



APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING TRUST JUNE 2008 NEWSLETTER

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NATIONAL CERTIFICATES IN PLUMBING, GASFITTING AND DRAINLAYING

After 4 years of industry consultation and feedback revised National Certificates in each of Plumbing, Gasfitting and Drainlaying have been registered with the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) by the Plumbing, Gasfitting and Drainlaying Industry Training Organisation.

Full details of the revised qualifications and the Unit Standards each of them contain can be found on the NZQA website www.nzqa.govt.nz

Each revised qualification now contains Unit Standards in areas that complement the core technical skills of plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying; for example, occupational safety and health, communications, first aid and customer service.

There are also additional technical skills; for example, solar hot water heating installation is now in the Plumbing qualification.

Each of these qualifications shares some Unit Standards with the other two. For example, all three contain Unit Standard 1099: Excavate and trench for plumbing, gasfitting or drainlaying. This is a Level 3 Unit Standard worth 9 credits.



The Level 4 Plumbing qualification now has 219 credits; the previous version had 192. The Level 4 Gasfitting qualification now has 171 credits, up from 134. The Drainlaying qualification is now Level 4 with 135 credits; the previous version was Level 3 with 86 credits.

The increase in credits in each qualification could mean an increase in the number of weeks of block courses. Some assessment of competency might in future also take place "on the job".

Transition Arrangements have been agreed. No new students will be accepted for the present versions after 31 December 2008. All new Trust apprentices employed from 1 January 2009 will enrol for the revised qualifications. That date might be earlier if any of the training providers used by the Trust commence training in the revised qualifications before then.

The Trust is now seeking further details from the training providers that Trust apprentices will attend in 2009 as to how and when each of them intend delivering the revised qualifications.

THE UNITEC E BOOK

Unitec has developed a series of E (for electronic) Books as a resource for the plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying industries. The Trust is a business partner with Unitec in this venture.

The E Books are about to go live over the internet, and will soon be available throughout New Zealand and overseas. They will be hosted on a website, access to which will be by paid subscription. They will be available to all tradespeople and apprentices within the industry, as well as other interested parties.

Apprentices attending approved training providers will have their subscription paid for by their provider for the duration of their study.

Incorporated into the website will be a link to Standards NZ, through which apprentices will have access to the most relevant Codes and Standards. They will be able to view these online and, subject to conditions of use, print them off. The website will also have links to a wide range of technical information provided by suppliers and manufacturers. The E books will be rolled out gradually starting from July.

All Trust apprentices enrolled at Unitec (including those attending block courses at Wintec) and CPIT will be subscribed over the following few months. You will be introduced to the E Books when you attend block courses during the second half of this year.

Your Study Guides will still be issued in hard copy, as well as being available on line. These will refer you to your actual study activities; for example the E Book versions of your correspondence modules, but these and all other study activities themselves will only be available on line.

To use the E Books you will need to have access to the internet, just as you do now to receive your payslips and all other communications from the Trust. If you do not have internet at home you will need to make other access arrangements; perhaps through friends or by asking your host employer. Alternatively you could use the free internet services at Public Libraries, drop into a local internet café or use the computer labs at Unitec, Wintec and CPIT.

In a recent study Unitec found that fewer than 4% of apprentices surveyed don't have ready access to the Internet.

The Trust will be including an internet capable laptop as an optional item on its Tool List for those wishing to purchase one. This would be paid for through the Trust's Tool Account.

THE PETER DIVER APPRENTICE SPONSORSHIP TRUST (PDAST)

The PDAST was recently launched in Christchurch by Peter Diver. Its purpose is to encourage an apprentice to gain Registration whilst staying on with the host employer who trained them. The PDAST offers financial and other incentives for this, including sponsored tools.

For full details see the PDAST website www.sponsorshiptrust.co.nz Peter is well known in Canterbury, mainly through his association with the firm of Peter Diver Plumbing and Drainage as well as his involvement with apprentices and CPIT.

Peter has set up and given his name to the above trust, and the objectives of the PDAST are very much supported by the Trust. A flyer on the PDAST is available from Area Coordinators.

The PDAST is another option by which Trust apprentices can acquire tools required in their Trust apprenticeship. The Trust therefore recommends that existing and potential new Trust apprentices consider the benefits of joining the PDAST.

