



# ▶ Quality apprenticeships

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Report IV(1)

## ▶ **Quality apprenticeships**

Fourth item on the agenda

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## ► Introduction

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1. At its 334th Session (October–November 2018), the Governing Body of the International Labour Office decided to place on the agenda of the 110th Session (2022) of the International Labour Conference an item related to apprenticeships (standard-setting).<sup>1</sup>
2. In accordance with article 46(1) of the Standing Orders of the Conference, the Office prepared a preliminary report setting out the law and practice in different countries, which included a questionnaire.<sup>2</sup> The report was transmitted to Member States in December 2019. Governments were invited to give their views by March 2021, after consultation with the most representative organizations of employers and workers. Based on the replies received, the Office prepared a second report on the item,<sup>3</sup> which was thereafter communicated to Member States. These two reports formed the basis for the first discussion of the item by the Conference, at its 110th Session, in 2022.
3. On 11 June 2022, the International Labour Conference, meeting in Geneva at its 110th Session, adopted the following resolution:<sup>4</sup>

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,  
Having adopted the report of the Committee appointed to consider the fourth item on the agenda,  
Having in particular approved as general conclusions, with a view to the consultation of Governments, a proposal for a Recommendation concerning a framework for quality apprenticeships,  
Decides that an item entitled “Apprenticeships” shall be included in the agenda of its next ordinary session for a second discussion with a view to the adoption of a Recommendation.
4. In the light of this resolution and in conformity with article 46(6) of the Standing Orders of the Conference, the Office has prepared the text of a proposed Recommendation concerning quality apprenticeships. The text is formulated on the basis of the first discussion by the Conference, and takes into account the replies to the questionnaire in the law and practice report. The purpose of the present report, which should reach governments not later than two months from the closing of the 110th Session of the Conference, is to transmit the proposed Recommendation to Member States in accordance with the Standing Orders.
5. Governments are hereby requested to inform the Office within three months from the publication of this report, and after consulting the most representative organizations of employers and workers, whether they have any amendments to suggest or comments to make. Taking into account the first discussion, the Office has provided further clarifications and proposals, suggested some minor changes to the text adopted at the 110th Session of the Conference and included comments explaining the rationale for the suggested changes. Given the importance of the subject, the Office encourages Members to adopt a whole-of-government approach and consult with social partners in preparing the replies. These should be as detailed and

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<sup>1</sup> ILO, *Minutes of the 334th Session of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office*, GB.334/PV, 2018, para. 42.

<sup>2</sup> ILO, *A Framework for Quality Apprenticeships*, ILC.110/IV/1, Geneva, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> ILO, *A Framework for Quality Apprenticeships*, ILC.110/IV/2(Rev.), Geneva, 2022.

<sup>4</sup> ILO, *Resolution to place on the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Conference an item entitled “Apprenticeships”*, International Labour Conference, 110th Session, 2022.

comprehensive as possible and should be communicated to the Office at the earliest opportunity – and in any case **not later than 14 November 2022**, pursuant to article 46(6) of the Standing Orders of the Conference – preferably by email to [apprenticeships@ilo.org](mailto:apprenticeships@ilo.org). The comments received will be reflected in the fourth and final report on the item, which will be prepared by the Office for the consideration of the Conference in 2023.

6. Governments are further requested to communicate to the Office, by the same date, whether they consider that the proposed text provides a satisfactory basis for the second discussion by the Conference at its 111th Session, in 2023. Governments are also asked to indicate which organizations of employers and workers they consulted before they finalized their replies. The results of the consultations should be reflected in the governments' replies. It should be noted that such consultations are obligatory for countries that have ratified the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144).
7. The report of the Standard-Setting Committee on Apprenticeships that was appointed by the Conference to consider this item ("the Committee") has been published and is available to Member States in its entirety, as is the record of the discussion of the item in the plenary sitting of the 110th Session of the Conference.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> ILO, *Reports of the Standard-Setting Committee: Apprenticeships – Summary of proceedings*, ILC.110/Record No. 5B(Rev.1), and *Plenary sitting: Outcomes of the work of the Standard-Setting Committee: Apprenticeships*, ILC.110/Record No. 5C, 2022.

