

Changing your career ?

... Get into Aviation

A career in Aircraft Maintenance is
challenging and personally rewarding



**Aircraft Maintenance
Engineer →**

Women seeking a career change

"Don't let the guys have all the fun!"

“ It’s a job I really want to do. I didn’t know much about the industry, but I find it exciting to work on aircraft.” Joanne



Yes! You can be an Aviation Maintenance Engineer.

A career in the aerospace industry can offer you exciting opportunities world wide. You will work on a diverse range of aircraft from supersonic military aircraft and commercial airliners through to light aircraft and helicopters.

As an Aircraft Maintenance Engineer you will be involved in the manufacture, installation, maintenance and repair of aircraft components such as engines, airframes and electrics.

There is a state wide shortage of Aircraft Maintenance Engineers in Queensland. Employment is available in general aviation firms, domestic and international airlines, aerospace businesses and the Australian Defence Force. You will be part of an elite team.

“When I first started in the aviation industry, I didn’t know of any other woman doing my role.”

Tracey

Katie’s Story

First Year Avionics Apprentice

Although Katie’s father worked at airports fixing radar equipment, and she grew up loving planes and the sound of jet engines, a career in the aerospace industry was still not something Katie had considered. For a number of years, Katie’s long term desire to travel convinced her to look at a career with travel agencies. However, this didn’t satisfy Katie’s creative side so in 1996 she made the move to retail fashion incorporating dressmaking and jewellery design.

Katie still felt unchallenged and a “flyer” in the letterbox changed all this. The challenge of an exciting new career in aviation which could lead to opportunities of work around the world was enough to make Katie pick up the phone and a few weeks later Katie started her new career in Avionics.

“ My friends couldn’t believe it when I told them and my parents were concerned about my ability to return to study but I love it, everyone is very helpful and I’m accepted as part of a team. I’m proud to be involved in the industry and now my family is very happy with my decision – it’s a commitment to myself.”

Joanne’s Story

First Year Avionics Apprentice

Joanne moved to Cairns after growing up in Melbourne. She had always wanted a career but decided to concentrate on having a family first. After seeing her two children off to school, Joanne started to look around for a career that would provide a good lifestyle and enough money to be able to help support her family. After being a stay at home mum for 4 years Joanne felt unsure which path her career should take, and started a traineeship with a fuel company. While there, Joanne saw an advertisement in the local paper for a “career in aviation”. Joanne had always loved hands-on work and had spent many of her younger years tinkering with cars so she made the call..... the person on the other end was very encouraging and supportive of women coming into the training course.

“ It’s a job I really want to do, I didn’t know much about the industry but I find it exciting to work on aircraft, it’s a real challenge. I see it as an opportunity and have been encouraged to consider travel overseas with the family in the future.”





How do I get there?

To become an Aviation Maintenance Engineer you need to complete an apprenticeship that includes a Certificate IV in Aeroskills. If you have previous experience, contact Skilling Solutions Queensland for advice on recognition of prior learning. The minimum education standard required is Year 10.

There are three Aeroskill specialist programs you can choose from:

- **Mechanical** - Maintaining, inspecting and undertaking fault diagnosis of airframe and engine systems, components and accessories on aircraft.
- **Avionics** - Maintaining, inspecting and undertaking fault diagnosis of aircraft electrical, electronic, instrument and radio systems, components and accessories on aircraft.
- **Structures** - Producing, maintaining, assessing, modifying and repairing all aspects of aircraft structures.

"I've had to think long and hard about taking this option. I've resigned from my job and am pursuing full time studies."

Michelle

You can complete your training in two ways; by completing a one year **institutional program** in a classroom, followed by a three year on the job apprenticeship; or by undertaking a **four year apprenticeship** which combines theory and on-the-job training.

Institutional program

You can complete the theory components as a fulltime student and then commence as a second year apprentice with an employer. The programs will vary in length from 38 to 42 weeks depending on which Aeroskills course you choose. To assist with fees, fulltime students may be eligible for Austudy or Abstudy.

For further information contact Centrelink on 13 24 90 for Youth Allowance and 13 23 17 for Abstudy.

"You'll get to know how aircraft fly." Joanne

Four year apprenticeship

This pathway means you will be paid from the time you commence your apprenticeship and you complete your training in blocks throughout the four years. As well, your off-the-job training is fully paid for through the registered training provider that you and your employer select.