However the Trust needs to make clear that the PDAST is not associated with the Trust in any way. Any decision by a present or potential future Trust apprentice to join the PDAST is an individual one involving that individual and their host employer.

The Trust and its management staff (including Peter when carrying out his role as one of our Area Coordinators) will not act as agents for the PDAST. The Trust will not take any responsibility for any involvement between an individual Trust apprentice, his or her host employer and the PDAST in the event that Trust apprentice joins the PDAST.

KUDOS - OSH TRAINING

Since 2005 the Trust's OSH training program has been delivered by specialist OSH provider Safety'n Action. The last Newsletter listed the first 19 apprentices who have completed the entire program and gained their Level 1 National Certificate in Occupational Safety & Health.

A further 10 apprentices have now done so, and will shortly be presented with their Certificates. Congratulations to the following apprentices and their host employers:

Stephen Deacon, Coatesville	Blackshaw Plumbing
Dugmore Mango, Glen Eden	Liberty Plumbing
Adam Hanson, Takanini	J & J Plumbing
Joe Fleming, Torbay	Mr Plumber
Chris Glover, Silverdale	J F Kendrick Plumbers
Francis Watson, Henderson	BT Plumbing
Max Wordsworth, Howick	H W Coyle
Blake Cowan, Forrest Hill	Mr Plumber
Aiden Ellmers, Mt Roskill	Plumbing St Lukes
Robert Nixon, Rotorua	Atkinson & Donaldson

MANUKAU INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (MIT)

MIT is an accredited training provider, and since last year has offered a Pre Trade program in plumbing. The Trust has taken on graduates of this very successful program as apprentices.

Later this year MIT will commence a managed apprenticeship program that new Trust apprentices in South Auckland will enrol in. This program will be for the revised National Certificates in Plumbing and Gasfitting (see the previous article on these).

In July MIT will open a new training facility in Mahunga Drive, Mangere for plumbing, gasfitting and roofing training courses. This is a very welcome expansion of the training facilities for the industry in Auckland. Well done MIT; we look forward to working with you!

OBTAINING TOOLS FOR YOUR TRUST APPRENTICESHIP

With the launch of the PDAST (see a previous article) there are now three options by which a Trust apprentice can obtain their tools. These are:

Option One. Purchasing these through the Trust, and either paying for them in cash or by weekly deduction of 10% of gross weekly wages through the Trust's Tool Account facility.

Option Two. Purchasing these yourselves, and either paying for them yourself or having someone else pay for them; for example your parents.

Option Three. By applying to join and being accepted by the PDAST. You may however need to purchase additional tools to ensure you have all the tools required by the Trust.

In the past some Trust apprentices decided on Option 2, but then failed to actually obtain their tools. This was not known of by the Trust, and led to some unexpected and embarrassing situations when the host employer later queried why his Trust apprentice had no tools.

New Trust apprentices now sign a Tools Purchase Option form on "sign up" to confirm which option they will use to get their tools on commencing employment with the Trust. If you subsequently change your initial option then you sign a replacement version of that form.

WHO IS YOUR EMPLOYER?

From time to time some of you get this wrong when completing forms for ACC, IRD, WINZ etc. That then causes frustration and delay whilst these problems are sorted out.

Your employer is the Apprenticeship Training Trust

It is with the Trust that you entered into and signed an Individual Employment Agreement, and are an employee of in terms of the Employment Relations Act.

Your host employer is NOT your employer. Your host employer is the registered plumber, gasfitter or drainlayer you are sub contracted to by the Trust to work for and be trained by "on the job". That subcontract lasts until one of the following takes place:

- a. you complete your apprenticeship, and cease employment with the Trust,
- b. you are "handed back" to the Trust by that host employer,
- c. you request and have approved by the Trust a transfer to another host employer,
- d. you resign from, and cease employment with the Trust.

You cannot actually resign from your host employer; you are not employed by them!

CHANGING ECONOMIC TIMES AND YOUR APPRENTICESHIP

Under the Host Employer Agreement a host employer can hand their Trust apprentice back giving 1 week's notice. The hand back can be for any reason.

It may be through no fault of the apprentice - the host employer may have a downturn in work and cannot then provide the apprentice with on job training. Handbacks for this reason are certainly becoming more evident right now!

The hand back may be because of poor performance and/or misconduct by the apprentice - a single event the host employer is not prepared to tolerate, or a series of minor incidents and where, despite warnings, there has been no improvement on the part of the apprentice.

