

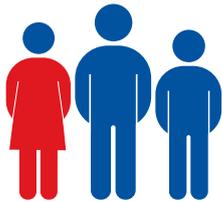
SCREWFIX

TRADE APPRENTICE

2020

**THE FUTURE OF THE TRADE:
PIONEERS IN MENTAL
HEALTH AWARENESS,
TECH & RENEWABLES**





**OVER 14,000
EMPLOYEES**

**OVER 10,000
PRODUCTS**

**700
STORES**

About us

Screwfix is convenient, straightforward and affordably priced, helping its trade customers get the job done quickly, affordably and right first time. From power tools and work wear to cables and pipe fittings, Screwfix offers over 33,000 products available to purchase online or from over 700 stores nationwide.

Screwfix is part of Kingfisher plc, the international home improvement company with over 1,350 stores and 74,000 colleagues in eight countries across Europe.

Trade Apprentice 2020

In Summer 2020, Screwfix's Trade Apprentice 2020 finalists were joined by Apprentices & Skills Minister Gillian Keegan to discuss their highlights and experiences of their apprenticeship programme so far and their passion for their trade.



**This year's Trade Apprentice winner,
Christopher Keel, a 21-year-old joinery
and carpentry apprentice from Glasgow.**

FOREWORD BY JOHN MEWETT, CEO OF SCREWFIX



At Screwfix, we know from speaking with tradespeople on a daily basis how passionate they are about supporting the next generation of plumbers, electricians, gas engineers, carpenters and other trades.

At a time when demand for skilled tradespeople has never been greater, there's a real need to promote the trade industry to the next generation. And with Covid expected to impact opportunities for young people the hardest, now more than ever it's vital we support the younger generation as they begin their careers.

As part of this year's **Screwfix Trade Apprentice 2020** Competition, it was a pleasure to listen to our talented top 10 finalists about what it's like to start out in the industry, the challenges they face and their hopes for the future as they progress in their careers.

As well as the day-to-day requirements of their jobs, they're real pioneers in areas like mental health, renewables and tech, with bright futures ahead of them.

Backing trade apprentices isn't just the right thing to do to support the future generation of the trade – they have the unique and highly relevant skills needed to make their businesses thrive and provide outstanding customer service.

I hope you find this summary of the discussion of interest.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Mewett'.

John Mewett, CEO

“As well as the hands-on experience, you learn the business side and about customer service too.

Apprenticeships have that package deal, which is what makes them so unique.”

- Trade Apprentice Finalist

KEY THEMES

Coronavirus: Impact on the Trades

“I think Coronavirus has left a big question mark on the trade and construction industries – it’s put everything on hold and has stuttered my progression.”

- Trade Apprentice Finalist

It is acknowledged that the nation’s youngest workers will be the most adversely impacted by the economic impact of the Coronavirus crisis, and our finalists said that their apprenticeship training and employment have already been impacted.

One finalist said that their apprenticeship training had already been delayed by six months with no certainty of when they were able to restart their training, while others had been furloughed from their jobs or had to shield in order to protect their family from contracting the virus.

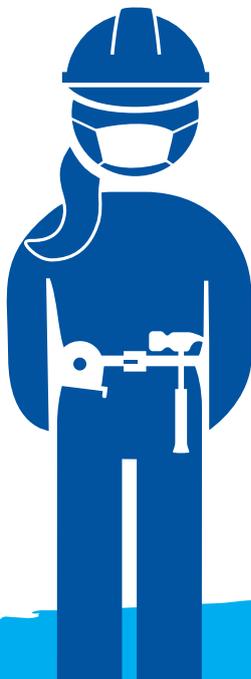
RECOMMENDATION

KICKSTART SCHEME

The Government has recognised the support needed for young school leavers with the new **Kickstart Scheme** and increased funding for companies who take on apprentices and trainees.

However, more support is needed specifically for existing apprentices whose training has been delayed in light of the crisis so they can continue to progress and thrive in their chosen career.

Employers and training providers should maintain a regular dialogue with apprentices and trainees to support their career development when delays occur.