## ► Office commentary on the proposed Recommendation

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8. The text of the proposed Recommendation concerning quality apprenticeships is based on the Conclusions adopted by the International Labour Conference following its first discussion of the item at its 110th Session, in May–June 2022 (“the Conclusions”). It also takes into account the replies received to the questionnaire included in the law and practice report and matters raised during the Committee’s discussion.

### Purpose of the Recommendation

9. The first discussion revealed a broad consensus on the desirability of: creating an enabling environment for promoting quality apprenticeships; developing quality apprenticeships as a path to decent work; providing lifelong learning opportunities to enhance productivity, resilience, transitions and the employability of apprentices; designing effective regulatory frameworks; involving employers’ and workers’ organizations in the design and implementation of policies and systems; preventing and addressing labour rights violations; and ensuring equality and diversity in the provision of apprenticeships.
10. The Committee also agreed that formulating a new instrument on apprenticeships would address the regulatory gap identified by the Standards Review Mechanism Tripartite Working Group in 2016. Two previous instruments, the Apprenticeship Recommendation, 1939 (No. 60), and the Vocational Training Recommendation, 1962 (No. 117), had been superseded by the Human Resources Development Recommendation, 1975 (No. 150), and subsequently by the Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195). Due to these juridical replacements, no existing ILO instruments address apprenticeships comprehensively.
11. The Committee agreed that the new instrument should take the form of a Recommendation, in accordance with the preference of a majority of respondents to the questionnaire.

### Scope of the Recommendation

12. The Committee expressed a clear view that the Recommendation should apply to apprenticeships in both public and private organizations and in all sectors of economic activity.
13. When the Committee discussed the definition of apprenticeships, members of the Africa group expressed concern about the inclusion of off-the-job training in the definition. That issue is discussed below in relation to Paragraph 1 of the proposed Recommendation.
14. Point 27 of the Conclusions notes the value of facilitating the transition from the informal to the formal economy. That objective is consistent with the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204), and the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, 2019.
15. The Office also notes that point 5 of the Conclusions indicates that the proposed Recommendation applies to “apprenticeships in all enterprises and sectors of economic activity”. During the discussion, it was confirmed that this formulation is broad enough to encompass arrangements in the informal economy.
16. The term “enterprise” is used throughout the proposed Recommendation to denote the person or organization for which an apprentice engages in on-the-job training. It is clear both from the Committee’s discussions and the broad statement as to the intended scope of the Recommendation in point 5 of the Conclusions that apprenticeships may be undertaken in both



the public and private sectors, including in not-for-profit organizations. However, there was some uncertainty during the discussion as to whether the concept of an enterprise is broad enough to encompass public administrations, including government departments. This led to the insertion in point 20 of the Conclusions of a reference to an apprenticeship agreement being concluded by “an enterprise or public authority”. The Office proposes to change “public authority” to “public institution” in Paragraph 17 of the proposed Recommendation.

## Changes to the proposed Recommendation

17. The Office has carried out a light revision of the proposed instrument.
18. The main changes introduced in the proposed Recommendation are as follows:
  - The Office proposes to simplify the title of the proposed Recommendation, from “a framework for quality apprenticeships” to “quality apprenticeships”, and notes that Part II relates to a regulatory framework.
  - The text of Paragraph 13 (based on point 16 of the Conclusions) has been rearranged to improve the logical sequence of the provisions.
  - Part V of the Conclusions has been divided into two in the proposed Recommendation: Part V, Promotion of quality apprenticeships, and Part VI, International, regional and national cooperation for quality apprenticeships. The title of the new Part VI has been expanded to include regional and national cooperation in addition to international cooperation, to reflect more accurately the content of the Part.
  - Following standard ILO drafting practice, references to “the social partners” have been replaced with “representative employers’ and workers’ organizations”.
  - Minor editorial changes have been made to improve readability.