In any event the Trust has to try and place that apprentice with another local host employer.

Host employers are expressing increased concerns over the economic situation, and what the immediate future holds in terms of their business. It is now proving more difficult, and taking longer, to place apprentices who have been handed back with a new host employer.

This is especially so when the hand back is because of poor performance or misconduct!

What does all this mean? First; host employers are taking greater interest in how apprentices perform at work and in their studies and how they contribute to their business.

Second; they are more discerning in selecting not just new apprentices but also existing ones who have been handed back. Trial periods are now more common. Host employers review CVs, interview the individuals, talk to previous host employer(s) and the Trust about them, the extent to which they are prospering in their apprenticeship and the reasons for hand back.

Third; if handed back and neither the apprentice nor the Trust can find another host employer, then the apprenticeship cannot be progressed. Alternatives need to be considered.

No Replacement Host Employer? If a replacement host employer cannot be found by the last day the apprentice is with their old host employer the Trust will direct the apprentice to undertake short term paid work. This is either from home or in another designated place of work for 1 week - progressing correspondence and searching for a new host employer. The apprentice will be required to confirm their activities on that week's timesheet.

Subject to availability, an apprentice might also be seconded temporarily to another host employer to replace another apprentice on block course or leave etc.

Option of Redundancy or Leave without Pay. Once the short term work comes to an end, and if a replacement host employer has still not been found, the apprentice will be invited to take either Leave Without Pay (LWOP) for an indefinite period of up to 6 months, or Redundancy.

LWOP Option. If and when a new host employer is found whilst the apprentice is on LWOP then the apprentice will return to paid employment. Any scheduled block courses during the period of LWOP should still be attended, given the apprentice remains enrolled with their training provider. The apprentice is not paid for attending these block courses since they are on LWOP. If no host employer is found after 6 months on LWOP then redundancy is the likely outcome.

Redundancy Option. If the apprentice decides not to take LWOP, the Trust will commence negotiations regarding redundancy. Each apprentice's Employment Agreement provides for 4 weeks paid notice of termination on the grounds of redundancy, but no other compensation.

The apprentice is then paid each week for those four weeks. If a host employer is found during those 4 weeks then the Redundancy does not take place.

Any Trust apprentice made redundant is offered outplacement and other assistance by Workplace Support (see the following article).

Any apprentice made redundant can continue their studies at the level they are then enrolled in. However they may not be able to re-enrol at the next level unless again employed in the industry.

Implications of Poor Performance and/or Misconduct. If you are handed back for these reasons the Trust will try and place you with another host employer. The first thing host employers ask both the Trust and you, if you get an interview, are why you were handed back.

If it was for poor performance or misconduct your chances of being taken on again are very much reduced! You then face the prospect of LWOP and/or Redundancy.

Reasons for recent handbacks have included poor block course attendance and/or progress, lack of commitment to your professional study (including correspondence), poor attitude, lateness, unauthorised absences, and failure to follow instructions.

To prosper in your apprenticeship, make yourself indispensable to your host employer!

Behave the way you will insist your apprentices behave in your future business!

THE TRUST'S EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

People sometimes have to deal with some big issues in their life. These affect work performance and/or attendance, and can lead to safety issues; busy worrying about the problem, the person is not then concentrating on their work.

Typical issues are death or serious illness of someone close, relationship problems, money worries, alcohol or drug addiction, gambling losses and work relationships. Some people can deal with these themselves, others find them very difficult. Some issues are very personal; you might not want to share them with family or friends, and trying to deal with them alone can complicate things further.

Employers can help - by referring a troubled employee to an EAP provider. The EAP provider offers specialist advice and help **on a confidential basis** to that person to help them work through the issues and develop a solution. **The overall aim is to help the individual so they remain productively and safely employed.**

For 4 years the Trust has used Workplace Support to assist any Trust apprentice troubled by work or personal issues on an "as required" basis. Confidential assistance may be sought from the apprentice's Area Coordinator by the apprentice, their family or their host employer.

If EAP support is agreed Workplace Support will be briefed and they will then make discreet personal contact with the apprentice. The costs of the agreed services are paid by the Trust.

REGISTRATION EXAMINATIONS

One requirement of the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board (PGDB) for Registration is that candidates must pass a three hour written Examination in the relevant discipline. Exams in each of Plumbing, Gasfitting and Drainlaying are held twice a year. Full details, as well as applications forms and past exam papers, are available on the PGDB website www.pgdb.co.nz

The next examinations are in November 2008; applications close in September 2008.

