



APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING TRUST

SEPTEMBER 2006 NEWSLETTER

CORRESPONDENCE PROGRESSION

It is now some 2 years since completion of the Unitec correspondence modules was made compulsory for Trust apprentices. Since then there has been an ongoing increase in the number of apprentices progressing these modules.

There has also been increasing support and assistance for them from host employers. A number now hold regular study sessions at which tradesmen and apprentices get together to work through the various assignments.

Jan Marsh, the Trust's Area Coordinator in Hamilton, has also started weekly tutorials at Wintec and open to all Waikato/Bay of Plenty apprentices. A number of local host employers now require their apprentices to attend these.

The benefits of doing this correspondence, and so better understanding the underpinning theory of plumbing and gasfitting, has become more evident for both apprentices and their host employers. The greater potential for those who have undertaken these modules to pass their subsequent Registration Examinations is also now more widely appreciated. The 11% pass rate in the 2005 Plumbing Examination came as quite a shock to many in the industry!

So How are Our Apprentices Going with Correspondence?

The Trust has recorded overall progression of correspondence modules in recent months; in May last year 57 modules had been completed, and by May this year 380 had been completed. This increased to 514 in July and right now (at the end of September) the total is 729.

Well done to those apprentices who are making the effort, and those host employers who are actively supporting and assisting them!

Please note the above totals are for completed modules. Each module is made up of a number of assignments, each of which should be completed and handed in for marking separately. There are many more modules only part completed; so numbers of completed modules will continue increasing in the next few months.

CORRESPONDENCE MODULE; GASFITTING 2

This 3 part module has just been published. Unitec have distributed it to all Trust apprentices who have completed their 2B, 2Q and Level 3 block courses.

Completion of this module will become a requirement for an increase in wage level from 1 January 2007. Prior to that date anyone completing their 2Q block will need to complete the other 6 Level 2 modules that are already available.

The only 2Q block course likely to be affected is Mauve Group; they are scheduled to do their 2Q on 24 October. Provided Mauve apprentices complete their 2Q and all other 6 Level 2 modules by 31 December 2006 they will qualify for an increase in wage level. If they do not do so by then they will also have to complete module 2.6 to qualify for an increase in wage level.

From 1 January 2007 all Trust apprentices will need to complete the 7 Level 2 modules to be eligible for an increase in wage level to Levels 3, 4 and 5.

Unitec have advised this module will in future be issued at each 2B block course.

BOC GAS SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Congratulations to Victor Briscan of Christchurch who works with Alectra Services, and Brett Czislawski of Henderson who works with Topline Trade Services. Each has been awarded a two week BOC Gas Scholarship.

HANDING IN CORRESPONDENCE ASSIGNMENTS

Unitec staff that mark these have asked that each individual assignment be sent in as it is completed. They should NOT be saved up and sent once the entire module is completed.

This will avoid situations where errors are made in Assignment 1, repeated in the following assignments, and only found out when the entire module is marked. Having Assignment 1 handed in and returned with corrections means any errors will not be repeated in later assignments.

PAYING UNITEC ENROLMENT FEES

When initially enrolling as students at Unitec for Level 1, and then re-enrolling for each of Levels 2 and 3 of their National Certificates in Plumbing and Gasfitting Trust apprentices pay their own enrolment fees direct to Unitec.

Unitec invoices each apprentice once they receive that apprentice's completed enrolment forms. Some apprentices are not paying their fees when they get that invoice, and Unitec then has to follow up with these individuals.

Others receive the invoice and only then decide to apply for a Student Loan to pay their fees. This involves a further time delay. The Studylink website advises Student Loan applicants apply at least 21 days before the course starts.

Unitec enrolment procedures require payment for a course before it begins. Students who do not pay their fees within the required time period may find they lose their place in a course, have their results withheld, and may not be permitted to continue to attend.

The Trust requests all apprentices complete their enrolment promptly, so they do not face any delay in progressing their apprenticeship.

APPLYING FOR A STUDENT LOAN?

