SNIPEF TRAINING SERVICES LTD
SNIPEF Training Services Ltd is the Plumbing Industry’s Training Provider for plumbing apprenticeships in Scotland. We work closely with Skills Development Scotland who funds the training programme. We manage the delivery of the Modern Apprenticeship in Domestic Plumbing & Heating SVQ Level 3.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND (SDS)
SNIPEF Training Services Ltd receives contribution funding from Skills Development Scotland (SDS) which is the Scottish Government funding agency. This funding allows SNIPEF Training Services Ltd to pay the associated costs of the off-the-job training undertaken by apprentices on the Modern Apprenticeship in Domestic Plumbing & Heating SVQ Level 3 training programme.

Costs involve:
- MA & SNUIB Registration Fees
- College/Training Centre Fees
- A contribution to Employer in the 3rd & 4th Year towards the employers training costs

For more information on SDS please visit www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk

FIPS (FUNDING INFORMATION PROCESSING SYSTEM)
Funding Information Processing System (FIPS) is the new Skills Development Scotland computer system which validates any funding SNIPEF Training Services Ltd claims once apprentices on our training programme achieve assessments at College/Training Centre. The validation comes in the form of SMS or email messages direct from SDS’s FIPS computer system sent to apprentices to confirm achievement.

WHAT YOU ARE REQUIRED TO DO
Once an apprentice receives a validation SMS or email message from Skills Development Scotland’s FIPS computer system the apprentice will require to reply with a Y. The apprentice should not reply using anything other than Y as the FIPS computer system will not be able to recognise any other response such as Yes for example. If the response is unreadable the apprentice will be sent further validation messages from FIPS and funding will not be released to the Training Provider meaning SNIPEF Training Services Ltd may not be able to be pay the apprentice’s training costs.

IF YOU HAVE REPLIED TO THE FIPS VALIDATION MESSAGE
If the apprentice has replied to either the FIPS SMS or email messaged with a Y (and Y only) this message will automatically update the FIPS computer system and SNIPEF Training Services Ltd will receive funding from Skills Development Scotland for your modern apprenticeship which as a result can continue.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DO NOT RESPOND TO SDS’S FIPS VALIDATION MESSAGES
If an apprentice fails to respond to Skills Development Scotland’s FIPS validation messages SNIPEF Training Services Ltd will not be able to draw down SDS funding to pay for the apprentice to continue on the Modern Apprenticeship programme. This will result in the apprentice being removed from our training programme and as a result the apprentice will not be able to continue their apprenticeship at College/Training Centre.

SNIPEF Training Services Ltd would not therefore be responsible for any unpaid costs such as College/Training Centre fees. The liability for any such fees would therefore fall to the employer or apprentice.
**SDS VALIDATION NOTIFICATIONS**

Throughout an apprentice’s time on the apprenticeship training programme an apprentice will receive validation messages from Skills Development Scotland on numerous occasions. Listed below are examples of when an apprentice will be likely to receive such validation messages from FIPS. On the following page we have listed the content of these validation messages to make apprentices aware of the validation content that they will receive from FIPS.

**START VALIDATION PROCEDURE/NOTIFICATIONS**

Once an apprentice has been inducted on to the training programme by one of our Regional Training Officers, SNIPEF Training Services Ltd will then register the apprentice on SDS’s FIPS computer system. After this FIPS will send its first validation message to the apprentice and then FIPS will follow the sequence undernoted in FIPS VALIDATION PROCEDURE/NOTIFICATION if no validation response is received within the required timescale.

**MILESTONE VALIDATION PROCEDURE/NOTIFICATIONS**

Once an apprentice has achieved assessments at their College/Training Centre the College/Training Centre will submit a T16 to SNIPEF Training Services Ltd. SNIPEF Training Services Ltd will then make milestones claims on FIPS. After a milestone has been claimed FIPS will send its first validation message to the apprentice and then FIPS will follow the sequence undernoted in FIPS VALIDATION PROCEDURE/NOTIFICATION if no validation response is received within the required timescale.

