

*These notes refer to the Employment Act (Northern Ireland)
2011 (c.13) which received Royal Assent on 22nd March 2011*

Employment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

EXPLANATORY NOTES

CONSULTATION

Time to train

14. The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) in England published a consultation paper in June 2008 seeking views on the introduction of a proposed new right for employees to request time to train. Corresponding consultations were carried out shortly thereafter by the Scottish Executive and the Welsh Assembly Government to ascertain if this right should be extended to employees in Scotland and Wales respectively. Given the importance of the skills agenda to Northern Ireland's economy, the Department for Employment and Learning carried out a corresponding public consultation in Northern Ireland between 31 July and 23 October 2009.
15. The consultation paper dealt with the right to request time to train and, separately, with a proposal to extend the existing and comparably designed right to request flexible working. There were 22 responses to the consultation, 13 of which contained substantive comment. The time to train proposals were positively received by a majority of stakeholders. Although there were some differences of opinion on the detail of the right, most saw it as a welcome addition to existing good practice which could reinforce the attention given to workplace training in supporting Northern Ireland's economy.