

people:skills:jobs:



Department for  
**Employment  
and Learning**  
[www.delni.gov.uk](http://www.delni.gov.uk)

# **HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM FUTURE SKILLS ACTION GROUP REVIEW**

**APRIL 2010**

## **FOREWORD**

---

As Chair of the Future Skills Action Group I am delighted with the progress that has taken place in the last year. Having stepped into the role at a stage when the Group had been established and an Action Plan was already in place, much work had taken place and I was, and still am, impressed by the commitment and determination of everyone involved.

The Group's success centres on the fact that it brings all the main stakeholders together to address identified goals that benefit the sector. As the Group demonstrates, much can be achieved if everyone plays their part. The Action Plan has enabled us as a Group to raise the profile of the sector and encourage more people to gain qualifications in this area so that local employers can access appropriately skilled people to work in their businesses.

Over the coming years, as Northern Ireland continues to grow its Hospitality and Tourism towards its full potential, it is this collective spirit between Government and Business that will enable the sector to thrive.

**STEPHEN MAGORRIAN  
CHAIR**

## **BACKGROUND**

---

The Future Skills Action Group (FSAG) was set up in November 2008 bringing together the key stakeholders with representation from government, employers and the colleges and universities. The FSAG's main aim was to identify skills issues facing the sector and to work with the Sector Skills Council, People 1st, to put in place interventions to overcome these. The remit of the FSAG covered three main areas:

- To co-ordinate existing resources and activities within the sector to meet current and future skills needs;
- To advise, design, develop, test, trial and evaluate new interventions which are able to meet existing and future skills needs within the sector; and
- To act as a 'Champion' for the sector.

The Group drew up a short term, action focussed plan entitled, 'Future Skills Action Plan for Hospitality and Tourism' to enable it to meet objectives and this was officially launched on 5 November 2009 by the Minister for Employment and Learning, Sir Reg Empey. A list of FSAG membership is at Annex A.

Based on Labour Market Information from People 1<sup>st</sup>, the action Plan focussed on three goals:

- Increasing the management and leadership skills within the workforce;
- Increasing the number of people entering the workforce with chef skills;and
- Increasing customer services skills within the workforce.

people:skills:jobs:



Department for  
**Employment  
and Learning**  
[www.delni.gov.uk](http://www.delni.gov.uk)

# The Action Plan Success to Date

## **Theme 1 – Skills Provision**

---

### **Management and Leadership**

#### Management and Leadership provision

Northern Ireland has the lowest number of managers and professionals in employment compared to the other UK regions. This evidence highlights the real need to improve general management and leadership skills among the workforce here, including the Hospitality and Tourism sector.

With this in mind the Department for Employment and Learning introduced a suite of Management and Leadership programmes to help employers meet the development needs of their managers. In addition, employers can receive 100% financial assistance towards the cost of these approved Management and Leadership courses which to date have shown NI businesses, that by simply adopting good management practices, it is possible to achieve far reaching business benefits, including increased productivity, better return on capital and more robust growth. To date 55 companies in the Hospitality and Tourism sector have availed of the 100% funding across the entire suite of management and leadership provision.

#### Hospitality and Tourism Educators Programme

The Hospitality and Tourism Educators programme launched with an initial workshop entitled 'Challenges and Strategies in Hospitality and Tourism Education and Training' in January 2010. Sixteen senior managers were recruited to participate in the programme with representation from all six colleges, the University of Ulster and a work based learning provider. The 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the programme, which

concludes in June 2010, includes three workshops. Module 2 took place in March 2010 and focussed on 'Working with Industry Stakeholders' and module 3, due to take place in April 2010, will incorporate UK best practice visits.

## **Chef Skills**

### Junior Chef Academy

The Junior Chef's Academy pilot programme for Northern Ireland has been extended with a further 12 programmes being delivered across the six colleges since September 2009. The 1<sup>st</sup> six Programmes were completed in December 2009 with all 99 students graduating. A celebration event took place in January 2010 in the Europa Hotel with over 200 attending. The event was compered by James McGinn and included a masterclass demonstration and talk by Cyrus Todiwala OBE and a cookery challenge for Junior Chef's. The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase commenced in February 2010 with 88 students enrolled. Compass Group UK and Ireland announced a funding commitment for the programme in Northern Ireland to secure the initiative for a further 2 years. Planning for a further celebration event is underway for May 2010.

### Roll out of the Professional Cookery Diploma

The Learning and Skills Development Agency NI (LSDA NI) worked through the Heads of Hospitality and Tourism to agree a project that would create a Northern Ireland brand of delivery to ensure that the industry would see consistency across all Further Education (FE) colleges in the delivery of training and assessment for the full-time Diploma. Industry would also be encouraged to contribute to assessment in all colleges.

