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Following a recent review of health and safety in the workshop and completion of a risk assessment, the college decided that improved safeguarding was required to prevent students from coming into contact with the machinery and other hazardous equipment located in the workshop. Hazards were present in the vicinity of manual and CNC machine tools, a robot, and high-voltage motors. While safety was the primary concern, there was also a desire to reduce the number of times that emergency stop buttons were being pressed accidentally (or maliciously) on the CNC machine tools, robot and process control equipment - all of which operate unattended from time to time.

Furthermore, it was recognised that the guarding could, itself, be used as a teaching aid. A variety of different access options were therefore specified, so students could gain first-hand experience of alternative types of safety gate interlock as well as a safety light curtain.

Several guard manufacturers were invited to tender against the specification, and the proposal from Procter Machinery Guarding was accepted for a number of reasons. First, the price was very competitive compared with the alternatives, yet the quality of the guarding was at least as high as anything else proposed. The company was also able to supply and install the guarding in the required timescale in order that the teaching curriculum was not disrupted. Another important factor was that Procter could supply the guarding with a hardwearing powder-coated finish to match the workshop's existing colour scheme.

Installing the guarding has created a U-shaped corridor within the workshop, improving safety as required but without hindering authorised access to the machinery. Steel posts are fixed to the floor to support the guarding panels that are blue sheet steel up to waist height and clear polycarbonate above. Yellow cover panels are used where the panels are fixed to the posts to give a very striking appearance. In total some 30m of guarding (consisting of 25 posts and 38 panels) was installed by Procter's own team.

One hinged access gate and one sliding access gate have been installed, together with a safety light curtain. The gates and guards were pre-drilled to accept the interlocks and light curtain, enabling on-site work to be completed as quickly as possible. All of the posts and panels were standard Angel items, but the sliding gate had to be customised to suit the required opening width. Nevertheless, installation was completed within just two weeks of the receipt of order.

Funding for the project came from the CoVE (Centre of Vocational Excellence) Manufacturing as part of the Learning and Skills Council's commitment to providing high-quality learning resources. Tony Oakley, CoVE Manager at Rotherham College, comments: "We are extremely pleased with the guarding; it has met our needs exactly. Procter machinery Guarding was an excellent supplier, throughout the tendering process and while the installation team was on site. At all times the installers worked efficiently, cleanly and tidily, always helpful and willing to make last-minute changes - as is inevitable with site work."

John O'Connor, Premises Co-ordinator, explains what is being safeguarded by the Angel guarding: "The machinery within the 'guarded' areas of the engineering workshop is controlled remotely from PLCs, (programmable logic controllers) and networked devices; its operation monitored from PCs. This remote operation is a prelude to the 'guarded' areas going 'online' in order to provide internet control and monitoring access to the equipment and machinery. The remote control room is the academic equivalent of the supervisory and control suite found in industrial applications, and the 'guarded' machinery equates to the industrial plant."

Stuart Aizlewood, an electrical lecturer whose students use the equipment operating in the workshop, adds: "After a few months of use I can report that the guarding has reduced the number of times emergency stops have been actuated. It has also stood up well to the rigours of a workshop environment and still looks as good as new."

Procter's Angel modular machine guarding system is a top-quality, visually attractive perimeter guarding system that is easy to specify and install. With its striking design and wide range of options, the Angel system is ideal for safeguarding facilities where aesthetics are important. And if the standard modules do not match a customer's specific requirements, Procter can design, manufacture and supply customised or bespoke items that blend in perfectly.

To find out more about the Angel modular machine guarding system, please contact Procter Machinery Guarding by telephoning 02920 882222 or e-mailing [sales@procterbedwas.co.uk](mailto:sales@procterbedwas.co.uk)

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**Note to editors**

**Procter Machinery Guarding** is the UK's leading machine guarding specialist. From its sites in Leeds and South Wales, Procter offers a comprehensive service to survey, design, manufacture and install machine guards nationwide. All guards are designed to comply with EC and HSE requirements and a Declaration of Conformity is issued on completion.

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