Apprentices applying to Studylink for a loan should advise their Area Coordinator as well as Averill Malekar, the Programme Administrator at Unitec. Averill's phone is (09) 815 4321 Extension 8151 and email: amalekar@unitec.ac.nz

TOOL LIST UPDATE

Drawing equipment including 2 set squares and a protractor, a calculator and a tech bag to hold them are now included in the Primary Tool List for new apprentices.



These new items are also available for purchase by other apprentices. Please contact Natasha at the Trust if you would like to obtain any of them. The cost of the tech bag is \$12.00 plus GST, and that of the calculator and all drawing equipment is \$40.00 plus GST.

UNITEC OFFICE - MAIL SLOT IN DOOR

South Auckland apprentices can now use this to hand in their correspondence assignments to Lorraine Williams, their Area Coordinator, at her Unitec Office.

SCOTT MORRIS - AN ARTIST IN THE MAKING!

Scott is a Trust apprentice with Kumeu Plumbing and recently won the Kumeu Coast & Country Jafa and Jandal Festival with his 2 metre high jandals made of corrugated iron. Here they are on display outside his host employer's premises.



LIMITED ELECTRICAL CERTIFICATE TRAINING

This elective training is provided free to all Level 3 apprentices who request it during their final level of their apprenticeship. Alternatively those who do not undertake it at Level 3 but graduate in both Plumbing and Gasfitting are provided with a vouchere to undertake it within 1 year of leaving the Trust.

So far this year most Level 3 apprentices who have enrolled for this training, attended the first few training sessions and then abandoned the course. It seems clear they had underestimated the content of, and the study involved in, this training and as a result found themselves over committed.

If you are considering doing this training you need to give serious consideration to the time and effort it involves. A course outline is available from Natasha. The course also involves calculations using electrical formulae.

This training is paid for by the Trust, and this present situation is unacceptable.

In future those who enrol for this training, either as Level 3 apprentices or as graduates will need to pay the tuition costs on enrolment. The Trust will then reimburse them for these fees once they complete the training course. The present cost of this training is \$570 including GST.

ADAM HANSON

Adam is from Takanini and works with Brian Miller Plumbing. Earlier this year he was selected for the NZ Junior Sporting Clay Bird Shooting Team to compete in the USA. Adam finished 11th in the individual event, and his team finished 5th.

There were over 700 competitors and Adam gained 3rd place in the AA Graded Shoot. Well done Adam, and best wishes for future competitions!



BLOCK COURSES AND OTHER TRAINING WHILST ON LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Trust apprentices may be granted Leave Without Pay (LWOP) for a variety of personal reasons; some travel overseas, others tour with a sport team, and some have more personal circumstances that need to be taken into account.

If a previously scheduled block course for which they are enrolled at Unitec takes place during their LWOP it is in their best interests that they attend that block course if they are available. This will avoid any delay in their studies.

They will not be paid for that block course however, since they have applied for, and had LWOP approved. If they are unable to attend that block course, then they need to let Unitec and the Trust know so they can be rescheduled for a later course, possibly after they return to paid employment.

A similar situation holds for Backflow, Limited Electrical Training and OSH Courses. It is in the apprentice's own best interests that they let the Trust know their intentions regarding any training scheduled during LWOP.

The above also applies if the apprentice has opted for up to 6 months LWOP as an alternative to Redundancy.

Note: As a matter of policy the Trust will **NOT** approve applications for LWOP from apprentices who wish to continue other paid employment in the industry, possibly with their existing host employer, simply because they can earn better wages. The Trust expects apprentices to actively progress their apprenticeship and complete it within the normal period on time.

ROWAN PYNE

In the July Newsletter we advised that Rowan had been selected as a member of the NZ Mens Underwater Hockey team to compete at the World Tournament in England in August. News just in is that Rowan's team won the Gold Medal; well done to you and your teammates Rowan!



ARRANGEMENTS FOR WAGES AT CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

The Trust's Office will close down from Friday 22 December 2006 until Monday 8 January 2007. During this period a member of the Trust's management team will be "on call" to assist with any emergency employment or training matter.

Apprentices Leave Arrangements

Host employers generally close down over the Christmas/New Year period, and most apprentices take Annual Leave. Some host employers may however want you to work for all or part of that period and/or be on standby for callouts.

