

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

MINISTRY PAPER 21/15

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME - RAP

INTRODUCTION

Members are being asked to note that the Ministry of Education, through the HEART Trust/NTA, is implementing the Registered Apprenticeship Programme, (RAP). This will provide an excellent mechanism for students to acquire academic qualifications and work experience, thereby preparing them for careers and providing solutions to high youth unemployment, especially among males.

BACKGROUND

The Apprenticeship Act, 1955 provides for the establishment of a Board, with authority to establish and supervise standards of training to provide skilled persons to satisfy industry needs. Via Decision No. 30/13 dated August 12, 2013, Cabinet appointed a Board of Directors, with a tenure of three (3) years, to provide leadership and governance for the existing apprenticeship programme, as well as strategic direction and guidance in implementing and administering the Registered Apprenticeship Programme (RAP).

The HEART Trust/NTA will in March 2015, undertake a marketing and promotion programme to increase public awareness of the RAP, especially among employers and prospective apprentices. Additionally, the Trust is designing an employment engagement strategy to get greater buy-in and full participation of employers.

CURRENT SITUATION/UPDATE

For the fiscal year ending March 31, 2015, a minimum of five hundred (500) apprentices ranging from unskilled persons to those with degrees are projected to be engaged in the Apprenticeship Programme.

PROJECTION

The number of apprentices will be increased to over two thousand (2,000) by the end of the 2015/2016 Fiscal Year. Apprentices will be placed in programmes which include Agriculture, Construction, Business, Information Technology, Animation, skills related to the Logistics Hub, Motor Vehicle Mechanics, Tourism and Health Care for which support has been assured from private sector and government agencies.

IT LABORATORY TECHNICIAN FOR SCHOOLS

In addition, planning is advanced to recruit one hundred and sixty eight (168) apprentices for placement in high schools island-wide. This is scheduled for implementation by the end of February, 2015. The apprentices will be trained as Laboratory technicians, with the responsibility for maintaining the laboratory equipment in the schools.

PILOTING FOR STUDENTS ON THE CAREER ADVANCEMENT PROGRAMME (CAP)

The piloting of the School-Based Apprenticeship for one hundred (100) CAP students under the School-Based modality is also being finalized for full implementation by the end of February, 2015. Under this modality, students in the CAP will be at school for 70% -80% of the time while being placed in a firm aligned to their respective programme of study for the remaining 30% -20% of the time. This industry engagement may take varied forms, for example; Block Release, Day Release, Summer Break, weekends and evenings, based on the convenience to both firms and apprentices.

DIGITAL ANIMATION PROGRAMME

Preliminary assessment of trainees pursuing the Digital Animation Programme at GARMEX commenced on December 8, 2014 with the prospective employer, GSW Animation Ltd. Evaluation of the assessment results is now taking place with a view to assigning the trainees to the Apprenticeship Programme for further training.

UNATTACHED YOUTH PROGRAMME

Registration for the piloting of the RAP under the Unattached Youth Programme is currently taking place in the communities of Western St. Andrew and North East Manchester. Youngsters will be placed at the entry level of the Apprenticeship Programme, which will last between six (6) months and a year. The Programme has a pathway for progression to the Intermediate, Advanced and higher skills levels. In the initial phase, one hundred (100) candidates per community - will be apprenticed in labour market aligned skills. At the end of the training, scheduled to commence by the end of February 2015, it is anticipated that the candidates will be placed in jobs. This projection is very realistic, based on the positive response being received from potential employers.

INFORMATION ON APPLICATION

The RAP Secretariat is located at the offices of HEART Trust /NTA - 7 Ripon Road, Kingston 5, telephone numbers – 968 - 4432-3. Interested persons may also apply online at www.heart-nta.org.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A total of J\$30M was allocated to the Programme for the 2014/15 Fiscal Year. It is anticipated that the budgeted allocation will be fully utilized. Seventy four (74) apprentices approved by the Board are currently being paid by their employers at an estimated average weekly stipend of J\$10,000, an overall cost of J\$3.080M per month. The fifty one (51) apprentices being processed under the School Based Modality will, however, be paid by the Apprenticeship Board at an average weekly rate of J\$5,500 – an expenditure of approximately J\$1.12M per month.

In addition to the subvention received from the HEART/Trust, the Apprenticeship Board will pursue partnerships with other Government agencies and private providers with a view to providing support for the increasing numbers of apprentices.

Areas for further collaboration and technical assistance were initially explored with two (2) Labour Market specialists from the International Labour Organization (ILO) on November 17 & 18, 2014. A proposal from the ILO, for a study tour of the German Apprenticeship System is now being reviewed by the Board of the RAP.



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