**VQ VALIDATION PROCEDURE/NOTIFICATION**

Once an apprentice has achieved all assessments at their College/Training Centre the College/Training Centre will submit a Final T16 to SNIPEF Training Services Ltd. SNIPEF Training Services Ltd will then make the VQ claim on FIPS which is necessary to complete your training programme. After the VQ has been claimed FIPS will send its first validation message to the apprentice and then FIPS will follow the sequence undernoted in FIPS VALIDATION PROCEDURE/NOTIFICATION if no validation response is received within the required timescale.

**FIPS VALIDATION PROCEDURE/NOTIFICATION**

- A FIPS validation message will be sent via SMS or email message to the apprentice.

If no response or readable response is received by SDS:

- FIPS will send a further validation SMS or email message after 15 days to the apprentice and the employer.

If no response or readable response is still not received:

- FIPS will send a 3rd and final validation SMS or email message after 25 days to the apprentice.

If no response has been received after 30 days the FIPS system will undo any funding claims SNIPEF Training Services has made on your behalf which will result in SNIPEF Training Services Ltd claiming any funding previously claimed.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT CONTINUING TO FAIL TO RESPOND TO SDS VALIDATION MESSAGES WILL RESULT IN THE APPRENTICE BEING REMOVED FROM OUR TRAINING PROGRAMME.**
CONTENT OF VALIDATION MESSAGES FROM SDS

Please see below the content of the SDS FIPS email and SMS validation messages an apprentice will receive once SNIPEF Training Services Ltd claims funding on FIPS for apprentices on our training programme.

START VALIDATION MESSAGES

Email: “Skills Development Scotland is responsible for managing Scottish Government funding contribution towards your training costs. Can you please confirm you have started your apprenticeship so that your apprenticeship and funding can be activated – Reply Y/N”

SMS: “SDS pays Scottish Government funding for your training. Please confirm you’ve started so your apprenticeship record and funding can be activated – Reply Y/N”

When will the apprentice receive Start validation messages? Apprentices will receive Start validation messages once they have been inducted on to the training programme by one of our Regional Training Officers and once they have been registered onto the SDS FIPS computer system by SNIPEF Training Services Ltd.

MILESTONE VALIDATION MESSAGES

Email: “Skills Development Scotland is responsible for managing the Scottish Government funding contribution towards your training costs. To verify the next payment for your apprenticeship, we require you to confirm that your progress has recently been reviewed by your training provider – Reply Y/N”.

SMS: “To verify the next payment for your apprenticeship, SDS requires you to confirm your progress has recently been reviewed by your training provider – Reply Y/N”.

When will the apprentice receive Milestone validation messages? Apprentices will receive Milestone validation messages once SNIPEF Training Services Ltd has claimed funding milestones on the SDS FIPS computer system. This will normally be around the months of December, January, February, June, July and August during an apprentice’s 3 years at a College/Training Centre.

VQ VALIDATION MESSAGES

Email: “Congratulations! Your employer/Training Provider has advised us that you have successfully completed your apprenticeship requirements. Skills Development Scotland is responsible for managing the Scottish Government funding contribution towards your training costs. To verify the final payments for your apprenticeship, we require you to confirm that you have confirmation from your employer/Training Provider that you have successfully completed your full apprenticeship – Reply Y/N”.

SMS: “To verify the final payment for your apprenticeship, SDS requires you to confirm that you have successfully completed the full apprenticeship – Reply Y/N”.

When will the apprentice receive VQ validation messages? Apprentices will receive VQ validation messages once SNIPEF Training Services Ltd has claimed the VQ funding on the SDS FIPS computer system. This will normally be once an apprentice has completed the College/Training Centre part of the apprentice’s training after 3 years.
SNIPEF TRAINING SERVICES LTD – FIPS PROCEDURE

With the introduction of FIPS SNIPEF Training Services Ltd aims to make sure the new SDS FIPS computer system has a minimal effect on us as a Training Provider. As a precaution we will follow the procedure below to minimise the risks to unconfirmed FIPS validation claims.

Apprentice Induction: During an apprentice’s induction onto the training programme our Regional Training Officers will fully explain the requirements of the SDS FIPS validation messages.