## Provisions of the Recommendation

### Preamble

19. The Office has established a standard preambular text that incorporates point 3(a)–(i) of the Conclusions, with the following proposed changes:
  - In the third preambular paragraph, the separate sentence from point 3(a) of the Conclusions has been merged with the preceding text, to improve readability.
  - In the fifth preambular paragraph, the expression “can lead to decent work” has been changed to “can lead to further opportunities for decent work”. This is to avoid any unintended suggestion that apprenticeships are necessarily a precursor to decent work and may not themselves involve decent work.
  - In the eighth preambular paragraph, “Emphasizing” has been changed to “Underlining” to avoid repetition.
20. The Office notes that the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work uses the term “full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all”. The Office thus invites the comments of Member States on whether the words “for all” should be inserted after “decent work” in the third preambular paragraph.
21. The Office notes some duplication in the fourth and eighth preambular paragraphs regarding the importance of quality education. The Office thus invites the comments of Member States on whether the two paragraphs should be merged.

22. The Office also invites the comments of Member States on whether the word “job” should be replaced with “employment” in the ninth preambular paragraph, in line with the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122).

## I. Definitions, scope and implementation

23. In relation to **Paragraph 1** (point 4 of the Conclusions), during the discussion on the definition of “apprenticeship” some Committee members pointed out that, in many countries, young people are keen to acquire skills through an apprenticeship but cannot meet the minimum entry requirements of vocational education and training institutions. Many of those young people acquire the skills for a trade or craft through apprenticeships in the informal economy, learning and working side-by-side with an experienced practitioner, typically a master craftsman.<sup>6</sup> These forms of traditional or informal apprenticeships usually take place in micro and small enterprises in the informal economy, and lack the element of off-the-job learning. Therefore, a number of governments noted that the proposed definition may exclude those apprentices who cannot access vocational education and training institutions.
24. Given that the scope of the proposed Recommendation in Paragraph 2 applies to “apprenticeships in all enterprises and sectors of economic activity”, the Office proposes for the consideration of Member States a broadening of the definition of “apprenticeship” to capture all apprenticeship systems, including apprenticeships in the informal economy.
25. In clause (d), the Office notes that some of the processes involved in the recognition of prior learning are performed by personnel other than assessors, such as counsellors or administrative staff. It therefore invites comments from Member States on whether a different term, such as “qualified professionals”, should be used instead of “qualified assessors”.
26. **Paragraphs 2–4** reproduce points 5–7 of the Conclusions.

## II. Regulatory framework for quality apprenticeships

27. **Paragraph 5** reproduces point 8 of the Conclusions. The Office notes the importance of referring to the elements involved in progressively achieving higher standards in apprenticeships, including those in the informal economy, with the aim of meeting the aspirational standard proposed. Therefore, the Office invites comments from Member States on adding the words “and take measures to support the upgrading of all apprenticeships, including those in the informal economy” at the end of Paragraph 5.
28. **Paragraphs 6–9** reproduce points 9–12 of the Conclusions.
29. The Committee approved an amendment that added the words “skilled trade or” before “occupation”. The Office notes, however, that the concept of an occupation, as used in international labour standards, is broad enough to encompass any form of skilled trade. As the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations indicated, “[t]he term ‘occupation’ is understood to mean the trade, profession or type of work performed by the individual, irrespective of the branch of economic activity to which he or she belongs or of his or her professional status”.<sup>7</sup> Further, the use of the term “skilled trade or occupation” in this Paragraph may cause misalignment with the term “occupation” used in the definition of an “apprenticeship” in Paragraph 1(a) and with “occupation-specific standards” in Paragraph 10. The

<sup>6</sup> ILO, *Upgrading Informal Apprenticeship: A Resource Guide for Africa*, Geneva, 2012.

<sup>7</sup> ILO, *Giving Globalization a Human Face*, General Survey on the fundamental Conventions concerning rights at work in light of the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, 2008, ILC.101/III/1B, 2012, para. 752.

Office therefore proposes to change the references to “a skilled trade or occupation” to read simply “an occupation”, and invites comments from Member States on this suggested change.

