

FAQ

[For Employers](#) | [For Trainees](#)

For Employers:

1. It is noted that employers with active tree inspection and/or tree work related contract(s) for the Government or the private sector of duration not less than one year is one of the eligibility requirements. Can an arboriculture company, which is a tree works sub-contractor without any direct contractual relationship with the Government, be an eligible employer?

The employers are eligible as long as they can prove that they are undertaking active tree inspection and/or tree work related contract(s) for the private sector or the Government (or its contractors) of duration not less than one year.

2. If an employer can only provide short-term contracts for individual tree work services, is the employer eligible to join the programme as a qualified employer?

One of the eligibility requirements for participating employers is that they must be undertaking active tree inspection and/or tree work related contract(s) for the Government or the private sector with duration not less than one year.

Registered companies under S19 Arboricultural Works of the Registered Specialist Trade Contractors Scheme of CIC (<https://rstc.cic.hk/en/register-list.aspx>); or landscaping contractors under the List of Approved Suppliers of Materials and Specialist Contractors for Public Works under DEVB (https://www.devb.gov.hk/en/construction_sector_matters/contractors/supplier/index.html?search=true&category=LANS&group=&class=) are exempted from submitting the relevant contract (s).

3. Is there a limit on the number of trainees to be engaged by each company?

There is no ceiling on the number of trainees to be engaged by employers, but in no case exceeding the maximum training tutor-to-trainees ratio of 1:4 for arborist/tree risk assessor/tree work supervisor training and 1:3 for tree climber/ tree climber cum chainsaw operator training.

If employer arranges assistant training tutor, the maximum ratio of assistant training tutor to Arborist Trainee, Tree Risk Assessor Trainee or Tree Work Supervisor Trainee shall be 1:2 and the maximum ratio of assistant training tutor to Tree Climber Trainee or Tree Climber cum Chainsaw Operator Trainee shall be 1:1. Therefore, the maximum training tutor-to-trainees ratio under the co-supervision by two types of training tutors shall be 2:6 and 2:4 for arborist/tree risk assessor/tree work supervisor training and tree climber/ tree climber cum chainsaw operator training respectively.

If an employer has 2 staff eligible for the training tutors of Arborist Trainees/Tree Risk Assessor Trainees/Tree Work Supervisor Trainees, then the employer can engage up to 8 Arborist Trainees/Tree Risk Assessor Trainees/Tree Work Supervisor Trainees. Under the co-supervision of 2 eligible training tutors and 2 eligible assistant training tutors, the employer can engage up to 12 Arborist Trainees/Tree Risk Assessor Trainees/Tree Work Supervisor Trainees in such case.

Please refer to Section 5.6.6 and 5.6.7 of the Programme Framework Document for details.

4. Can the existing employees of an employer participate in the Trainee Programme as trainees?

Employees who meet the eligibility requirements for trainee under the Trainee Programme can participate in the programme. Applications shall be made by employers for CIC/HKIC's approval.

5. Is there any requirement on the duration of services of the training tutor in his/her current company? Does he/she need to be a full-time staff?

There is no specified requirement on the duration of services of a training tutor in his/her current company. For a training tutor of Arborist Trainees/ Tree Risk Assessor Trainees/ Tree Work Supervisor Trainees, he/she should have at least 7 years of work experience in tree care, tree risk assessment and management. For a training tutor of Tree Climber Trainees/ Tree Climber cum Chainsaw Operator Trainees, he/she should have at least 3 years of work experience in tree care and tree climbing.

The training tutor must be directly employed by the employer on a full-time and paid on a monthly basis (For details, please refer to the definition of a continuous contract under the Employment Ordinance (Cap. 57)), meets the academic, professional and other qualification requirements and complies with the ratio with trainees as required in the Trainee Programme. Employers must ensure that qualified training tutors are assigned to the trainees when conducting the training in the training period. Employers must seek CIC/HKIC approval on the change of training tutors.

6. If a training tutor is eligible for both arborist and tree climber training, can he/she be the training tutor of both types at the same time?

Given that the training tutor's company meets the eligibility requirements on taking in both Arborist Trainees / Tree Risk Assessor Trainees/ Tree Work Supervisor Trainees and Tree Climber Trainees/ Tree Climber cum Chainsaw Operator Trainees and according to the required ratios of training tutor-to-trainees (i.e. 1:4 for arborist/tree risk assessor/tree work supervisor training and 1:3 for tree climber/tree climber cum chainsaw operator training), a training tutor for both arborist/tree risk assessor/tree work supervisor and tree climber/ tree climber cum chainsaw operator training can train at most 2 Arborist Trainees/ Tree Risk Assessor Trainees/ Tree Work Supervisor Trainees and 2 Tree Climber Trainee/Tree Climber cum Chainsaw Operator Trainees.

