

Unit 9: Starting Work in Construction

Unit reference number: M/502/3695

QCF level: 1

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 40

Unit aim

This unit introduces learners to career opportunities in construction and the organisations that provide such opportunities. It encourages learners to make informed choices about their potential career options.

Unit introduction

This unit introduces learners to the different specialist areas that make up the construction and built environment sector and helps them identify the variety of careers available in each of these specialist areas, at all levels.

Learners will have the opportunity to explore the different types of organisation that operate within the construction and built environment sector in terms of their size and the type of work they undertake.

Learners will use this information to make decisions concerning possible career choices in construction, and to reflect on the effect of such choices on their preferred lifestyle.

Although learners will work independently when making decisions about their career options, they will also function as effective members of a team by working responsibly and cooperatively.

When preparing for work in the construction industry it is important that learners are able to seek and respond to guidance from colleagues and tutors during the learning process. This unit will help learners to develop an understanding of the personal qualities that are valued by employers.

Essential resources

The most significant resources for this unit are:

- structured visits to workshops, offices and building sites
- work experience in workshops, in offices or on building sites
- contact with personnel working at all levels in the industry.

This offers a perspective on the nature of work in the construction and built environment sector that will inform the learner's choice of units and hence their 'taster' experience. Internet access will give learners an opportunity to develop a range of skills in e-learning but the tutor will need to manage it carefully.

Learning outcomes, assessment criteria and unit amplification

To pass this unit, the learner needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria		Unit amplification
1	Know about different types of career opportunities available in construction	1.1	Describe different types of career opportunities in construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Types of career opportunity:</i> full-time or part-time; employed or self-employed; permanent or temporary; professional and technical, e.g. architecture, architectural technology, surveying, civil engineering, structural engineering, building services engineering, construction management, maintenance management, facilities management; craft or operative, e.g. bricklaying, carpentry, joinery, painting, decorating, plumbing, electrical installation, plastering, stonemasonry, roofing, wall and floor tiling, groundwork, concreting, general construction operative; skilled or unskilled
2	Know about different types of organisation offering career opportunities in construction	2.1	Describe different types of organisation that offer career opportunities in construction in terms of their size and the nature of the work they undertake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Types:</i> limited number of large contractors; much larger number of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) □ <i>Work undertaken:</i> e.g. large public works, infrastructure, speculative house building, newbuild, conversion and adaptation, maintenance and repair, manufacture and supply of materials and components
3	Understand how career choices can impact upon an individual's lifestyle	3.1	Explain how an individual's lifestyle may be influenced by the career choices they make	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Lifestyle issues:</i> ambitions and aspirations; job satisfaction; sense of identity; financial and social benefits □ <i>Impact of career choice:</i> requirements, e.g. education, training and development, robust mental and physical good health; conditions of work, e.g. hard work, tight deadlines, working away from home or abroad, weekend working, flexitime, long hours of work, time spent travelling to work; impact, e.g. effect on family life, social life and personal relationships, stress levels, mental and physical demands
4	Be able to make informed career choices	4.1	Make realistic career choices based upon information provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Career choices:</i> career choice from content 1 above, potential employers from content 2 above, implications of career choice from 3 above

Learning outcomes		Assessment criteria		Unit amplification
5	Be able to work responsibly with others	5.1	Demonstrate good team working skills by working responsibly and cooperatively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Behaviour:</i> e.g. responsibility, recognition of strengths, knowledge and understanding of self and other team members, cooperation □ <i>Attitudes:</i> e.g. enthusiasm; approachability; communication skills, e.g. listening, questioning, speaking clearly; following instructions
	6	Be able to seek and respond to guidance when working as part of a team	6.1	
6.2			Communicate appropriately with others	

Information for tutors

Delivery

The purpose of this unit is to encourage learners to think realistically about what it would be like to be employed in the construction and built environment sector and, more particularly, to help the learner match their skills, qualities and aspirations to a job they feel they might want to do. The unit covers a wide range of jobs at all levels, but delivery should focus on those jobs the learner could access on completing a programme based on Level 1 units. Progression issues should be examined by considering the ambitions of individual learners and by matching these ambitions to further training and development opportunities.

The unit is designed to offer an overview of the work available in the construction and built environment sector, starting with the range of jobs available, their skills requirements and the different types of organisations that employ people to perform such jobs and offer good training and employment opportunities. In this unit the learner needs to consider job roles and responsibilities only in the broadest sense. This could include the difference between craft and technician roles, off-site or on-site working, construction craft or building services craft apprenticeships, together with examples of all of the above.

Learners should be made aware that, although the large organisations dominate the industry, the smaller organisations predominate. The reasons why people must work together as a team to plan, design and construct the built environment should be stressed throughout.