A project team was created with members from every college, led by Belfast Metropolitan College and facilitated by an LSDA NI associate with extensive Hospitality teaching, research and project management background. Outcome targets were set and agreed. Each team member took responsibility for outcomes, and a communication and repository for resources created through the LSDA Teaching and Learning Community web portal. The project team have met three times in 2009/2010 and have also interacted remotely.

Outcomes are well on target, with considerable sharing and extensive resources agreed and developed. The final meeting of the group will complete the project and develop a comprehensive resource pack for each college to use as an Operational Standards Manual. This includes entry criteria, induction plan, schemes of work at levels 1 and 2, assessment plans, teaching resources, templates and photographic examples of graded dishes. Plans are in place to disseminate to the whole sector and this is expected to be complete by the end of March 2010. The target of 3 colleges planning to deliver the Diploma has been exceeded. All colleges now plan to offer the Diploma in September 2010.

### Chef Conversion Course

The Chef Conversion course started in March 2010 with two colleges delivering the programme, Belfast Metropolitan College and Southern Regional College. A cohort of 30 students, 15 per college will complete a 25 week course with four days in college and one day on placement with industry. Students will receive a training allowance of £120 per week for the duration of the course.

### Apprenticeships

Work is ongoing to promote and raise awareness of the Department for Employment and Learning's Apprenticeships programme through the public facing government website, NIDirect and through the Northern Ireland Careers service.

### **Customer Services**

#### Customer Service Course

Work is ongoing to develop the module for a Customer Service Course and we are in the very early stages of planning. It is anticipated that this module will be developed for delivery in the coming year.

Careers Awareness Events LSDA NI arranged Careers Events to enhance the appeal of the Hospitality and Tourism sector. They researched potential venues, met with Directors, Human Resource managers and agreed five host organisations to showcase career opportunities in Hospitality and Tourism. The organisations were located to provide a regional spread of venues. Dates were chosen to minimise disruption to the businesses.

Belfast, W5 and the Odyssey	13 <sup>th</sup> January
Newcastle, Slieve Donard Resort and Spa	2 <sup>nd</sup> February
Ballymena, Galgorm Resort and Spa	23 <sup>rd</sup> February
Enniskillen, Lough Erne Resort and Spa	9 <sup>th</sup> March
Londonderry, Da Vinci's Ramada	24 <sup>th</sup> March

An agenda for each event included a comprehensive approach from Northern Ireland Tourist Board, People 1<sup>st</sup>, an expert Ambassador and the property staff. A tour was included to provide a direct insight into job roles. The local Further Education college was invited to each event to highlight course provision to support training and career progression. Flyers were printed and circulated to schools through Education and Library Boards, Further Education colleges, Training Organisations, the Northern Ireland Careers Service and the Educational Guidance Service Authority. Links to schools were also made through the Junior Chefs Academy and the Northern Ireland Schools and Colleges Careers Association Conference.

The target number of 2030 careers teachers and advisers per event has been reached or exceeded for the first three events. Feedback on completed events has been extremely positive with praise for speakers and the opportunity to see and talk to staff first hand.

Tourism Awareness Programme Strand 1 of this project involves the development of

progression. Flyers were printed and circulated to schools through Education and Library Boards, Further Education colleges, Training Organisations, the Northern Ireland Careers Service and the Educational Guidance Service Authority. Links to schools were also made through the Junior Chefs Academy and the Northern Ireland Schools and Colleges Careers Association Conference.

The target number of 20-30 careers teachers and advisers per event has been reached or exceeded for the first three events. Feedback on completed events has been extremely positive with praise for speakers and the opportunity to see and talk to staff first hand.

#### Tourism Awareness Programme

Strand 1 of this project involves the development of an educational resource for teachers to use in schools linked with the curriculum to improve the employment status of the Tourism industry. To date, five Northern Ireland industry video case studies have been filmed, together with six individual career video profiles to feature on the resource. Development work is in progress aimed at launching the resource to teachers in May 2010.

Strand 2 of this project will see the establishment of a network of industry ambassadors to participate in career promotional activities to enhance the appeal of tourism as a provider of good quality employment in Northern Ireland. A network of 54 Ambassadors is in place to support careers promotion activities. Programme implementation is ongoing with ambassadors being matched to suitable events and further promotion of the scheme through schools. To date 15 Ambassador matching opportunities have been provided throughout Northern Ireland.