30. **Paragraph 10** reproduces point 13 of the Conclusions. In clause (d), the term “qualified staff” has been changed to “qualified personnel” to make it clear that both hourly-wage-earners and salaried staff members are included. In clause (j), the term “supportive services” has been changed to the more commonly used term “support services”. Consistent with the Committee’s discussion, the types of services that might be offered in this regard could include mentoring, childcare, transportation and funds for equipment. The term “support” is intentionally broad, to take account of a range of national circumstances. In clause (n), a minor editorial change was made to improve readability.
31. **Paragraph 11** reproduces point 14 of the Conclusions.
32. **Paragraph 12** reproduces point 15 of the Conclusions, with an editorial change to move “in relation to apprenticeships” to the end of the sentence to improve readability.
33. The chapeau of **Paragraph 13** reproduces the chapeau of point 16 of the Conclusions. The Office notes that the use of the term “holidays” in clause (c) refers to annual holidays pursuant to the Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970 (No. 132), as opposed to public or customary holidays. Clause (h) of point 16 of the Conclusions recognizes that apprentices should have access to “paid maternity, paternity and parental leave”. The Office notes that an apprentice would be eligible for either maternity or paternity leave, not both, and hence has reworded it to read “have access to paid maternity or paternity leave and parental leave”. In addition, the Office has renumbered it to become clause (e), so that it comes immediately after the other forms of leave.
34. **Paragraphs 14–16** reproduce points 17–19 of the Conclusions.

### III. Apprenticeship agreement

35. **Paragraph 17** reproduces point 20 of the Conclusions. As mentioned earlier, during the first discussion, the Committee adopted an amendment to add the words “or public authority” after the term “enterprise” in point 20 of the Conclusions to account for apprenticeships in public bodies such as government departments. The Office proposes the term “public institution” instead of “public authority” for this purpose.
36. **Paragraph 18** reproduces point 21 of the Conclusions. In clause (b), the term “work hours” has been changed to “hours of work”, as this is the term used in other international labour standards, including the Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1).
37. **Paragraph 19** reproduces point 22 of the Conclusions.

### IV. Equality and diversity in quality apprenticeships

38. **Paragraph 20** reproduces point 23 of the Conclusions.
39. In **Paragraph 21**, the Office has changed “and” to “including” before “in access to apprenticeships”, to emphasize that the objective of gender equality and balance should apply to all aspects of apprenticeships, and that access to apprenticeships is merely one of those aspects.
40. **Paragraph 22** reproduces point 25 of the Conclusions.
41. **Paragraph 23** reproduces point 26 of the Conclusions, with an editorial change replacing the word “wanting” with “seeking”.
42. **Paragraph 24** reproduces point 27 of the Conclusions.

## V. Promotion of quality apprenticeships

43. To improve the structure of the proposed Recommendation, the Office has divided **Part V** of the Conclusions into two Parts: V, Promotion of quality apprenticeships, and VI, International, regional and national cooperation for quality apprenticeships. Part VI begins with Paragraph 28.
44. **Paragraph 25** reproduces points 28 and 29 of the Conclusions. Following standard ILO drafting practice, the references to “the social partners” in the chapeau and clause (d) of Paragraph 25 have been replaced with “representative employers’ and workers’ organizations”. In clause (d), “a labour market information system” has been changed to “labour market information systems”, to align with the French and Spanish versions.
45. With respect to clause (h), responding to the concerns expressed by some members of the Committee on the role of intermediaries, the Office has replaced “encouraging intermediaries to participate” with “facilitating the participation of intermediaries”. In addition, “when appropriate” has been changed to “where appropriate” for consistency.
46. The Office has made a minor edit to clause (k) so that it now reads “... increasing *the* participation of disadvantaged groups”.
47. **Paragraph 26** reproduces point 29 of the Conclusions.
48. **Paragraph 27** reproduces point 30 of the Conclusions. Following standard ILO drafting practice, the reference to “the social partners” in the chapeau of Paragraph 27 has been replaced with “representative employers’ and workers’ organizations”.
49. Clause (b) includes a reference to intermediaries. In the context of promoting transitions from the informal economy, where the available resources and institutional support are often inadequate, the Committee considered the role of associations and their potential to bridge the informal and formal economies. These include associations of craftspersons, which may hold training equipment in common user facilities, for example. The Committee inserted the term “where applicable” to reflect the fact that such intermediaries may not always be available to play this role. The Office has changed the word “applicable” to “appropriate” to better reflect this notion.
50. The Office also notes that Paragraph 27 refers to facilitating the transition from the informal to the formal economy and includes a number of measures to support this transition. However, after the removal of an explicit reference to recognition of prior learning from point 27 of the Conclusions, Paragraph 24 and Paragraph 27 of the proposed Recommendation currently do not propose any specific measures to recognize the competencies of apprentices in the informal economy to promote their access to formal education and training, including quality apprenticeships. The Office invites comments from Member States on the inclusion of measures such as recognition of prior learning and bridging courses in Paragraph 27 of the proposed Recommendation.<sup>8</sup>
51. The Office also invites comments from Member States on the inclusion of a new clause stating: “support the upgrading of apprenticeships in the informal economy so that they may converge towards quality apprenticeships”.

