

A photograph showing several people sitting at a desk, looking at documents and writing. The image is partially obscured by a large red banner at the top and bottom of the page.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP & BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES

The word ‘entrepreneur’ is sometimes used to describe an individual that starts and runs their own business (or multiple businesses!).

When you run a business, no matter what size or how long you’ve been operating, Business Support Services are often the key for sustaining, developing, and growing your business.

Business Support Services help a business run more effectively and efficiently. This can include individuals employed directly by a business (such as a Finance Manager, Human Resources Manager, or Marketing Executive), or independent companies that provide these services on an as-needed basis, such as Accountancy Firms, PR Agencies, and HR Consultants.

In addition, there are a range of Business Support Services available from local Councils and Enterprise Agencies, which often have a range of courses and programmes to help individuals set up and grow their own business.

Could you be an entrepreneur of the future?





KEY FACTS

- As of 2022, there are **79,000** registered businesses in Northern Ireland, with **1,550** businesses starting up in 2021 alone.

- **60%** of businesses in Northern Ireland have 1-9 employees.

- **25%** of businesses in NI turnover **£100,000 - £249,000** per year.

- 14% of registered businesses in Northern Ireland are based in the Belfast City Council area, 12% in Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon, 11% in Fermanagh & Omagh, 7% in Lisburn & Castlereagh, and 6% in Ards & North Down.



WHY ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

If you're an inventive person who has lots of great ideas that you think could be sellout successes, entrepreneurship might be for you. _____



It can be daunting thinking about setting up a business, but there are loads of benefits to working for yourself, such as deciding when and where you work, seeing your products and services come to life, and possibly even providing jobs for other people.

Running a business can be very hard work, but also incredibly rewarding. If you're always thinking of new product ideas, ways you could improve products that already exist, or thinking of ways to earn some cash, then you could be a future entrepreneur.





WHY BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES?

There's a role for almost every skill set in the vibrant business support sector. It's a very broad sector with a wide and varied range of different jobs. For example, there are roles in finance, which is great for people who love numbers, and roles in human resources, which can be ideal for people who are empathetic and thrive when working with others.

Many jobs in business support have 'standard' working hours of Monday to Friday from 9 to 5, which can be appealing to individuals who prefer a stable work schedule and don't want to work 'unsociable' hours (evenings and weekends).

There are typically good opportunities for development and promotion, with many jobs paying competitive starting salaries.



WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES?

The business support sector is very broad, so there are a wide range of different career opportunities available that will suit many different skill sets.

Just some of the types of jobs available include:

- Accountant
- Public Relations (PR) Executive
- Marketing Executive
- Market Research Executive
- Payroll Manager
- Human Resources Officer
- Health & Safety Officer
- Administration Assistant
- Business Consultant
- Training Manager
- Learning & Development Officer
- Talent Management Specialist
- Customer Service
- Sales Manager

...and more!



SALARY EXPECTATIONS

With such a wide variety of roles available, salaries vary for each based on the type of work, job location, required entry qualifications, and your experience level.

Example **salaries** for a range of careers in this sector are :

Human Resources Officer
Average salary
£26,844 per year

Public Relations Executive
Average salary
£25,873 per year

Accounts Assistant
Average salary
£23,929 per year

Human Resources Manager
Average salary
£36,919 per year

Marketing Executive
Average salary
£25,609 per year

Accountant
Average salary
£34,765 per year

Health & Safety Officer
Average salary
£30,283 per year

Marketing Manager
Average salary
£35,000 per year

Sales Manager
Average salary
£31,892 per year

Learning &
Development Manager
Average salary
£30,636 per year

Business Owner
£0 - Unlimited



For further information, click the link highlighted in **blue**



WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DO I NEED?

The specific qualifications needed for a career in business support services are dependent on the occupation you're interested in. For most entry level positions, many employers will expect you to have achieved a degree in a relevant subject with a minimum grade of a 2:1.

For example, if you are interested in Human Resources, there are a range of degree programmes you could undertake, such as Human Resource Management at Ulster University or Queen's University. There are also qualifications at Certificate and Diploma level available from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

For roles in Marketing-related careers, there are degree programmes available such as Communications, Advertising & Marketing and Communication and Public Relations (both Ulster University), as well as a range of qualifications at Certificate and Diploma level from the Chartered Institute of Marketing.

For Accountancy-related roles, there are a range of qualifications available, from degrees at University to qualifications from organisations such as the Association of Accounting Technicians and Chartered Accountants Ireland.

There aren't specific qualifications required to be a business owner. However, qualifications relating to the type of business you want to start would be useful, as well as general business-related qualifications.



WHAT SKILLS ARE USEFUL?

Beyond any qualifications or experience needed to pursue a career in this sector, or become a business owner, there are a range of employability skills and personal attributes that are useful to have.

These include:

- Commercial awareness
- IT skills
- Problem solving
- Time management
- Project management
- Communication
- Analytical thinking
- Teamwork





WHERE CAN I GO TO FIND OUT MORE?

There are a range of organisations that can provide more information on entrepreneurship and starting your own business, as well as the range of business support roles that all businesses and organisations need.

Useful resources may include:

Enterprise NI

Enterprise Northern Ireland is a representative body for Northern Ireland's Enterprise Agencies. It provides support and acts as a voice, lobbying on behalf of small businesses.

NI Chamber of Commerce

NI Chamber of Commerce supports Northern Irish businesses, promoting their growth and the development of the economy.

Institute of Directors (IOD)

The Institute of Directors provides support to company directors across the UK, in the private, public, and third sectors. It helps directors to network and to stay up to date on current events and news.

Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)

The FSB provides support and resources to small businesses, helping them to grow and develop, and to increase their outreach and customer base. It lobbies for small businesses too, and acts as a representative for them.

Young Enterprise NI

Young Enterprise is a charitable organisation that educates young people on enterprise and finance in an engaging, hands-on way. It runs educational programmes and challenges for young people to get involved with, such as the 10X Challenge and LaunchPad.



EMPLOYERS IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP & BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES



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