Each of you should discuss and have your Annual Leave approved by your host and also let the Trust know these details well before the holidays start.

Apprentices' Pay Arrangements

There will be two pays in the week of December before the Trust Office closes.

The first will be Wednesday 20 December. It will be for the week of Wednesday 13 to Tuesday 19 December **plus** the 4 Statutory Holidays of 25 & 26 December 2006 and 1 & 2 January 2007.

The second will be on Thursday 21 December. It will be for each apprentice's Holiday Pay for 2006. If you took none of your 3 weeks Annual Leave during 2006 you will receive 6% of your gross income for the whole of 2006 (less tax). If you took any Annual Leave during the year then your Holiday Pay will be for whatever is the remaining balance.

The first pay for 2007 will be on Wednesday 10 January. It will be for your work from Wednesday 21 December 2006 through to Friday 5 January 2007.

***Please note these pay days and plan your holidays
and your holiday finances!***

CHANGING ECONOMIC TIME AND HANDBACKS

With the changing economic times, some host employers are finding that they cannot keep their apprentices fully employed. Hand backs are taking place, but so far the Trust has been able to place most of those apprentices handed back.

In a small number of cases, and especially where the handback has also been for poor performance and/or unsatisfactory behaviour by the apprentice, it has been increasingly difficult to place that apprentice with another host employer.

In such cases the apprentice is put on 1 week paid study leave for correspondence pending identification of a host employer prepared to take that apprentice on.

If one cannot be found then the apprentice is offered Leave Without Pay (for up to 6 months) or Redundancy. If the apprentice opts for LWOP then they can obtain other employment, say with a labour hire company, pending them or the Trust locating a new host employer. If one has not been found at the end of six month period the apprentice's position is made redundant.

If the apprentice opts for Redundancy then they are paid for each of the 4 weeks of notice and then their position is made redundant. If a replacement host is identified in those four weeks then the redundancy does not take place.

TEMPORARY PLACEMENT WITH ANOTHER HOST EMPLOYER

Another aspect of these changing times is that some host employers are asking the Trust to arrange temporary placements of Trust apprentices.

Until now such requests had been so the apprentice could gain experience in areas that host employer could not provide eg gasfitting. However these requests are now being made because the host has had a downturn in business. They want the Trust to take their apprentice back for a short period pending an upturn in work.

Such temporary placements are not the norm; when host employers cannot provide work then handback is the usual option.

Whilst the Trust will endeavour to assist any host employer in such a situation, there is no guarantee that an apprentice can be temporarily placed with another host employer. That will depend totally on another host employer wanting an apprentice temporarily at matching times.

ALAN MILLER - KUDOS IN CORRESPONDENCE

Well done to Hamilton apprentice Alan Miller from Plumbing & Gasworks. Unitec tutors have commended Alan for the quality of his correspondence assignments and his overall diligence.

Well done Alan; Jan Marsh advises you are also a regular at the weekly Wintec correspondence tutorials.

TOOLS AND OTHER DEALINGS WITH HOST EMPLOYERS

Some Trust apprentices are allowed to purchase additional tools through their host employer's suppliers. Some host employers offer to pay the apprentice's enrolment fees at Unitec; often on the "understanding" they will be completing their apprenticeship with that host employer. Some apprentices have even been lent money by their host employer.

Such private arrangements between an individual apprentice and their host employer are neither required nor endorsed by the Trust. Recent instances have also lead to disagreements, and upset for both apprentice and host employer.

Such arrangements involving a host employer and a Trust apprentice seconded to that host employer are not a requirement of either the Trust's Host Employer Agreement or of the apprentice's Individual Employment Agreement.

Should they enter into any such arrangement(s) then they do so in a private capacity, and on the clear understanding that the Trust will not accept any responsibility for, or arising from, any such arrangements.

NEW ADDRESS FOR THE TRUST

With the introduction of Post Codes the new mailing address for the Trust is:

The Apprenticeship Training Trust
PO Box 302 516
North Harbour
NORTH SHORE CITY 0751

Phone: 0800 18 78 78 (0800 1TRUST)

Fax: 0800 68 68 48

Email: info@att.org.nz

Web: www.att.org.nz