

BEN **APPRENTICE MECHANICAL DESIGN ENGINEER**



How did you first become interested in engineering?

I have always been interested in cars, engines, and computers. I am curious with the way things are manufactured, and the way individual system components work together. I love to ask "Why?". Choosing engineering has allowed me to pursue a career in something I love, am interested in, and is allowing me to continue to learn every day!

Why did you choose to do an apprenticeship?

I chose an apprenticeship because I wanted experience in the workplace, to get hands on and proactively learn whilst gaining nationally recognised qualifications. I work better learning practically and getting my hands dirty. I didn't want to do another 4 years of school, and as most jobs require experience, an apprenticeship was the obvious way to go. It is a win-win in every aspect, you get years of experience, you receive qualifications, you get paid, and you get a job at the end of it. It really is a no-brainer!

What has been your personal highlight so far?

I've got a few! I have loved the General Welding & Fabrication rotation. The best part of the rotation was using the plasma cutter and welding sets. I enjoyed this so much that I completed my projects early giving me time to produce extra work which I could take home. I used this opportunity to create various pieces. My two favourites were a firepit I made for my house, and a pot of roses welded all out of metal (for my lovely girlfriend!). The instructors are so supportive and knowledgeable, and are always willing to help.

I am also enjoying being with my company. It is fascinating learning all that they do and their role within the nuclear industry. It has been a real eye opener discovering all the projects that they work on!

MY POT OF ROSES!



What does an average day look like for you?

An average day for me as a first-year apprentice varies. Currently I am doing rotations at SETA which follow a flexible format. I do one month with SETA, followed by one month at work – with a day release every Wednesday when I attend SETA to study my BTEC in the classroom.

When I am at work, I spend time within the workshop learning directly from seasoned engineers with years of experience. I am currently doing my own research and mock projects to imitate the real ones I will be working on next year.

When at SETA on rotation we do a mix of practical and written work – the ratio depends on which rotation you do. My personal favourite so far has been the general fabrication and welding rotation. During this rotation we spent probably 80% of our time in the workshop which was a treat. We got practical experience with hand tools and various machines such as guillotines, bandsaws, and pillar drills. The best part of the rotation was using the Plasma Cutter and Welding sets.