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<sup>8</sup> As to effective strategies for doing this, see, for example, ILO, *Upgrading Informal Apprenticeship Systems*, Policy Brief, Geneva, 2011; and *Upgrading Informal Apprenticeship: A Resource Guide for Africa*.

## VI. International, regional and national cooperation for quality apprenticeships

52. As mentioned earlier, the Office has divided Part V into two separate Parts, with the new Part VI beginning with Paragraph 28. In the title of Part VI, “international cooperation” has been expanded to include “international, regional and national cooperation” in line with the content of the Part.
53. In **Paragraph 28(a)**, the term “domestic” has been changed to “national” to align with standard drafting practice and with clause (c), which makes reference to “nationally, regionally and internationally”. The Office notes that the term “national” also comprises action at a subnational level. In clause (c), the Office has deleted the word “completed” before “apprenticeship qualifications” to avoid redundancy.

## Other considerations

54. During the first Conference discussion, the qualifying expression “in accordance with national laws” was inserted in draft Paragraphs 10, 13, 18 and 22 of the proposed Recommendation. This wording, which is at times used in Conventions in order to mitigate the effect of certain binding provisions, would not be suitable for a non-binding Recommendation. As the provisions of the proposed Recommendation seek to provide policy guidance and not to create enforceable legal obligations, any prescriptive reference to national laws would be redundant and might give rise to confusion. The Office recalls that the expression that had been put forward in the proposed Conclusions was “having regard to national circumstances”, which would be more appropriate given the non-binding nature of the instrument, while affording the necessary flexibility. The Office also considers that this point needs further clarity and, to this end, invites comments from Member States on the advisability of retaining the qualifying expression “in accordance with national laws” in the above-mentioned Paragraphs. Finally, the Office recalls that in line with the *Manual for drafting ILO instruments*, the use of such expressions should be limited as much as possible when they refer to the substance of a provision rather than to its implementation.
55. With regard to Paragraph 12 of the proposed Recommendation, the Office wishes to recall that a reference to “the relevance of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998), as amended in 2022, for the promotion of quality apprenticeships and the effective protection of all apprentices” is already contained in the Preamble of the proposed Recommendation. Therefore, draft Paragraph 12, which merely recommends that “Members should, in relation to apprenticeships, take measures to respect, promote and realize the fundamental principles and rights at work” would appear to unnecessarily soften the scope and effect of the ILO fundamental principles and rights at work. The Office therefore invites comments from Member States on the relevance and appropriateness of addressing the respect, promotion and realization of fundamental principles and rights at work in a hortatory provision of a non-binding instrument.