If the employer company arrange assistant training tutor to facilitate the training and both the training tutor and assistant training tutor can also meet the requirement of both job categories, under the co-supervision by training tutor and assistant training tutor, the maximum ratio of 1 training tutor to 3 Arborist Trainees/Tree Risk Assessor Trainees/Tree Work Supervisor Trainees and 3 Tree Climber Trainees/Tree Climber cum Chainsaw Operator Trainees.

Please refer to Section 5.6.9 of the Programme Framework Document for details.

7. Can a training tutor provide training to trainees in different companies?

In order to ensure that the trainees would be given suitable and sufficient guidance, the training tutor can only provide training to the trainees under his/her company. Being a training tutor for another company is not allowed. CIC/HKIC will keep and review the records of training tutors and trainees. If employers are found violating this requirement, the training allowance may be forfeited.

8. If the training tutor resigns during the training period and there is no other eligible training tutor in the employer company, how would CIC/HKIC handle in this scenario?

If training tutor resigns from the employer company, the employer must notify CIC/HKIC immediately upon the receipt of his/her resignation notification and apply to CIC/HKIC for the change of training tutor of the respective trainee(s). However, if there is no more eligible training tutor available in that employer company, the training would be ceased upon the last working day of the training tutor and reimbursement of training allowances would be stopped. If the employer could not employ a replacement training tutor within three months after the receipt of such resignation notification, the Approved Project will be terminated. The concerned trainee(s) may choose to continue to work for the same employer and to continue the training upon the arrival of a new training tutor, or find a new eligible employer to continue his/her training. Stoppage of training with duration longer than nine months is not allowed by CIC/HKIC and the previous training would be forfeited.

9. Can the employer apply for the programme if the graduation certificate or documentary proofs of prospective graduates have yet been issued?

The employer can still apply for the programme, but can only apply for reimbursement of training allowances upon submission of valid graduation certificates or documentary proofs of the prospective graduates. If any trainees fail to graduate in the end, the approval on the application for the Trainee Programme will be invalidated and no training allowances will be reimbursed.

10. Do employers need to pay for the Value-added/Enrichment Programme for trainees?

Value-added/Enrichment Programmes are part of the training under the Trainee Programme organised by the CIC/HKIC or its designated institutes/organisations. Employers are not required to pay for such

training programme. However, employers are required to release trainees to attend the Value-added/Enrichment Programmes with full pay as a normal working day. CIC/HKIC will provide the attendance of the trainees to the employers for record or follow up if there is an unauthorised absence.

11. If the trainee acquired the relevant recognised professional qualification within the training period, can he/she be granted the bonus? Is the employer still eligible to apply for reimbursement of training allowance after that?

Trainees are eligible to apply for the bonus by phase upon completion of designed training period and passing in the assessment, with acquisition of relevant recognised professional qualifications during the training period or within one year upon completion of training. Please refer to Section 5.11 of the Programme Framework Document for details.

Except for the trainees who resign during the training period, the employers will still be reimbursed with the training allowance.

12. If a trainee resigns during the training period and fails to complete the training, can the employer be reimbursed with the training allowance?

If a trainee resigns from the company or be dismissed by the employer during the training period, the employer must notify CIC/HKIC immediately. If the employer/trainee withdraws from the plan with reasonable explanation and accepted by CIC/HKIC, CIC/HKIC will reimburse the training allowance in proportion according to the trainee's last working day.

13. Can an employee participate as an Arborist Trainee/ Tree Risk Assessor Trainees/ Tree Work Supervisor Trainees and a Tree Climber Trainee/ Tree Climber cum Chainsaw Operator Trainees at the same time?

To ensure appropriate and adequate training, an employee cannot join as Trainee more than 1 training type at the same time.

If a Tree Climber Trainee would like to become a Tree Climber cum Chainsaw Operator Trainee during the training period, he/she must submit relevant application to CIC/HKIC at least one month before training completion.

For Trainees:

1. How to participate in the Trainee Programme?

Participation to this programme follows the "first-hire-then-train" principle. Application to the programme shall be made by employers. However, employers must apply with the consent of its employees.

2. Are prospective graduates eligible to join the programme if the graduation certificate have not been issued yet?

The applicant can still apply for the programme, but can only apply for reimbursement of training allowances upon submission of valid graduation certificates or documentary proofs of the prospective graduates. If any trainees fail to graduate in the end, the approval on the application for the Trainee Programme will be invalidated and no training allowances will be reimbursed.

