

LEARNING ON THE JOB

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APPRENTICESHIPS WITH FONTERRA

“Being an electrician, you are always learning. Don’t think you know it all because even the seasoned electricians will scratch their heads from time-to-time,” says ELYSSE KERR.

“That might be scary for some but if you keep an open mind, follow your supervisor, and learn as much as you can, you’ll be good as gold.”

Elysse (21) is in the fourth year of her Electrical and Instrumentation apprenticeship with Fonterra, based in Taranaki. She started her apprenticeship when she was 17, straight out of school with a company in her home town of New Plymouth. She completed six months but unfortunately was let go due to the company not being able to keep many apprentices on. At the end of 2023, she applied for an apprenticeship through Fonterra and got it.

“They wanted to continue where I left off so luckily I didn’t have to start my apprenticeship again. I interviewed along with a small group of people having to build a mini forklift – the most interesting job interview I’ve been to.”

Elysse loves working for Fonterra and the culture within the work environment.

“The people are great, always saying hello, having a talk and a laugh about anything. You get to know them quite well.

“I’m the only woman on the crew and one of the youngest. I love that they haven’t excluded me due to those factors.

“Someone is always there. The apprenticeship itself is full of people trying to help you to succeed in any way possible. I recommend Fonterra if you want to work on big machinery and get your hands dirty on a project.

“The best way is to keep an eye out on the Fonterra careers website and follow Fonterra pages on social media. They close their yearly applications around August.”

There is no shortage of variety in the work Elysse does at the Fonterra plant, including working on machinery, robots, PLC (programme logic controllers), control panels, motors, and even power points.

“At the factory I work at, it changes day-to-day, through preventative maintenance and breakdowns. No two days are the same. You can get multiple jobs within a day or one big job that requires more than one of you to complete.”

Elysse went to Stratford High School in Taranaki. In Year 13 she took Media Studies, Music, Calculus, English, Drama and Digital Technology, and had a leadership role.

“At that time, I didn’t know what career I wanted to take so I kept my options open. If you want to become an electrician, I suggest taking Physics to have a basic understanding of how it all works.

“To school leavers, a good attitude is always a given. You are working with the crew for a long time and you quickly get to know them pretty well. Everyone is in the same boat and you want the day to go smoothly with some laughs along the way.

“Just remember your manners – long days get to some people so be polite, listen and learn.”



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**ELYSSE
KERR**

KEY FACTS



- **ELYSSE KERR** IS IN THE FOURTH YEAR OF HER **ELECTRICAL AND INSTRUMENTATION APPRENTICESHIP WITH FONTERRA.**
- SHE WORKS ON **MACHINERY, ROBOTS, PLC (PROGRAMME LOGIC CONTROLLERS), CONTROL PANELS, MOTORS AND POWER POINTS.**
- **ELYSSE** TOOK **MEDIA STUDIES, MUSIC, CALCULUS, ENGLISH, DRAMA AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY** IN YEAR 13 AT **STRATFORD HIGH SCHOOL.**

ONLINE



For more information on career opportunities with Fonterra, visit careers.fonterra.com/careers/Early-Careers or scan the QR code to register your interest in our Apprenticeship programme