Apprentices may sit these examinations, and a number do so each year. The Trust does not require Trust apprentices to sit their Registration examinations whilst they are an apprentice; the decision to sit these examinations is a personal one by the apprentice. They make their own application (to the PGDB) to sit them, pay the exam fees and study for them.

It is clear that those apprentices who have completed correspondence are far more likely to pass these exams, either as an apprentice or subsequent to completing their apprenticeship. Recent results of present and former Trust apprentices are shown in the following tables.

	November 2006	June 2007	November 2007
Plumbing			
Overall	39%	26%	35%
Formal Training	43%	26%	36%
Trust	42%	30%	19%
Gasfitting			
Overall	52%	66%	77%
Formal Training	50%	65%	78%
Trust	51%	87%	91%

This first table shows the Overall pass rate for all who sat each exam. Formal Training results are for those candidates who have been trained/are training in New Zealand, including present and past Trust apprentices. Trust results are for present and past Trust apprentices.

This second table gives a breakdown of results for Level 1, 2 and 3 Trust apprentices who sat on each occasion as well as past Trust apprentices who hold National Certificate:

	November 2006:			June 2007:			November 2007:		
	Sat	Passed	% Pass	Sat	Passed	% Pass	Sat	Passed	% Pass
Plumbing									
Level 1	2	2	100	1	0	0	2	1	50
Level 2	29	19	66	12	7	58	10	6	60
Level 3	36	16	44	17	5	29	25	3	12
National Certificate	47	11	23	20	3	15	16	0	0
Overall	114	48	42	50	15	30	53	10	19
Gasfitting									
Level 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	100
Level 2	11	6	55	6	6	100	10	9	90
Level 3	27	16	59	9	7	78	11	10	91
National Certificate	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overall	43	22	51	15	13	87	22	20	91

The high % pass rates achieved more recently by Level 1 and 2 apprentices are especially pleasing, and reflect the increased amount of correspondence individuals at these levels are undertaking. In comparison the Level 3 result in Plumbing for November 2007 is disappointing but understandable.

UNITEC RESITS

Unitec has advised the next "Resits" will be held from Tuesday 8 to Friday 11 July. Reporting time is 8:15 am at Unitec, Building 98. Questionnaires and practical tasks will be completed on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. National Certificate Exam re-sits will be held on Friday.

Trust apprentices enrolled at Unitec and yet to complete a previously attended Q course are expected to attend and undertake the "resit". You should contact Unitec now on 09 815 4321 Extension 8424 to confirm your attendance as well as what activities you will be undertaking.

NORTHLAND APPRENTICES

Along with working all those hours in the trade, attending courses and completing correspondence, some Northland Area Trust apprentices have excelled on the sports fields.

Host employers have noted the exploits of some Northland Region apprentices:

Liam Haven, working for Kumeu Plumbing (KPL) Ltd, Kumeu. Liam plays for the Kumeu Rugby Club Premier team as an openside flanker. He is a talented player, very quick off the mark and with an uncompromising style of play. Throughout his rugby development, Liam has represented North Harbour at numerous grade levels and is hopeful of future honours at senior level.

Mathew Clark, working for J C McCall Plumbing Ltd, Albany. Mathew plays rugby for Silverdale Premier team and North Harbour under 20 side, as well as being selected for the North Harbour Maori Senior team. Mathew usually plays at first-five but also at fullback for North Harbour Maori. He displays good leadership, having this year captained the Northern Region Maori Under 21 team in matches against South Island Maori in Christchurch (a loss) and Central Maori (a win) in Rotorua.

Joshua York, working for A J C Plumbing and Gasfitting Ltd, Mairangi Bay. Joshua plays rugby for the East Coast Bays Premier team and is in the squad for the North Harbour NPC team. His speed, ball skills and understanding of fast pace of modern rugby has resulted in Joshua being selected for the New Zealand Touch Team. Additionally he represented New Zealand in the 10's Tournament in Hong Kong and was also selected in the squad for the New Zealand 7's training camp.



THE APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING TRUST

A charitable trust established in 1991

***"Providing opportunities for people to train
and become successful tradespeople"***

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"You cannot teach a man anything

You can only help him discover it in himself"

Galileo