



Suffolk Joint  
Construction  
Committee

# Pipefitter/Plumber

Pipefitters and plumbers make our heating work. They ensure we have hot and cold running water and the waste for our toilets end up where it should. They also look after various sub-contractors and take responsibility of complex mechanical installations.

## THE ROLE

Pipefitters and plumbers start work as an apprentice from 16 to 20 years old, there are others that have joined the industry as a career change.

You will be expected to attend college on day release for 3 to 4 years learning your trade and to take both written and practical exams.

You would work on all types of buildings, new or refurbishment, including hospitals, schools, offices, public and listed buildings.

Whilst being a pipefitter or plumber is a hands on career, it also requires you to be able to problem solve, read and interpret drawings, diagrams and instructions and to be a team player.

## SALARY EXPECTATIONS

An apprentice pipefitter earns around £12,000 to £18,000

Pipefitters or craftsman earn around £20,000 to £25,000

Senior craftsman earn around £25,000 to £35,000

Mechanical foreman (looking after a project on site and a gang of men) earns around £40,000

Mechanical project manager can earn around £45,000

## CAREER PROGRESSION

CIVIL  
ENGINEERING  
TECHNICIAN

CRAFTSMAN

SENIOR  
CRAFTSMAN

MECHANICAL  
FOREMAN

MECHANICAL  
PROJECT  
MANAGER

# Pipefitter/Plumber

## ENTRY ROUTE

You will need to have GCSE grade C's in English Maths and Information Technology or be prepared to gain these transferable skills at level 2.

The apprenticeship is made up of 3 to 4 years at college on day release whilst working the other 4 days a week on site gaining practical experience on mechanical installations.

Both the on-site experience and college teaching provides Health and Safety teaching, working in a team and taking responsibility for your works and action.

- Work indoors and outdoors and be prepared to sometimes work at height
- Work with little or no supervision; relying on their own initiative or work as a team putting together a large installation
- Be prepared to travel away from home
- Develop good working relationships
- Read both building and engineering drawings and specifications
- Select materials and equipment for an installation
- Diagnose and rectify faults on various installations

## COURSES INCLUDE:

- Level 2 – NVQ Diploma in Heating and Ventilating industry and Commercial Installation
- Level 3 – Advanced level Apprenticeship in Heating and ventilating including welding

## TYPICAL TASKS FOR A PIPEFITTER/PLUMBER:

- Installation of pipework systems for heating, hot and cold water and drainage
- Using all types of pipework materials, plastic, copper and steel

**For more information on becoming a pipefitter/plumber visit:**

[www.goconstruct.org](http://www.goconstruct.org)

[www.cibse.org](http://www.cibse.org)

[www.citb.co.uk](http://www.citb.co.uk)

**or talk to your local college**

**Your career journey starts here!**