13 Week Progress Reviews: During an apprentice’s 13 week progress review our Regional Training Officers will remind the apprentice and employer (if workplace reviews) about SDS FIPS validation messages.

T16’s at College/Training Centre: College/Training Centre lecturers will remind apprentices when they are signing their latest T16 Notification of Achievement about the requirements of FIPF validation messages.

T16’s claimed by SNIPEF Training Services Ltd on FIPS: Once SNIPEF Training Services Ltd has made an achievement claim on FIPS we will send an email to the apprentice and the employer to say they should expect to receive a FIPS validation message soon and that it is important that the apprentice must reply Y.

Mass Emails: Before our main FIPS claiming periods in June and December each training year our Regional Training Officers will send an email to all apprentices and employers to remind them that they will receive FIPS validation messages within the next few weeks if the apprentice has gained new achievements at College/Training Centre.

Emails & Telephone Calls: If an apprentice does not respond to a FIPS validation message SNIPEF Training Services Ltd will email the apprentice and the employer after 15 and 30 days. We will also make a phone call to both apprentice and employer after 20 days.

Meeting with Regional Training Officer: If after our emails and telephone calls an apprentice has still not responded to a FIPS validation email one of our Regional Training Officers will arrange a face to face meeting with the apprentice and employer.

OUTCOME AFTER THE ABOVE PROCEDURE

If after the above procedure has still resulted in the apprentice failing to respond to a FIPS validation message SNIPEF Training Services Ltd will have no option but to remove the apprentice from our training programme.

FUN FACT

The very first SMS message sent simply said ‘Merry Christmas’ and was sent by British engineer Neil Papworth on 3rd of December 1992 from a computer to a mobile phone.
Back in 2015 it is estimated that the number of email messages sent per day was around 205 billion. That’s around 2.4 million emails sent every second totalling around 74 trillion emails sent per year.

Worldwide we sent 8.3 trillion SMS messages in 2016. This works out 23 billion messages per day.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

What do I do if I change my telephone number or email address?
If you change your telephone number or email address it is vitally important that you let your SNIPEF Regional Training Officer know as soon as possible. You can also contact SNIPEF Headquarters and we will update your SDS records with your new contact details.

I have chosen to be contacted by email but I have not received any emails from SDS?
Please check your junk or spam email folders as the email may have been filtered as spam. If the validation email is there please mark the email as not spam and add the SDS email address to your ‘safe’ senders list. The FIPS validation emails will come from the following email address: Sds.administrator@skillsdevelopmentscotland.onmicrosoft.com

I have chosen to reply to SDS by SMS message. Does this cost me to reply?
Yes. All SMS validation reply messages are charged at your normal network rate. If you wish to change your contact method to email (which is free) please contact your SNIPEF Regional Training Officer. You can also contact SNIPEF Headquarters and we will update your SDS records with your new contact details.

What happens if I do not reply to SDS’s validation messages?
If you do not reply to any or all SDS validation messages SNIPEF Training Services Ltd will be unable to claim funding on your behalf and this will result in your apprenticeship being terminated and you or your employer will be responsible for any unpaid fees or associated training costs.

I replied to SDS’s validation messages with more than the required Y. What happens?
If you have replied to the SDS validation message with more than the requested Y this will be rejected by FIPS. Please reply to the message again with the required Y so the validation can be approved.

SOCIAL MEDIA
SNIPEF Training Services Ltd is now active on a number of social media platforms. For all the latest updates please follow us:

@SNIPEFtraining /SNIPEFtraining /SNIPEFtraining /SNIPEFtraining

Help spread the word by using the hashtag #BecomeAPlumber

CONTACT US
If you require any further information with regards to any of the above please contact SNIPEF Training Services Ltd on 0131 524 1245 or alternatively email us at training@snipef.org

Please note our hours of operation are Monday – Thursday 09:00am – 17:00pm and Friday 09:00am – 16:30pm.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION
If you are looking for more information with regards to the content of this booklet please contact SNIPEF Training Services Ltd.

www.becomeaplumber.org

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FUN FACT
Texting is now the second most common use for a mobile phone. The first is for checking the time, prompting concerns that texting will spell the death of the wristwatch.