

JOB PROFILE: HEAVY VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR TECHNICIAN

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

If you are looking for a **BIG** career which is just that bit different, then it doesn't get much bigger and better than **Heavy Vehicle Maintenance and Repair!**

Heavy Vehicle Technicians repair and service heavy vehicles, be they coaches, buses, trucks, bulldozers, tractors, agricultural machinery or other stationary engines like generators and pumps. With such a diverse range, technicians usually specialise in repairing a particular vehicle type.

Coach Vehicle Maintenance is just one highly specialist area of Heavy Vehicle Maintenance and Repair. Here you will be responsible for detecting and diagnosing faults using diagnostic equipment, servicing, tuning, repairing and replacing worn or faulty components and parts and ensuring coaches are roadworthy. You will need to ask the right questions to find out about faults and be able to clearly explain faults and repairs to clients.

It is an extremely responsible role, as you quite literally will have the safety of passengers in your hands. Be prepared to occasionally work late and be on emergency call out, which can involve some travelling if a coach has broken down en route.

Technicians are highly skilled and you will be using some of the latest computer-aided 'kit' found in the industry today. How cool is that! You will also need to be able to understand technical diagrams and manuals, many of which are in CD-Rom format.

There are opportunities to work for either a large or small coach operator and you will be surprised how different today's coach industry really is. If you think it is just a man's job, then think again - there are plenty of great opportunities for women as well!

The outlook for the future – there is currently an extremely high level of demand for skilled Heavy Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Technicians. So don't miss out on being part of a **BIG** industry!

PERSONAL QUALITIES & SKILLS

- Sound knowledge and interest in vehicle technology
- Good manual dexterity
- Excellent diagnostic skills
- Good communication skills
- Methodical with an eye for detail
- Keen awareness of health and safety regulations
- Ability to work well in a team
- Good IT skills
- Able to work well under pressure and to tight deadlines
- A high level of physical fitness and full colour vision

TRAINING

There is a range of work based qualifications available, leading to an NVQ/SVQ Levels 1 to 3 with optional pathways, depending on which part of

the industry you work in. These include:

- Vehicle Maintenance and Repair (options in light or heavy vehicles, motorcycles, electronics and security)
- Vehicle Fitting Operations (tyres and general fitting)
- Vehicle Body and Paint Operations (body repair and refinishing)
- Roadside Assistance and Recovery

For experienced technicians there is also a Certificate in Advanced Automotive Diagnostic Techniques (4121) at Level 4.

ENTRY

Most Heavy Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Technicians enter the industry via an Apprenticeship. An apprenticeship combines work experience with an employer and training at a college or training provider. Apprenticeships may be different, depending on where you live.

To start an Apprenticeship you will need 4-5 GCSEs/S Grades (A*-C/1-3) especially in Maths and English or vocational equivalents. Some employers and training providers require applicants to take an aptitude test.

PROGRESSION & SALARY

As a guide:

- Trainee Technicians can earn between £6,000 to £10,000 depending on age and the stage of training
- Experienced Technicians can earn over £20,000 per year
- Allowances are usually paid for unsocial hours. Some coach operators offer bonuses for Technicians who show high levels of commitment and competency in their work

- There are good opportunities for promotion within the industry. A typical progression route is Technician, Senior Technician, and technical supervisor and management positions for those with the right skills and experience. Management roles involve less hands-on work. Some larger organisations offer a more formal promotional structure.

FIND OUT MORE...

For further information and advice visit the *GoSkills* website:

www.goskills.org

For the latest on apprenticeships log on to www.apprenticeships.org.uk or contact your local connexions office if you are in England

Visit www.careers-scotland.org.uk for further information if you are in Scotland and www.careerswales.com if you are in Wales.