

A day in the life of an Aldermans apprentice

Sean Henderson

At school what did you most enjoy, or excel at?

I enjoyed PE, Science, Design & Technology. I loved to experiment and find the best ways to create new things. I enjoyed Maths too and excelled at that – once I left school I moved onto Further Maths.

What was it about engineering as a career that appealed to you?

Design & Technology really interested me. I loved planning something that I wanted to make, finding information about other products which were similar, and making mine different. In my work experience I did a placement at an engineering company which furthered my interest, and I knew this was something I wanted to do once I left school.

Why did you decide to pursue an apprenticeship?

I didn't feel I had the knowledge I fully needed to be able to work at an engineering company. I applied for an apprenticeship in engineering so I could further my knowledge and skills for the company I would work for.

How did you find your apprenticeship placement?

Having finished my first year at college I decided to send my C.V to different companies, but didn't get much luck or replies. So I decided to go through the College as I knew that they were finding people engineering apprenticeships at companies which were actively looking to take on apprentices. It didn't take long before I had a couple of interviews, which led me to my apprenticeship at Aldermans.



Sean (third from right above) with the welding team at Aldermans.

Why did you choose Aldermans?

From what I knew about engineering, including website research, Aldermans seemed to fit what I wanted to do. I felt that I could get on really well with them and have a good future.

When did your apprenticeship start and end?

I started my 3-year apprenticeship on the 7th September 2011 and finished in November 2014.

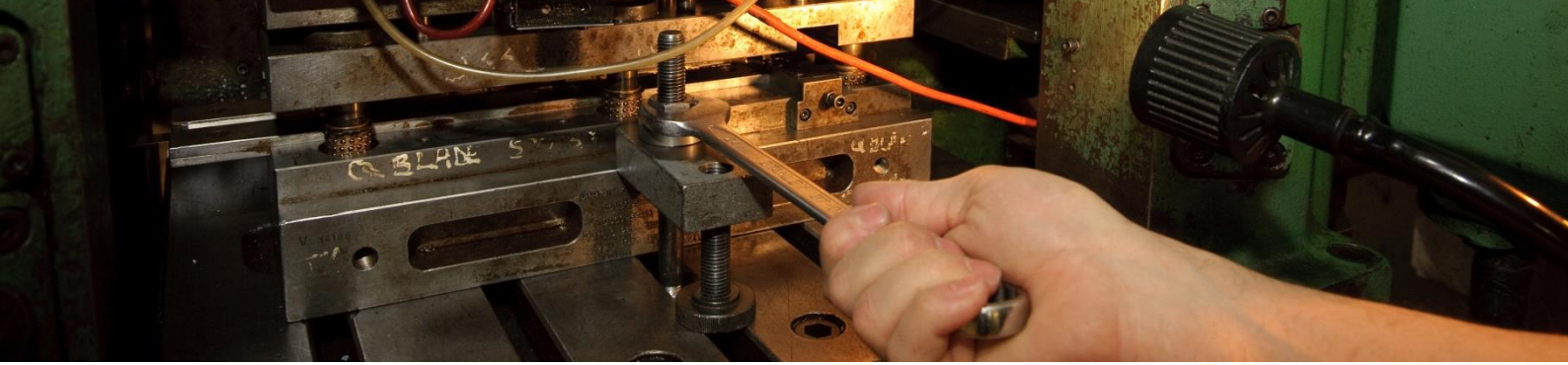
How has Aldermans helped you to develop your skills?

From the start we both understood what we wanted me to do for the company. This gave focus to my learning. Aldermans has given me the correct and the most efficient training needed to do my job.

What's the most important thing you've learned about yourself during your apprenticeship?

I've been able to take the engineering I've learned at college into the workplace. I have grown more confident and reliable, and I now feel confident at work to do the jobs I need to do correctly.

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During your apprenticeship, what have you achieved that are you most proud of?

Learning new machinery at work, which has helped me and Aldermans. And completing my practical welding exams, as it was my first year welding. But I am most proud of just completing my apprenticeship with merits and distinctions and becoming a member of the team at Aldermans.

What have you learned about being an employee?

Work is a completely different environment from college. You have that extra responsibility as an adult to make sure that you are on time and that you are doing your best to help Aldermans progress.

Are there any down-sides to being an apprentice?

There aren't many down sides, as you are learning a trade for your future, so it is all worth it. But at college there is a lot of coursework to be done and you need to make sure you are 100% committed to get the best out of what you are learning. Also when you are new you will probably be put on jobs which aren't the best. But the more you prove yourself and learn, the more responsibilities you get and the better the jobs.

What do you do on a typical day at work?

When I was an apprentice the jobs I did were related to my college work. I was mostly learning welding, so I would do small welding jobs to improve my skills. Now I have learnt many other different operations in the workplace, so most days are different, which is good.

How has your apprenticeship helped you plan the next steps in your career?

The apprenticeship has given me a clear path towards what I want to do in the future. My qualifications have put me in good stead in engineering. Hopefully I have many years ahead at Aldermans: they helped me out through the apprenticeship and I feel that I have learnt a lot about the company. I feel more of an employee now rather than an apprentice.

What would you say to others who might consider an engineering apprenticeship?

I was very lucky to find an engineering apprenticeship and at a company like Aldermans. For someone at any age who wants a career in engineering this is the best way to start. You learn every aspect in the areas you need to know so when you finally start working at your company you feel confident to do any job and do it well. I would recommend you do a lot of research on the type of engineering apprenticeship you want to do and the companies that are looking ,and make sure you find the one that suits.

About Aldermans

A family firm, established in Plymouth for over 45 years, we're one of the region's best-known and respected metal fabricators.

Combining traditional skills with the latest technologies, we offer our clients an integrated metalwork service, from design and prototyping to small or large-scale production runs.

Our technologies include press tooling, pressbrake folding, CNC machining (lasering, punching, milling, turning), cutting, welding, assembly and kitting, and powder coating.

We are proud to hold the EN ISO 9001 quality management certification.

As well as investing regularly in the latest technologies, we also invest in our staff through training in manufacturing management techniques, such as lean manufacturing and Six Sigma.

We are an active member of PMG, the Plymouth Manufacturers' Group.