

## **The Building Trades Apprenticeship Readiness Program Q and A**

### ***Q: What is a Building Trades Apprenticeship Readiness Program?***

**A:** In 2007, the Building Trades' national Standing Committee on Apprenticeship and Training created an Apprenticeship Readiness [training] Program (ARP) that would empower participants to make informed decisions about which craft they would pursue. These training programs are sponsored by State and Local Building Trades Councils, Training Coordinators and JATCs in cooperation with local community groups, government agencies and schools.

The goals of the ARPs are to (1) increase the number of candidates for apprenticeship across all crafts, (2) to increase the diversity of apprenticeship candidates by recruiting women, people of color and veterans, and (3) to increase the retention rate among apprentices by providing them with a deeper understanding of both the industry and the role of craft unions in construction.

Building Trades ARPs use the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3), a comprehensive, 120-hour apprenticeship preparation curriculum. The MC3 provides a gateway for community residents to gain access to Building Trades registered apprenticeships, which are jointly administered by labor and management. In 2012, the US Department of Labor recognized the MC3 with its Registered Apprenticeship Innovator and Trailblazer Award.

The Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) is offered in cooperation with state and local Building Trades Councils, which are essential participants in any MC3 program. The MC3 is not otherwise available; state or Local Building Trades Councils must participate in any MC3 program.

**Starting September 1, 2015, the MC3 will be available in an online format.**

### ***Q: How do we set up an ARP using the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum?***

**A: The first step is to submit an MC3 Implementation Plan to the Building Trades National Office.** The Implementation Plan must, at a minimum, address the following issues:

- The Council's willingness to send a coordinator for a one week instructor training course on teaching the Core Curriculum, to be conducted by the Building Trades Academy (see [www.bt-academy.org](http://www.bt-academy.org) for the schedule and location of classes);
- Commitments received from the Building Trades Council's affiliated Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committees to participate in the program;
- A summary of plans to place successful students in apprenticeship programs;

- Discussion of whether the Council is instituting the program in association with commitments from employers or in connection with a project labor agreement to provide employment opportunities for program graduates;
- A description of any partnership agreement and identification of other partners in the plan;
- A commitment from the Building Trades Council (or their designee) to register all students in the online platform for the MC3, which is where the Building Trades maintains records (including demographic information, completions and apprenticeship placements) for all ARP participants.

**Q: How do we get access to the MC3 curriculum and what does it cost?**

**A:** Once the national Building Trades approves of your ARP/MC3 Implementation Plan, you will receive a user name and password for your instructors, and separate instructors on how to register your students in the new online edition of the MC3. Your instructors will register students for your section of the MC3, including their demographic information.

**The Building Trades doesn't charge tuition for the MC3, but there is a \$75 per student cost for materials and tech support.** This \$75 per student payment should be included with your MC3 Implementation Plan.

**Q: *What additional steps are required to make the MC3 course a success?***

**A: You should complete the steps on the following checklist.** Each MC3 program will be different, however, because they are based on your local needs and preferences. The checklist:

- Discuss placement plans and employment commitments with JATCs, local Building Trades unions and employers.
- Secure agreements with local partners, including roles and responsibilities for local partners.
- Develop an MC3 program budget.
- Develop an MC3 Program timetable.
- Identify and secure a training site.
- Recruit instructors.

- Locate transportation services to facilitate visits by participants to Building Trades training centers.
- Recruit participants.
- Plan a graduation ceremony. You should invite family and friends of the graduates.

**Q: What topics are included in the MC3 curriculum?**

**A: There are nine sectors or chapters in the MC3:**

- Construction Industry Orientation
- Tools and Materials
- Construction Health and Safety
- Blueprint Reading
- Basic Math for Construction
- Heritage of the American Worker
- Diversity in the Construction Industry
- Green Construction
- Financial Responsibility

**Q: What is the format of the MC3 curriculum?**

**A: Starting September 1, 2015, the MC3 will be available in an online format.** The MC3 curriculum will still be taught face-to-face, but it will be available to all approved ARP programs in a web-based learning management system. All of the student and instructor materials for the updated MC3 will be available in one integrated format. If you want to print out copies of the materials located in the new MC3 online platform, you may do so with the permission of the Building Trades National Office.

**Q: Are some parts of the MC3 curriculum required and others optional?**

**A: Yes, some sections of the MC3 chapters are required and some are optional.** The table below explains this in detail.

