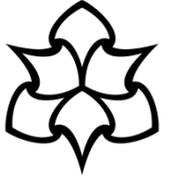




Employer Perspectives on the Added Value of a Degree Apprenticeship: A case study

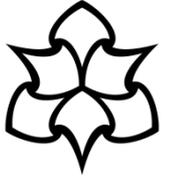
Dr Valerie Antcliff

Prof Sue Baines

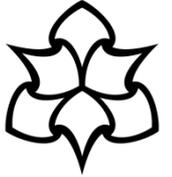


Outline

- Policy from a business perspective
- Our case study organisations
- Findings:
 - Degree apprentices v employing a graduate
 - Employer role in curriculum development
 - Attitudes to funding
- Are employer expectations sustainable?

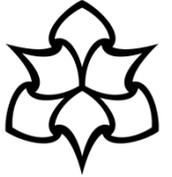


***“the state has no hold
whatsoever over the actions of
one key group of actors –
employers” (Keep 2004: 12)***



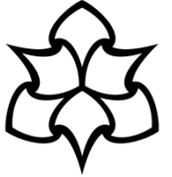
Policy from a Business Perspective

- Both Leitch and Richard reviews gave business a pivotal role in developing apprenticeships – demand led approach
- Trailblazer groups - employers, professional bodies, training providers who work together to design new apprenticeship standards
- Recasts businesses as purchasers of higher education
- The Apprenticeship Levy
- Manchester Metropolitan University –pre validation advisory board



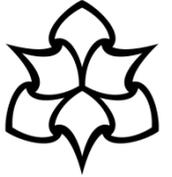
Will businesses want to act as purchasers of higher education?

- Existing graduates or graduate training schemes already fulfil their needs?
- Financial costs – value for money?
- Commitments associated with a degree apprentice too high?



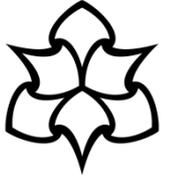
Case studies:

- BSc based on the standard for Digital Technology Solutions for Professionals
- First cohort in 2015
- Company A - Head of Technology and Talent Programmes. 500 apprentices internationally, employ a third of apprentices in the first cohort. Finance sector
- Company B HR Manager. A high growth enterprise with 100 employees and 2 apprentices. Digital Media sector.



Advantages over graduate recruitment

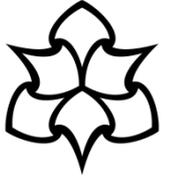
- Retention – four year apprenticeship means apprentice can experience a range of career opportunities within the business
- **Company A** – opportunity to put skills to immediate use
“new graduates are hit with the reality that what they learn is out of date”
- **Company B** – support finding quality candidates.
“when you get a graduate you don’t have any support – everything they learn has been academic”



Curriculum Development

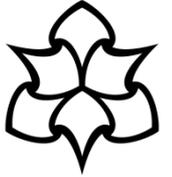
“Exciting” “long overdue” “traditional degrees don’t provide the skills we need”

- Company A – *“over 6 months it was really eye-opening as a business”*
- Opportunity to include legacy technologies
- Assessed project tailored to the needs of the business
- Company B – flexibility to respond to technological change, use technologies not yet available at the University in their assessed work.



Thoughts on funding

- Value for money – a long term investment
- Company A – *“it’s quite a substantial amount but it’s worth it”*
- Other benefits outweigh economic considerations: *“The energy they bring into the workplace is contagious”*
- The Levy
 - Company A *“it will be a tough gig to invest that”*
 - Company B – not recruiting in 2017, waiting to see how levy works out



Conclusions

What is the added value of a degree apprenticeship for employers?

- Effective two way dialogue between business and the University
- Support from the University throughout the apprenticeship
- Flexibility – work-based projects & tailored modules
- Role of the Director of Apprenticeships as a point of contact
- Is this level of flexibility and support sustainable in the long term?