



FIJI NATIONAL
UNIVERSITY

THE NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

A young woman with her hair in a bun and wearing glasses and a pilot's uniform stands in a flight simulator cockpit. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The cockpit features multiple large screens displaying a sunset over the ocean, and various control panels and instruments are visible.

BUILD A CAREER

EARN WHILE YOU LEARN

NATIONAL TRAINING & PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE





The National Apprenticeship Week is a week-long event raising awareness about the significance of vocational education and apprenticeship on industry, on employment and on national development in Fiji.

Countries around the world that have some form of apprenticeship scheme are reaping the benefits because of their strong skills base. There is a special relationship and rapport when there is partnership between employers and training institutions. The apprenticeship scheme in Fiji gives young people a chance to gain hands-on experience in the workplace whilst studying towards a recognised qualification. The best part is that these young people earn a regular income just like any other employee. The benefit for the employer is that the scheme helps organisations grow its own pool of talent, reduce staff turnover and injects the right kind of skills needed for sustainable growth.

There are currently 22 trades and 7 technician levels offered under the Scheme. Each apprentice is trained by the industry to suit their needs.

There are some challenges surrounding the scheme though, such as, ensuring that it meets the right skills gap, and it addresses local and national priorities.

We are also faced with unprecedented transformational change in the world of work such as technological innovation, climate change, and globalisation. But our aim is to strengthen this scheme which may be the oldest form of public and private partnership in history.

Nonetheless, the National Apprenticeship Scheme aims to ensure everyone has the same access to apprenticeship opportunities, especially for young women.

If you are a school leaver, you can get your career off to a great start by choosing from a wide range of jobs through apprenticeship. So talk to us today and let's work towards starting your journey!

Dr Isimeli Tagicakiverata

Director National Training & Productivity Centre

Manager NATD Message

Bula Vinaka

Skills shortage is a global problem being faced by the many sectors of work. Technological advancement, migration, globalization, and demographic shifts have had extraordinary transformations to the world of work. High labour mobility indicates that a highly skilled and trained person has many career opportunities locally and internationally.

Apprenticeship training is one of the most successful models of training which ensures that organizations have a skilled workforce. The training is provided in collaboration with the employers, training institutes, and the Fijian Government.

Employers invest in Apprenticeship Program to develop a robust pool of qualified tradespeople to invest in the success of their business. When companies have ready access to potential employees who possess the specialized skills necessary to succeed, they gain the ability to develop a workforce that will drive enhanced productivity, reliability, safety, and product quality.

In the last five years, the Scheme has recorded a growing interest from the employer and students. The department has also registered new employers who have come on board to be part of the National Apprenticeship Scheme, and they have recruited a few apprentices in their organisations. Apart from the current offerings, the apprenticeship team is working with industries in developing new areas that will focus on the industry requirements. We aim to reduce the skills gap faced in the industry, and the future of apprenticeship training looks very bright.

Currently, there are four aspects to Apprenticeship Training:

- On the Job Training- it is where the apprentices learn the practical aspects of the trade.
- Off the job- it is when the apprentices attend theory training at the college
- Inspections and Assessments- the apprenticeship officers, inspect the apprentices at the worksite. This takes place on a tri-annual basis, and apprentices are assessed on the hard skills and soft skills.

- Records- Apprentices are required to keep training records from day one, which are then verified and are kept as evidence of training gained.

Our role as the Scheme administrators is to ensure that apprentices receive training in all aspects of the trade. This is carried out in consultation with the employers, training providers and is captured in our apprenticeship training guidelines. Apprenticeship officers carry out inspections and assessments and provide reports on individual apprentice's progress, job knowledge, job rotations, competencies achieved, and soft skills required. Through the apprenticeship program, we aim to produce job-ready tradespeople to take up supervisory roles in the future.

We have also seen a growing interest from females in joining trade areas. These areas include Automotive Electrical, Plant Maintenance Engineering, Printing, Shipwright, Electronics, and Marine Engineering. This is because they can prove that females can perform just as well as males if they are given the opportunity.

With an Apprenticeship program, you are assured a secured future with many employment opportunities. If you are interested in furthering your career in trade areas, then talk to us.

