



# STUDENT HANDBOOK





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## Mission Statement

We are Western Welding Academy (WWA), a state-of-the-art welding training facility in Gillette, Wyoming. We love to teach. We want to help people become the best they can be in their welding career.

The company's focus is on training/creating the finest pipe and structural welders in the industry, with the mindset of quality over quantity. The school is set up to look and feel like an actual jobsite. Students receive almost 100% weld time. The school is operated by a small dynamic team dedicated to the student's overall success. We teach several types of welding including pipe welding, SMAW, GTAW, GMAW, and FCAW on Carbon Steel, Stainless Steel and other exotic piping materials.

WWA trains pipe and structural welders for power plant shutdowns, refinery turnarounds, gas plant base builds, oil field piping work, papermill shutdowns, food processing plants, and various other mechanical/structural projects. WWA offers six different courses that address the needs of existing employers, people starting a welding career, and contractors who want to further their welding procedures and techniques.

One of the things that sets us apart from other welding schools is the level of commitment the WWA staff has to the success of our students. From the Academy Director to the welding instructors, each staff member of the WWA team is someone who has walked in the blue-collar shoes of the working man/woman that is trying to provide for themselves or a family. We understand the hardships associated with lack of skills, knowledge, and training. The welding instructors are used to making a living welding on the job, not somebody who has held a teaching position for years and gotten behind the times, or lost touch with the contractors and construction managers looking to hire fresh and talented workers.

One of the other things that sets WWA ahead of other welding schools is our atmosphere and company culture. WWA is set up and run like a construction site to simulate an industrial setting. 100% Personal Protective Equipment usage is required every minute of every day to get students comfortable with it until it becomes second nature for them.

We have a quality over quantity approach to everything we do. If something is worth doing, it's worth doing right. This approach also drove us to invest in top quality welding equipment.



## Enrollment

### Enrollment Procedures

Students who would like to attend Western Welding Academy need to complete an Enrollment Application. An Enrollment Application can be found online at [www.westernweldingacademy.com](http://www.westernweldingacademy.com) or at the Academy located at 2107 N Hwy 14-16, Gillette, WY 82716. A non-refundable application fee of \$100.00 is required before we can process a student's application.

Please keep the following in mind before completing the Enrollment Application:

- The application needs to be completed in full. Partial applications cannot be accepted.
- Please give careful attention to the date you list as your "preferred start date". The preferred date is not a guarantee that a student can be accepted for that exact date.
- WWA contacts the student with the approved start date for the course.
- Students need to plan to be at the facility on the Friday immediately prior to their start date to attend a mandatory orientation. WWA verifies the official date of orientation with the student.

**Please note: Tuition must be paid in full prior to orientation.**

Western Welding Academy, LLC is an equal opportunity institution. WWA complies with all local, city, county, state, and federal regulations pertaining to said school. All students are enrolled, trained, and promoted to perspective industry partners for future employment equally. WWA shall not deny enrollment to any prospective student or make any distinction or classification of students because of race, creed, color, sex, or national origin.

## Orientation

All students attend a mandatory orientation with the school administrator or welding instructor and their class. Individual orientation sessions are not offered without approval from WWA's Administrator. Orientation is designed to review with students the academy's policies, training facilities, staff, and safety procedures. Date of the mandatory orientation is supplied to the student after enrollment has been accepted and confirmed by WWA.



## Courses Offered

Course	Cost	Weeks	Hours/Week	Hours Total
Welder I SMAW Structural	\$5,350	5	48	240
Welder II SMAW Pipe	\$7,450	7	43	300
Welder III GTAW Pipe	\$6,450	7	43	300
Welder IV SMAW/GTAW Advanced Pipe	\$6,450	5	50	250
Professional Pipe Welder (Welder I, II, III & IV) w/ 20% Bulk Discount	\$20,560	24	46	1090

### Office Hours

Days ..... Monday-Friday  
Hours ..... 7:00am to 5:00pm

### Course Hours

Course Days ..... Monday-Friday  
1<sup>st</sup> Shift Hours ..... 6:00am to 2:00pm  
2<sup>nd</sup> Shift Hours ..... 2:00pm to 10:00pm  
3<sup>rd</sup> Shift Hours ..... 10:00pm to 6:00am

### Previous Education/Training

Western Welding Academy gives no credit for previous experience, education, or coursework. Western Welding Academy cannot transfer any completed coursework time to another institution. Course completion is based solely upon logged clock hours; therefore, transferability of any clock hours is determined by the receiving institution, WWA cannot guarantee the transfer of any logged hours to another institution.



