

New free guide to become a plumber

Logic4training, the UK's leading building services training provider, has launched new free guide to starting and developing a career as a plumber.

This guide advise on what training is required, the common routes to success and what qualifications plumber needs. It is step by step guidance on the career progression as a plumber. It has been designed to help school leavers and career changers find out what it takes to become a plumber.

This guide looks at various routes that are available depending on where are you now at the moment- college leaver or career changer, whatever the age. It presents the opportunities

for skills development like apprenticeships or the part time college courses.

The guide starts out with a summary of the varied work a plumber tackles day-to-day. It's not just installing taps and bathrooms; there are heating and drainage systems to plan and install, appliances to repair and water routing and sanitation systems to sort out.

The guide includes:

1. What to Expect from the Job
2. Are There Any Risks?
3. Where to Start
4. Qualifications You'll Need and How to Get Them
5. Apprenticeships
6. Other Courses to Take
7. Progressing in Your Career

Mark Krull, director of Logic4training, said: "We're delighted to launch this new guide, which will hopefully go some way to encouraging youngsters and experienced workers alike to explore career opportunities in this rewarding sector.

"The Ultimate Guide to Plumbing Careers joins our suite of guides, including advice on becoming an electrician and gas installer, plus general business guides for SMEs looking to expand and develop. Logic4training is committed to going beyond the classroom when it comes to helping our customers and the industry at large succeed."

The free guide is available to download from Logic4training website: <https://www.logic4training.co.uk/guides/logic4training-guides-the-ultimate-guide-to-plumbing-careers/>

(Source: Logic4training)



Don't Cut Corners with Gas

Gas Safe Register has launched a brand new awareness campaign reminding people not to 'cut corners' when it comes to gas safety and check the Register to ensure they use a legally qualified engineer for all gas work.

The campaign is attracting through the distinctive Gas Safe yellow and black colours and brand. It has been already active across social media and other channels like digital marketing, advertising billboards and radio adverts on selected stations. The radio and YouTube adverts are aimed at householders to emphasise that it is their responsibility to ensure that their gas appliances are working safely and efficiently by only using a Gas Safe registered engineer.

Jonathan Samuel, chief executive at Gas Safe Register, said: 'With so many things to juggle in this day and age it's understandable that some peo-

ple look for quick and easy solutions, but when it comes to gas safety our message is clear – you cannot cut corners. Our new campaign highlights Gas Safe Register as the trusted source to find a qualified and legal gas engineer to work on gas appliances to make sure they're working safely and efficiently.'

By employing only Gas Safe Register's engineers homeowners are protecting themselves from badly installed, fixed or incorrectly serviced gas appliances that can cause carbon monoxide poisoning, gas leaks, fires and explosions.

Customers can check if the business is on the register by calling the helpline on 08004085500 or texting 85080 (Text GAS + Business registration number). To check if an engineer is currently Gas Safe registered you will need their unique 7-digit licence number which is on their Gas Safe ID card. Cards are valid for a year and each new card will have a different licence number. Gas engineers will often have a range of qualifications that allow them to carry out specific types of gas work. It's important to check what work they are qualified to do.

BE PROUD TO SHOW YOUR GAS SAFE REGISTER ID CARD.

If you are a Gas Safe Registered engineer, remind your customers to:

- Only use a Gas Safe registered engineer to fit, fix or service their appliances
- Get their gas appliances regularly serviced and safety checked every year
- Fit an audible carbon monoxide alarm
- Check for warning signs such as lazy yellow flames or black marks or stains around the appliance.
- Know the six main signs and symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning – headaches, dizziness, nausea, breathlessness, collapse and loss of consciousness.

To register as Gas Safety Engineer or to learn more about Gas Safe Register's plans for the campaign visit the Gas Safe Register.

(Source: Gas Safe Register)





Carillion's collapse

The beginning of the year for the construction industry in the UK has started with the collapse of the construction giant Carillion. This affected workers and businesses that were in Carillion's supply chain. Carillion went into liquidation. Compulsory liquidation is when a company is ordered by a court to be wound up, for example, on the petition of a creditor or creditors because the company cannot pay its debts.

The Official Receiver has been appointed Liquidator of Carillion Plc and certain other companies in the group. The Official Receiver is seeking to maintain operational continuity and is continuing to trade these businesses. Special Managers from PwC have been appointed by the High Court to help manage the affairs, business and property of the companies. The Special Managers from PwC act as agents of the companies, without personal liability.

Carillion held approximately 450 contracts with the government, representing 38% of Carillion's 2016 reported revenue. Key central government contracts are with DfE, DHSC, MoJ, MoD, and DfT. The government declared it would continue to deliver all public sector services following the insolvency of Carillion PLC.