## ► Proposed Recommendation concerning quality apprenticeships

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The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

Having been convened in Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met at its 111th Session on XX June 2023, and

Noting that global unemployment and underemployment rates continue to be high, that inequality persists and that rapid transformations in the world of work, such as those resulting from the challenges of climate change, exacerbate skills mismatches and skills shortages, requiring people of all ages to reskill and upskill continuously in the interest of promoting full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work, and

Noting that Members recognize the importance of effective lifelong learning and quality education, and

Recognizing that the promotion and development of quality apprenticeships can lead to further opportunities for decent work, contribute to effective and efficient responses to current challenges and provide lifelong learning opportunities to enhance productivity, resilience, transitions and employability and meet current and future needs of apprentices, employers and the labour market, and

Considering that an effective framework for quality apprenticeships requires apprenticeships to be well regulated, sustainable, sufficiently funded, inclusive and free from discrimination and exploitation, to promote gender equality and balance, and diversity, to provide adequate remuneration or other financial compensation and social protection coverage, to lead to recognized qualifications and to enhance employment outcomes, and

Emphasizing that apprenticeships should be promoted and regulated, including through social dialogue, with a view to ensuring their quality, providing benefits and protection to apprentices and enterprises, and enhancing the attractiveness of apprenticeships to potential apprentices and employers, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, and

Underlining the importance of quality education for all and openness to lifelong learning, and

Recognizing that quality apprenticeships can support entrepreneurship, self-employment, employability, the transition to the formal economy, job creation and the growth and sustainability of enterprises, and

Recalling the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and

Underlining the relevance of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998), as amended in 2022, the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008), as amended in 2022, and the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, 2019, for the promotion of quality apprenticeships and the effective protection of all apprentices, particularly in the light of the profound transformations in the world of work, and

Recalling the provisions of other relevant ILO instruments, particularly the Employment Policy Convention (No. 122) and Recommendation (No. 122), 1964, the Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142), the Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984 (No. 169), the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), the Human Resources

Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195), and the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204), and

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals concerning quality apprenticeships, which is the fourth item on the agenda of the session, and

Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of a Recommendation,

adopts this XX day of June of the year two thousand and twenty-three the following Recommendation, which may be cited as the Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation, 2023:

## **I. Definitions, scope and implementation**

1. For the purposes of this Recommendation:
  - (a) the term “apprenticeship” should be understood as any form of education and training that is governed by an apprenticeship agreement and enables an apprentice to acquire the competencies required to work in an occupation through structured and remunerated or otherwise financially compensated training consisting of both on-the-job and off-the-job learning that leads to a recognized qualification;
  - (b) the term “intermediary” should be understood as an entity, other than the host enterprise or educational institution, that assists in the provision, coordination or support of an apprenticeship;
  - (c) the term “pre-apprenticeship programme” should be understood as a programme designed to help potential apprentices to develop their competencies with a view to improving their workplace preparedness or meeting the formal entry requirements for an apprenticeship; and
  - (d) the term “recognition of prior learning” should be understood as a process, undertaken by qualified assessors, of identifying, documenting, assessing and certifying a person’s competencies, acquired through formal, non-formal or informal learning, based on established qualification standards.
2. This Recommendation applies to apprenticeships in all enterprises and sectors of economic activity.
3. Members may give effect to the provisions of this Recommendation through national laws and regulations, collective agreements, policies and programmes or other measures consistent with national law and practice.
4. Members should implement the provisions of this Recommendation in consultation with representative employers’ and workers’ organizations.

## **II. Regulatory framework for quality apprenticeships**

5. Members should incorporate and promote quality apprenticeships within their relevant education, vocational training and employment policies.
6. Members should establish regulatory frameworks for quality apprenticeships, and qualification frameworks or systems to facilitate the recognition of competencies acquired through apprenticeships. Representative employers’ and workers’ organizations should be involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of systems, policies, programmes and frameworks for quality apprenticeships.