## Course Descriptions

### **Welder I - SMAW Basic Welding**

- Course Length: 5 weeks, 240 hrs
- Tuition: \$4,800
- Tools: \$550
- Total Cost: \$5,350
- Pre-requisite course: None
- Pre-test: N/A

This course teaches Shielded Metal Arc Welding for beginners. Students learn the following skills-

- 1) Use and care of welding tools.
- 2) Intro to Shielded Metal Arc Welding.
- 3) Proper electrode storage.
- 4) Proper electrode sizing and selection.
- 5) Arc strikes, shielding gas, hydrogen cracking.
- 6) Base metal grading and selection.
- 7) Amperage/Voltage ranges, Travel speed, Heat inputs.
- 8) How to read and understand a Welding Procedure Specification (WPS)
- 9) Welding machine set-up for the Shielded Metal Arc Welding Process.
- 10) Proper base metal preparation for welding.
- 11) Body positioning techniques when welding with SMAW.
- 12) Fillet weld measurements, fit-up, and welding techniques.
- 13) Weld defects and acceptance criteria for AWS D1.1 structural steel code.
- 14) Intro to V-groove welds, electrode selection, and industry uses.
- 15) V-groove welding techniques for all positions.
- 16) Oxy-fuel torch set-up and cutting techniques.
- 17) Destructive Testing techniques of V-groove welds, industry methods, and specimen preparation in accordance to the applicable code or standard.

No experience needed, show up and learn the basics. Students are provided a tool bucket that includes all the basic welding tools needed to complete the course. Students learn welding/shop safety, welding machine set up and operation, how to weld SMAW fillets, full penetration v-groove welds, and oxy-fuel cutting procedures. Upon completion, students are certified to AWS D1.1 structural steel code and receive a course completion certificate.



## **Welder II – SMAW Pipe Welding**

- Course Length: 7 weeks, 300 hrs
- Tuition: \$7,200
- Tools: \$250
- Total Cost: \$7,450
- Pre-requisite course: Welder I or pass the pre-test.
- Pre-test: 3/8" Open Root V-Groove 2G & 3G Weld Test 6010/7018


This course teaches Shielded Metal Arc Welding (SMAW) on pipe. Students learn the following skills-

- 1) Use and care of pipe welding tools.
- 2) Intro to pipe welding.
- 3) Proper electrode sizing and selection.
- 4) Arc strikes, shielding gas, hydrogen cracking.
- 5) The importance of pre-heating base material.
- 6) Pressure ratings, temperature reaction, expansion/contraction.
- 7) Amperage/Voltage ranges, Travel speed, Heat inputs.
- 8) Proper end prep, and fit-up techniques for pipe welding.
- 9) Body positioning techniques when pipe welding with SMAW.
- 10) Weld defects and acceptance criteria for AWS and ASME codes.
- 11) Intro to open-root pipe welding, electrode selection, and industry uses.
- 12) SMAW pipe welding techniques for all positions.
- 13) Non-Destructive Testing techniques for the piping industry.
- 14) Weld defects and repair procedures in accordance with applicable piping codes.
- 15) SMAW weld repair techniques and common industry practices.
- 16) SMAW pipe rack welding techniques.

Students are provided all the basic pipe welding tools needed to complete the course. Students learn how to weld pipe with SMAW on all sizes of pipe, from 8" to 2" in the booth and in the pipe rack simulator. Upon completion, students are certified to AWS specifications in accordance with ASME section IX and receive a course completion certificate.