The Government declared it would provide the

necessary funding required by the Official Receiver to maintain public services. Those already receiving their pensions will continue to receive payment. A website was launched for all concerned about their situation after Carillion's collapse.

Kier, one of the construction well-known leaders, had joint ventures with Carillion Plc. Amongst projects, there is HS2 where Kier and Eiffage are now 50/50 joint venture partners delivering two of the seven civil engineering packages, lots C2 and C3. All 51 Carillion employees, including apprentices, working on the CEK HS2 joint venture have been offered the opportunity to join Kier/Eiffage with continuous service being maintained.

At Highways England, Kier has assumed full responsibility for the smart motorway schemes on which they had been working in joint venture with



Carillion

Carillion. All employees currently working on the schemes have been offered the opportunity to join Kier. Approximately 150 employees will be making this transition to Kier in the next week including seven apprentices. Communication with the existing supply chain on this project has also taken place ensuring continuity of skills, resources and suppliers on these projects.

Commenting Haydn Mursell, Chief Executive, Kier said; "We have been working collaboratively with our clients and are pleased to have reached agreement with Government. We have been able to take action quickly and reassure the project teams that they continue to play an important role in the delivery of these contracts."

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said: "This announcement demonstrates the strength and purpose of the joint venture contracts agreed on HS2

works and the smart motorways programme. These have enabled Kier and Eiffage to step in as planned and guarantee continued employment, apprenticeships and the seamless delivery of these vital projects." "HS2 and Highways England carried out at the point of award, additional due diligence to ensure, even without Carillion, these projects would continue. Both Highways England and HS2 will, of course, continue to monitor the situation."

Mark Thurston, Chief Executive of HS2 Ltd said; "We welcome this decision by the remaining JV partners. Through this difficult time the team has continued to deliver and we're grateful for their ongoing hard work and dedication. No time delays or costs implication have come about as a result of the events of this week, underlining the strength of the joint venture approach taken by HS2 in procuring its partners."

The Rt Hon David Lidington CBE MP said: It is regrettable that Carillion has not been able to find suitable financing options with its lenders but taxpayers cannot be expected to bail out a private sector company. We understand that some members of the public will be concerned by recent news reports. For clarity – All employees should keep coming to work, you will continue to get paid. Staff that are engaged on public sector contracts still have important work to do."

Anyone worried about their pension situation can ring The Pension Advisory Service (TPAS) on 0300 123 1047 for free and impartial guidance. TPAS has also set up a special helpline number for members of these pension schemes: 020 7630 2715. JobCentre Plus, through its Rapid Response Service, stands ready to support any employee affected by this announcement.

Source: Carillion

The Ecodesign Directive to extend Energy labelling directive (ELD)

The Ecodesign Directive defines minimum requirements for energy-related products and is now incorporated into UK law under the Energy Related Products Regulations 2010 SI 2010 No. 2617. The specific regulation came into law on 1 January 2018.

The Ecodesign of Energy-Related Products Directive (ErP) is a European framework put in place to help the European Union (EU) achieve its 20-20-20 target:

- Deliver 20% energy efficiency improvement by 2020
- Lower carbon (CO₂) emission by 20% by 2020

- Increase the share of renewables by 20% by 2020

The current Ecodesign Directive is upgraded version of policy dealing with energy using products (EuP) and was extended to include energy-related products (ErP) in 2009.

The aim of the Ecodesign Directive is to improve the design, eliminate the worst performing products from the market and promote solutions with the least life-cycle costs.

The Energy Labelling Directive requires that appliances be labelled to show their power consumption in such a manner that it is possible to compare the efficiency with that of other makes and models.

All appliances must:

- display a standard energy label
- display a specified performance data
- be supported by technical documentation

The energy label is standard across the EU and must include:

- the model number of the product and name of its manufacturer
- the amount of energy it uses in a year, calculated in kWh / annum
- specific data according to its type, in pictogram format
- its energy efficiency class, from best to worst, depending on the relevant scale for the product, with corresponding colour-coded arrows

More information here: www.direct.gov.uk/energylabel

(Source: GOV.UK)



Industry's help for Carillion's former apprentices

The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) is calling on all apprentices from Carillion's projects to get in contact so it can help them continue their training. Moreover, employers are welcome to step in with offers for training.

CITB has ensured funding with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to continue the support for the training for Carillion apprentices on the week following the company's liquidation. It has attempted contact with the 1400 apprentices, and hundreds have already been booked in for events being held across the country. CITB is offering every former Carillion apprentice a face-to-face session with CITB Apprenticeships to find out their individual learning needs. Many more need to be contacted so they can take up the career lifeline CITB is offering them through its offer of support.

The Carillion apprentices were primarily in bricklaying and carpentry and joinery – skills that the country vitally needs to build homes and solve our housing shortage. For this reason, CITB is also calling on construction employers – particularly homebuilders, as many of the skills are applicable and in demand for that sector – to rally round and take on the former Carillion apprentices.

