

## **Welcome to the ACT Programme**

Hello and welcome.

We are glad that you have wisely chosen to join the ACT Career Progression Programme.

The programme is designed to allow you to fully explore your career options, help you find your career direction, enable you to develop a clear and comprehensive tailored career development plan, and of course to significantly improve your prospects of realising your employment ambitions.

This pack contains the instructions, the hard tools and materials, directions to soft tools and resources, and all the necessary information you will need to do just that.

There are assigned mentors available who are trained and competent to deliver this programme. They will assist you on your path, should you require them, and will work with you to help you achieve your eventual success.

The programme is user friendly, and help is available where difficulties arise.

The programme is unique in its scope and ability to deliver a high quality career development programme to unemployed jobseekers at community level, and at no cost to the user. The programme exceeds most, if not all, career progression programmes for unemployed jobseekers nationally, and indeed surpasses many comparable 'paid for' professional resources. It is a complete package.

You should be aware of the JRC's strict confidentiality policy, and you are therefore encouraged to discuss any issues with your mentor that are causing, or may cause you a problem with your decision to take part in this programme.

Remember – Your mentor is there for you, and while your mentor cannot be available to you at all times, the resource centre can assist you with many issues that may arise, until you meet your mentor again at your next appointment.

To use this programme properly, you should follow the instructions as laid down. Here again, if you have any problems with the instructions, you should discuss it with your mentor, or the centre.

While the programme may be user friendly, and the process is not difficult, it does require some commitment and effort on your part. The simple maxim is; 'The more you put in the more you get out'. That said, when you consider the not so considerable effort and investment required compared with the possible outcome of what is likely to be one of the most significant investments you can ever make – in your career – then every effort and investment you put in is likely to be well worth it.

Although nothing in life is guaranteed, we are confident that if you engage and work with the programme, you will reap benefits. Though finding gainful employment is the eventual outcome you may desire, we are certain that the insights you will gain through participation in the programme will be of great benefit.

We wish you luck in your endeavour, we hope that you enjoy the programme.

Wherever this programme may take you, we sincerely wish you the best.

## ACT Programme Instructions and Advice

Always play close attention to the instructions.

**Step by Step:** The programme follows a step by step process. You may dip in and dip out of the programme at different points, but it is recommended that you follow the programme in a sequential manner. (For example - It may be that you need some guidance on CV's as you are currently applying for a job, and you therefore decide to go directly to the module dealing with CV's). However, following the step by step process will give you the best results as many of the sections build on previous sections.

**Workshops:** There are video workshops provided to help guide you through the process. They are delivered online, and links are provided for same.

**Tools:** All worksheets, workbooks, and tools come with their own instructions.

**Mentors:** We recommend that you avail of the mentors provided. That said, you have the option of working through the programme alone and can still seek assistance when you require it. Further references to mentors in these instructions will only apply to you as you see fit.

**Sequence:** The programme path is laid out in a sequential fashion.

**Rate of progress:** Your mentor will advise you on how well you are progressing through the programme.

**Exercises and tools:** As you move through the programme there will be areas where your input will be needed. These areas are designed to draw out the necessary information that will allow you to build your tailor made Career Development Plan.

**Programme Timing:** Will vary from person, and is largely dependent on your ability and how you apply yourself. Some will like to move through it quickly, while others will prefer to take time and absorb the programme in detail. It is for you to decide what approach you will take. That said, we suggest that you apply yourself with a certain amount of discipline, as complacency in this regard may mean that you could end up leaving the programme unfinished.

**Commitment:** We are committed to doing what we can to ensure that you derive maximum benefit from the programme. You will however have to play your part and engage with the programme. Your mentor will guide and encourage you, but cannot force you to apply yourself appropriately. If genuine issues arise that are likely to affect your ability to engage with the programme, you should discuss the matter with your mentor.

**Appointments:** A mentor's time is valuable. If you can't make an appointment please notify the centre as quickly as possible. Mentoring sessions have a specific timeframe; therefore if you are late you may lose the full time allocation for your session. In some circumstances if there is no show at the appointed time, your session may be cancelled.

**Mentors:** Your assigned mentor is trained and equipped to assist you as you work through the programme. If however, you feel that you would like to change to another mentor you should contact your JRC and you will be assigned a new mentor without question.

**Evaluation:** At different points in the programme you will find an evaluation sheet. The purpose of this sheet is to assess your own experience with differing parts of the programme and it allows us to consider any observations you may make. This will enable us to improve the programme into the future. We would appreciate your genuine feedback and any recommendations you can make.