

A Day in the Life of an Apprentice Electrical Technician – Christian Pullen

Ever wondered what a typical day looks like for an apprentice electrical technician in the automation industry? Spoiler alert: no two days are ever quite the same.

For Christian Pullen, an apprentice electrical technician at Huxley Bertram Engineering Limited, each day brings a mix of hands-on wiring, problem-solving, teamwork, and plenty of learning along the way. From building control panels to supporting commissioning on site, Christian plays a key role in helping automated systems move from drawings to fully working machines.

Most projects begin in the workshop with panel wiring. Christian spends time assembling automation control panels, routing cables, terminating connections, and making sure everything is neat, labelled, and built to specification. Attention to detail is key here, tidy wiring doesn't just look good, it also makes commissioning and future maintenance much easier.

As an apprentice, this is also a huge learning opportunity, reading schematics, following electrical drawings, and getting hands-on with components like PLC hardware, relays, power supplies, and terminal blocks. At this stage he can start to build a mental visual as to how the machine is intending to run and operate.

When projects move along, Christian shifts from the workshop to the factory floor for field wiring, connecting motors, sensors, actuators, and other equipment back to the control panels.

This is also where things get exciting! During commissioning, Christian works closely with commissioning engineers to troubleshoot electrical issues, tracking down faults, checking signals, and helping bring automated systems to life.

One of Christian's standout moments so far has been successfully diagnosing and solving on-site issues, whether that's finding a wiring error, correcting an I/O problem, or helping resolve unexpected behaviour in a system. There's nothing quite like seeing a machine spring into action after a tricky fault has been cracked.

Alongside this, he regularly liaises with project engineers, discussing design changes, clarifying requirements, and making sure everyone is aligned as the project progresses.

Not everything goes exactly to plan during commissioning, and that's perfectly normal in automation projects.

When changes are made on site, Christian helps update electrical drawings, so they match what's actually been installed. These "as-built" drawings are vital for future servicing and upgrades, making accuracy especially important. It's also a great way for him to deepen his understanding of how design decisions translate into real-world installations.

Back in the workshop, Christian also spends time soldering connections and PCBs. From small electronic components to connector pins, soldering requires patience, steady hands, and a sharp eye for quality. It's one of those skills that improves with practice.

What makes the role especially rewarding is the constant learning. Between hands-on electrical work, close collaboration with experienced engineers, and exposure to full automation project lifecycles, Christian is building a strong foundation for his future career.

No two days are the same but whether he's wiring panels, supporting commissioning, updating drawings, or solving on-site issues, each day brings new challenges and new wins.

That's life as an apprentice electrical technician in automation: practical, fast-paced, and always moving forward.