



Survey summary

Degree Apprenticeships – *Great Potential but Further Work Needed to Maximise their Benefits*

In the run up to establishing the Centre for Degree Apprenticeships, the project partners undertook a survey engaging 165 respondents – providers, employers and apprentices. More detailed discussions were also held with apprentices, employers and university staff in the digital, engineering and nursing sectors.

The Overall Conclusion - The potential of Degree Apprenticeships is overwhelmingly recognised but further work is needed to ensure the benefits of Degree Apprenticeship are maximised.

A Great Concept – Respondents were overwhelmingly positive about the concept of Degree Apprenticeship. Reservations focused on matters of detail, implementation and funding.

- **Apprentices** see Degree Apprenticeships from a career enhancement perspective, providing an educational route and often as a way to qualify in a profession.
- **Employers** see Degree Apprenticeships as providing progression-routes for the existing workforce, aiding recruitment, establishing, or maintaining alternative entry-routes, and providing a means of learning and up-skilling while working.
- **Providers** see Degree Apprenticeships as creating alternative entry-routes, widening access, fitting industry needs and as a business opportunity.

Social Mobility

- **86.7% of survey respondents say that social mobility is very or extremely important as an aim for Degree Apprenticeships**
- **55% of respondents think Degree Apprenticeships have already contributed greatly or significantly to social mobility.**
- **Examples of social mobility benefits** include providing opportunities for people who would not otherwise have entered higher education and progression from relatively low qualified roles to professional and managerial positions.
- **The Contribution of Degree Apprenticeship** - Factors enabling Degree Apprenticeships to contribute to social mobility include effective promotion and outreach; accessible entry-routes; programme design that caters for 'non-standard' entrants; effective learner support; and the ability to earn while learning and avoid running up debt.



- **Barriers Limiting the Contribution of Degree Apprenticeship to Social Mobility** – Factors limiting the contribution of Degree Apprenticeships include a lack of awareness and misconceptions about Degree Apprenticeship among potential apprentices, parents, schools and colleges; lack of availability of suitable programmes; inflexible entry requirements; and concerns about salaries, debt or the ability to succeed in higher education.
- **Improving the Contribution of Degree Apprenticeships to Social Mobility** - Factors needing attention include improved promotion to improve awareness and perceptions of Degree Apprenticeships; better availability of programmes; more flexible entry-requirements; better learner support, for instance for functional skills; clearer progression routes between apprenticeships at different levels; and ensuring apprentices are paid a fair wage.

Productivity

- **82.9% of survey respondents say that that increasing productivity is a very or extremely important aim for Degree Apprenticeships**
- **49% of respondents think Degree Apprenticeships have already contributed greatly or significantly to productivity.**
- **Examples of productivity benefits** include business or service benefits such as performance improvement, improved quality, innovation, and direct gains from apprentices' projects. Many respondents also mentioned bringing in new knowledge, skills development, and personal development and progression.
- **The Contribution of Degree Apprenticeships** - Factors enabling Degree Apprenticeship to contribute to productivity include workplaces that support learning and link it to strategic goals; good-quality, relevant, work-integrated programmes; effective partnership working at a practical level; effective evaluation strategies; and well-designed apprenticeship standards.
- **Barriers limiting the contribution of Degree Apprenticeships to productivity** - Factors include workplaces where there is insufficient support, excessive pressure of work, or an environment not conducive to learning; poor integration between on- and off-the-job training; poor quality partnerships; and a lack of availability of relevant programmes or apprenticeship standards.
- **Improving the Contribution of Degree Apprenticeships to Productivity** - Factors needing attention include better engagement, organisation and support in some workplaces; improved partnership working; and more practical, flexible programmes to improve industry relevance.

Opportunities, Challenges and Best Practice – A range of opportunities were identified, along with challenges and best practice that could be built upon:

- **The main opportunities that Degree Apprenticeships provides for individuals** relate to employability and careers, accessing higher education, and progressing within the same organisation.
- **For employers, major opportunities include** the development of skills and capability within the organisation, aiding workforce development and planning, and creating progression pathways.



- **For providers, Degree Apprenticeships provide a major opportunity** to develop partnerships with employers.
- **Challenges in the delivery of Degree Apprenticeships include** cover for apprentices that are supernumerary or if they are away from the workplace; workplaces that are not as conducive to learning as they could be; availability of suitable programmes; lack of knowledge about Degree Apprenticeships; a need for providers to be more agile; and the instability of the funding and policy environment.
- **Examples of best practice in Degree Apprenticeships delivery** include effective collaboration and partnership between employers and providers; effective management of workplace learning by both provider and employer; and enabling apprentices to put their skills to use and take on responsibility

