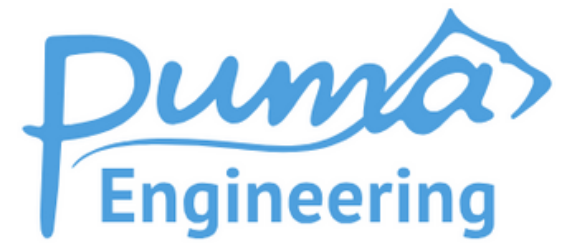


ETHAN LEVEL 2 WELDING APPRENTICE



What was your route in to engineering?

I have always wanted to build things. Welding lets me achieve this. At school I enjoyed doing practical things rather than sitting in the classroom, so was quite keen to get a job when I left school. I researched several companies to find one that would be prepared to give me an opportunity. Although Puma engineering has several apprentices they took me on as well.

I didn't quite get the grades for Maths and English at school, so I am taking Level 2 Functional Skills at SETA to make sure that I achieve these before the end of my apprenticeship.

Why did you choose to do an apprenticeship?

I'm not an academic person and always knew that I wanted to do a job that was hands-on. For me the practical side of things is the best way of learning as I struggled at school with written work and listening. I enjoy being creative and making things, with welding I can do this.

An apprenticeship isn't an easy option as there is a lot to learn, but it's done in a more applied way that suits me.

What does an average day look like for you?

Whilst at work I can be doing various tasks. Everyday though I need to make sure that I've got the right PPE on to keep me protected for the job ahead. I might be prepping some pipe making sure that it is clean removing any rust and imperfections. Once its clean I then tack it together. This can take 1-2 hours to make sure that it's done correctly. I also help other employees with carrying, tacking and assisting with welding their jobs. I am learning all the time from other experienced employees at my company.

During my first year I will also spend time at SETA doing my "off-the-job" training. Across the year I will be doing Sheet Metal Work, MMA, MIG and TIG welding. This will mean spending time in SETA's workshop and in their classroom doing the theory part.

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

I think you need to have patience, concentration, confidence and being able to work as part of a team. Manufacturing items can be an extremely long process, from cutting to prepping, to tacking to welding. Sometimes this is the entire month for large tasks. Everyone needs to work as a team to make sure that the jobs get done. If something isn't quite going right, then there will be someone in the team who can support you to make sure it goes OK. Being part of a team is great especially as there will be times that you see them more than your family!

What has been your personal highlight so far?

I think that it has to be the people at Puma. When I very first started everything was new to me and I was always making mistakes. The team was patient and kind and showed me the different ways to complete the different tasks. My knowledge is gradually increasing and I do feel that without their help I wouldn't have progressed as far as I have.

