



**HARDWARE
ASSOCIATION
I R E L A N D**

CERTIFICATE

HARDWARE RETAIL AND MERCHANTING

Supported by:



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About the HAI Certificate in Hardware Retail and Merchanding

As the sector evolves it will require more people with problem-solving skills. Hardware Association Ireland (HAI) is pleased to officially launch its Certificate in Hardware Retail and Merchanding, a new certificate programme for new employees in hardware retail/builders merchanding. The mentor-based programme will commence in September.

Objectives of the programme and who it's for:

The course is designed to equip those new to the sector, and those who never did a course in it with a knowledge and skills base that will enable them to contribute to the business of their employer. It will also help employees build a career in the sector.

It is intended that this foundation course will enhance the employer's ability to attract and retain talent as employees will feel that the employer has invested in them.

Completion of course can also be used as a basis for employee reviews and wage conversations.

Applications will be limited to 20. Only HAI members can apply.

Course Duration:

The course will be completed in nine months. The first two modules will be close together in time, while later modules will be more spaced out as students' learnings develop.

Modules will run from September to May. One module every 4-6 weeks.

Payment:

The cost is €1,350 per student. This must be paid in full and before commencement of the course.

Responsibility of Employer:

Management/employer buy-in is crucial for this course. Each participant must have a mentor within their organisation. This mentor will be called upon to evaluate the student's ability and willingness to apply their knowledge to the business and for continuous assessment updates. The mentor will also be informed of how well the student is faring during the course.

Participants will be given day release – 9 half days - (4 1/2 full time) and time to cover course work.

Location:

All modules will take place remotely (via Zoom). There will be two in-person events:

- Introductory Day, where all students, mentors and tutors will have an opportunity to meet in person and have a chance to ask questions before the commencement of the programme
- Graduation Day – At the end of the programme, all students who have successfully completed their studies will be welcomed with their mentors to receive their Certificate of Completion.

Dates and location of the two in-person events is tbc.

Having the modules delivered online will grant considerable savings to employers in terms of expenses for travel and absence from work, while giving students flexibility in their time-keeping.

About the Tutors

The Role of the Tutors:

We are working with our experienced team of tutors who through years of delivering training for HAI have a unique insight into the sector. Meetings will be arranged with tutors at beginning and other occasions in the year.

About the Tutors:

Terry Harmer (Selling Skills and Customer Service)

Terry Harmer specialises in designing and implementing training programmes and modules modelled on world class companies, using best practice initiatives, to train Sales, Customer Service, Communications, Teambuilding, Leadership, and People Management.

Declan Flood (Basic Finance and Credit Control)

Declan Flood is recognised as a thought leader in credit worldwide for his total business approach to credit. He believes that credit is not only about getting paid in full and on time, it is also about maintaining excellent customer relationships and finding a way to deliver every order.

Keith Harford (Stock Control and Merchandising)

Keith has an MBA from the University of Stirling and has associate expert professionals with whom he works on specific projects. He works with countless businesses across a number of sectors including Retail, Wholesale, Hardware and Agri sectors, along with Manufacturers/Producers too.

Greg Fry (Digital Marketing and Social Media)

Greg Fry is an International Social Media trainer who delivers LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, Digital Video and Social Business Strategy training and workshops for institutions such as the Digital Marketing Institute, Sure Skills and the Digital Skills Academy.

Noel Davidson (Communication Skills and Teamwork & Team Building)

Noel Davidson is the Entrepreneurs Academy Director of Training specialising in leadership, communication skills, presentation skills and social media. Passionate about helping people build their influence with others, Noel has trained extensively in the USA under New York Times No. 1 best-selling author and leadership expert, John C. Maxwell.

The Modules

The modules covered in this programme include:

Personal Development:

- a. **Communication Skills** - The power of good communication: How to craft what you do and say to have a consistently positive impact on others
- b. **Selling Skills** – The essential selling skills, knowledge and tactics to be able to manage sales transactions with confidence
- c. **Customer Service** – Equips participants with the skills and strategies to execute excellent customer service

In-Store Finances:

- d. **Basic In-store Finances** – The fundamentals of instore finances, like margins, credit policies and cash flow
- e. **Credit Control** – A deeper dive into credit control practices, including how to manage overdue accounts, collection calls and handling disputes

In-store Operations:

- f. **Stock Control** - This workshop shows participants the importance of stock control to the business and how to bring strong positive thinking and attitude to this subject
- g. **Merchandising Essentials** - This workshop helps participants to look at ways in which they can improve the merchandising standards in their store.