7. Members should establish or designate one or more authorities responsible for regulating apprenticeships, in which representative employers' and workers' organizations should be represented.
8. Members should ensure that the competent authorities have clearly defined responsibilities, are adequately funded and work in close cooperation with other authorities or institutions responsible for regulating or delivering education and training, labour inspection, social protection, occupational safety and health, and public and private employment services.
9. Members should adopt a process, in which representative employers' and workers' organizations are represented, for recognizing a skilled trade or occupation as being suitable for quality apprenticeships, taking into account:
  - (a) the competencies needed to work in that skilled trade or occupation;
  - (b) the appropriateness of an apprenticeship as a means of acquiring such competencies;
  - (c) the duration of the apprenticeship required to acquire such competencies;
  - (d) the current and future demand for skills in, and employment potential of, that skilled trade or occupation;
  - (e) the occupational, training and labour market expertise of employers' and workers' organizations; and
  - (f) the wide range of emerging occupational fields, and evolving production processes and services.
10. Members should establish occupation-specific or general standards, as appropriate, for quality apprenticeships by taking measures in accordance with national laws and practices that provide, among other things, for:
  - (a) the minimum age for admission, in accordance with the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182);
  - (b) occupational safety and health measures, in accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187);
  - (c) any educational qualifications, attainments or prior learning, if needed for admission;
  - (d) the need for supervision of apprentices by qualified personnel and the nature of supervision required;
  - (e) the appropriate balance between apprentices and workers in the workplace and the need to promote apprenticeships also in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises;
  - (f) the expected minimum and maximum duration of the apprenticeship;
  - (g) the extent to which the expected duration of the apprenticeship may be reduced on the basis of prior learning or progress made during the apprenticeship;
  - (h) learning outcomes and curricula based on relevant occupational competencies, the education and training needs of apprentices and labour market needs;
  - (i) the appropriate balance between off-the-job learning and on-the-job learning;
  - (j) access to vocational guidance and career counselling, and other support services as appropriate, before, during and after the apprenticeship;
  - (k) the qualifications and experience required for teachers and in-company trainers;



- (l) the appropriate balance between apprentices and teachers, taking into account the need to ensure quality education and training;
  - (m) the procedures for assessing and certifying the competencies acquired; and
  - (n) the qualification acquired on the successful completion of the apprenticeship.
- 11.** Members should take measures to ensure that there is a fair and transparent process by which an apprenticeship can be undertaken in more than one enterprise, subject to the apprentice's consent, when this is considered necessary for the completion of the apprenticeship.
- 12.** Members should take measures to respect, promote and realize the fundamental principles and rights at work in relation to apprenticeships.
- 13.** Members should take measures, in accordance with national laws and circumstances, to ensure that apprentices:
- (a) receive adequate remuneration or other financial compensation, which may be increased at different stages of the apprenticeship to reflect the progressive acquisition of occupational competencies;
  - (b) are not required to work hours that exceed limits specified by national legislation and collective agreements;
  - (c) are entitled to holidays with adequate remuneration or other financial compensation;
  - (d) are entitled to be absent due to illness or accident, with adequate remuneration or other financial compensation;
  - (e) have access to paid maternity or paternity leave and parental leave;
  - (f) have access to social security and maternity protection;
  - (g) are afforded protection and receive training in respect of occupational safety and health and in respect of discrimination and violence and harassment;
  - (h) are entitled to compensation for work-related injuries and illnesses; and
  - (i) have access to an effective complaints and dispute resolution mechanism.
- 14.** Members should prescribe the conditions under which:
- (a) enterprises may offer apprenticeships;
  - (b) educational and training institutions may provide off-the-job training; and
  - (c) intermediaries may assist in the provision, coordination or support of apprenticeships.
- 15.** Members should take measures to continuously develop and strengthen the capacity of government agencies, employers' and workers' organizations, and teachers, in-company trainers and other experts involved in apprenticeships.
- 16.** Members should take measures to ensure that apprenticeship systems and programmes are regularly monitored and evaluated by the competent authorities. The results of monitoring and evaluations should be used to adapt the systems and programmes accordingly.

### III. Apprenticeship agreement

- 17.** Members should ensure that apprenticeships are governed by a written agreement that is concluded between an apprentice and an enterprise or public institution and, if permitted by

national laws and regulations, may also be signed by a third party, such as an educational or training institution or an intermediary.

