

Cassette 2-17 Tape Transcript
Kwantlen College Career Tape: Welding Program, 82-11-01

Interviewer:

This is an interview with Ron McKeown, who is an instructor in the Welding program, held at the Newton campus of Kwantlen College. Ron, what kind of work would a graduate from the Welding program do?

Ron McKeown:

A graduate from the Welding program would work in industry as a Welder, in a junior capacity.

Interviewer:

How does our program in welding train a person to perform this work?

Ron McKeown:

In essence, we try and simulate an industrial exposure for students. We work in three basic work areas. Being: Oxyfuel Welding, cutting, and braising, and shielded metal arc welding, and gas metal arc welding, would be the total exposure a student would get in our welding program. The length of the program is, approximately, seven months long, combining theory, and practical throughout the program. Approximately, 20% theory, and 80% practical. The program is a self-paced, continuous intake program. Self-paced being [... unintelligible] a student would come into the program, working one-on-one with the instructor. The person would complete each module on an individual basis. Working at his own rate of learning.

Interviewer:

How many students do you have in a class?

Ron McKeown:

The number of students in the class are eighteen.

Interviewer:

What are the hours for the, for your program?

Ron McKeown:

The Welding program, at the present time, consists of two General Welding programs, and two welding upgrade programs. The General Welding programs would run from 7:00 to 12:30, and again from 1:00 to 6:30.

Interviewer:

The upgrading program, who would take the upgrading program that's offered?

Ron McKeown:

As we discussed earlier, earlier, a student in the General Welding program would graduate from the program as a Welder, in a junior capacity. After being in industry for, for a few months, or longer, can come back, and tie into the program again, as an upgrade student, zeroing in on a specific process, or application.

Interviewer:

Okay, how do you get into the Welding program?

Ron McKeown:

A student getting into the Welding program must be seventeen years of age, out of high school for one year, and have a grade 10 education.

Interviewer:

Are there any, I understand that the students have to go through an interview, and an evaluation for the program?

Ron McKeown:

Each student applying for the program has [... unintelligible] four bases to cover, before entering the program. One being he, first of all, has to apply for the program. Then he has a, an interview with one of the instructors in the program. He has to be evaluated through our BTSD system, and he has to have a medical certificate from his doctor.

Interviewer:

Do you have both men, and women, in your program?

Ron McKeown:

Yes, there are both men and women in our Welding program.

Interviewer:

What's the age range of the people taking the program?

Ron McKeown:

Anywhere from, about, seventeen, to forty-five, fifty.

Interviewer:

What are the fees for the program, and how long are the waiting list to get into the Welding program?

Ron McKeown:

The fees, at the present time, are \$52 per month, and yes, we do have a waiting list of, approximately, seven months long.

Interviewer:

If a person doesn't have the necessary entrance requirements, what does he, or she, do?

Ron McKeown:

We have threshold requirements for the program, and if a person doesn't meet those requirements, he, or she, must bring up their academic status to a level where it would be acceptable for the Welding program. Now, that can be done on site, through our BTSD department, but it must be a grade 10 education.

Interviewer:

And that's grade 10 math, and, approximately, grade 10 reading level?

Ron McKeown:

Approximately, a grade 10 reading level. Reading comprehension.

Interviewer:

Okay. When someone completes the program, what certification does he, or she, have?

Ron McKeown:

A completing the General Welding program at Newton Centre, would complete with a college certificate, plus a provincial welders log book, with a Level C. Not a registered C, but a Level C. In order to become registered C Level in the province of British Columbia, a student must complete seven months, or, approximately, seven months, in a vocational area. Plus, an

additional five months of industrial experience, for a total of twelve months, in order to become certified in the province.

Interviewer:

Are there different levels that, you know, where can a student go, once they've got their Level C ticket?

Ron McKeown:

From a Level C, a student can go to a Level B, and then to a Level A. Comprising of an A,B, & C Level in the province.

Interviewer:

Where would you work, and who employs graduates from this program?

Ron McKeown:

Welding is a very, very diversified field. There is welders throughout the province, and probably, about, every trade union that you could imagine. Everything from your boilermakers, pipefitters, ironworkers, pile drivers, it just goes on, and on. Even, electrical workers' employs welders. Carpenters employ welders. Every union employs welders.

Interviewer:

What's the availability of work?

Ron McKeown:

Excellent actually, but at this point in time, with this economic crunch, students are finding a hard time getting employment.

Interviewer:

How about the future?

Ron McKeown:

Excellent, excellent trends for the future. Welding is, is just so young, it's so, and has an excellent future.

Interviewer:

What, approximately, what's the starting salary for someone, you know, after they've got their C ticket, and what would it be, probably, after, about, five years, with about five years' experience?

Ron McKeown:

A graduate from the Welding program would make, approximately, between \$10, and \$18, an hour. Depending on which field he went into.

Interviewer:

And after, about, five years' experience?

Ron McKeown:

At the present time, a person could make as much as \$20 an hour, right now.

Interviewer:

Is there anything that you feel makes his program unique?

Ron McKeown:

Apart from it being continuous intake, individualized, I think that's about the only thing that makes it unique.

Interviewer:

Okay. Thank you very much, Ron. This concludes my interview with Ron McKeown, the instructor of the Welding program. If you have further questions, please contact the Newton campus at 591-1111.