**The Multi-Craft Core Curriculum: Required and Elective Sections**

Required Sections	Elective Sections - Select to complete the 120 hour requirement
Orientation and Industry Awareness- 8 hours	Construction Health and Safety- 22 hours (CPR and First Aid- 8 hours/Osha-10- 10 hours/Women’s Health and Safety- 4 hours)
Construction Trade Awareness- 8 hours	Blueprint Reading- 24 hours
Tools and Materials Hands on Training- 8 hours	Green Construction- 4-8 hours
Basic Math for Construction- 40 hours	Financial Responsibility- 4-8 hours
Heritage of the American Worker- 8 hours	
Diversity in the Construction Industry- 12 hours (Diversity Awareness- 4 hours/Sexual Harassment- 8 hours)	

**Total 84 Hours**

**Total 54 Hours (Choose 36 out of 54)**

**Table Notes:** All MC3 Programs must contain a minimum total of 120 classroom hours. The 84 hour core is required for all programs. Building Trades Council representatives and their partners may add additional hours to the MC3 at their discretion.

**Q: Is there specific language that must be included in the MC3 student application?**

**A: Yes. The following language must be included in all Building Trades' Multi-Craft Core Curriculum/Apprenticeship Readiness Program applications:**

**NOTICE: THIS PROGRAM IS AN APPRENTICESHIP-READINESS PROGRAM ONLY. PARTICIPATION IN AND/OR COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAM DOES NOT GUARANTEE ADMISSION INTO AN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM, ADMISSION INTO A UNION OR EMPLOYMENT IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY. DECISIONS ON SUCH ADMISSIONS OR EMPLOYMENT ARE MADE BY THE INDIVIDUAL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM, UNION OR EMPLOYER AND NOT BY THIS PROGRAM. BY SIGNING THIS APPLICATION AND PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROGRAM, YOU INDICATE YOUR AGREEMENT AND UNDERSTANDING THAT NO PROMISES OR GUARANTEES OF ADMISSION TO AN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM OR A UNION OR EMPLOYMENT IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY HAVE BEEN MADE TO YOU AND THAT NO ONE REPRESENTING THIS PROGRAM HAS THE AUTHORITY TO MAKE SUCH PROMISES OR GUARANTEES.**

A recent decision out of NYC (Apple vs. Atlantic Yards Dev. Co.) illustrates why it is important that Building Trades pre-apprenticeship (or apprenticeship readiness) programs make clear to participants in the program in writing that there is no *promise/guarantee* that they will gain entry into an apprenticeship program, a union or be given employment. In this case, the court denied summary judgment to contractors seeking to dismiss a claim by participants in a pre-apprenticeship program who alleged that they were promised membership in a construction union and union construction jobs.

**Q: Is there a final exam for the MC3?**

**A: No, but Building Trades Council leaders who work with high schools and community colleges must be clear and consistent regarding the issue of testing in the MC3.**

It is important to pay close attention to the issue of testing in employment programs because of law and regulations law in this area. In brief, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent decisions by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) have held that tests ARE allowed in employment programs as long as they don't discriminate on the basis of "race, color, religion, sex or national origin." According to the EEOC, for a test to be found non-discriminatory it must be "validated," in other words, thoroughly tested to make sure it doesn't discriminate in practice, which is a lengthy and expensive process.

What does this mean for Building Trades' programs using the MC3? It means you should first understand why the Building Trades doesn't use an exit exam in the MC3. When the Building Trades National Apprenticeship and Training Committee created the MC3, they choose NOT to use an exit exam for a few simple reasons. First, the Committee wanted to avoid duplicating the aptitude test (entrance exam) that is required of all apprenticeship candidates in Building Trades joint programs. Second, the Committee and the Building Trades staff wanted to steer clear of this issue of test validation.

As a result, Building Trades programs may use some form of assessment of student learning, but these assessments must be qualitative and informal, rather than quantitative or numerical scores. I have attached, as a way to illustrate this, the assessment form used by the Augusta Georgia Building Trades, in their ongoing apprenticeship readiness programs. You will see that this assessment tool specifies whether the students have been fully engaged with the various sections of the curriculum (and thus completing the required hours specified), and even contains space for written comments from instructors, but avoids the issue of a numerical score for each participant.

Second, and perhaps most important, *for those of you working with high schools and community colleges, you must make clear to your educational partners that if THEY choose to use an exit exam in any program using the MC3, that they must make sure that the tests they use have been validated under the guidelines set forth by the EEOC.* This is a requirement if they are to partner with your Council.