

BPIF

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THE PRINT
TECHNICIAN
APPRENTICESHIP

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THE PRINT TECHNICIAN APPRENTICESHIP IS THE NEW LEVEL 3 APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME FOR PRINT. THE FOCUS OF THIS NEW STANDARD IS ON ENSURING THAT YOUR APPRENTICE IS BEING TRAINED IN THE OCCUPATION RATHER THAN ON JUST ACHIEVING A QUALIFICATION.

THE PRINT TECHNICIAN WILL HAVE A STRONG CORE OF KNOWLEDGE COVERING THE PRINT PRODUCTION PROCESS, INCLUDING PAPER SCIENCE, PRE-PRESS, PRESS AND POST-PRESS, AND WILL SPECIALISE AND SUPPLEMENT THIS CORE KNOWLEDGE BY FOLLOWING ONE OF THE THREE OPTIONS; PRE-PRESS TECHNICIAN, PRESS TECHNICIAN OR POST-PRESS TECHNICIAN.

EACH PRINT TECHNICIAN WILL BE COMPETENT IN THE FOLLOWING KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND BEHAVIOURS (KSBs):

KNOWLEDGE

UNDERSTANDING OF THE FOLLOWING:

- The printing and graphic communication industry and its markets
- How the organisations in the printing industry work, including their culture, values, processes and how the apprentice fits in
- Technical knowledge and print industry practices, processes and the materials used to carry out the occupation effectively, e.g. practices can include maintenance and continuous improvement; processes include printing, quality assurance and colour management; materials include mainly paper and board, but also plastic, metal and other materials
- Pre-press, press and post-press processes and equipment and the commercial impact of their role e.g. ensuring that printed material is presented to post-press in perfect condition
- Customers' expectations in terms of order specification and timescales
- Quality expectations and how they are managed
- The print and graphic communications industry health, safety and environmental requirements and laws
- Problem solving

SKILLS

COMPETENT TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Efficiently operate print machinery and equipment according to the order specification and timescale e.g. print a colour magazine onto paper within 2 hours to meet the production schedule; fold a leaflet to specification and timeframe
- Follow a structured approach and methodology to identify areas for improvement, proposing and implementing solutions
- Carry out work to required quality standards, targets and deadlines. Standards include colour matching, print resolution and matching customer specification and individual company standards
- Keep accurate records using both digital and manual processes
- Comply with health, safety and environmental requirements at all times
- Communicate and work effectively with others, including giving clear instructions to colleagues
- Implement practical solutions in a timely manner
- Ability to supervise and instruct print operatives, as well as taking the lead as required

BEHAVIOURS

LEARN TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Willing to both listen and learn. Be dependable, reliable and flexible. Perform role in a safe manner by following company policies and guidelines
- Work effectively with others in a team. Carry out work with integrity and discretion. Work with others to create improvements. Work with other departments and teams to provide support of a technical nature as required
- Open to new ideas, i.e. new technologies and working practices
- Follow process and procedures to ensure that work meets specifications and report consistently and accurately
- Communicate effectively and recognises the importance of good communication

PRE-PRESS TECHNICIAN

A PRE-PRESS TECHNICIAN IS SKILLED IN ALL THE PHYSICAL PROCESSES THAT OCCUR BEFORE THE PRINTING AND FINISHING STAGES.

Pre-press is the first stage of production, and is the term used for the processes and procedures that occur between the creation of a print-ready design and the actual printing process. As part of their training they will develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) in the core elements as defined in the standard. In conjunction with this core set of KSBs, they will also focus on the KSBs required for their specific job.

A SKILLED PRE-PRESS TECHNICIAN WOULD BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE THE FOLLOWING KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND BEHAVIOURS:

- Know how to produce plates, cylinders, screens and/or electronic files
- Recognise the different company equipment and its associated needs
- Understand colour theory
- Understand receipt, checking, and processing of digital files
- Can produce reports and relevant paperwork
- Are able to design and produce creative digital artwork
- Plan and produce edited images ready for various software such as Adobe InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, QuarkXPress etc.
- Check digital files and solve issues with software and work flow management
- Create imposition schemes and job layouts
- Demonstrate proficiency in a range of pre-press, design, workflow management and business software packages e.g. 'Screen True-flow', 'Adobe Creative Suite' and 'Tharstern'
- Customer communication
- Use scanning techniques to create digital images that are compatible
- Produce a printed or digital 'proof'
- Manage digital colour reproduction in pre-press so that the Press Technician can set up and run effectively



PRESS TECHNICIAN



THE PRESS TECHNICIAN WILL RUN OR OVERSEE THE RUNNING OF THE PRINTING PRESS. A PRESS TECHNICIAN IS SKILLED IN ALL THE PHYSICAL PROCESSES THAT OCCUR AS PART OF THE PRINTING STAGE.

