Press release

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**APPRENTICES COUNTING ON WALKER & SUTCLIFFE**

This week is National Apprenticeship Week (Monday 6th to Sunday 12th February), an annual event established to place the spotlight on apprenticeships.

The vital role that apprentices play in business is all too familiar to Walker & Sutcliffe, the accountancy practice in Huddersfield that support and nurture Gary Worley and Alex Hyatt as they learn their trade.

“Apprentices are really important to our business and our industry” comments Rachel Reilly, Accounts & Audit Senior and apprentice mentor for the company.

“It’s vital that we attract young people and apprenticeships are a great way to do this.

“Yes, we are investing in developing skills for the benefit of the business and its future, but it’s so much more than that! At Walker & Sutcliffe it’s about the individual. It’s about investing in each person and their career. In return, they bring new skills, a fresh approach and a different point of view.”

Gary, whose current role is Accounts Semi Senior, started with Walker & Sutcliffe after being recommended by his sixth-form tutor.

Gary explains: “In 2016 I was in my first year of sixth form and simply didn’t want to be there. I was good at business and maths and my tutor knew that I had an interest in accountancy. So, he introduced me to Walker & Sutcliffe and I was lucky enough to get an interview and start as an Accounts Junior Apprentice.”

Taking the AAT/ACA apprentice route, Gary is currently finishing his professional level of ACA.

“As an apprentice, I have the best of both worlds. I get paid to learn. I don’t have the debt that often comes with university fees and I get to know the job and the wider world of business. Learning while on the job means that I acquire more than just knowledge, I get to put this into practice while developing softer, lifelong skills such as communication.

“The team at Walker & Sutcliffe have been great – they help and support me as I progress. They are really flexible too, and we plan my role around time out for college, study and exams.

“I love learning and understanding how different aspects of accountancy support a business and its journey. It’s rewarding seeing how we can help clients progress and make decisions – it’s a side that you can only see when you are actually working in a business and not just studying.”

Acquiring a higher level qualification without having to attend university was what attracted Alex to an apprenticeship with Walker & Sutcliffe back in 2020, he explains:

“A family member had headed to university to study finance and they helped me to see that this was not the only option. I wanted the qualifications and the experience, so fresh out of college I wrote to Walker & Sutcliffe to find out if they had an opportunity that was right for me.”

Today Alex is half way through his ACA qualification. He combines college with on-the-job learning, which according to him provides the best training possible.

Alex continues: “Apprenticeships help you to get much more than a qualification. I see what roles are involved with accountancy, I talk to clients and benefit from supporting accountancy in practice. It has given me the variety I required while providing me with invaluable experience.”

Rachel concludes: “I would not hesitate in recommending apprenticeships. Regardless of your organisation's sector or size, it’s well worth it!

“The variable skills apprentices bring and the value they add is immeasurable. Combine this with seeing individuals grow through their apprentice journey, it’s really rewarding.”

For further information about the practice, please visit: <https://www.walker-sutcliffe.co.uk/>

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