## **Welder III – GTAW Pipe Welding**

- Course Length: 7 weeks, 300 hrs
- Tuition: \$6,000
- Tools: \$450
- Total Cost: \$6,450
- Pre-requisite course: Welder II, or pass the pre-test.
- Pre-test: 2" XXH 6G Weld Test SMAW 6010/7018



This course teaches GTAW carbon steel plate and pipe welding. Students learn the following skills-

- 1) Use and care of a TIG torch.
- 2) Proper tungsten prep.
- 3) How prep carbon steel base metal in preparation for GTAW welding.
- 4) Fillet weld techniques using the GTAW process.
- 5) Proper preparation and fit-up techniques for welding with the GTAW process.
- 6) How to GTAW weld carbon steel pipe in all positions.
- 7) GTAW weld repair techniques and common industry practices.
- 8) GTAW pipe rack welding techniques.
- 9) Weld defects and repair procedures in accordance with applicable piping codes.

This course teaches Gas Tungsten Arc Welding (GTAW) on pipe. Students are provided all the GTAW welding tools needed (including TIG torch) to complete the course. Students learn how to weld pipe with SMAW on all sizes of pipe, from 8" to 2" in the booth and in the pipe rack simulator. Upon completion, students are certified to AWS specifications in accordance with ASME section IX and receive a course completion certificate.


#### **Welder IV – Advanced SMAW & GTAW Pipe Welding**

- Course Length: 5 weeks, 250 hrs
- Tuition: \$6,000
- Tools: \$450
- Total Cost: \$6,450
- Pre-requisite course: Welder III or pass the pre-test.
- Pre-tests: 2" XH 6G Weld Test GTAW (ER70s-6) - 2" XXH 6G Weld Test SMAW 6010/7018

This course teaches advanced GTAW pipe welding and advanced SMAW pipe welding. Students learn the following skills-

- 10) How to effectively use inert gas to purge the inside of the pipe in preparation for welding.
- 11) How prep stainless-steel base metal in preparation for welding.
- 12) Proper fit-up techniques for stainless steel, Inconel, and chromoly pipe.
- 13) How to weld stainless steel, Inconel, and chromoly pipe.
- 14) GTAW weld repair techniques and common industry practices.
- 15) Pipe rack welding techniques.
- 16) Cutting and preparing large diameter pipe for SMAW downhill welding.
- 17) 12" branch connection layout.
- 18) SMAW downhill welding techniques and industry practices.





Students are provided all the welding tools needed to complete the course. Students learn how to weld pipe with GTAW and SMAW on all sizes of pipe, from 16” to 2”. Upon completion, students are certified to AWS specifications in accordance with ASME section IX and receive a course completion certificate.

### **Welder V – Professional Pipe Welder**

- Course Length: 24 weeks, 1,090 hrs
- Tuition: \$19,200
- Tools: \$1,360
- Total Cost: \$20,560

Course one is a 6-month training program tailored to people interested in a pipe welding career. This is our main program that shapes and builds the next generation of pipe welders. Work ethic, jobsite safety, communication skills and financial training are included, to build top notch, solid employees. This course teaches joint configuration, joint preparation, reading of welding symbols, blueprint reading, base metal preheating, weld repair, electrode care and management, and how to read a welding procedure (WPS). Students are 6G certified by an AWS CWI at the end of the course providing they pass the required welding tests. Students learn SMAW welding and GTAW welding on carbon steel, stainless steel, and other exotic materials from 2” to 20” pipe in all positions. We teach confined space welding, welding from heights, and dual operator style welding.

## **Tuition and Equipment**

A \$340 non-refundable enrollment fee is required for all prospective students to reserve their enrollment for a later date. On the day of orientation, the fee is applied to the student’s required down payment of \$1,040, and the balance of that down payment is due at that time.

Tuition must be paid in full prior to orientation.

WWA provides a standard list of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) items for each student. These are to be used during training and are the students to keep once they complete and graduate their selected course. Students who choose to terminate their training or are expelled from the school prior to graduation are required to return the PPE to WWA.

Students may purchase additional PPE at their own cost. WWA does not provide or reimburse a student for PPE they purchased as personal preference items.



## Enrollment Requirements

All students must be at least 18 years of age to be considered for any of the courses offered by Western Welding Academy. WWA is not accepting any students under the age of 18.

Before the student's start date; WWA *highly recommends* students have their vision tested and corrected if necessary.

