Explore a building career

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This is the time of year when young people who have finished their secondary schooling start exploring their job and career options. Taking on an apprenticeship is one option to consider if you are thinking of a career in the building industry.

Graduating from high school is one of the most exciting and scary experiences you will go through. For most high school students, graduating means it's time to work out what you are going to do with your life after school and what career you will choose. Do you choose to study at university or do you go straight into the workforce? A choice that will set you up with skills for the rest of your life is an apprenticeship in the building industry.

An apprenticeship is a formal commitment to complete a three to four-year period of training in a trade such as carpentry, brick and blocklaying, painting, plastering, wall and floor tiling, plumbing and so on. An apprenticeship is mainly spent learning in a workplace-based setting and some time spent training at TAFE or with a private training provider.

Apprentices get paid to learn, which means they have most of the same rights and responsibilities as other employees. A completed apprenticeship in construction will usually result in a nationally recognised Certificate III qualification.

This can lead to opportunities for the apprentices to either start their own business or work as an employee for a contractor. The best thing is that they will come out a skilled tradesperson.

The great thing about doing an apprenticeship is that you can earn while you learn and develop a skill that can be used anywhere in Australia or around the world.

To start an apprenticeship you usually need to have reasonable grades in maths and English and some form of exposure to the industry, such as work experience from school or a pre-apprenticeship.

It is pleasing to see more females starting an apprenticeship in the building industry. A female won Master Builders top apprentice bricklayer award last year.

The building industry is such a varied industry and is the second largest



employer in Western Australia, with over 140,000 people employed, including more than 70,000 tradespersons. Our industry offers apprentices a wide range of opportunities for their future financial security and a skill that will open many doors for job prospects.

Parents can help their children transition to full-time construction work by encouraging self-motivation, a positive attitude to learning, a healthy lifestyle (including regular sleep patterns) and resilience to short-term challenges.

If you are looking for a career change or if you would like to find out how your son or daughter can become an apprentice and what they need to do to get started, contact the Construction Training Fund (9244 0100) or the Apprenticeship Pathways website (www.aapathways.com.au) for more information.

The Construction Futures Centre in Belmont is a great place to visit to explore a whole range of jobs and career paths in the building industry.



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