Alvin Lal

Manager - National Apprenticeship & Trade Test

The History

The National Apprenticeship Training Scheme was introduced in 1963 under the Ministry of Labour and known as the Fiji Apprenticeship Council.

This scheme was introduced to:

- Address the national skills requirements
- Have qualified trade personnel in the trade and technician fields; and
- Produce competent and certified workers.

Eleven years later the responsibility of looking after the scheme was passed on to the Training and Productivity Authority of Fiji (then Fiji National Training Council) for expansion in 1974.

The National Apprenticeship Training Department was managed by the National Standards and Accreditation Council 2003.

In 2010 the responsibility of administering and managing the National Apprenticeship Training Scheme was placed with the National Training & Productivity Centre following the merger with the Fiji National University to date.

The four major aspects of the training are:

1. Theoretical -The Apprentice is required to attend the theoretical coursework approved by NTPC, based on competency standards set by the Fiji National University for the selected trade.

2. Practical -The Apprentice is required to attend 1,400 hours of practical training per year as required in the training guideline.

3. Inspections -All Apprentices will be inspected at the worksite. The inspection will take place on a tri-annual or bi-annual basis, depending on the training format.

4. Records -All training records and profiles of each Apprentice are archived after the completion of the training.

Certification of Apprentices

A Certificate of Apprenticeship will be issued upon successful completion of training. Once the Apprentice has achieved all the competencies outlined in the Training Guide.

The scheme has continued to improve in its roles and responsibilities through the support from the Industries to address the skills needed and to produce competent and certified work force for the organisations.

WHAT IS THE APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

The National Apprenticeship Training Scheme is a tripartite agreement is signed between the Apprentice, employer and NTPC to train apprentices in accordance to the Apprenticeship guideline. Apprentices are monitored and trained by a competent personnel from the industry for a duration of three to four years.



The NTPC's Apprenticeship Department administrates integrated practical training provided by the employer and the theoretical training provided by a training institute.



The apprenticeship consists of two parts:

1. On – job Learning:

On the job learning is designed to take place as the apprentice carries out daily tasks assigned to them by the employer. It is the responsibility of the employer to pass on skills, knowledge and training to the apprentice, assessing them along the way.

2. Off- job Learning:

This is the classroom learning aspect of the apprenticeship. The apprentice will need to attend regular classes at a training provider (for instance NTPC). Depending on the apprentice's job location, there are normally a couple of options, including night classes, day classes, and block courses.

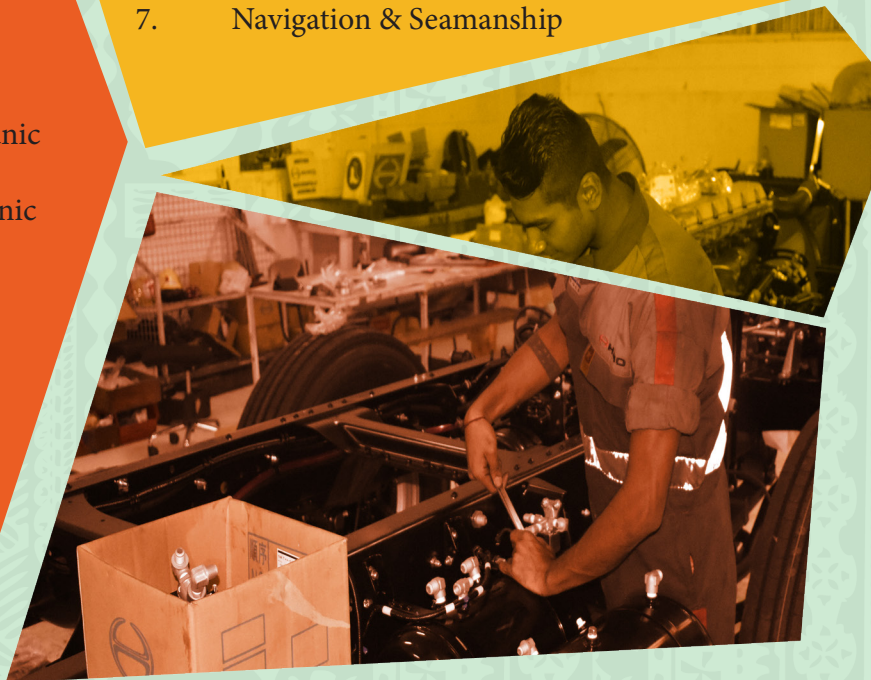
Trades in Apprenticeship Training Scheme