18. Members should ensure that an apprenticeship agreement:
  - (a) clearly defines the parties' respective roles, rights and obligations;
  - (b) contains provisions, in accordance with national laws, relating to the apprenticeship duration, remuneration or other financial compensation and its frequency, hours of work, rest time, breaks, holidays and leave, occupational safety and health, social security, dispute resolution mechanisms and the termination of the apprenticeship agreement;
  - (c) identifies the competencies, certifications or qualifications to be attained and any additional education support to be provided;
  - (d) is registered under conditions established by the competent authority; and
  - (e) is signed on the apprentice's behalf by a parent, guardian or legal representative, where the apprentice is a minor, as may be required by national laws and regulations.
19. Members should develop a model apprenticeship agreement to facilitate consistency, uniformity and compliance.

#### **IV. Equality and diversity in quality apprenticeships**

20. Members should take effective measures to prevent discrimination and violence and harassment against apprentices.
21. Members should take appropriate measures to promote gender equality and balance in apprenticeships, including in access to apprenticeships.
22. Members should take measures, in accordance with national laws, to promote equality, diversity and social inclusion in apprenticeships, taking special account of the situation and needs of persons in vulnerable situations or belonging to disadvantaged groups.
23. Members should actively promote apprenticeships for adults and experienced individuals seeking to change industry or occupation, upgrade their skills or enhance their employability.
24. Members should take measures to promote access to quality apprenticeships as a means to facilitate the successful transition from the informal to the formal economy and from insecure to secure work.

#### **V. Promotion of quality apprenticeships**

25. Members should, in consultation with representative employers' and workers' organizations, take measures to create an enabling environment for promoting quality apprenticeships, including by:
  - (a) developing and implementing strategies, setting national goals and allocating adequate resources for quality apprenticeships;
  - (b) mainstreaming quality apprenticeships in national development strategies and in employment, education and lifelong learning policies;
  - (c) establishing sectoral or occupational skills bodies to facilitate the implementation of quality apprenticeships;
  - (d) developing and maintaining robust mechanisms, such as labour market information systems and regular consultations with representative employers' and workers' organizations, to

assess the current and future demand for skills with a view to designing or adapting apprenticeship programmes accordingly;

- (e) implementing effective and sustainable financing models;
  - (f) providing incentives and support services;
  - (g) facilitating effective public–private partnerships to support quality apprenticeships within a national regulatory framework;
  - (h) facilitating the participation of intermediaries in the provision, coordination and support of apprenticeships, where appropriate;
  - (i) undertaking awareness-raising activities and promotional campaigns at regular intervals to improve the image and attractiveness of quality apprenticeships by promoting the benefits of apprenticeships to workers, young people, families, teachers, career counsellors, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and employers, particularly micro, small and medium-sized enterprises;
  - (j) increasing awareness of apprentices’ rights, entitlements and protections in promotional campaigns;
  - (k) establishing needs-based pre-apprenticeship programmes with a focus on increasing the participation of disadvantaged groups;
  - (l) facilitating access to further vocational and higher education opportunities for apprentices;
  - (m) providing flexible learning pathways and career guidance to support mobility, lifelong learning and portability of skills and qualifications; and
  - (n) using new technologies and innovative methods to improve the effectiveness and quality of apprenticeships.
- 26.** Members should promote a culture of lifelong learning, skilling, upskilling and reskilling.
- 27.** Members should, in consultation with representative employers’ and workers’ organizations, with a view to facilitating the transition from the informal to the formal economy, take measures to:
- (a) strengthen the capacity of micro and small economic units by facilitating access to business development and financial services, improving the occupational safety and health environment, and enhancing the teaching and training methods and the technical and entrepreneurial competencies of master craftspersons;
  - (b) ensure that apprentices have access to off-the-job learning and may complement their on-the-job learning in other enterprises or through intermediaries, where appropriate; and
  - (c) strengthen the capacity of associations of micro and small economic units, including through financial support, to improve the quality of apprenticeships.

## **VI. International, regional and national cooperation for quality apprenticeships**

- 28.** Members should take measures to:
- (a) enhance international, regional and national cooperation and exchange information on good practices, in all aspects of quality apprenticeships;
  - (b) cooperate to offer expanded learning opportunities to apprentices and recognize competencies acquired through apprenticeship programmes or prior learning; and
  - (c) promote the recognition of apprenticeship qualifications nationally, regionally and internationally.