



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission**

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

Link Modules

Case Study 2013

AXEL COMPUTERS

Axel Computers, an American transnational corporation has had a manufacturing facility in Claragh since 1991. The Claragh plant manufactures components for desktop computers. It has been the main employer in the town since the early 1990s.

With the increase in popularity of laptops, tablet computers and smartphones the demand for larger desktop computers has fallen in recent years. As a result the workforce of the Claragh branch of Axel Computers has fallen to 500 compared to 1,300 at the peak of production in 1995.

In 2012, the American head office of Axel Computers announced that the Claragh plant will close in July 2013. There is obvious distress among staff and local business people. Although Axel Computers is not as important to the local economy as before it is still the main employer in the town.

The Claragh Chamber of Commerce and Claragh Town Council have decided to come together and devise a 'Plan of Action' to deal with the closure of the factory. It is hoped that they will come up with ideas and strategies to minimise the negative effects of the closure. Emphasis will be on job creation, training and community enterprise development. Their first task will be to contact relevant government agencies for support. A town meeting has been arranged so that locals can voice their opinions on developments.

Mark Ryan has worked at Axel Computers since he left school twelve years ago. He started working on the assembly line and worked his way up to his present position 'Manufacturing Technician'. Over the years he participated in as many training opportunities and courses as possible. His most recent job involved installing microprocessors into PC's. Like all other staff of the computer manufacturing firm, he is greatly concerned about the future. He is worried that his lack of a third level qualification and lack of varied work experience will make it more difficult to find employment in the current economic climate.

As Mark has worked for Axel Computers for twelve years he will receive a generous redundancy package. He is considering using this money to gain a formal qualification. The I.T. industry is still strong in Ireland but Mark knows that the major I.T. companies operate in the area of software development. He is interested in achieving a suitable qualification in Computer Software Development and Engineering but is not sure how to get the information on the relevant third level courses.

Axel Computers, in an attempt to help staff prepare themselves to re-enter the jobs market, has arranged for everyone to meet with recruitment experts. These professionals will advise on Curriculum Vitae preparation and help each worker to devise his/her strategy to gain employment. Axel will also organise support for staff who wish to set up a business of their own.