

## **Guidance for Parents**

We hope you find the following information of interest.

### **Traineeships**

A traineeship is an education and training programme with work experience, which is focused on giving young people the skills and experience that employers are looking for. Basically, they help young people to become 'work ready' before they go on to do an apprenticeship. An important part of this is to develop maths and English skills.

Traineeships are delivered by training providers and funded by the government, with employers providing the valuable work experience placement as part of the programme. Unlike apprenticeships, the trainee will not be paid a wage. The training programme can last up to six months and gives the trainee the opportunity to see if they are suited to the job.

All young people undertaking a traineeship will be required to study English and maths, unless they have achieved:

- GCSE A\* - C in those subjects or, for those aged 19-23,
- GCSE A\* - C in those subjects or a functional skills qualification at Level 2.

More information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship>

### **Apprenticeships**

An apprenticeship is a work-based training programme that offers paid employment while you learn. The main benefit is being able to gain valuable work experience, while developing all the practical and technical skills needed to become a competent plumber.

#### **Who can apply for an apprenticeship?**

If your son or daughter is still at senior school, it is an ideal time to consider applying for an apprenticeship in the plumbing and heating industry. They have to be at least 16 to apply. At present, the government covers the full cost of their course until they are 19, after that, the employer covers the cost for those who are 19 or older.

If they have already attended college and gained A-Level qualifications, a career in plumbing is still a good choice. After successfully completing their plumbing courses, it would be easier for them to take the next step on to an appropriate degree course. This would enable them to eventually gain professional recognition with the Engineering Council as either an Incorporated or Chartered Engineer.

#### **How long does an apprenticeship take?**

To become fully qualified can take up to four years. The first part of the apprenticeship will cover NVQ Level 2 Diploma (Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland), and then they will progress on to the Advanced Apprenticeship in order to gain the NVQ Level 3 Diploma. In 2017 it might then be a qualification relating to the Trailblazer Plumbing and Domestic Heating Technician Apprenticeship (please see the section on Trailblazers).

#### **Entry qualifications?**

Candidates usually need four GCSEs at C grade or above, but it's best to check this out with your local college as requirements do vary. Most colleges will ask candidates to take an assessment test before enrolment. Sometimes an interview is also required.

## How much does an apprentice earn?

All apprentices must receive the appropriate national minimum wage. At present the rate is £3.30 per hour. This may not sound a lot, but when you consider that the course has been paid for and they are gaining valuable skills and experience, it's not a bad deal, especially when a university course could cost around £9,000 per year! As a minimum, apprentices can expect to earn around £90 per week, but some companies may be more generous.

## What can I earn when I qualify?

This is a tricky question to answer because it depends on a lot of things. The first is location. Obviously, someone working in a city or busy town will expect to earn more than someone working in a more rural environment. Likewise, someone working for a big company will expect to earn more than someone working for a small business, where you are perhaps the only employee.

After gaining the right qualifications, an individual can expect to earn between £15k-£20k. After gaining more experience in the industry, this could rise to around £25k-£35k. Of course, there are always exceptions and bonuses may be involved.

## How many hours will I work?

Approximately 30 hours per week, plus a day (possibly two) at college. The working day may start at 8am and end around 4pm.

## Holidays?

Apprentices are entitled to 20 days of paid holiday per year, plus bank holidays.

## How do I apply?

To get an apprenticeship, you need an employer. This can be done through a training provider, such as JTL Training ([www.jtltraining.com](http://www.jtltraining.com)) or Building Engineering Services Training ([www.best-ltd.co.uk](http://www.best-ltd.co.uk)).

## Alternatively...

- Check out the recruitment section of local newspapers to see if any companies are advertising apprenticeship vacancies.
- Search the internet for companies to see if they are advertising apprenticeship opportunities.
- Your son or daughter could get in touch directly with a local company and give them a copy of their CV. They should ask them to keep it on file in case a vacancy arises.
- Ask family and friends if they know of anyone who is looking for an apprentice.

## Advice

These organisations provide information and advice on apprenticeship schemes:

- National Careers Service on 0800 100 900 (<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>). They also have a list of vacancies on their website.
- Connexions ([www2.cxdirect.com](http://www2.cxdirect.com)). They have trained advisors who will do their best to help with any questions concerning apprenticeships.

## Trailblazer Apprenticeships

In October 2013, the government announced that it wanted to reform apprenticeships, so that they are more rigorous and responsive to the needs of employers. These new schemes are called 'Trailblazer' Apprenticeships and are being developed for a number of industries.

At present, a Plumbing and Domestic Heating Technician Trailblazer Apprenticeship is being developed in England.

There are a number of changes that will be made to the present system. For instance, students will be assessed in a different way and they will be graded at the end of training. They must also be able to meet professional registration requirements for Engineering Technician (EngTech) status with the Engineering Council.

Employers, professional bodies and trade associations are developing the new standard for the plumbing and heating industry. It is anticipated that the course for the Trailblazer Apprenticeship will be in place by September 2017.

For more information on Trailblazer Apprenticeships please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-of-apprenticeships-in-england-guidance-for-trailblazers>

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### **Trainee membership**

Once an individual has enrolled on an accredited course, they can apply for Trainee membership of the Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering (CIPHE).

This will give them access to an e-learning portal, which is packed with learning modules, demonstration videos, literature and technical information. There are currently 237 modules to choose from and material is added to the site on a regular basis. Leading manufacturers have contributed modules, which cover a wide range of topics, including renewables.

Trainee members also benefit from a range of discounts and special offers. They will also be eligible to apply for awards and bursaries. They can also take advantage of having their details added to the Work Experience section on the Institute's website [www.ciphe.org.uk](http://www.ciphe.org.uk)

Membership of a professional body shows employers and the public that professional development and upholding standards is important to the individual concerned.

Trainee membership just costs £27 – this includes receiving p&he Journal six times a year. Alternatively, Trainee membership is available at a reduced price of £10 per year and includes receiving an electronic copy of the Journal. A fantastic way to start a career in the plumbing and heating industry!

**For further details please contact the Membership Department at [membership@ciphe.org.uk](mailto:membership@ciphe.org.uk) or ring 01708 463107.**