

## **NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK**

Kelvin Hughes recognises the importance of apprenticeships within the workplace, and has run its own successful apprenticeship scheme, the Kelvin Hughes Apprenticeship and Training Academy, for the past three years. This interview with a Kelvin Hughes apprentice has been carried out in support of National Apprenticeship Week 2017 - taking place from 6 to 10 March.

National Apprenticeship Week is co-ordinated by the National Apprenticeship Service. It is designed to raise awareness of the

value that apprenticeships and traineeships can bring to both individuals and companies alike, and to celebrate the positive impact they have on the wider economy. By raising awareness in this way, it is hoped that even more people will apply for apprenticeships and the opportunity to learn in a real workplace setting and enjoy a fast track to a great career.

The Kelvin Hughes Apprenticeship and Training Academy website can be found at:

[www.kelvinhughes.com/about/careers/apprenticeships](http://www.kelvinhughes.com/about/careers/apprenticeships)

## **AN INTERVIEW WITH PETROS TTOFIA**

**“Students are far more aware and understand the benefits of doing an apprenticeship. That’s making a big difference.”**

**Q. What made you decide to take the apprenticeship route?**

**A.** I always wanted to be an accountant, right from when I was at school and considering my career options. I like working with numbers and have an aptitude for it. I worked in an accountancy firm for a while after leaving school and really enjoyed the tasks I was given to complete there.

So, when I saw this opportunity to do an apprenticeship at Kelvin Hughes, it seemed like the ideal next step to further my career. I was keen to experience working in a real-life situation while continuing to learn.

**Q. And how did you hear about the Kelvin Hughes apprenticeship opportunity?**

**A.** I first heard about the apprenticeship scheme from someone I knew who had previously worked at Kelvin Hughes. I found the vacancy I was looking for online and applied for it. This was in December 2016.

After I applied, I was invited to come in for an informal face-to-face talk and that led to an interview in early January. I was offered the position and I started working just two weeks later. My apprenticeship is based in the finance department and I work at the company headquarters.

**Q. So, you’ve only just started, How are you finding it?**

**A.** Well, not surprisingly, I’ve have had to take in a lot of new information in a very short space of time. It’s been difficult but very satisfying at the same time. One particular challenge has been familiarising myself with the specific accounting system used by the company. That’s been a big learning curve for me because it’s software I’ve never used before. However, I know how important it is and I’m determined do my job to the best of my ability and try to add value to the company.

Although I’ve only been in the role for a few weeks, I’ve been involved in sorting out invoices and reconciling the bank account every day. It’s been great to have the opportunity to get fully involved straight away. As my apprenticeship continues, I’m looking forward to taking on more responsibilities and getting involved in bigger projects.

I’m really enjoying working for a big company. It’s never boring because there’s always so much going on and something new to learn. Getting to grips with the products and services, the radar technology, is an especially interesting area for me and one that I didn’t know a lot about before joining Kelvin Hughes.



Petros Ttofia,  
Apprentice at Kelvin Hughes



Working with lots of different people is also very important. Everyone in the finance team has been very friendly and they've helped me to achieve a lot. Already I feel like I'm part of the team.

**Q. How long will your apprenticeship last? And what do you think the benefits might be?**

**A.** It's a two-year apprenticeship. After that I will be able to look towards taking on a junior accountancy role and, in time, prepare to take the main exams to enable me to become a fully-qualified accountant.

The great thing is that I'm not only learning, I'm also earning at the same time. It's the best of both worlds. When I finish my apprenticeship, I will come out of it part-qualified with two years' real-life experience under my belt. That's a really good feeling.

Whatever I decide to do in the future, I can put all of that on my CV and it will mean more than just having a series of qualifications to offer. I can prove that I not only have enough theoretical knowledge about accountancy and how a finance department works but also the actual experience of working in the finance team of a large, successful company. It's getting more and more competitive out there and I know that this will help me gain an advantage when it comes to interviews in the future.

**Q. Why do you think apprenticeships are becoming more popular?**

**A.** Well, going to university is still the more popular option. However, not everyone is the same. Some people like to study from books while others prefer working and studying at the same time. I'm one of those people and there are a lot of us out there. When you eventually get a

job, it's not just about having the grades. More young people want to experience both sides of the learning process and employers are looking for that too.

Also, there's a lot more information about apprenticeships out there now. It wasn't always the case. When I was at school, teachers would mention it as an option but there was still a much bigger focus on university and not quite so much information available on apprenticeships. Now, teachers and students are far more aware and understand the benefits of doing an apprenticeship. That's making a big difference.