A hotline has been set up for both former Carillion apprentices to get in touch, and for construction employers who are interested in helping them. The phone number is: 0344 994 4010 and there is also an email carillion.apprenticeshipsupport@citb.co.uk for people to contact CITB's dedicated support team.

The apprentices were being trained in Carillion centres through England and Scotland, with some of the bigger centres based in Birmingham, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Sunderland, Sittingbourne and Southampton.

CITB hopes to start placing the first apprentices with new employers asap as the construc-

tion sector looks to recover from the collapse of its second biggest firm.

Sarah Beale, Chief Executive of the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), said: "We understand it's a very worrying time for the young people who were on the Carillion apprenticeship programme, but we can help them restart their training and get their careers back on track if they get in touch with us. Our industry needs the skills these young people are developing and we want to help them find new employers and get their qualifications. "Our industry, which has consistently reported skill shortages and difficulties in attracting apprentices, now needs to step up and support these young people who have so much to offer. There is certainly no shortage of work in construction, with housebuilding and infrastructure particularly strong, so these young people can have great careers despite this setback. "At CITB, we are committed to doing everything we can to help the former Carillion apprentices, and hope to see many of them restarting their careers very soon."

(Source: CITB)



New computer programme for increasing building site productivity

A new system for increasing productivity during construction projects has been created by an academic at Northumbria University, Newcastle. It has a great potential for construction companies to cut costs and reduce build time.

Using innovative mathematical modelling, Dr Laura Florez, an academic at Northumbria University, Newcastle, has created a computer model for labour allocation. It ensures construction workers are allocated more efficiently on a building site by taking into account indicators like workers' skills, experience and personalities, conditions on site and the current stage of the build.

This user-friendly computer program has been tested using data from a large residential building, comparing the traditional allocation techniques used by the site manager with that proposed by the model. The results showed that by using the model, it is possible to achieve a reduction in the time taken to complete the project.

Dr Florez told about her research: "As anyone in

the construction industry knows, the configuration of gangs constantly changes and the site manager is responsible for scheduling and allocating gangs to balance between the complexity of the job and the need for quality and high production rates. My model takes into consideration characteristics of masons and site conditions in order to determine the right gang to build the right wall in order to increase productivity. With this computer programme, site managers are not only able to identify working patterns for each of the masons but also optimal gang formation, completion times, and labour costs."

The importance of the proper work scheduling and planning workforce is known to every construction business. The diversity of workers and the dynamics of the building site require to base the model

on multi-objective optimisation, genetic algorithms, dynamic programming and ranking methods.

Dr Florez said: "A proper allocation model would have to consider the characteristics of masons and how to relate these characteristics and site conditions to select the right gang for the right wall considering the project constraints, for example the availability of workers and precedence relations between tasks and budget, to ensure minimum time and increased productivity."

Dr Florez is now looking for construction companies and contractors to work with to test and develop her model further for masonry construction and other construction trades. To find out more, please contact Dr Florez by emailing laura.florez@northumbria.ac.uk or call 0191 227 3306.





20%

Increase in planning fees in England

The new regulations came into effect last month allowing local planning authorities in England to increase planning fees by 20%. It is the first planning fee increase for five years. The increase in planning fees should allow local authorities to spend more funds on improving planning services.

There is the increase from the previous application rate for the new dwelling of £385.00 to £462.00, a householder planning application increased from £172.00 to £206.00, prior approval applications went up from £80.00 to £96.00.

The online Planning Portal has published the updated planning fee schedule for England. According to the update those who have already uploaded draft applications on the system will have to amend documents to recalculate new applications fees. Moreover, in such scenario re-submission fees might apply.

The Government is preparing the detailed plan-

ning guidance on Permission in Principle (PiP) for minor housing-led developments. The regulations on PiP will apply from 1st June 2018, and there is new outline planning route with the confirmed a fee of £402 per 0.1 hectares. Until the end of 2017, local authorities were required to publish brownfield land registers of sites suitable for housing.

Also, the government has introduced planning fees for new policies. Since now, local authorities will be allowed to charge for applications for planning permission where the removal of permitted development rights has been withdrawn, for instance through Article 4 directions. Also, there is now a

£96 fee for prior approval applications for certain permitted development rights like the installation of solar PV equipment on non-domestic buildings, the erection of click-and-collect facilities within the land area of a shop and the provision of temporary school buildings on vacant commercial land for state-funded schools.

Will the fee increase put people off from the investment? We are waiting for your opinion. Get in touch with us on Facebook or via email.

The comprehensive guidance on fees is available here: https://ecab.planningportal.co.uk/uploads/english_application_fees.pdf