3. Can an applicant apply to become a trainee if he/she has not completed a Hong Kong Qualification Framework (HKQF) Level 3 or above qualification in arboriculture, tree management, tree risk assessment, tree work and tree climbing, or equivalent in an appropriate discipline?

Individuals who have not completed HKQF Level 3 or above courses in arboriculture, tree management, tree risk assessment, tree work and tree climbing can still participate in Tree Climber Trainee and Tree Climber cum Chainsaw Operator Trainee under the programme. However, trainees must provide documentary proof (e.g. graduation certificate) within 6 months of the commencement of trainee programme.

4. Can graduates of arboriculture- or tree management-related programmes apply to become Tree Climber Trainees / Tree Climber and Chainsaw Operator Trainees?

Graduates of arboriculture- or tree management-related programmes may also apply to become Tree Climber Trainees or Tree Climber and Chainsaw Operator Trainees. Similarly, graduates of tree work and climbing programmes may also apply to become Arborist Trainee/ Tree Risk Assessor Trainees/ Tree Work Supervisor Trainees.

5. Can an employee participate as an Arborist Trainee/ Tree Risk Assessor Trainees/ Tree Work Supervisor Trainees and a Tree Climber Trainee/ Tree Climber cum Chainsaw Operator Trainees at the same time?

To ensure appropriate and adequate training, an employee cannot join as Trainee more than 1 training type at the same time.

If a Tree Climber Trainee would like to become a Tree Climber cum Chainsaw Operator Trainee during the training period, he/she must submit relevant application to CIC/HKIC at least one month before training completion.

Trainees who have participated in Arborist Trainee, Tree Risk Assessor Trainee and Tree Work Supervisor Trainee or have obtained relevant recognised professional qualifications can still participate in Tree Climber Trainee and Tree Climber cum Chainsaw Operator Trainee under the training programme.

Similarly, trainees who have participated in Tree Climber Trainee and Tree Climber cum Chainsaw Operator Trainee or have obtained relevant recognised professional qualifications can still participate in Arborist Trainee, Tree Risk Assessor Trainee and Tree Work Supervisor Trainee under the programme. However, trainees must still meet the requirements specified in 5.2.1(a) and (b).

6. How would CIC/HKIC follow up on the progress of training?

Trainees are required to achieve the required levels in the training plans established under the Trainee Programme. The employers and training tutors must provide appropriate and adequate training to facilitate the trainees to acquire the competency levels in different core areas as stipulated in the training plans.

Trainees are required to submit the monthly progress report. CIC/HKIC will conduct visit or site inspection or phone interview at least 3 times per year within training period to learn about the training progress and ensure the training is properly conducted.

Besides, trainees are required to attend the Value-added/Enrichment Programmes organised by CIC/HKIC or its designated institutes/organisations during the training period, and required to attend the interim and final assessment and pass the final assessment for the completion of training.

7. Do trainees need to pay for Value-added/Enrichment Programme?

Value-added/Enrichment Programmes are part of the training under the Trainee Programme organised by CIC/HKIC or its designated institutes/organisations. Trainees are not required to pay for such training programme. Employers are required to release trainees to attend the Value-added/Enrichment Programmes with full pay as a normal working day.

8. If a trainee switches to another company during his/her training period, can he/she continue his/her remaining training in the new company?

The trainee is allowed to change employer once during the training period, the trainee must be employed by a new employer within 6 months after termination of the employment in order to continue the uncompleted training, otherwise the completed training will be invalidated and the trainee will not be able to re-apply for training in the same job category. Arborist Trainees, Tree Risk Assessor Trainees and Tree Work Supervision Trainees will be treated as the same job category. Similarly, Tree Climber Trainee and Tree Climbing cum Chainsaw Operator Trainee will be considered as the same job category. This arrangement is also applicable for trainees who have been re-employed by their original employers.

9. If a trainee acquires the relevant recognised professional qualification during the transition to a new employer, is he/she still eligible to rejoin and continue the uncompleted training?

The eligibility of trainee will not be affected if he/she acquires the relevant recognised professional

qualification within his/her previous training period or the transition period (within 6 months) between the previous and the new employers. The trainee cannot continue his/ her uncompleted training while the new employer of that trainee cannot apply for the remaining allowance in the capacity of the trainee unless new application has been submitted and accepted by CIC/HKIC.

10. If a trainee acquires the relevant recognised professional qualification within the training period, can he/she be granted the bonus?

Trainees are eligible to apply for the bonus upon completion of training and passing in the assessment, with acquisition of relevant recognised professional qualifications during the training period or within one year upon completion of training.

Except for the trainees who resign during the training period, the employers will still be reimbursed with the training allowance.

Please refer to Section 5.11 of the Programme Framework Document for applying the bonus by phase.