

Apprenticeship Training Programme

Phase 1: *With Employer*

Induction Training
Introduction to Health & Safety Training
Introduction to Tools & Equipment
Introduction to Basic Skills

Phase 2: *Delivered in Training Centre (20 weeks)*

Course Content:

Induction
Bench Fitting/Welding
Basic Electricity/Batteries
Engines
Transmission
Braking Systems
Diesel Fuel Systems
Basic Vehicle Wiring, Electric Motors & Computers
Steering & Suspension Systems
Customer Service
Related Theory

Phase 3: *With Employer*

Work Based Assessments

Phase 4: *Delivered in Educational Colleges (10 weeks)*

Course Content:

Engine
Transmission
Fuel Systems
Electrical
Steering Systems
Related Theory

Phase 5: *With Employer*

Work Based Assessments

Phase 6: *Delivered in Educational Colleges (8 weeks)*

Course Content:

Transmission
Compressed Air Braking Systems
Suspension Systems
Hydraulics
Steering Systems
Diagnostic Systems
Related Theory

Phase 7: *With Employer*

Work Based Assessments

The overall duration of this apprenticeship is a minimum of 4 years provided all phases are successfully completed. On successful completion of the programme the learner is awarded a Level 6 Advanced Certificate Craft – Heavy Vehicle Mechanics.

For further information please contact your
local Education & Training Board Training Centre
or log onto www.SOLAS.ie

The Craft of Heavy Vehicle Mechanics



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 **Apprenticeship**

KNOWLEDGE. SKILL. COMPETENCE

Overview

Heavy vehicle mechanics carry out routine servicing and repair on commercial vehicles such as trucks/trailers, vans, jeeps, buses and coaches. Many work for road haulage companies. Usually the work is based around servicing, diagnostics and repairs. As well as routine servicing, major overhauls are undertaken at regular intervals. Faults are diagnosed and the defective components are repaired or replaced as necessary.

Work Activities

It is very costly for a road haulage, bus or coach company to have a vehicle off the road and not earning money, so the mechanic's work is very important.

Each vehicle is serviced after a specified length of time or kilometres, to replace, repair or adjust any worn parts and generally check, tune and adjust for good performance. As part of a routine service, mechanics check and change oil, and check and adjust brakes and steering. Parts for heavy vehicles are often more expensive than those for light vehicles, so mechanics usually have to repair rather than replace any faulty items they find.

Mechanics usually cover the mechanical, hydraulic and pneumatic aspects of vehicles while auto-electricians specialise in their electrical and electronic systems.

Mechanics use a wide range of hand and power tools and measuring devices. They use jacks and hoists to lift and move heavy items. They may refer to technical manuals and drawings during their work.

The work involves standing, crouching and lying under vehicles, and reaching into awkward spaces in the engine compartment. Mechanics may have to drive out to breakdowns to make repairs on the spot in all weathers or to bring back the vehicle.

Aspects of Work

- Learning new practical skills
- Learning how machines work
- Repairing things
- Working with vehicles
- Learning and developing new craft-related skills, knowledge & competence
- Understanding and using physics
- Being responsible for controlling or adjusting equipment
- Understanding technical drawings and diagrams
- Being accurate with numbers in counting, measuring and arithmetic
- Practical skills and theoretical knowledge
- Being physically active
- Working with electricity or electronics
- Lifting or carrying heavy items
- Being interested in road or rail transport
- Working in a noisy environment
- Taking responsibility for own learning, including the allocation of study time

Personal Qualities and Skills

You must have good practical skills and a high level of technical knowledge. You need to be physically fit to cope with bending, lifting and stretching, although you will use ramps and pits, hoists and jacks for heavy work. You will need nimble fingers to handle small parts and hand tools.

You should be logical and patient in tracing faults, and have good organisational skills to prioritise your workload. It is important for mechanics to have good communication skills and they must be able to explain faults and repairs clearly to people from non-technical backgrounds.

Opportunities

Opportunities arise from time-to-time for promotion to supervisor level. Many persons use an apprenticeship as a first step in proceeding to such occupations as instructors, teachers, training advisers, managers and owners of businesses.

Where apprentices and crafts persons have the necessary ability, initiative and basic qualifications, opportunities are available for advancement. These include advanced technological and management courses which are available in Institutes of Technology, Schools of Management, Professional Institutes, etc.

People anxious to advance themselves in their careers are advised to discover for themselves what opportunities are available.

Educational Requirements

The minimum age at which the employment of an apprentice may commence is 16 years of age.

The minimum educational requirements are:

1. Grade D in five subjects in the Department of Education & Skills Junior Certificate Examination or an approved equivalent, or
2. The successful completion of an approved Pre-Apprenticeship course or
3. Three years' work experience gained over sixteen years of age in a relevant designated industrial activity as SOLAS shall deem acceptable

You must obtain a job as an apprentice in your chosen occupation. Your employer must be approved to train apprentices and must register you as an apprentice within 2 weeks of recruitment.

In certain crafts, apprenticeship applicants are required to pass a colour vision test approved by SOLAS.