Degree Apprenticeships at the University of Portsmouth

Andy Taggart

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Degree Apprenticeships - a brief history

Introduced 2015 by the then business secretary Vince Cable
Designed to help reduce the UK’s skills gap
Also hoped that by aligning apprenticeship with degrees, the status of apprenticeships would be raised and not regarded as a poor relation to traditional courses
Students work full-time with one day per week at University (exceptions being our military and police students)
At the end of their course students complete an End Point Assessment to demonstrate they have met the apprenticeship standards for their apprenticeship, this is on top of any assessment for the degree element of their course
The University of Portsmouth launched its first DA programme in 2016 with 7 Business Students.

By February 2020 number had grown to 608 across 17 courses involving all faculties of the University.

Around 300 are in the Business Faculty including 60 military personnel.

This rise compares to a fall in the number of standard apprenticeships started (18%).

Nearly 50% of DAs are in Business & Law related subjects.

Around 90 Universities (including Russell Group) offer DAs.

(H of C Briefing Paper no 8741 18 Dec 2019)
The Challenges

Technical

One of our army students was studying while living in a tank for 3 months!

Pedagogical

A very different cohort to traditional undergraduates

Administrative

“early evidence signalling excessively bureaucratic and cumbersome application and data collection methods”
Lisa Rowe et al, University of Chester, 2016
The Challenges - pedagogical

- Delivering an engaging teaching programme for distance learners
- The goals of these learners tend to be very different to those of traditional undergraduates
- Military - Junior ranks reluctant to question contributions of senior officers
- Military - Social conservatism
- Very limited staff/student contact
- Teaching students with much greater demands on their time - work, family etc
Mitigation not aggravation!

**Types of content/activities**

- Video/animation
  - bob
  - Vyond
  - Home made/Youtube

- Study/Revision
  - Brainscape

- Collaboration/feedback
  - Nearpod
  - Vevox

- Interactive/assessment
  - H5P
  - Kahoot

- Mobile friendly
  - Book creator
  - Articulate Storyline | Rise
Book creator as viewed on a mobile phone
- No scrolling through long PDFs
- Compatible with Windows/Android and Apple devices
- Ideal for delivering course Documents in a DL environment
The Challenges - Administrative

20% Off the Job Training - logging and monitoring.
EPA - mapping to standards & the EPA process.
Need for an ePortfolio.
Access for external assessors/auditors.

Our Current Solutions -
Google
- Sites
- Forms/Sheets - auto emails for reminders & hours
- Shared Drives
- Mahara where ePortfolios need to be locked down
Use of Google sites for our CMDA ePortfolios

Use of the ePortfolio and reflective exercises to promote more inclusive attitudes.
For our CMDA students the use of Google sites has proven to be very successful
- Easy to use
- Aesthetically appealing
- Easy to share
In conclusion

**STRENGTHS**
- Marrying up of industry expertise with university teaching
- For students, no fees
- Professional qualification/recognition on top of a degree

**WEAKNESSES**
- Lack of awareness among potential students
- Technology - delivering some students geographically scattered (Police/Army/NHS)
- Existing university systems don’t always easily align with needs of degree apprenticeships

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Govt wants 3 million apprentices
- Need for a better educated/skilled workforce

**THREATS**
- Reform of the Levy (small businesses now have to contribute 10%)
- Re-introduction of the cap on student numbers?
Thank you

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