



Construction

Job Information Sheet

Construction is one of the UK's largest industries, with two million people already at work in more than 700 different types of jobs. There is always a demand for new people to join the industry and there are many opportunities to develop skills and abilities throughout your career. To work in this sector you need to be practical and methodical. You should have a technical interest, must work accurately and be willing to take responsibility. Whatever job you do, you will be contributing to the safety of a structure that lots of people will use.

For some, but not all, jobs you need to be physically strong. For many you must be good with your hands. You also need other skills besides the technical ones. You must be able to work as part of a team and you might have to supervise a team. You might need to plan projects or write reports, in some jobs you have to get on well with the public – if you are a painter and decorator for instance, you must be friendly, polite and prepared to listen to your customer.

A College or 6th form course?

For construction careers staying on in full-time education can be a good option but for others the best option is to find an employer and attend college part-time.

If you intend to study at university or become a technician then taking A Levels in such subjects as maths, sciences or construction and the built environment are a good option. Vocational courses, such as BTEC National Diploma can also be a good choice. You normally need at least four GCSEs at grades A*-C or equivalent to enter these courses.

Construction Awards are available at three levels, Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced, These awards are qualifications for craft occupations that you can complete full-time or part-time. For the advanced course you need to have completed the intermediate. In order to complete your training for NVQs (National Vocational Qualifications) and become a fully qualified tradesperson you must be working in the industry. For this reason an apprenticeship (see page 3) remains the best route for craft training. Full-time study can be a good alternative but it is important to talk to the college about your chances of finding an employer when you complete your studies.

Some colleges also offer Technical Certificates in construction crafts. These cover the skills and knowledge that you can develop away from the workplace but again you will need to complete your training after finding an employer. The Foundation Certificate in Building & Craft Occupations is available in some schools and colleges. It gives you the chance to sample work within the industry and help you to decide if a career in construction is for you.

Diplomas

The Diploma is a new qualification that combines classroom study with practical experience. Diplomas will be available at Foundation, Higher and Advanced Levels in many colleges and 6th forms and, in some cases, may replace other vocational courses. The Construction & the Built Environment Finance Diploma was introduced in some parts of London from September 2008.

For details on the vast range of education and training courses, including Diplomas, on offer throughout London go to www.mychoicelondon.co.uk and for further help on the best route for you visit www.bconstructive.co.uk.

Are there jobs for 16-19 year olds?

To be a civil engineer or architect you need to study at university. However, there are many jobs in construction that do not require a degree or diploma. Below is a selection of jobs that could be available to 16-19 year olds living in Central London. Further details of these and many other jobs can be found at www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u/ and www.bconstructive.co.uk.

This information sheet covers jobs for 16-19 year olds in Central London. It does not cover graduate jobs or jobs that are rare in Central London. For details of the whole range of jobs in the construction industry go to www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u/ or www.bconstructive.co.uk.

Operatives are practical, multiskilled people who do not specialise in any single trade but can turn their hand to many tasks. Jobs include:

- Construction operatives or labourers
- Construction plant operators (operate machinery used in construction)
- Demolition operatives
- Road workers
- Water distribution/sewerage operators (treat and clean water at wastewater or sewerage)

There are no set entry requirements but some employers will ask for a few GCSEs or equivalent qualifications. Because of the dangerous nature of some of the work many employers will not take on operatives who are under 18.

Crafts people specialise in one practical trade. Jobs include:

- Bricklayers
- Carpenters and joiners
- Carpet fitters
- Cavity wall insulators
- Ceiling fixers
- Electrical Installation
- Engineering construction craft workers (erect and maintain buildings, plant and machinery)
- Floor layers
- Glaziers
- Painters and decorators
- Plasterers

- Roofers
- Security/Fire Protection Installation
- Scaffolders
- Stonemasons
- Tilers
- Window fitters

To enter the industry in a craft occupation, a good basic education is needed and most employers will ask for at least GCSE grade Ds or equivalent qualifications.

Are there lots of jobs?