## **Theme 3 – Coordination and Communication**

---

### Industry into Education programme

The Industry into Education pilot aimed to encourage stronger links and support between industry and the Further Education sector. All colleges agreed to host two 'Industry into Education' professionals who will focus on an agreed project in two areas, preferably Hospitality and Travel / Tourism. This work with the college can be flexible to suit the availability of the industrialist over five days.

LSDA NI produced a comprehensive guidance booklet to standardise approach, recording of tasks agreed, invoicing claims and evaluation of outcomes and experience. Each college has agreed at least one placement; four colleges have agreed two placements; five projects have commenced. College managers recognise the value of these opportunities and embrace them fully. They see this as a valuable opportunity to engage with industry in a very proactive way.

### UK Skills Passport Communication System

Phase 1 of this project is aimed at supporting the integration of UK Skills Passport (UKSP) in the delivery of sector programmes. Tutor training sessions have been held across the 6 colleges and work based training providers with 42 tutors trained in the use of UKSP. An online support forum for tutors has been set up to offer feedback and support as the programme is further rolled out to students. To date 211 students have registered with nearly 40% coming from South Eastern Regional College.

Phase 2 of this project is aimed at promoting and encouraging sector employers to register as good employers and to use the UKSP as a resource to support training and development. An initial breakfast event took place in March 2010 in Fermanagh. The event was supported by key partners in the region including, Fermanagh District Council and South West Regional college. Further events are in planning for 2010.

#### The Skills Newsletter

Promotion of the Action Plan through the Department for Employment and Learning's Skills Newsletter takes place on a bi-monthly basis to communicate the progress on the various projects. Feature pieces are included to promote and celebrate developments and key milestones. A special edition 'Hospitality and Tourism' newsletter was produced in December 2009.

#### Workforce Development Forums

Work is ongoing to involve the Workforce Development Forums (WDFs) in each of the regions so that they are aware of the Action Plan and the various programmes and initiatives within it. A meeting is planned in April 2010 with the Chairs of the WDF to move this forward.

## **The Year Ahead**

---

As the FSAG approaches the end of its first year it is timely to reflect on what has been achieved and the lessons learnt. As a result the following actions are recommended for 2010/2011:

- That the Action Plan should be updated for the 2010/2011 financial year. The revisions would build on the work taken forward to date and large scale changes to the Plan would not be envisaged;
- That membership of the Group and Project Team should be reviewed to ensure that the right people are members of the group;
- That money should continue to be made available to People 1<sup>st</sup> through the Department for Employment and Learning in order to take forward aspects of the Action Plan;
- That People 1<sup>st</sup> should take over the secretariat function of the Group;
- That closer links be established with all of the Workforce Development Forums to ensure that the Hospitality and Tourism sector is appropriately represented on each;
- That local industry is encouraged to become more involved and to take an active role in assisting in the delivery of objectives within the Plan.

---

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM FUTURE  
SKILLS ACTION GROUP**

Stephen Magorrian, Botanic Inns (CHAIR)

Louise Kearney, Northern Ireland Tourist Board

Roisin McKee, People 1<sup>st</sup>

Maggie Robinson, LSDA

Evelyn McBurney, Southern Regional College

Barbara McNeill, South Eastern Regional College

Karen McLaughlin, North West Regional College

Emmanuel McCann, Belfast Metropolitan College

Susanne Workman, South West Regional College

Tony Madden, Northern Regional College

Una Reid, Queens University, Belfast

Kevin McCann, Invest Northern Ireland

Mandy Martin, Park Avenue Hotel

Janice Gault, NI Hotels Federation

Don Wilmot, Causeway Coast

John Toner, Slieve Donard

Una McMahon Beattie, University of Ulster

Alan Clarke, Northern Ireland Tourist Board

Noel Cornick, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Roisin Sloan/George Wilson, Department for Employment and Learning

Sian McCleave, Department for Employment and Learning

Jane Hamill, Department for Employment and Learning (secretariat)

people:skills:jobs:



Department for  
**Employment  
and Learning**  
[www.delni.gov.uk](http://www.delni.gov.uk)



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

**THE DEPARTMENT:**

Our aim is to promote learning and skills, to prepare people for work and to support the economy.

This document is available in other formats upon request.

**Further information**  
**Programme Management Branch**  
**Skills and Industry Division**  
**Lesley Buildings**  
**61 Fountain Street**  
**Belfast**  
**BT1 5EX**  
**Telephone: 028 9044 1777**  
**Email:**  
**[successthroughskills@delni.gov.uk](mailto:successthroughskills@delni.gov.uk)**