Physical Requirements include:


- Standing for extended periods of time
- Good eyesight
- Bending, stooping, kneeling
- Grasping
- Ability to lift 50 lbs.
- Maneuvering into small spaces

\*\*\* WWA is a handicapped accessible training facility. \*\*\*

## Attendance Policy

Attendance of 95% is required for the duration of enrollment. It is difficult to develop marketable skills without regular, consistent attendance. Employers require welders who hold prompt, regular attendance in high regard.

1. Attendance is recorded twice daily. Students are evaluated at least once a month to ensure that they are on track to graduate from the given course.
2. Excused absences include serious illness of the student and death or birth within the immediate family. All excused absences shall be made up within two weeks of the absence. All absences that were not given pre-approval require the student to fill out an Absence Report Form. This can be found on the website and needs to be completed before they return.
3. All unexcused absences are recorded in the student file and **cannot** be made up.
4. If the student's attendance drops below the 95% mark during the class, or if the student misses three consecutive days, they are subject to probation for a period not to exceed 30 days. During the probationary period the student remains in school and must maintain at least 95% attendance for those 30 days. If the student complies with the probation successfully, the student can then return to good standing. If the student continues to be absent during the



probationary period, the student will be expelled. Any student whose attendance drops below 90% are subject to termination from the program.

5. Tardiness is a disruption to the Academy and shows lack of respect to fellow students. For every two tardies, one unexcused absence is recorded. An unapproved early dismissal is also counted as a tardy.
6. Leaves of absence are greatly discouraged, given they are disruptive to the continuity of the given training. All requests for any leave of absence may be granted after the submission of a leave of absence form and upon approval by a school official. One leave of absence, whether medical or personal, may be considered per 12-month period. Any leave of absence cannot exceed 60 calendar days for personal reasons and 90 days for medical reasons. Any student not returning following a leave of absence is terminated on the next school day after the agreed upon return date.

## **Dress Code**

Students are expected to dress appropriately and as they would be expected to in the welding field. Proper leather steel toe or composite boots are recommended (ASTM2413-11). Safety glasses must be worn at all times in the shop area (Z87.1). Other personal protective gear as dictated by the instructors and training may include face shields and ear plugs while grinding, proper shaded lenses for welding and cutting, and long pants and sleeves to protect from the arc rays.

## **Progress Standards**

All students are expected to maintain passing grades while attending school and all grades become part of the student's permanent record. Academic success is a tremendous indicator to employers on the type of employee you are likely to be.

The percentage portion of the final grade for each course:

- 75% - Skilled Performance
- 15% - Attendance
- 10% - Written Exam
  - 90-100%      A
  - 80-89%      B
  - 70-79%      C
  - 60-69%      D
  - 59%- >      F



## Termination Policy

Western Welding Academy strives to maintain a high level of standards for student conduct, quality of education, and a safe environment for high level skilled training. At the discretion of the Administrator, a student may be dismissed from the school for any serious incident or repeated instances, intoxicated or drugged states of behavior, possession of drugs, or alcohol on school property, creating a safety hazard to themselves or other persons at the school, disobedient or disrespectful behavior to another student, faculty member or staff, refusal to take a drug test, or any other stated or determined infraction of conduct; both on and off of WWA property.


If at any time the student is found to be in violation beyond the allowable limits within this student handbook or for violations of any rules and regulations, they are subject to termination. Violations of the Enrollment Contract is subject to student termination.

**\*\*Note-** Violations for termination include, but are not limited to, attendance policy, student conduct, dress code, progress standards, drug and alcohol policy, and random drug testing.

## Code of Conduct

WWA students are always expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. This includes respect for themselves, fellow students, faculty, and staff. Disrespect is not tolerated. Misconduct such as fighting, horseplay, use of illegal drugs/alcohol, or carrying weapons is not tolerated. The Student Code of Conduct and regulations are signed by each student at the start of each course and is posted in the shop, classroom, and break areas. It is always visible to the students.

