Heavy Vehicle

The heavy duty automotive industry has been fuelled by the phenomenal buoyancy in the resources sector where the reliability of plant vehicles has a significant bearing on the productivity and profitability of iron ore, alumina, coal, gold and mineral sands mining.

This trend has also created a healthy demand for skilled mechanics to service and repair heavy vehicles used in mining operations and provides lucrative employment options either on site or on a “fly-in fly-out” basis for those graduates who have the requisite skills and knowledge.

Heavy duty automotive utilize their knowledge of hydraulics, electrical and mechanical components to service and repair a broad range of earth moving machinery including bulldozers and scrapers but this is not the only industry in which their sought after skills are in tremendous demand.

The road transport industry, responsible for conveying goods to various localities throughout Australia also requires the services of heavy duty mechanics to service large trucks and pantechnicons used for this purpose. Plant mechanics may also find employment options in the agricultural sector where the maintenance of tractors, seeders and harvesters is vital to primary producers.
The world of the heavy duty mechanic

Heavy duty mechanics perform a variety of tasks that may include:

- The general overhaul of engines and transmissions - usually undertaken after a specified number of scheduled hours
- Scheduled oil sampling from transmissions and engines to record where parts are wearing and plan overhauls to rectify this
- Overhaul of transmissions, brakes and final drives
- Dealing with minor breakdowns associated with electrical and air conditioning systems
- Undertaking ongoing maintenance and repairs
- Changing oil and cleaning air filters

Much of the earth moving equipment is electronically controlled so computers have become important in the diagnosis of faults and have consequently been integrated into the training that prospective heavy duty mechanics undergo.

Most heavy duty vehicles are air-conditioned and many students add to their raft of skills by gaining air conditioning accreditation to enable them to perform this vital service particularly in the higher latitudes where airconditioning equipment is essential. The acquisition of any additional skills that complements the training given to prospective heavy duty automotive mechanics adds to their employability and versatility ensuring that they are able to make a valuable contribution to the work place.

With 5000 more heavy duty tradesman required in the next ten years to meet industry demand, a career as a heavy duty automotive mechanic has much to recommend it - a wealth of career opportunities that are rewarding and satisfying with portable skills that enable graduates to work anywhere in Australia or abroad.

Personal attributes that will enhance your chances of success in this career include:

- mechanical aptitude
- good hand skills
- well developed analytical abilities
- logical thought processes
- meticulous in assembly

What qualifications in heavy duty automotive studies offer you

The Certificate I in Automotive (Pre-Apprentice Mechanical - Vehicle Servicing - Heavy Automotive) will provide you with the practical skills and knowledge to service and repair mechanical parts of trucks and other heavy duty vehicles. You will learn skills that enable you to maintain and service a range of heavy road vehicle automotive equipment including engines, cooling systems, clutches, transmissions, brakes, electrics, suspensions, and hydraulic systems. As part of this qualification you will undertake a supervised work placement where you will be able to apply the skills and knowledge you have learned.

Employment opportunities

Heavy duty mechanics may seek employment with heavy vehicle repairers, or road transport firms. The defence, energy supply, and public works authorities also employ heavy duty mechanics. Those who have the requisite business acumen may even establish their own business.

Entry requirements

Certificate I in Automotive (Pre-Apprentice Mechanical - Vehicle Servicing - Heavy Automotive)

- Communication skills

For more information of TAFEWA entrance requirements please visit [www.tafe.wa.edu.au](http://www.tafe.wa.edu.au)

Further study options

Certificate IV in Plant Mechanics

Further information

Contact our Information and Career Advisory Officers on 1800 621 445 or (08) 9780 7070
Email: courseinfo@bunbury.training.wa.gov.au
Website: [www.swrc.wa.edu.au](http://www.swrc.wa.edu.au)