

**GENERATION
APPRENTICESHIP**
www.apprenticeship.ie

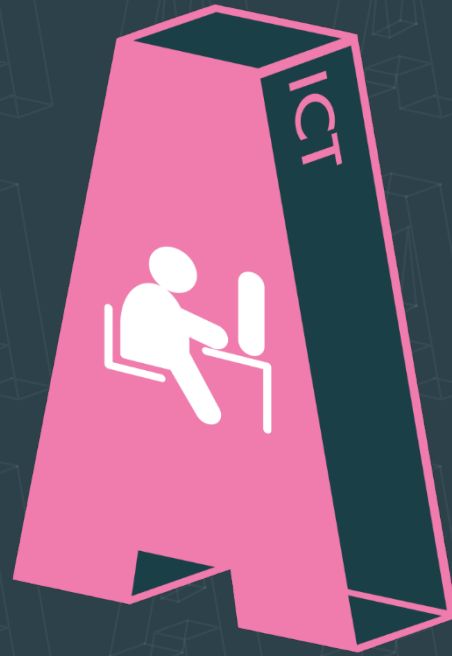


TUS Midlands
Midwest

Software Testing Associate

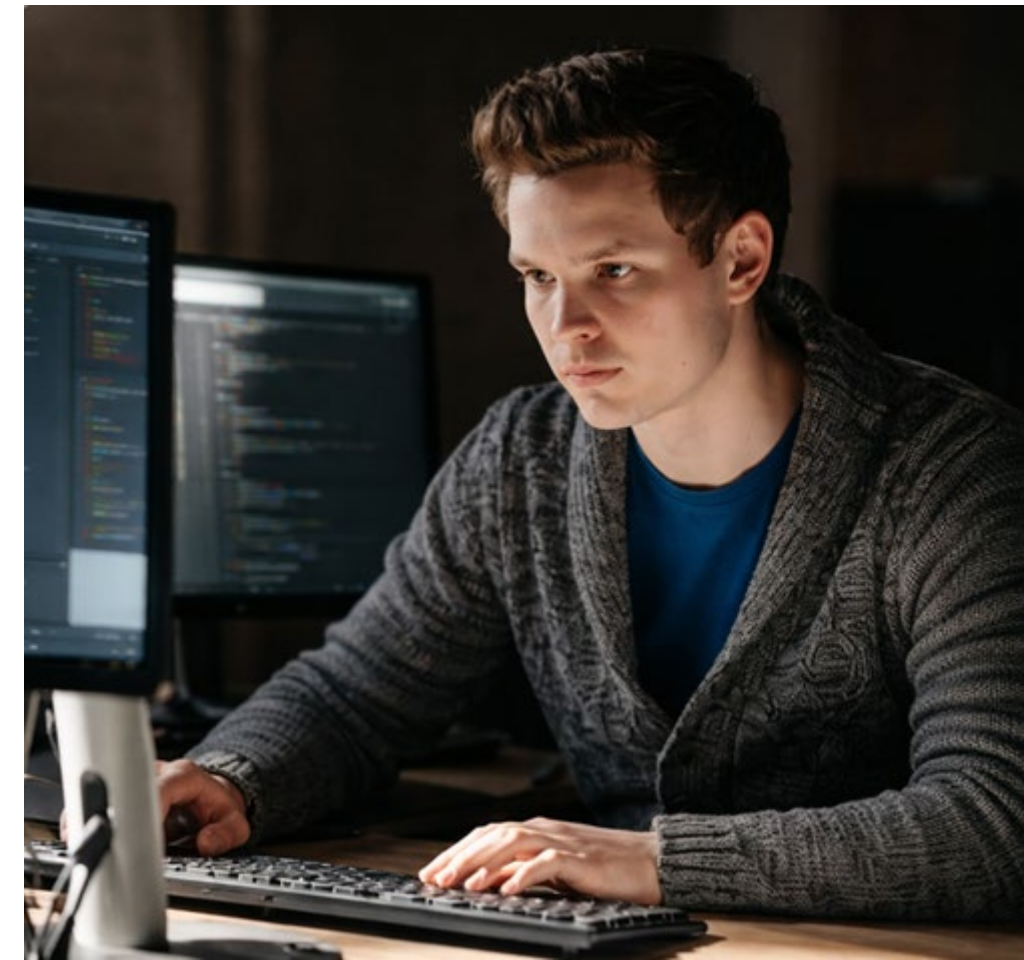
**Apprentice
Handbook**





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What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a structured education and training programme that formally integrates and alternates between workplace-based learning and study at a university, higher education institution, or training center

It is a dual system, blending on-the-job, employer-based learning with off-the-job academic study. Apprentices are paid employees for the duration of the programme and gain nationally recognised qualifications.