1. Any possession, solicitation and/or use of drugs and alcohol is not tolerated while on WWA property. Prescription medication authorized by a physician and taken under direct orders is the only exception. WWA must be made aware of any medication that impacts safety of the fellow students and staff.
2. All students are required to dress and work per industry standards. **The required PPE is to be worn every day and at all times.**
3. Students are only allowed to take breaks during allotted times and in locations approved by WWA.
4. Smoking is not allowed inside any WWA buildings. Smoking is allowed only at specific locations approved by the WWA.

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5. Cell phones are strictly prohibited during class and/or shop times. Cell phone use is allowed during approved break and lunch times.
  6. Personal property is the responsibility of the student. WWA is not responsible for any missing or damaged personal property.
  7. All students are subject to random drug testing. Refusal to take a urine test results in expulsion.
  8. Students are required to adhere to strict safety standards. Students refusing to adhere to safety standards are subject to expulsion.
  9. Students are prohibited from bringing firearms into the WWA's training facility.

**NOTE-** Any student dismissed for unsatisfactory conduct is not allowed to return to the premises. WWA reserves the right to terminate a student for unsatisfactory conduct both on and off of the WWA Property.

## **Academic Calendar**

New students begin on Mondays, subject to course availability, application processing, and mandatory orientation attendance before the class begins.

Completion date depends upon the class you are enrolled in.

### **Holiday Schedule**

- Thanksgiving and the Friday immediately following Thanksgiving
- The two weeks surrounding Christmas & New Year's Day, as determined by the Academy
- The third week of March for Spring Break (Monday-Friday).
- The Friday immediately before and the Monday immediately after Easter
- Memorial Day
- July 4th (or the Friday immediately before or the Monday immediately after the 4th, if it is on a weekend)
- Labor Day
- Spring break (the 3rd Monday - Friday of March)

\*\*\*Holidays are subject to change\*\*\*



## Course Completion

Once a course has been completed satisfactorily, the students are issued one official Certificate of Completion. The course certificate includes the student's name, school name and address, course name and date of completion. The certification is authenticated by an authorized school official with their name, title, signature, date of issuance, and official seal.

Should students require an additional copy of their course completion certificates, they may make a request in person during regular business hours or through the mail. Students then receive a copy of the original certificate

WWA documents and maintains a copy of all Course Completion Certificates.

### Employment Assistance

WWA students receive employment training and coaching. **As of July 1<sup>st</sup> 2020, 100%** of WWA graduates have found employment within **3 weeks of graduating**. Our complete mission is to train high quality welders and help them find employment. We only focus on the results we are able to achieve. Our graduates have no problem finding employment if they want to work and are willing to travel.

## Grievance Procedure

Most problems or complaints a student may have with the school or staff can be resolved with communication. A meeting with the school staff is recommended. However, if the meeting does not resolve the situation to the student's satisfaction, they may submit a written complaint to the school Administrator. The written complaint should include the nature of the problem, approximate dates, names of individuals involved, copies of any important information regarding the problem, evidence the grievance policy was followed prior to this point, and the student's signature.

WWA's Administrator personally responds to all grievances submitted.

Should the grievance not be resolved, the student may file a complaint with the Wyoming Department of Education at 122 W. 25<sup>th</sup> St. Suite E200, Cheyenne, WY 82002.

## Withdraw and Refund Policy Procedure

- WWA will refund all money paid if the applicant is not accepted. This includes instances where a starting class is cancelled by the WWA. This does not include the \$100 Application Fee.
- WWA will refund all money paid if the applicant cancels within three business days (excluding Sundays and holidays) after the day the contract is signed or an initial payment is made, as long as the applicant has not begun training. This does not include the \$100 Application Fee or the \$340 Enrollment Fee.



- If training is terminated after the student enters classes, WWA may retain the application fee established under (3) of this subsection, the enrollment fee plus a percentage of the remaining tuition as described in the following table:

<b>If the student completes this amount of training:</b>	<b>Student Forfeits this Amount:</b>
0%-5%	10%
6%-24%	25%
25% or more	100%

- When calculating refunds, the official date of termination is:
  - When WWA receives notice of the student’s intention to discontinue the training program; or
  - When the student is terminated for a violation of the published Academy policy which provides for termination.
- All refunds are paid within 30 calendar days of the student’s official termination date.