

**No. MSDE-1/2/2023-AP(PMU)**  
**Comp. No. 60078**  
**Government of India**  
**Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship**  
**(Apprenticeship Training Division)**

Shram Shakti Bhavan, Rafi Marg,  
New Delhi, the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2023

**OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**Sub: Clarification on 'Optional Trades' under Apprenticeship Training – Regarding.**

As per the Apprentices Act, 1961, the apprentices being engaged by the industry/establishment fall under five categories of apprentices, namely, (i) Graduate Apprentices, (ii) Technician Apprentices, (iii) Technician (Vocational) Apprentices, (iv) Trade Apprentices, and (v) Optional Trade Apprentices.

2. The Government of India has also been running schemes to promote apprenticeship with provision for financial support, in terms of partial stipend support, advocacy, digital portal for reporting and capacity building, namely the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) administered by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and the National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS), administered by the Ministry of Education.

3. The details regarding duration and qualification of the Apprenticeship categories mentioned above are given below:

S. No.	Nomenclature as per the Apprentices Act, 1961	Relevant Section	Duration of Apprenticeship	Qualification	Year Introduced	No. of courses	Scheme support
1.	Graduate Apprentices	2(j)	One year	Degree in Engineering or non-engineering or pursuing Degree in Engg. or non-engg.	1973	163	National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS)
2.	Technician Apprentices		One year	Diploma in Engineering or non-engg. or pursuing Diploma in Engg. or non-engg.	1973		

3.	Technician (Vocational) Apprentices	2(pp)	One year	12 <sup>th</sup> Class with Vocational subject.	1986	137	National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS)
4.	Trade Apprentices	2(q)	1-3 years	8 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup> , ITI, and in some trades B.Sc.	1961	266	
5.	Optional Trade Apprentices	Sub-rule 5B of Rule 2 of the Apprenticeship Rules 1992	06 months/ 09 months, one year (beyond one year with approval of Ministry) OM dt 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2022	5 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup> Class with Vocational subject, Degree in Engg. Or non-engg., Diploma in Engg. or non-engineering.	2014	400+	

4. The Optional Trade Apprenticeship, open to students of all education qualifications (as per the type of trade) was introduced in 2015 to provide the much-needed flexibility to run Apprenticeship in customized employer specific courses/curriculums.

5. A confusion has arisen on the Optional Trade Apprentices, particularly relating to Graduates including B.A., B.Sc., B.Com, BE, B.Tech, etc. who are getting registered both under NATS and NAPS. This has created difficulties in implementation of NATS and NAPS schemes.

6. To address this confusion and bring clarity in the implementing roles of the two Ministries with respect to the Optional Trade apprenticeship, it may be noted that the pool of students catering to optional Trade apprenticeship is amply large for coverage under both NAPS and NATS, as the students that are eligible under the other four categories can also cater to the Optional Trade category.

7. All students cohort irrespective of their educational qualification are eligible for 'Optional Trade Apprentice'. 'Optional Trade Apprentice' may enrol under either NAPS or NATS as per fitment with their chosen trade or establishment preference and pursuant norms of respective schemes shall apply.

8. Respective field level functionaries of Apprenticeship, belonging to BOATs, Regional Directorates of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (RDSDEs), Joint Apprenticeship Advisers and all Apprenticeship Advisers at States/UTs are advised to take note of the same and ensure seamless administration of all types of Apprenticeship, with utmost user centricity and convenience of all stakeholders.

9. This issues with the approval of competent authority.

  
(Sonal Mishra)

Joint Secretary (Apprenticeship Training)

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To

- 1) Secretary, MSDE – for kind information
- 2) Secretary, Deptt of Higher Education, MoE, – for kind information
- 3) Joint Secretary (TE), Deptt of Higher Education, MoE, for kind information and needful action.
- 4) Director General of Training, Directorate General of Training (DGT), Kaushal Bhavan.
- 5) Regional Directors of all RDSDEs under DGT.
- 6) Directors, Board of Apprenticeship Training (BOAT)/Board of Practical Training (BOPT)
- 7) State Apprenticeship Advisers of all States/UTs
- 8) Joint Apprenticeship Advisers of all Sector Skill Councils (SSCs)
- 9) Third Party Aggregators (TPAs).