

A **horticultural technician** works with plants and has knowledge and skills in ornamental horticulture and plant health care. Using tools and machinery, this person installs, grows, and maintains indoor and outdoor plants; builds urban and rural landscapes; maintains outdoor properties; cares for turfgrass and golf courses; and installs and maintains irrigation systems.

Horticultural technician is a **non-restricted certified** trade regulated by the Apprenticeship and Certification Act. On successfully completing the apprenticeship program, a person working in this trade is entitled to a Certificate of Apprenticeship and can challenge the trade examination to obtain a Certificate of Qualification.

### Entrance requirements

Grade 12 or equivalent

### Program duration

About three years or as determined by industry guidelines

### Work description

A horticultural technician is a person who:

- communicates effectively to achieve results
- controls plant pests and diseases using various methods, including integrated pest management
- transplants and installs plants
- maintains and manages horticultural properties
- recycles waste materials
- identifies nutrient requirements of plants, applies fertilizers, and monitors the plants and maintains records of results of applications
- analyses plant watering requirements, installs irrigation systems, and monitors and records results
- grows plants using different propagation techniques and maintains records of results
- prunes plants, considering timing and tools
- establishes and maintains turfgrass
- constructs landscapes according to drawings, using plants and other materials such as wood, stone, soil, and concrete
- maintains and stores tools and equipment
- works in compliance with workplace safety legislation

### ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

At the time of registration, an apprentice receives an **Apprenticeship Training Standard**, which outlines the skills training objectives to be met or competencies to be acquired on the job. These competencies equip an apprentice to work in the trade as a certified skilled worker or "journeyman". The employer or sponsor or trainer of an apprentice signs the relevant section of the training standard to indicate the progress of the apprentice in meeting individual training objectives. This signature demonstrates that an apprentice has learned the skills established by industry that are essential for being a skilled worker.

### IN-SCHOOL TRAINING

Horticultural technician apprentices require two levels of theoretical training: the 8-week basic and 12-week advanced levels. This training is offered at an approved training delivery agency on a block-release (full-time) basis during the winter months.

At the time of registration, the training consultant discusses the schooling options with the apprentice to determine the most suitable arrangements for the apprentice and the sponsor/employer.

In-school training for horticultural technician apprentices includes instruction in:

- plant science and botany
- basic and advanced turfgrass management
- basic and advanced plant identification
- basic and advanced plant materials
- applied trade mathematics
- basic and advanced landscape construction
- pest management
- landscape equipment maintenance
- plant material and plant handling techniques
- plant propagation techniques
- irrigation (components, pipe layout, and spray rates)
- site layout, and grading and drainage
- workplace communication
- applied safety procedures
- St. John Ambulance first aid



# APPRENTICESHIP FAQ'S

## **Apprenticeship – What is it and how does it work?**

Apprenticeship is a hands-on training program for people who want to work in skilled trades or occupations. About 90% of apprenticeship involves on-the-job training by sponsors of training or employers. The remainder consists of theoretical training, usually obtained at a college of applied arts and technology or another approved training delivery agency.

Training agreements between apprentices and their training sponsor or employer are prepared by an Employment Ontario employment and training consultant. In accordance with legislation, each training agreement is an individualized contract or training plan between a person who wants to learn a skilled trade and the training sponsor or employer.

Apprentices and training sponsors or employers benefit from apprenticeship training. Apprentices learn to become qualified tradespeople or “journeypersons”, and training sponsors or employers gain highly skilled employees with up-to-date knowledge and work techniques. Jobs in skilled trades or occupations provide challenging work and good careers.

## **How long does an apprenticeship last?**

Most apprenticeships take two to five years to complete, depending on the trade or occupation. At the time of registration, prior education and related work experience are considered, where appropriate, to potentially reduce the length of the program. Flexible in-school training options are generally available to meet the specific needs of apprentices and their training sponsor or employer.

## **How does a person register for apprenticeship training?**

When a person who wants to be an apprentice has found a training sponsor or employer willing to engage in apprenticeship training, either the person or the training sponsor or employer should contact apprenticeship staff at the local Employment Ontario office. An employment and training consultant will arrange a meeting at the workplace to assess the ability of the training sponsor or employer to train and assess the person, prepare the training agreement or contract, and initiate the training.

## **Are there other pathways to apprenticeship training?**

The Co-Op Diploma Apprenticeship program allows students attending college to receive apprenticeship training while earning a diploma. The Pre-Apprenticeship Training program helps unemployed individuals strengthen their skills and increase their eligibility for apprenticeship training in a specific skilled trade.

## **Can a student start an apprenticeship while attending high school?**

The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) allows high school students to register as apprentices while earning cooperative education credits through work placements in skilled trades. Interested students should contact their guidance counsellor, technical teacher, or apprenticeship staff at the local Employment Ontario office for more information.

## **Does the government encourage employers to hire apprentices?**

Ontario needs more skilled workers, and more employers training skilled workers. To this end, the Ontario government provides the Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit to corporations and unincorporated businesses that hire apprentices in certain skilled trades, and an Employer Signing Bonus to employers who register new apprentices in sectors in which skilled workers are in high demand.

## **Does the government provide financial support to apprentices?**

Apprentices can benefit from the Ontario government’s Apprenticeship Scholarship and Loans for Tools programs. The federal government offers assistance through its Apprenticeship Incentive Grant and Apprenticeship Completion Grant programs.

## **What is the “Red Seal Program”?**

The Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program was established to provide greater labour mobility for skilled workers who wish to move from one part of Canada to another. It encourages the standardization of provincial/territorial training and certification programs. Many Ontario trades are part of the Red Seal Program. In these trades, people who successfully challenge a Red Seal trade examination receive a Certificate of Qualification with a distinctive red seal that is recognized across Canada.

To learn more about apprenticeship in Ontario, visit the Employment Ontario website at [www.ontario.ca/employment](http://www.ontario.ca/employment), call the Employment Ontario Hotline at 1-800-387-5656 or 416-325-4084 for service for the deaf, or visit an Employment Ontario office and talk to a counsellor.