TRADE LEVEL

1. Aircraft Maintenance
2. Automotive Electrical
3. Automotive Mechanic
4. Boilermaking
5. Carpentry
6. Cook
7. Electrical Fitter Mechanic
8. Electronics
9. Fitting & Machining
10. Heavy Commercial Vehicle Mechanic
11. Heavy Mobile Plant Mechanic
12. Industrial Sewing Machine Mechanic
13. Joinery & Cabinet Making
14. Manufacturing Engineering
15. Panel Beating
16. Plant Maintenance Engineering
17. Plumbing
18. Printing
19. Refrigeration & Air-conditioning
20. Saw Doctor
21. Shipwright
22. Welding & Fabricating

TECHNICIAN LEVEL

1. Automotive Engineering
2. Electrical Engineering
3. Mechanical Engineering
4. Plant Engineering
5. Telecommunication Engineering
6. Marine Engineering
7. Navigation & Seamanship



Note: These programmes do not fall under Credit Point system.

The Employer's Guide

The background image shows two men in a workshop. One man, wearing a dark blue polo shirt and safety glasses, is leaning over a lathe, working on a piece of metal. A bright lamp is focused on his work area. The other man, wearing a blue button-down shirt and safety glasses, is standing next to him, looking on. The workshop has green-painted metal walls and various tools and equipment are visible in the background.

Why Apprenticeship is good for your organisation?

- Employing an apprentice offers a return on investments to match your needs.
- You can recruit employees who are keen to work and have positive impact on the overall productivity of the organization
- This provides growing a workforce in a cost-effective way
- Apprentices offer with fresh ideas and new thinking methods to your organisation.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

A probationary period of 3 months is allowed from the date of registration of contract. This serves to:

- Allow the employer to assess if the apprentice has the aptitude for the chosen trade; and
- Gives the apprentice a chance to decide whether to continue in the trade.
- New employers who wish to engage in apprenticeship training are required to apply to NTPC for permits to train apprentices

GENERAL TIP TO SUPERVISORS

- Keep an eye on your apprentice's day-to-day work, this will help you see if they are competent in the assessments they want signed off. If they don't work directly under you, check in regularly with the other tradesmen they are working with.
- Talk with your apprentice, have informal conversations about where and what assessments they are working towards.
- When it comes time to sign off their on-job assessments set aside at least half an hour.
- Ask questions when going through the assessment with your apprentice.

Government Incentive

Employer can only claim 200% tax rebate if the wages paid to the Apprentice is above National Minimum Wage Rate and must be a first time Employment.
Employer can also claim 150% tax rebate on fees paid to FNU during Theoretical Training.
(Terms & Conditions apply)

GRANTS PROVIDED BY NTPC

1. Tool Allowances

NTPC will pay 50 percent of the total cost of the essential tools, or \$450.00. Whichever is less will be paid to the employer when application is lodged by the employer on the forms provided by NTPC. The employer must assist the Apprentice in the purchase of essential tools as prescribed in the approved tool list required by the Apprentice. The amount will be reimbursed by the Apprentice through employer payroll deductions.

2. Travelling Allowances

NTPC pays back 50 percent of the bus fares and 75 percent of the flight fares/boat fares, to Apprentices travelling from Vanua Levu to Suva or outer islands. When an application is lodged by the employer on the approved forms provided by NPTC

3. Daily and Residential Grant

This grant is applicable to Method B employers only.