In-store Promotion:

- i. **Digital Marketing and Social Media** – Participants will learn the fundamentals of marketing practices and how they can contribute such strategies to their own business

Management Development:

- h. **Teambuilding and Team Leading** - Communicating for influence and impact as a team member and a team leader

Product Knowledge:

This programme also includes a number of Product Knowledge tutorials, where industry experts will provide key product information on sectors such as Painting and Décor, Heating and Plumbing, Timber & Roofing Products, Insulation Products, and more.

Assessment and Testing

Participants will be assessed on a continuous basis:

- i. Ahead of the first session they are asked what they would like to achieve.
- j. At the end of session they are asked what learned and what actions they intend to complete following that session.
- k. After 30 days they are to document what actions they undertook, and what impacts they had.

All the above will be documented in a workbook which is supplied to participants at the beginning of the course, and must be submitted to HAI's online learning portal by the designated submission date.

They must complete this on the job, and it must be signed by their mentor and sent back to HAI. Mentors must complete their own monthly feedback form on this workbook and submit same to HAI.

Certificate

Upon completion of all modules participants will be presented with a Certificate of Completion in both printed and digital form. The printed version will be presented to eligible students at the Graduation Day.

Participants and mentors are expected to attend this presentation.

Only one graduating day. Modules can be repeated if missed for defined reasons.

The digital version will be sent to eligible students by email.

Awards

It is expected that each year there will be an award for the highest performing student and the runner up. This is determined with the following criteria:

- On-time submission of assignments (both students and mentors)
- Live module attendance
- Overall participation and growth in programme (tutor feedback is key to this)

2023-2024 Schedule

Module	Title	Date
Module 0: Introductory Day		
Introductory Day (location details to be sent to participants)		Tbc
Module 1: Personal Development		
Personal Development	Communication Skills Product Knowledge: <i>tbc</i>	Tuesday 5 th September
Personal Development	Selling Skills Product Knowledge: <i>tbc</i>	Wednesday 27 th September
Personal Development	Customer Service Product Knowledge: <i>tbc</i>	Tuesday 17 th October
Module 2: Credit and Financial Management		
Credit and Financial Management	Understanding Basic Finance Product Knowledge: <i>tbc</i>	Thursday 23 rd November
Credit and Financial Management	Credit Control: From Start to Finish Product Knowledge: <i>tbc</i>	Thursday 14 th December
Module 3: In-Store Management		
In-Store Management	Stock Control	Thursday 18 th January
In-Store Management	Merchandising Essentials	Thursday 22 nd February
Module 4: Marketing and Promotion		
Marketing and Promotion	Digital Marketing and Social Media Product Knowledge: <i>tbc</i>	Thursday 21 st March

Module 5: Management Skills

Management Skills

Teambuilding and Team
Leading

Thursday
25th April

Product Knowledge

Product Knowledge

Sector-specific modules (see
above schedule)

Participant Feedback:

Students –

“I have learnt a lot, coming from a completely different industry, this has been very helpful to understand more of this industry. I have learnt how best to approach and deal with customers and how to make a sale and also know it is best to remember when working in the shop to think how the customer would think.”

“I have learned a lot from the course so far. Particularly how many areas in business are more closely tied together than people might expect. I have also found the product knowledge presentations on the course to be very useful.”

“It’s hard to pinpoint one thing because I’ve learned so much! After the Selling Skills workshop I suggested introducing instore signage to promote one of our offers, and sales significantly increased on that product in just a few weeks! I’m much more confident in my role now.”

Mentors -

“My student is flourishing and improving all the time since starting the course. Confidence levels have grown considerably and due to the broad subject coverage within the Certificate I really feel that he is at ease in most situations at the moment. It’s a super concept that I think is a no brainer to offer to any ambitious member of staff. Improvements will follow if the student embraces the course. Delighted overall.”

“I think the mentoring is vital. It has given me an opportunity to sit down with my student and discuss opportunities with him on where he would like to grow/develop, such as shadowing others, etc. The process helps me define a path and structure for his career.”

“Mentoring is important for someone who has been promoted, I had a mentor.
You need to invest in staff and training.”

Contact us:

If you are an employer and have an employee interested in this module, or if you are an employee new to hardware retail and merchandising contact us today and we will be in touch about enrolment.

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Phone: 01 298 0969

Web: www.hardwareassociation.ie