Key Features of the Software Testing Associate Apprenticeship:

- Over half the apprentice learning takes place on-the-job
- 'Earn while you learn' apprenticeship model with a formal contract of employment
- The apprenticeship leads to a Higher Certificate level 6 in Software Testing.
- During the apprenticeship, off-the-job phases are delivered through a blended model of online sessions and scheduled training blocks and weeks, with on-the-job phases taking place in the workplace. This approach provides flexibility while ensuring apprentices gain practical experience and apply learning within real software testing projects.

OVERVIEW

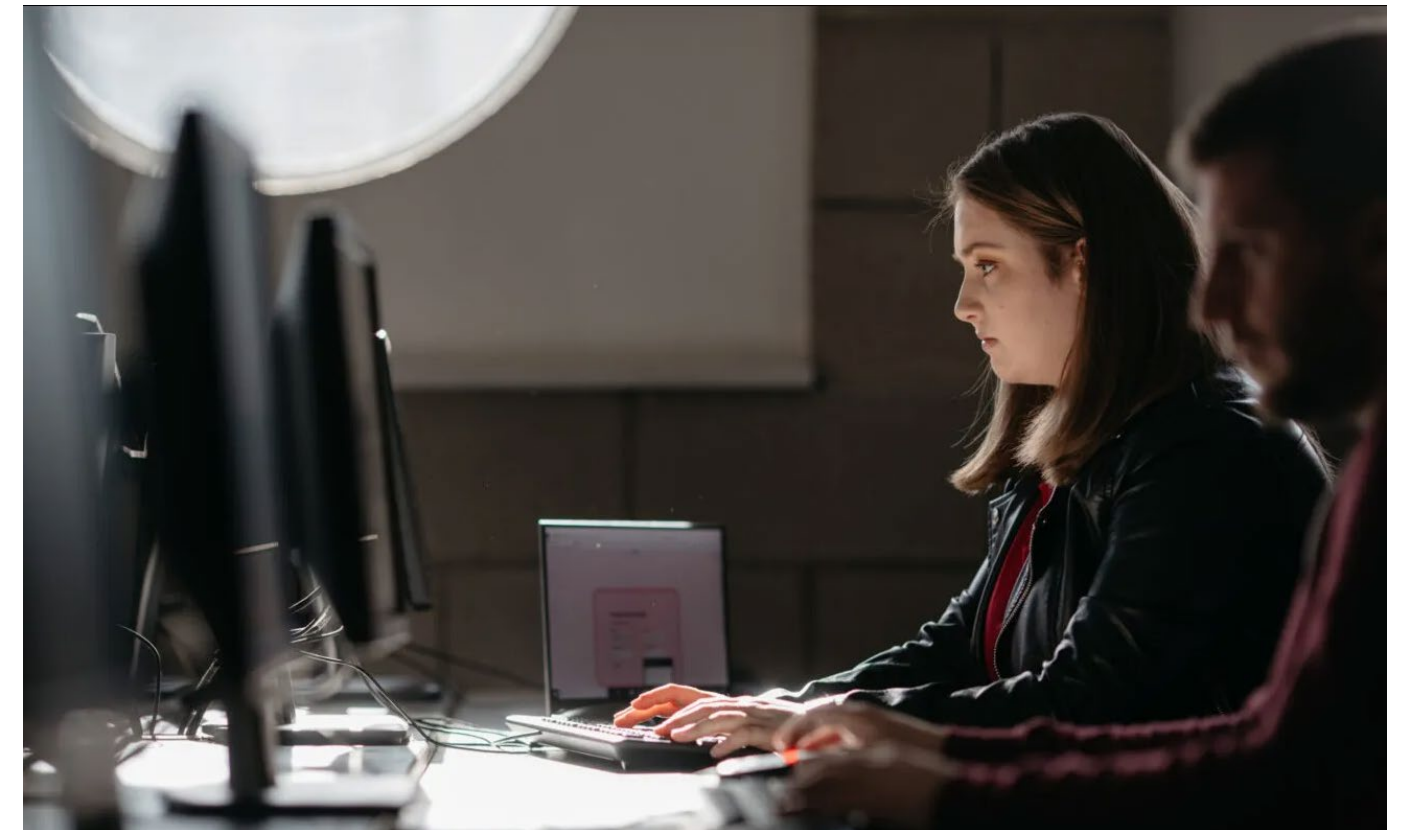
Apprenticeship	Software Testing Associate
Duration	24 months
NFQ	Level 6
ECT Credits	120
Qualification upon completion	Higher Certificate
Education Provider	Technological University of the Shannon