Group	Wage/Salary Range per Annum	Daily Grant (\$)	Residential Grant (\$)
1	Up to \$6,000	30	50
2	6,001- 9,000	45	50
3	9,001-12,000	60	50
4	12,0001-15,000	65	50
5	15,001-20,001	86	60
6	20,001-25,000	108	60
7	25,001-35,000	151	60
8	35,001-45,000	194	60
9	Above \$45,000	216	60

GENERAL TIP TO SUPERVISORS

- Keep an eye on your apprentice's daily tasks, this will help you see if they are competent in the assessments they want signed off. If they don't work directly under you, check-in regularly with the other tradesmen they are working with.
- Talk with your apprentice, have informal conversations about where and what assessments they are working towards.
- When it comes time to signing off their on the job assessments set aside at least half an hour.
- Ask questions when going through the assessment with your apprentice. Asking Questions that will help them to relate what they're learning on a daily basis.
- Communicate- commend your apprentice when they have completed a task correctly and also guide them if the apprentice has not done the task properly.
- Reward your apprentice for progression through their training. For example, this could be a wage increase or weekly/month awards when they complete an assessment. This helps to motivate them and keeps them working towards completing their apprenticeship.
- Schedule a talanoa session with your apprentice and Apprenticeship officer find out how things are progressing. Ask your apprentice what he/she feels good about, areas where they need more experience, and any other issues that need your attention. Some apprentices may find it hard to proactively ask for help, so keep an eye out for signs they may need a hand.
- As employers you need to keep in mind that you're always working with different generations and at time this could become a challenge- especially baby boomers to the millennial, different generations bring their own skills and knowledge to your workplace. It is important to be aware of how they think, how they operate, and how to get the most from them. Be prepared to lead the way and embrace these skillsets and let them grow your business.

COSTS TO CONSIDER

There are several costs you'll need to consider that recognizes the investment you are about to make when you take on an apprentice:

Apprenticeship fees

There are a few costs involved with having an apprentice:

- Training fees – these include off-job training, accommodation cost and other industry liaison to keep the qualification current. The employer normally pays these which can be claim through levy and grant.
- Tools – Your new apprentice may not have the tools to start their training, so have a think about how you approach this. You could supply them with a required tool list before they start. However, it can deducted from apprentices wages throughout the training duration and rest can be offset from the tool incentive which is provided by University.

Starting pay rate

There is minimum apprentice wage rate is provided by NTPC, which gazetted by the Ministry of Labour. However you start them with your choice looking at factors, such as their previous experience, skills, and attitude.

The Minimum wage rate by NTPC

	Trade Level	Technician Level
1st year	\$1.94	\$2.05
2nd year	\$2.05	\$2.37
3rd year	\$2.37	\$2.68
4th year	\$2.68	\$2.98

APPRENTICE'S GUIDE

How to Join the Apprenticeship Scheme

- Candidates may apply directly to the employer
- A list of employers authorized to engage in apprenticeship training is available on request from NTPC

Contract of Apprenticeship

Apprentices fall under the Apprenticeship Order under The Fiji National Training Order: Cap. 93 Section 21 as now it is amended to the Fiji National University ACT 2009.

The contract is between the:

- Employer
- Apprentice, and
- Director of NTPC

If the apprentice is under the age of 18 years, a parent or guardian will be required to sign as guarantor for the apprentice.

The contract is made under the Apprenticeship Order to enable the apprentice and the employer to fulfill their obligations and responsibilities during the term of apprenticeship. This contract, after being fully completed and signed by all parties, is submitted to NTPC for registration.

Basic Entry Requirements

- Complete Year 12 Level Education or equivalent prior learning
- Medical fit
- Capable of successfully completing theoretical course
- Capable of handling the practical training requirement

APPRENTICESHIP AWARDS

The Apprenticeship Award ceremony is an important event held by NTPC. The event also honours those apprentices who have excelled in both, academic studies and on-the-job performance. A committee is formed consisting of employers, academics, and members of NTPC to scrutinize and select best apprentices.

The selections of award winners are based on the following criteria:

- I. Academic performance for all stages of theoretical training
- II. Employer' s assessment of on-the-job training of the apprentice
- III. NTPC' s Apprenticeship Officers' assessment of reports of every on-the job inspection throughout the apprenticeship term

These awards include:

- The overall best apprentice get a fully sponsored trip to either New Zealand or Australia.
- The runner-up best apprentices get a week-long, fully sponsored tour of industries in Fiji.
- Trade winners receive tool vouchers or cash prizes.

Other Benefits

After successful completion of Apprenticeship Scheme, Apprentice can directly sit for class 2 Trade Test