There are 6 different categories of printing: lithography, screen, flexography, gravure, letterpress and digital. Each requires different techniques in order to operate successfully, and companies may use one or more categories of press depending on the customer needs. Job duties can vary according to machine type and technology, as well as by printing category. As part of their training they will develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) in the core elements as defined in the standard. In conjunction with this core set of KSBs, they will also focus on the KSBs required for their specific job.

A SKILLED PRESS TECHNICIAN WOULD BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE THE FOLLOWING KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND BEHAVIOURS:

- Knowledge of the employer's printing machinery, including a detailed understanding of the full operating capabilities and limitations of the specific press type and printing process
- Production processes including the cause and effect of pre-press issues on print and print issues on post-press
- Be able to prepare a machine for running, shut it down properly after running, and maintain long-term working effectiveness
- Knowledge of the properties and structures of materials and chemicals
- Quality control expectations and techniques, costs, and other continuous improvement practices
- Safe handling of materials and chemicals
- Be able to complete all reports and relevant paperwork
- Deal with a wide range of different printing operations such as managing colour, handling inks/toners, cleaning and maintenance, or operating different types of printing press etc.
- Work to tight deadlines in a calm and professional manner
- Ensure that customer specification and company quality standards are met e.g. colour matching, print resolution, product consistency etc.



POST-PRESS TECHNICIAN



A POST-PRESS TECHNICIAN IS SKILLED IN ALL THE PHYSICAL PROCESSES THAT OCCUR AFTER THE PRINTING STAGE AND COVERS A BROAD RANGE OF EQUIPMENT.

Each requires different techniques in order to operate successfully, and job duties can vary according to machine type and technology. As part of their training they will develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) in the core elements as defined in the standard. In conjunction with this core set of KSBs, they will also focus on the KSBs required for their specific job.

A SKILLED POST-PRESS TECHNICIAN WOULD BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE THE FOLLOWING KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND BEHAVIOURS:

- Pre-press and post-press processes and equipment and how their role will impact upon others
- Properties and structures of materials, adhesives and various other chemicals
- Physical properties of the numerous paper/plastic stocks and their benefits and constraints
- How to convert sheets into pages and products
- How to safely and effectively convert the source materials (e.g. printed paper and gold foil) into the customer's specific product (e.g. a special edition videogame pack) by using a combination of machinery and processes
- The benefits and constraints of the many different folding types
- How to apply different finishes to different substrates e.g. scented varnish, holographic foiling, soft-touch laminate, near-field communication sticker and be able to set up, run and maintain a specific range of finishing equipment at the appropriate speed and at quality levels
- Deal with a range of finishing processes which may include varnishing, folding, embossing/debossing, foil blocking etc.
- Operate finishing equipment optimally
- Handle and transport materials and other inventory within the finishing area working environment
- Work to tight deadlines, in a calm and professional manner



TRAINING PROGRAMMES AT THE BPIF

THE BPIF OFFER HIGH QUALITY TAILORED TRAINING PROGRAMMES THAT WILL MEET YOUR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS WHILST ENSURING THAT IT MEETS ALL THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD.

You will have a dedicated Training Co-ordinator who will work with you and your apprentice throughout the programme ensuring that your apprentice is developing the skills needed for your business and that they achieve them in a timely manner. Both you and your apprentice will have 24 hour access to their progress via their online portfolio and will be able to access the highest quality learning resources through our Virtual Learning Environment and our Online Classrooms.

Throughout the programme, your apprentice will have the opportunity to network with their peers from other organisations through workshops held at either BPIF locations or at other employer sites.

This training programme on offer from the BPIF will include additional non-mandatory qualifications including the Print VRQ or technical certificate, which will cover the majority of the core knowledge elements and provide the apprentice with an additional recognised qualification. English and Maths continue to be a requirement for all apprenticeships and apprentices will need to pass functional skills at Level 2. The BPIF will support all apprentices to develop their skills based on their individual starting points.

You will continue to be involved in reviewing the progress of your apprentice throughout their training. At the end of the programme under the requirements of the standard a formal end point assessment will take place. Before your apprentice is put forward for this there will need to be a review with you, the apprentice and the Training Co-ordinator to ensure that everyone is in agreement that the apprentice is ready to be able to complete this successfully.

The BPIF are here to support you and your apprentice through this new standard allowing you to grow a highly skilled workforce.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON
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