

Northern Ireland

As the Sector Skills Council for land-based and environmental industries, Lantra in Northern Ireland is supporting our industries in developing a highly skilled workforce capable of competing in today's local and global economy. Lantra aims to improve productivity, business performance and reduce skills gaps by continuously enhancing the quality and availability of training and skills development opportunities.

What Lantra has done for businesses and individuals:

- In conjunction with a range of education providers and the Department for Employment and Learning, Lantra has promoted careers information for the sector to universities, colleges and schools across Northern Ireland.
- Lantra CourseFinder, supported by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development continues to assist individuals and businesses search for appropriate training at the nearest provider. Since its inception, use of the system has rapidly grown, with a recorded 9% increase in the uptake of training in the sector in Northern Ireland.
- Hosted a 'Business Development' seminar to provide specialist information and business advice on issues such as finance management, recruitment and staffing, and funding opportunities available through the Rural Development Programme.
- In conjunction with the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise, Lantra secured funding from the Department for Employment and Learning to support the NI landscape gardening team compete in the UK Skills competition.
- Ongoing work relating to the review of National Occupational Standards (NOS) has taken place in Northern Ireland across a range of industries.
- Hosted a 'Land Management' seminar in conjunction with the University of Ulster to facilitate knowledge exchange with industry in relation to water quality and land management issues.
- In conjunction with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development carried out an analysis of skills needs within the environmental and land-based sector which will be used to help shape the development of DARD's education strategy.
- In conjunction with the Department for Employment and Learning, Lantra undertook a number of projects. These included:
 - Benchmarking the skills needs of environmental conservation organisations – this work included information on training issues such as competencies and experience across a range of job levels.
 - Working in conjunction with the Fencing Contractors' Association to analyse the level of skills and skills gaps in the fencing industry in Northern Ireland.
 - Reviewing environmental and land-based apprenticeship frameworks to assess whether they are meeting the needs of both employers and apprentices.



David Seffen, Lantra's Northern Ireland Partnership Manager and Paula Smyth, Marketing, Communications and Project Co-ordinator

Lantra Skills Ambassador, Michael Pollock of Beechill Landscapes, Belfast, says:

"It is imperative that we constantly re-address our business skills requirements, and in today's economic climate it is even more important. There will be an obvious tendency to cut back on our training budgets, however, I would urge industry not to slash funds but to re-evaluate where budgets are to be spent in order to be prepared for the upturn in the economy."

Contact Lantra Northern Ireland
The Business Centre, Unit C12
80-82 Rainey Street, Magherafelt
Co Londonderry BT45 5AJ

Tel: 028 7963 1304
Fax: 028 7930 1061
Email: ni@lantra.co.uk



Skillbuild NI competition



Michelle Gildernew, Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development with Lantra staff

Looking ahead...

- Promote the Skills Manager tool to both individuals and organisations to recognise skills, identify skills gaps to steer staff development and recruitment programmes, and help individuals develop their careers.
- Engage with careers advisers to help change their perception of the industry from being low-skilled with poor prospects, to an important industry requiring a highly skilled workforce, offering diverse career opportunities with progression.
- Continue to assist training providers to match the needs of the industry with relevant courses to help improve training delivery.
- To take forward Lantra's Skills Ambassador Programme within Northern Ireland to deliver Lantra's key messages and promote skills development to a widespread audience.
- To encourage more training providers to list their courses on Lantra's online CourseFinder, which provides quick and easy access to courses – from industry specific training to management, health and safety and IT courses.
- Support the Rural Development Programme, in particular Axes 1 and 3 which are aligned with Lantra's strategic objectives, including actions on skilling and re-skilling, to support wider economic development.



Lantra Skills Ambassadors

Helping assess, record and find the skills industry need ...

Skills Manager – a unique online tool that allows employers, employees and volunteers to assess their own skills and record practical experiences, achievements and qualifications. Skills Manager facilitates the identification of skills gaps, allowing training and development planning and documenting.

National Student Database – bridging the gap between further education and the world of work. The National Student Database enables new entrants to record all aspects of their education and work experience in a form that can be used by employers selecting new entrants for job vacancies.

Job Shop – allows employers to compare their job vacancies needs against the recorded skills profiles of college students.



Making the difference...

Major industries in Northern Ireland

Agricultural crops
Agricultural livestock
Environmental conservation
Equine
Fencing
Floristry
Horticulture, landscaping and sports turf
Land-based engineering
Production horticulture
Veterinary nursing

Facts and figures

Over 19,000 businesses in the land-based and environmental sector in Northern Ireland*

98% of businesses in our sector employ less than ten staff**

63,300 people are employed in the sector in Northern Ireland*

1,000 new workers needed each year to meet demand for the foreseeable future***

52% of the workers in the sector are self-employed***

*Lantra Skills Assessment 2009

**Lantra estimate based on: Office of National Statistics Inter-Departmental Business Register

***Lantra estimate based on: Institute of Employment Research, Working Figures 2007-2017



Advisers at a careers event

www.lantra.co.uk

Telephone: 028 7963 1304

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