CA House, 47-49 Pearse Street, Dublin 2

Tel: 01 649 8100

email: enquiry@accountingtechniciansireland.ie

BELFAST OFFICE

The Linenhall, 32-38 Linenhall Street, Belfast BT2 8BGT

Tel: 028 20 462165

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