Finding an apprenticeship

If you choose to do an institutional program your training provider will organise a work placement for you during the program and will assist you with finding an apprenticeship when you finish.

Group training organisations are also able to help you with finding an apprenticeship.

For further information contact:

Aviation Australia

Ph: 07 3860 0900 www.aviationaustralia.aero

Qld Institute for Aviation Engineering (QIAE)

Ph: 07 5437 2722 www.qiae.com.au

Aviation Training for Aviation Engineers (ATAE)

Ph: 07 3277 7227 www.atae.com.au

Skill360 Australia

Ph: 07 4046 4000 www.skill360.com.au

Queensland Apprenticeship Services

Ph: 07 4050 0777 www.qas.org.au

Skilling Solutions Queensland

Ph: 1300 654 687 www.skillsolutions.qld.gov.au

You may find other providers by searching the internet.



Things to consider

- Ask your family for support and plan your finances.
- Plan how you will balance study time with part time work and/or looking after a family.
- Determination and self discipline will equip you for this challenging industry.
- Have the confidence to ask questions of your trainers and peers.
- Build your good health and physical strength.
- Resist sexism from family and friends about your career choice - get informed.

For further resources and networks supporting women in non-traditional industries, see www.women.qld.gov.au/hardhats

"I expected it to be heavy duty coming back to school but the teachers are awesome and very supportive." Katie

"I wished I had started earlier, I was encouraged to pursue a more traditional role for women but I've preferred the male dominated roles. In the past expectations have held me back but now I have the confidence in knowing I have made the right decision for me."

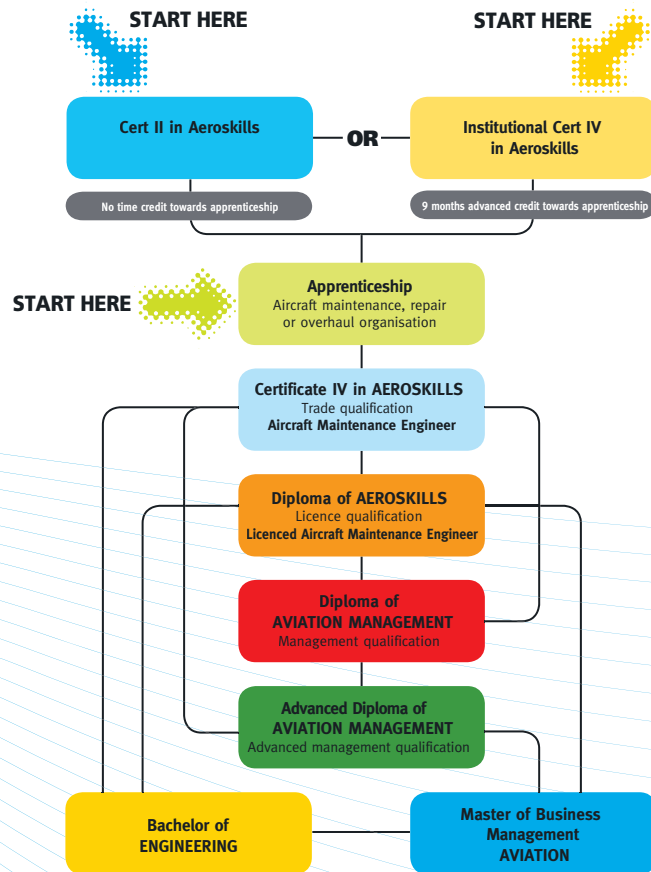
Kate

Aeroskills Pathways

You can enter the aviation and aerospace industry via a Certificate II in Aeroskills, the Institutional Certificate IV in Aeroskills or directly into a 4 year apprenticeship. After completing your apprenticeship, you can further your career pathway through management and higher qualifications if you so choose...the sky's the limit!

"Cairns Aviation Skills Centre and our training provider Aviation Australia actively promote public awareness of women in aviation maintenance to encourage women to explore aviation as a career option and to inspire women of all backgrounds and ages to pursue their dreams."

Chris Pigott : Manager Cairns Aviation Skills Centre



"It's challenging, but if you like hands on work, then go for it... You need to be yourself and do what you love!" Joanne

