

# EMPLOYER Q & A

**Oli Smith**  
Creative Director  
Aye!

**Aye!**

Aye! is a creative agency based in Yorkshire that works with businesses throughout the UK and internationally. Specialising in branding, digital and design for various companies from furniture manufacturers to motor vehicle companies.

Founder, Oli Smith, set up the agency whilst studying for a graphic design degree at Kirklees College. The company now employs 6 staff and is one of the most prominent agencies in Yorkshire.

## Why does your company take on apprentices?

Our apprentice first came to us on work experience and I was so impressed with the instant impact he made that I immediately decided to take him on. He got on with everyone from day one and was very enthusiastic. I also wanted to nurture a new talent and invest in someone to develop and grow the business.

## What are the benefits to your company of taking on apprentices?

We've been able to train up our apprentice so he can take on a variety of client work and make a real impact. I wanted to expand our agency offer and fill a gap we had. I'm pleased to say we can now provide animation services thanks to our apprentice. Importantly he was able to contribute straight away. We are a small team so everyone needs to make an impact and our apprentice has done just that.

## Tell us about your apprentices from Kirklees College?

Our apprentice fitted in well from day one, picked things up fast and became an integral part of the team very quickly. He's not just the apprentice, he's a designer like the rest of the team. I wanted to mentor someone, pass on my experience and help someone start an exciting career - our investment is really paying off. Support from the college is always on hand. As a former student I'm well aware of the high quality support and teaching you get.

## What does the future hold for your apprentices at the company once they have completed their course?

Our apprentice is definitely staying on with us once he's completed his programme. He's such a valuable asset to us and we want him to grow with the business. We will keep developing his skills and experience to the benefit of Aye!, our clients and him.

## Would you take on more apprentices in the future, and why?

Yes, definitely. It allows you to invest in your business with low financial risk. It's been a success for us. It's great to be able to nurture someone in this way so they can become a big asset to your company. An apprentice is a long-term choice that will greatly benefit your business.



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