The unit gives learners the opportunity to think about the factors that affect job choice from a variety of perspectives, including:

- their personal skills and qualities
- the skills and qualities they might wish to develop
- the different types of organisation in the construction and built environment sector
- the needs and wants of different organisations in terms of work undertaken, physical location, size and structure
- how a job could affect their lifestyle
- how their lifestyle might have to change
- the relationship between lifestyles and job choices.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities
<p>Know about the different types of career opportunities available in construction</p> <p>Whole-class, teacher-led discussions supported by small group research into the different types of career opportunity available, followed by group presentations of findings. Source material to include books, CD ROMs, newspapers, trade magazines and the internet. Presentations by experienced construction personnel will prove very useful.</p>
<p>Know about the different types of organisation offering career opportunities in construction.</p> <p>Whole-class, tutor-led discussions supported by small group research into the different types of organisation working in construction and the built environment, followed by group presentations of findings. Source material to include newspapers, trade magazines and the internet. Presentations by representatives from appropriate organisations will be useful.</p>
<p>Understand how career choices can impact upon an individual's lifestyle.</p> <p>Whole-class, tutor-led discussions with a question and answer session to draw out the learners' thoughts on the potential personal impact of several different career choices at both professional/technical and craft/operative level. Presentations by experienced construction personnel on the personal advantages and disadvantages of their career choices will prove extremely useful.</p>
<p>Be able to make informed career choices.</p> <p>Career choices must be based on the information gathered above and should be realistic and coherent. Assessment evidence should take the form of clear choice of career(s), identification of at least one organisation that offers such careers and evidence that the learner has investigated the impact of their career choice on their preferred lifestyle.</p>
<p>Be able to work responsibly with others.</p> <p>Discussion of the benefits of behaving in a cooperative and responsible manner towards both staff and other learners. This requires no formal allocation of time and should occur during both delivery and assessment.</p>
<p>Be able to seek and respond to guidance when working as part of a team.</p> <p>Tutors should encourage learners to ask questions about their work. This could be prompted by tutors asking learners to explain what they are doing, why they are doing it, the nature of the careers they are contemplating and the potential impact of such careers on their preferred lifestyle. Learners should be aware that their attitude, and the nature of their responses to any advice provided, will comprise part of the evidence required to achieve the unit. This requires no formal allocation of time and should occur during delivery and assessment.</p>

Assessment

The use of one assessment instrument is suggested as being sufficient to allow full coverage of the learning outcomes, although the assessment may be conducted in two discrete parts to avoid assessment overload for learners. The assessment instrument would therefore comprise 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, and 6.2. The assessment could be divided up into two parts as follows: firstly 1.1 and 2.1 and secondly 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1 and 6.2 can be assessed over the whole period of assessment for both parts and will require no extra time.

For 1.1, learners must describe two different types of career opportunities in construction in terms of the skills and abilities needed. One career should relate to professional and technical career opportunities and the other should relate to craft and operative job opportunities. There is no requirement for a highly detailed answer but the two types of job role must be clearly differentiated.

For 2.1, learners must describe two different types of organisation that offer career opportunities in construction, in terms of their size and the nature of the work they undertake. One should be a large organisation engaged in major construction projects and the other should be a small or medium enterprise (SME) engaged in smaller works. There is no requirement for a highly detailed answer but the two types of organisation, and the nature of the work they do, must be clearly differentiated.

For 3.1, learners must explain how an individual's lifestyle may be influenced by the career choices they make in terms of the training and development that will be needed, their general state of health, the conditions under which they will work, the possible effect on their personal relationships and the general demands of the chosen career. The treatment can be broad as there is no requirement for the learner to make a career or job choice at this point.

For 4.1, learners must make two realistic career choices. These need not relate to their desired career path as it is unlikely that this will be clear to the learner at this stage. Learners must demonstrate the ability to make career choices based on information provided by their tutor. This information should relate to the training and development needed for a range of jobs and the nature of the different organisations they might work for. As for 1.1 above, there is no requirement for a highly detailed answer, but learners' responses should be essentially correct and clearly differentiated from each other.

For 5.1, learners must demonstrate good team working skills by working in a responsible and cooperative manner and by sharing resources and ideas with other learners. They must, however, produce their own individual evidence. The evidence could take the form of a witness statement.

For 6.1 and 6.2, learners must demonstrate responsibility by seeking and listening to guidance and clarification from tutors as and when appropriate, and by acting upon the guidance received. They should communicate appropriately with both tutors and other learners at all times. The evidence could take the form of a witness statement.

Suggested resources

Books

There is a wealth of careers information to be found. School, college and public libraries will have useful material, and trade magazines and local and regional newspapers will all help learners assess the job market at any given time.

Osbourn D – *Introduction to Building* (Longman, 2002) ISBN 9780582473034

Topliss S and Murray-Smith J – *BTEC Entry 3/Level 1 Construction Student Book* (Pearson, 2010) ISBN 9781846909207

Websites

<http://careerplanning.about.com/cs/miskills/a/scans.htm>

www.citb.org.uk/careers

www.direct.gov.uk/en/youngpeople

www.icould.com

www.summitskills.org.uk