2 YEAR APPRENTICESHIP WILL INCLUDE:

Year 1	Year 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The apprenticeship begins in the workplace with a formal induction, followed by the first off-the-job phase delivered at the University. This phase covers the basics of software testing, the software development lifecycle, test design and execution, defect reporting, documentation, and effective communication. The rest of Year 1 continues primarily on-the-job, with online sessions and scheduled off-the-job weeks. Apprentices work alongside developers and testers, gaining practical project experience and receiving mentoring within a professional software team. Work-based learning is complemented by off-the-job phases delivered through online sessions and structured weeks aligned with programme requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 2 continues primarily on-the-job, with online sessions and scheduled off-the-job weeks. Learning emphasises test management, automation principles, quality assurance practices, and effective collaboration within agile development teams. Apprentices will strengthen their problem-solving abilities and gain a clear understanding of how testing contributes to reliable software delivery. Apprentices will work on larger, real-world projects, applying structured testing methods and actively contributing to team-based development activities.

Learning outcomes for the Software Testing Associate Apprenticeship:

<https://tus.ie/apprenticeships/consortia-led-apprenticeships/>



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

The apprenticeship will give you the knowledge, skills and experience to begin a career in software testing across a range of industries including finance, healthcare, manufacturing and digital services.

You will learn to work as part of a development team to identify issues, test features and improve software quality. The problems you will deal with may include investigating defects, validating fixes, documenting results and supporting reliable software releases.

Key professional competencies of a Software Testing Associate:

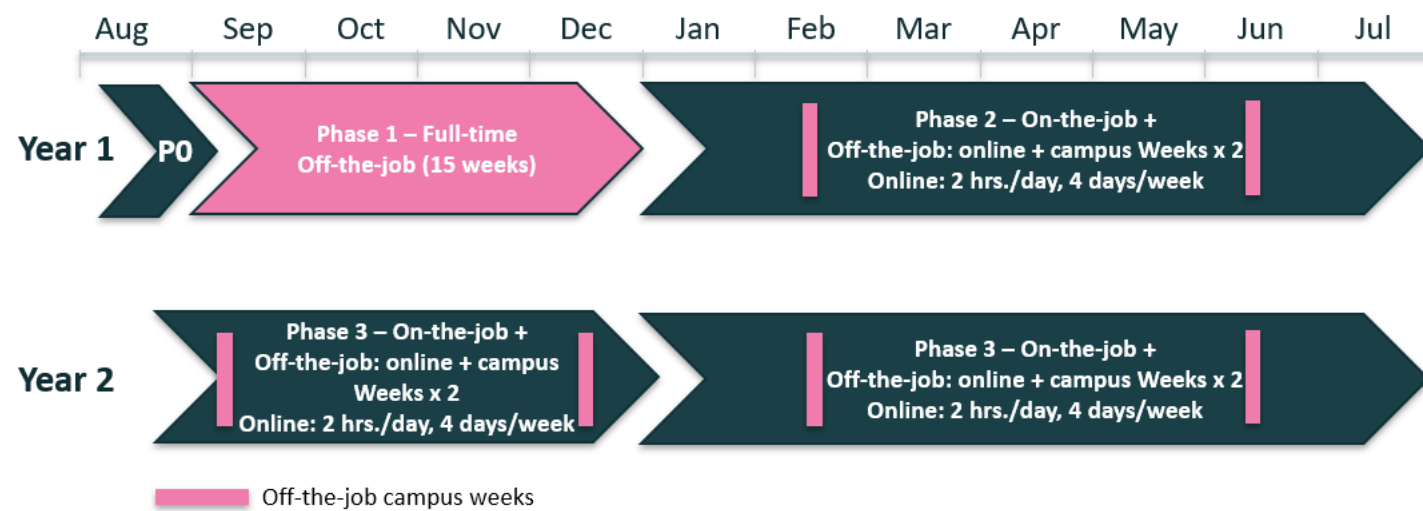
- Understanding software testing fundamentals
- Knowledge of the Software Development Lifecycle
- Test design and execution
- Defect reporting and tracking
- Basic automation awareness
- Analytical & problem-solving skills
- Communication skills & teamwork
- Professionalism and work ethic

APPRENTICESHIP STRUCTURE

This two-year apprenticeship is delivered through a blended model combining off-the-job phases, online learning and structured on-the-job learning. The first off-the-job phase is delivered over a 15-week period. The remaining phases take place primarily on-the-job and include scheduled online learning as well as additional off-the-job weeks throughout the apprenticeship. The approach minimises time away from employment while allowing apprentices to develop practical skills within a real software development environment.