KEY THEMES

Mental Health

“We’re at the forefront of the trade in respecting mental health issues.”

- Trade Apprentice Finalist

The finalists spoke passionately about the importance of mental health support in the workplace and highlighted how important it is to be able to be themselves at work and that their work fits their personality.

While awareness of the importance of good mental health in the workplace has been prominent in public debate in recent years, the apprentices were concerned that there was still much to do to raise awareness in the trade industry and to break down the culture of bravado that still exists in the sector.

But they were optimistic that awareness will continue to increase in the sector, in part thanks to their knowledge and interest in the issue. An apprentice noted that by being open to their older colleagues about mental health challenges they had faced in the past, their colleagues then too felt comfortable about sharing their experiences of poor mental health – sometimes for the very first time.



time to change

let's end mental health discrimination

RECOMMENDATION

Include additional mental health resources and training in all trades and construction apprenticeship programmes, such as holding **Time to Talk** sessions, with robust processes in place for apprentices to raise any concerns through their employer or education provider.

Continue to promote and make mental health initiatives such as **Mental Health First Aiders** and the Department for Work & Pensions' **Access to Mental Health Support Service for Apprentices** as accessible as possible for employers in the construction and trades sector.



KEY THEMES

Skills for the Future: Tech & Renewables

“Younger people are educating themselves about the trade through watching Day-in-the-Life videos on channels like YouTube.”

- Trade Apprentice Finalist

Trade apprentices are embracing new trends and technology to bring their business into the 21st century and to meet customer demand for greener, more efficient products and services in their homes.

Technology plays a key role in the lives of young tradespeople. With their technology skills, they are bringing their companies into the 21st century by helping them navigate social media and online marketing, as well as sharing ideas with their customers via digital platforms.

They also recognise the role that technology plays in helping them to learn new skills and recruit the next generation through channels such as 'Day in the Life' videos on YouTube. One finalist said that they chose to take up their trade after watching one of these videos, as it brought to life what the job would entail in an accessible and highly visual way. Another finalist hosts their own YouTube channel to show young people what opportunities are available in the industry.

Some said that these online platforms helped bridge the information gap that exists in more formal institutions, where young people can find out more about different career paths of interest to them. It is also a valuable resource in exploring topics such as mental health. >>



KEY THEMES

Skills for the Future: Tech & Renewables

“I’m very passionate about climate change and issues like renewables.

In the trade it seems silly not to be involved – it’s more economically efficient and better for the planet and I’m really excited to be a part of it.”

- Trade Apprentice Finalist



Some of the finalists have already chosen to specialise in the renewable energy sector. They said that customer demand is already high for greener and energy-efficient products and services, and only expect the trend to continue in the future as customers recognise the environmental and financial benefits of these new solutions.

The Government recently announced its new Green Homes Grant, where homeowners and landlords can apply for vouchers to make their homes more energy efficient where the work has been completed by a registered tradesperson with the TrustMark accreditation. As well as making the nation’s homes more energy efficient, the scheme will boost jobs for tradespeople of all ages.

RECOMMENDATION

Make it as simple as possible for tradespeople, particularly apprentices, to gain the **TrustMark** accreditation to be eligible to carry out projects as part of the new **Green Homes Grant Scheme** programme.

Introduce ‘top-up’ training modules on the latest products and services in the renewable energy sector for trades across all ages and levels of experience to upskill in this important future area. This additional training could be carried out by existing apprenticeship providers and frameworks.

Government, employers and education providers should consider developing or expanding their online communication channels to encourage more young people to take on an apprenticeship and develop their skills.

OUR 2020 FINALISTS

SCREWFIX
TRADE APPRENTICE
2020

WINNER!



Chris Keel



Olivia Parkin



Elliott Hanan



Beth Skinner



Isabella Stagg



Kyle Hall



Marcus Piper



Matthew Hill



Oliver Greaves



Owen Creaser-Smith



Trade House, Houndstone Business Park, Yeovil BA22 8RT
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