**Welded to the job as apprentices secure regional first**

Three apprentices from In-Comm Training are well on their way to becoming fully qualified welders after they became some of the first in Shropshire to pass the End Point Assessment.

James Critchley, Ryan Jarvis and Sam Hart successfully secured their Welding Standard Level 2, brought in by the Government to replace the City and Guilds Apprenticeships.

There were put through their paces by The Welding Institute (TWI) at the Marches Centre of Manufacturing & Technology’s hub in Shrewsbury and came through with flying colours, impressing assessors with their technical skills and ability to overcome specific challenges.

The trio, who work for Holborne Group, Jarvis Metals and K&M Engineering respectively, will now have the opportunity to move on to a Level 3 standard and, importantly, will be in a position to deliver an immediate positive impact to their employers.

“End Point Assessment is more geared towards addressing the needs of industry and can be tailored to suit specific sector requirements, such as the welding of specialist materials for safety critical applications,” explained Mark Bates, Welding Assessor at In-Comm Training and MCMT.

“This is good news for two reasons. Firstly, companies get apprentices that are industry-ready and young people are being future-proofed so they know the skills they are learning are valuable and sought after by firms.”

He continued: “TWI has significant experience in this field and our three apprentices certainly impressed assessors, highlighting how competent they are in this vital manufacturing discipline.”

In-Comm Training, which is rated Ofsted ‘outstanding’, works with 240 companies every year across its three technical academies in Aldridge, Bridgnorth and Shrewsbury, delivering over 40 Trailblazer Apprenticeships.

It has invested heavily in its welding provision, offering access to 30 Mig, Tig and Arc bays for apprentices and to support the upskilling of existing workers, with more due to be added at its facility inside SDE Technology on Brixton Way.

“The training we received to get us ready was excellent and we got on really well with our trainer, who taught us the theory and the practical applications of all the different welding disciplines,” added James Critchley, who was one of the first to pass the End Point Assessment.

“We had to prove we could cut out sections and bend test using Manual Metal Arc (MMA) and MIG, before completing four theory tests – all on the same day. The TWI assessor was great and made it as relaxed as they could, meaning we could really show them what we can do.”

He went on to add: “Now that I’ve passed my Level 2, I’m looking to immediately move on to Level 3 and continuing to make a positive impact with the Holborne Group, where I help weld and fabricate anything from framework for factories to big structural work for general engineering.”

Holborne Group’s John Brookfield concluded: “James has impressed from day one and has quickly become a highly valued member of our team. The training he received from In-Comm has been a great benefit to both James and ourselves and I’m sure he’ll go from strength to strength.”

**For further information, please visit** [**www.in-comm.co.uk**](http://www.in-comm.co.uk) **or** [**www.mcmt.co.uk**](http://www.mcmt.co.uk)**. You can also follow @incomm\_training on twitter.**