

# Darren Frizzell

Our Trainee Plant Engineer, Darren Frizzell, joined Sterling in 2016 as an Electrical and Instrumentation (E&I) Craftsman and has since gone on to complete his HNC in Electrical and Electronic Engineering at Tyne Metropolitan College. Find out more below about his role and how he supports our customers.



## Can you briefly describe your background?

When I was 16, I started an apprenticeship in electrical contracting where I completed my NVQ Level 3 at Newcastle College. In this role, I worked away a lot and studied in my spare time outside of work. Once I completed my NVQ, I decided that I wanted to work closer to home in the north east, which is when I saw the role of Electrical and Instrumentation (E&I) Craftsman advertised at Sterling.

In this role, I worked across the different plants at our Dudley site with responsibility for various maintenance work. I was in this role for around three years before I was promoted to E&I Technician.

At this time, I also volunteered as a union representative at Sterling, which was a great opportunity for me, as I gained experience in working alongside the senior management team; going to meetings, meeting new people, and seeing the business from another point of view. It's allowed me to develop a strong working relationship with the senior management team.

Since working at Sterling, I have been given the opportunity to complete my HNC at Tyne Metropolitan College in Electrical and Electronic Engineering, and I am hoping to go on to complete my foundation degree in this area in the future.

## Fast Facts

### ROLE

Trainee Plant Engineer

### STARTED AT STERLING

February 2016

### EDUCATION

HNC in Electrical and Electronic Engineering

### SPECIALISATIONS

Engineering

## What does your role as Trainee Plant Engineer entail?

In April 2023, I was promoted to Trainee Plant Engineer. In this role I manage a team of people. This includes multidiscipline technicians, fitters, E&I technicians, and some of our apprentices. I also manage some of the contractors who come to site. I enjoy working with our apprentices, as it gives me an opportunity to do what others did for me when I was an apprentice; helping to kick start their careers.

I think becoming a union representative also prepared me well for moving into a management position, knowing more of the Dudley team than I would have in my day-to-day role and therefore having stronger cross-department communication skills, which in turn benefits our customers.

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My role as a Trainee Plant Engineer does vary, but a lot of it involves ensuring a high level of communication across shifts to confirm everything on the plant is running as smoothly as possible. I support the team in determining their priorities for each shift and making sure the right team are on the right job to minimise production downtime.

Sterling is really good at multipurpose production, so being able to go from one process to another in a streamlined manner is important as it ensures we are operating as efficiently as possible. Any product reintroduction is carried out by the maintenance department and any new products are installed by the new product introduction (NPI) team, this is to ensure we don't impact the company's schedule and we want to be able to keep our customers happy by delivering on time.

## How does your role support our customers?

Although we aren't directly customer facing, our job is to ensure that production windows are well prepared in advance, maintain production schedules, and ensure products are out of the door on time. This supports the wider team in ensuring the customer's schedule is kept to and we are on time with production. By doing our job effectively, we ensure that customers are happy with the service provided to them by Sterling.

Sometimes it can be harder to see the bigger picture when on the shop floor, so making sure that everyone in the team is aware of how their role impacts our customers and supports the manufacture of life-saving drugs for people around the world is vital and helps us work better together.

## Can you tell us about a work achievement at Sterling?

When I started on the shop floor as E&I Craftsman, I worked on commissioning new products. One of the processes I worked on took a month of commissioning alone. On the back of this project, I was promoted to E&I Technician as recognition for my hard work on the project and my commitment to the team. So, this was a really great achievement for me to see that my work was valued by Sterling.

## What is your favourite thing about working at Sterling?

Coming to work isn't a chore. Working amongst likeminded people in a range of departments is great, especially as everyone gets along so well and work better together because of this.



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