Off-the-job phases focus on guided practical activities and demonstrations that support the development of testing skills and professional practice. Learning is reinforced through documentation tasks and project-based work carried out in the workplace. Apprentices are developed and assessed through a combination of on-the-job and off-the-job learning and assessment.

YOUR APPRENTICESHIP JOURNEY

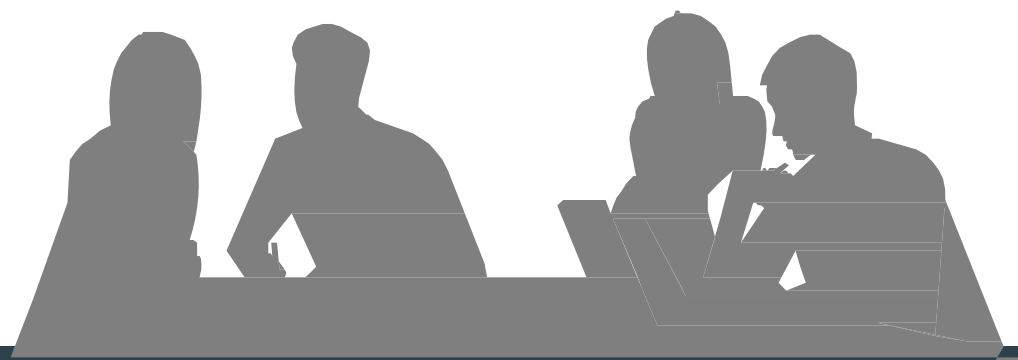


SUPPORTING YOUR APPRENTICESHIP JOURNEY

We are very aware that the apprenticeship in software testing requires significant commitment from you. We recognise the extent of your commitment as well as the other demands and challenges that life brings.

To ensure that your apprenticeship journey is a successful one and that you are supported to achieve your best in software testing, we have a range of supports to help you, including:

- Dedicated workplace mentors
- Peer learning both on and off the job
- One-to-one meetings with mentors and academic supervisors to support your learning and development
- Full access to all student supports as a registered student including a Student Support Officer; Student Health and Wellbeing; Clubs and Societies and much more
- Small class sizes to support group and peer learning
- Access to employee supports including HR and employee health and welfare



ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- 1** Leaving Certificate (or equivalent), Grade O6/H7 or better in five subjects with a minimum of 250 points. This criteria does not apply to over 23's but all applicants will follow company and SOLAS recruitment procedures and must demonstrate their ability and competence to undertake the programme.)
- or**
- 2** Non-graduates with at least 5 years' professional experience in a software related field may be considered for admission under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- and**
- 3** Secure an apprenticeship position with a SOLAS-registered Software Testing Associate employer.

Note: Applicants who are non-native speakers of the English language must meet the university-approved English language requirements. Visit our English Language Requirements page for more information here: <https://tus.ie/global/international-admissions/entry-requirements/english-language-requirements/>

APPRENTICE FEE

The Apprentice annual contribution fee is €2,400 per year, payable by the apprentice, though employers may choose to cover or subsidise this cost.



STATUTORY REGULATOR ROLE

SOLAS is the statutory regulator for apprenticeship programmes with responsibilities governed under the 1967 Industrial Training Act. Under their remit SOLAS/National Apprenticeship Office (NAO) appoints 'Authorised Officers' (AOs) who carry out activities on its behalf. This includes approving new employers who wish to recruit and train apprentices and the registering of apprentices. Authorised Officers are employed by Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and are assigned to work with employers based on the geographical region in which the employer is located.

Upon receipt of an Expression of Interest (EOI) from an employer the Authorised Officer (AO) in the region will schedule a visit with the employer and complete the statutory approvals process. The AO will also complete the registration process for apprentices recruited by the employer and work with the employer and apprentice across the duration of the apprenticeship programme.

The Employer and Apprentice must sign the Apprenticeship Code of Practice. For further information on your role and responsibilities as an Apprentice, please refer to this document:

<https://content.apprenticeship.ie/f/83224/x/6602273024/apprenticeshipcodeofpractice.pdf>

HOW TO BECOME A SOFTWARE TESTING APPRENTICE

To become an apprentice in software testing, you must meet the entry requirements for the apprenticeship, apply for an apprenticeship vacancy with a Solas approved employer and successfully pass each stage of the recruitment process. Details of apprenticeship opportunities are advertised locally and nationally by many employers, and are often listed on the national apprenticeship jobs portal at:

<https://apprenticeship.ie/career-seekers/jobs>

Further information on apprenticeships can be found on the Generation Apprenticeship website here:

<https://apprenticeship.ie/>



USEFUL CONTACT AND INFORMATION LINKS

Generation Apprenticeship:

<https://apprenticeship.ie/>

Apprenticeship Code of Practice:

<https://www.solas.ie/f/70398/x/95bfccc618/apprenticeshipcodeofpractice.pdf>

TUS Faculty of Applied Sciences and Technology

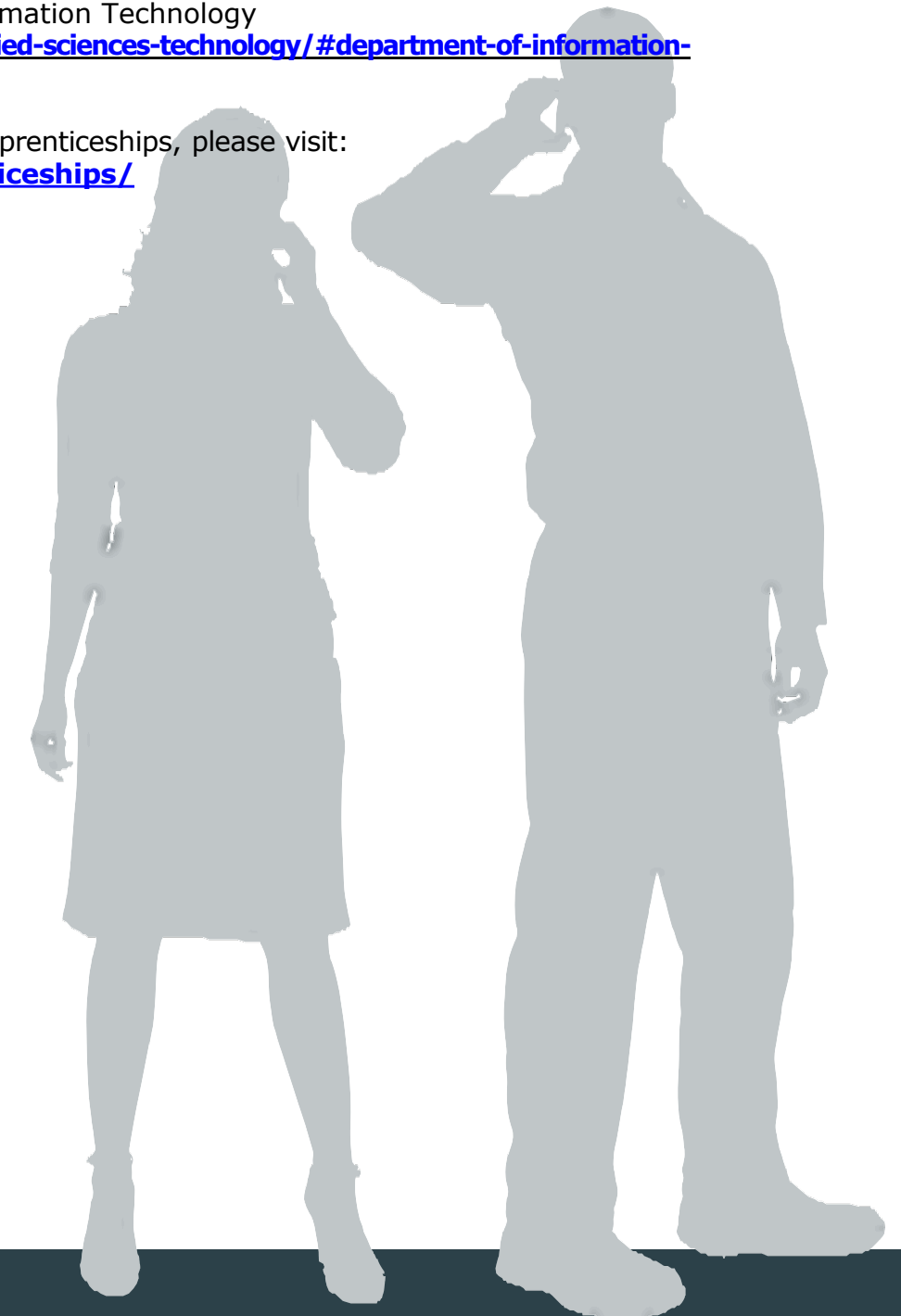
<https://tus.ie/faculty-applied-sciences-technology/>

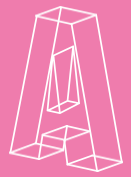
TUS Department of Information Technology

<https://tus.ie/faculty-applied-sciences-technology/#department-of-information-technology>

Further information on apprenticeships, please visit:

<https://tus.ie/apprenticeships/>





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