

EMPLOYER Q & A

Declan Murphy
Projects Engineer (former apprentice)
Fox's Biscuits

Fox's have been making biscuits since 1853 growing from a tiny Victorian bakery into a household name. They bake more than 6 million biscuits a year and are now part of Ferrero, the world's third largest chocolate and confectionery business.



Why does your company take on apprentices?

We are now part of Ferrero which means we can take on more apprentices in areas such as automation, robotics and mechanical engineering. We want our experienced workers to pass on their wealth of knowledge to the next generation to take our company into the future. It's about apprentices being part of the family here and it's fantastic having them as part of the new drive workforce.

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

It's about skills and engineering retention. We have a long-term plan in place to ensure our workers are multi-skilled and that they stay and develop with us. Our apprentices become well-equipped employees with many skills to take their careers forward and have a big impact on our business.

Tell us about your apprentices from Kirklees College?

Feedback from apprentices is exceptional when it comes to Kirklees College. They enjoy college work and engaging with the college. They are an integral part of the team here and it's great to see apprentices helping and supporting each other. It's a pleasure to see how they are progressing, improving their skills and making a difference to the business.

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

These apprentices are helping Fox's move into a new age of engineering. Ultimately once they have finished their apprenticeship they move into full-time position with us. We invest a lot into our apprentices and there are lots of opportunities for them to work their way up here to multi-skilled engineers, technicians, project engineers and beyond. We are a growing company which opens lots of doors for apprentices.

How does the college support your company and your apprentice?

We have a great relationship with the college. We work very closely and well together. If any problems occur they are always there to help us solve them. We are in regular contact and they give us updates on our apprentice's progression and how we can help them achieve. We are proud to work with Kirklees College, they are a great training provider.

Our key contact at the college is Gary Parkinson. He's a very well-trained engineer and experienced tutor. If he is your college lead then you won't go wrong. He works tirelessly on behalf of the college and is always there for support ensuring apprentices hit their targets and achieve.

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

Absolutely, we've had many apprentices come through that are now working full-time here. They are a great asset to a business. They enjoy showcasing their skills and get a lot of respect from others for doing such a good job. We get amazing feedback from other departments about their performance.

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