There are still new jobs but competition for apprenticeship places is often fierce, especially for the popular trades. For example, *The Times* reported that plumbing companies are turning away thousands of hopefuls - there were 26,000 people studying for plumbing qualifications nationally but only 1,500 potential plumbing vacancies. On the other hand employers often have difficulty finding people who have done well at school or college to fill technician level positions in Central London.

Technicians need four good GCSE passes (A-C) in English, maths and science or sometimes A levels, or an equivalent vocational qualification. For these jobs you need to be practical but also able to understand the technical aspects of the industry. Jobs include:

- Refrigeration/air conditioning technicians
- Building technicians
- Civil engineering technicians
- Engineering construction technicians (design, construct and maintain buildings, plant and machinery)
- Town planning technicians
- Technical Surveyors

Live Construction Vacancies (on 1st September 2010)

Young people in Central London can search for job and training opportunities at www.mychoicelondon.co.uk/choicejobs. When this information sheet was published the following vacancies were available:

LOIS Ref	Vacancy	Organisation	Location	Notes
L19001993	Women into Construction Plant Taster Days	Construction	London 2012 Olympic Site	
L18000168	Apprentice Surveyors	Surveying	Throughout London	GCSE grades A*-C in English, maths and science
L 27001694	Trainee Maintenance Operative	Construction	Lambeth	Open to Lambeth residents only
L27002436	Apprentice Plumber	Building Maintenance	Dagenham	GCSE grade A*-C in science or a practical subject required

Vacancies in red are new this month. To find out more about any of these vacancies either speak to your Personal Adviser or contact the nearest centre listed at the bottom of this page. If you do not live in any of the areas listed below you can find your local Connexions centre at: www.connexions-direct.com/index.cfm?go=localServices

Other Vacancy Sites

For all of the organisations listed below enquiries and applications can be made online.

Construction Skills (www.bconstructive.co.uk/apprenticeships)	Run apprenticeships across a very wide range of construction trades.
Building Engineering Services Training (www.best-ltd.co.uk)	Run apprenticeships for building services engineer, heating and ventilating fitter/welder, service and maintenance engineer, domestic heating fitter, ductwork installer, refrigeration engineer, air conditioning engineer and plumber.
JTL (www.jtlimited.co.uk)	Run apprenticeships for electrical installation, plumbing and heating and ventilation.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships offer training to young people who want to learn while working. Careers in the skilled construction trades are probably the most sought after by young people in Central London and competition for apprenticeships is fierce. Therefore, employers will usually ask for at least GCSE A-D, in order to be sure that applicants will be able to cope with apprenticeship training.

There are a number of training organisations who oversee apprenticeships in construction and these are listed in 'Other Vacancy Sites' below. You should apply for apprenticeships through these organisations. However, in Central London few people find an apprenticeship by this route and you should also make sure you apply directly to other employers who may have apprenticeships.

Some apprenticeships are listed in the 'live' vacancies above. In addition the following companies are likely to recruit apprentices next summer (you can apply to all of these online):

- **NG Bailey** (www.ngbailey.co.uk/careers/index.php) last year had apprenticeships in electrical installation and building services engineering. Applicants needed GCSE maths, English and science at grades A*-C or equivalent.
- **Lovell** (www.lovell.co.uk/content/blogcategory/83/172/) currently have no apprenticeships in the London area, but may recruit in the future. They have had apprenticeships in bricklaying, carpentry, painting & decorating and maintenance operations. Learning takes place on site and in eight one-week residential blocks at a college in Leicestershire. Applicants were expected to have GCSE maths, English and science at grades A*-C. Last year Lovell also has management training opportunities for those with two A Levels at grade C or above or equivalent.
- **Balfour Beatty** (www.balfourbeatty.com/bby/working/apprenticeships/) in the past they have had apprenticeships in electrical and mechanical engineering, plumbing, construction trades and highways maintenance. They have also offered traineeships in civil and railway engineering and quantity surveying.

Tests

Many construction employers and training organisations use tests as a way of choosing the right person for a job. Tests often include problem solving, mathematical ability and interpretation of plans. In these tests you will often have to read and understand building drawings, answer multiple choice questions and use your number skills to work out lengths and amounts. You will normally be sent out example questions so that you can practice before you do the test for real.