

HARRY LEVEL 3 PIPE WELDER APPRENTICE

What was your route in to engineering?

I studied my GCSE's at school and was really pleased to pass my Maths and English, otherwise I would have had to have re-taken these at college. I then did a one year course at college in Marine Engineering and passed with a Merit. I knew that I wanted to go in to Engineering, so applied to numerous apprenticeships in my local area. I had two interviews with Cytiva, one was even on my birthday! I was successful and am now doing a four year apprenticeship to become a Pipe Welder.

What does an average day look like for you?

I catch the train early in the morning to Southampton, and then rent an e-bike from the station to get to SETA as it's cheaper than getting the bus. Before starting class I usually have the opportunity to chat with my mates, as well as at break and lunchtimes. Our instructor lets us know what the plan is for the day. I'm training to be a Pipe Welder, so I will be completing rotations in 3 types of Welding - MMA, MIG & TIG, as well as Machining and Fluid Power, all of which have been selected by my employer as I will need to know about them for my apprenticeship. At the end of the day in the workshop we tidy and clean up before going home.

I'm in the first year of my apprenticeship so at SETA we spend time in the workshop four days a week and one day in the classroom for a two year BTEC course – this is the theory part of the apprenticeship. When we're in the workshop safety is very important, so we wear our Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at all times.

What personal qualities do you think are important to do your job?

I believe that patience is one of the qualities important for my job. With welding you have to be slow and steady to ensure you get it right, as well as having the confidence to challenge yourself with new tasks. It's always good to be able to have a bit of 'banter' with your work colleagues or mates at SETA, although this isn't a requirement of the job!

Why did you choose to do an apprenticeship?

I chose to do an apprenticeship as I want to start a career within engineering. As an apprentice I am starting off with great foundations within a company, all the while getting paid to learn. I'm learning lots of valuable skills at both SETA and in my workplace that I will transfer to my role once I have graduated from my apprenticeship.

What has been your personal highlight so far?

I was so pleased when I got my apprenticeship, and my confidence is improving with everything that I do, as I can be over-critical on myself as I want to do well. I am happy with the grades I am achieving in the assessments that we have at the end of every workshop rotation. This shows the hard work that I am putting in. I am also happy with the grades that I have achieved in my BTEC, one of which has been a Merit.

Why did you choose to be an Apprentice Council Rep?

I became a member of the Apprentice Council as I wanted to enable other people's ideas and suggestions to be heard at SETA, and where possible for improvements to be made.

