





Apprenticeship – Review of the Year July 2023

As we are coming to the end of his first academic year we catch up with our apprentice, Luke Joplin, as to what his first year has been like, what he has achieved and what he is looking forward to in the future.

What has your first year been like?

It is quite an experience to begin full-time work mixing it with my college studies and was the right decision for me to follow this route rather than go to university. I had a previous experience of manufacturing engineering Level 2 and Level 3 City & Guilds but the hands-on practical experience I have gained at TOA, whilst continuing my studies, has given me a much broader knowledge of my subject. The projects I have been working on at TOA are unique and the training I have received has enabled me to work on my own projects, with supervision, learning new skills and techniques along the way.

What have been the highlights?

I think the biggest highlight was the first time I was allowed to follow a project through from the design and creating the CAD drawings to implementing the build for the customer which improved my confidence and the feeling that I can be relied upon to work on projects by myself. A huge learning curve was how precise and neat in wiring the public address and voice alarm systems that we build must be. I learnt very quickly, when I had to re-do a project, under the watchful eye of the Technical Team, that everything must meet the TOA standard. My work is much more precise and shows how much I have improved in the last year with the technical ability to get things right first time – as they say practise makes perfect. This has been greatly helped by the friendly team that have mentored and encouraged me along the way.

Is there anything you would change?

No, I have really enjoyed my first year and the support I have been given. I was pleased to make my own change by learning to drive this year as this has made the process of getting to work much easier and made me more independent as a whole.

What are you looking forward to next year and beyond?

I am looking forward to being more independent and knowing that the team have confidence in my skills and knowledge that I can work by myself. Now I have my ECS (Electrotechnical Certification Scheme) Card which I studied for with the ISCVE (The Institute of Sound, Communications and Visual Engineers) I can go out on site to carry out testing and commissioning and this will be exciting to see the projects that I have built in the workshop installed and working. I am looking forward to developing my skills and executing my projects to the best of my ability and to continue to learn more about the industry.

Ian Bridgewater, Director – Technical Sales Manager

"It was a huge learning curve setting up the scheme in the first place and finding the right course to match what we needed as a skills set for the future. We have been very lucky in our candidate choice and Luke has fitted well into the TOA team. Supporting an apprentice has been rewarding and something we would look at again in the future. We know Luke will continue to grow his skills base in the coming years with TOA and to be a valid asset to our family."

You can find out more about ECS Cards and the ISCVE at www.iscve.org.uk