

Fire Protection Plumber interview questions

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What to expect

Fire Protection Plumber interviews focus on technical standards, safety, and practical judgement. Employers want to see you can work to AS 2118 and the NCC, read drawings, and stay calm when a test or commissioning doesn't go to plan.

- **Technical and standards:** Questions about applying AS 2118, AS 2419, the NCC, reading hydraulic drawings, and understanding system components.
- **Safety and compliance:** Questions on hazard identification, isolation procedures, worksite safety management, and regulatory documentation.
- **Scenario and problem-solving:** Hypothetical on-site issues such as failed flow tests, leaks, or clashes with other trades, testing your judgement under pressure.
- **Behavioural and teamwork:** Past experiences with coordination, communication, reliability, and explaining technical details to others.
- **Process and commissioning:** Walk-throughs of your approach to pressure testing, maintenance, handover procedures, and completing compliance paperwork.

Typically a phone or video screen with a recruiter or hiring manager, then a face-to-face interview with a supervisor or project manager. Some employers include a practical skills assessment, such as a pipe threading task or a site walk-through, and a final conversation about the role and conditions.

1. Can you walk me through how you pressure test a newly installed sprinkler system, from preparation to sign-off?

Why they ask

This tests your technical process and whether you understand the steps required by AS 2118, including safety, equipment, and documentation.

How to structure your answer

A step-by-step walk-through of your process, covering safety checks, equipment setup, test pressures, duration, and documentation.

Example answer

"First, I check the system is isolated and tagged out, and I review the drawings to confirm the test boundaries. I set up the hydraulic pressure test rig, making sure the gauges are calibrated. I fill the system slowly, bleed air from the high points, then bring it up to the required test pressure. I hold it for the specified time, watching for any pressure drop. If it holds, I record the results and complete the test certificate. If not, I isolate sections to find the leak, repair it, and retest. Finally, I flush the system and prepare it for commissioning."

2. What are the key safety considerations when maintaining a fire pump, and how do you manage them?

Why they ask

Fire pumps involve stored pressure, electrical isolation, and moving parts. The interviewer wants to see you prioritise hazards and apply controls.

How to structure your answer

Prioritise the main hazards, then describe your controls, using a risk assessment approach.

Example answer

"The main hazards are electrical isolation, stored pressure, and moving parts. I start with a risk assessment and lock out/tag out the power. I check for residual pressure and bleed it off safely. I wear appropriate PPE, including gloves and eye protection. I make sure the area is clear and I have a second person if needed. I also check the pump is cool before working on it. I document the isolation and controls before I start."

3. You arrive on site to commission a hydrant system and the flow test results are below the required standard. What do you do?

Why they ask

This scenario tests your judgement under pressure, your diagnostic approach, and how you communicate a problem to the site team and client.

How to structure your answer

A judgement-under-pressure structure: stay calm, gather information, diagnose, communicate, and resolve.

Example answer

"First, I do not panic. I recheck the test setup and gauge calibration to rule out equipment error. Then I review the hydraulic calculations and check for closed valves or blockages. I might isolate sections to find the issue. I inform the site supervisor and the client's representative immediately, explaining what I have found and what I plan to do. If it is a design issue, I escalate to the engineer. I document everything and do not sign off until the system meets AS 2419."

4. Tell me about a time you had to read a complex hydraulic drawing and explain it to another tradesperson who was not familiar with fire protection.

Why they ask

This assesses your communication skills, teamwork, and ability to translate technical plans into practical steps for others.

How to structure your answer

STAR: Situation, Task, Action, Result.

Example answer

"On a commercial project, I had to install sprinkler piping in a ceiling space shared with electricians and ductwork. The hydraulic drawing showed a routing that was not obvious. I sat down with the electrician, pointed out the pipe sizes, the sprinkler head locations and the clearance requirements. I sketched a simple plan and walked him through it. We agreed on a sequence so we would not clash. As a result, we avoided costly rework and kept the program on track."

5. How do you ensure your work complies with AS 2118 and the National Construction Code?

Why they ask

This tests your knowledge of the standards and your systematic approach to compliance, from planning through to documentation.

How to structure your answer

A checklist or process structure: plan, check, verify, document.

Example answer

"Before I start, I review the drawings and specifications against AS 2118 and the NCC. I check that materials and components are approved and that the design meets the required hazard classification. During installation, I follow the spacing and clearance rules, and I use the correct fittings. I pressure test and flow test to the standard. I complete the compliance documentation, including as-built drawings and test certificates. If anything is unclear, I ask the engineer or check the standard."

6. Describe how you handle a handover to a client when the system is complete but they have questions about maintenance.

Why they ask

This looks at your client-facing communication, your ability to explain technical information clearly, and how you document and follow up.

How to structure your answer

A client-facing communication structure: prepare, explain, listen, document, follow up.

Example answer

“Before the handover, I make sure all documentation is ready, including test results, as-built drawings and maintenance schedules. I walk the client through the system, showing them the key valves, pumps and test points. I explain the routine maintenance tasks, like weekly and monthly checks, in plain language. I listen to their questions and answer honestly. If I do not know something, I find out and get back to them. I leave a clear maintenance manual and my contact details for follow-up.”