

What features of Higher Education Apprenticeship effect Apprentice Satisfaction and Engagement and How?

Rationale

Apprenticeship programme delivery models are different from the traditional, full or part-time undergraduate courses in many ways, not limited to:

- Employers purchase apprenticeships, not the apprentices (QAA 2018);
- Education is at work and in class
- Apprentices work and study at the same time and paid for both
- There is higher burden of resources on employers (Muikien et al. 2017)
- Apprentices are often mature, with family commitments and time constraints

This study asks whether apprenticeship delivery features impact on apprentices' satisfaction and engagement and how.

Objectives

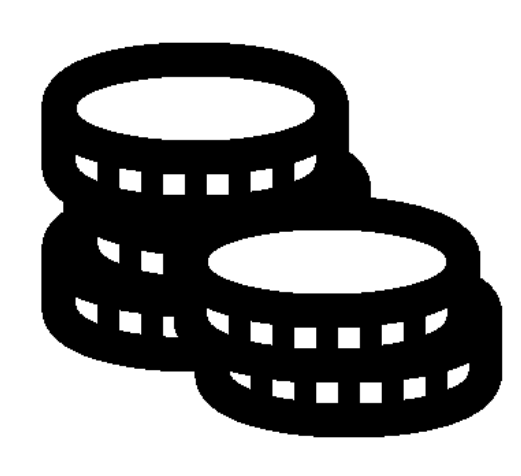
- Determine the apprenticeship delivery features which influence apprentices' satisfaction and engagement levels
- Assess degree of influence of those delivery features on apprentices' satisfaction and engagement
- Explain how apprenticeship delivery features influence the satisfaction and engagement of apprentices
- Develop a framework of recommendations on apprenticeship programme delivery within the university

Methodology

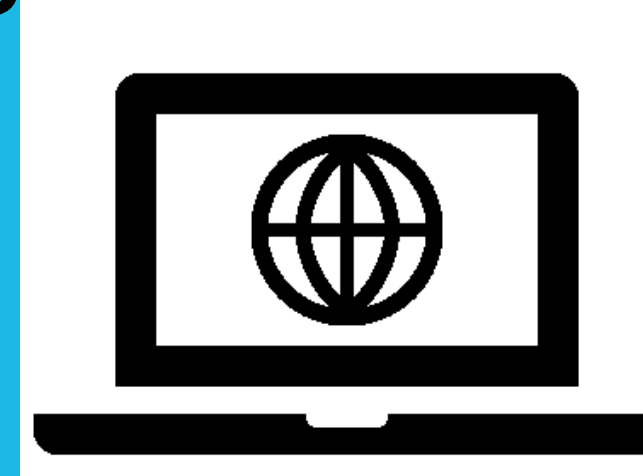
- More than 17% of the apprentice population were surveyed in total
- 27 Questionnaires, analysed by SPSS
- 10 Interviews, analysed by Nvivo and six-phase thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006)
- Mean score, relative importance index and Kendall's tau-b tests conducted

Key Findings

Being paid whilst studying is considered a benefit



IT facilities such as Canvas are having a positive impact



Support from a work-based mentor



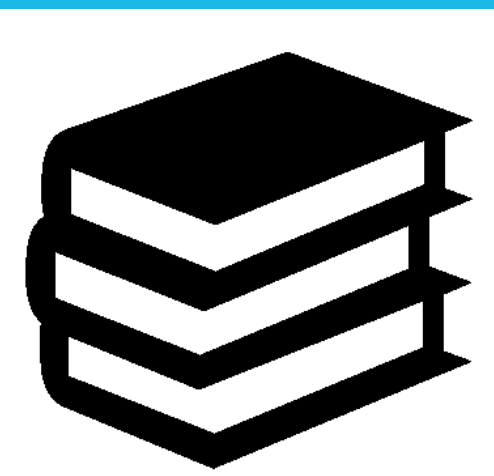
Being allocated "enough time to study" is ranked the most important indicator for satisfaction. However this is not met

Stress from the programme ranks highest on the level of experience apprentices have of the engagement indicators

Getting fixed, on-the-job-training' has a positive correlation with "having a study routine with access to course materials"

Recommendations

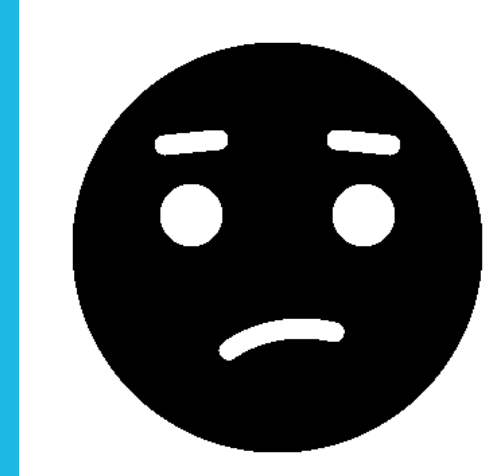
More time for independent reading should be included



Collaboration between parties involved should be improved



Work/study/life balancing issues should be addressed



References

- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2): 77–101.
- Mulkeen, J., Abdou, H. A., Leigh, J. & Ward, P. (2017): Degree and Higher Level Apprenticeships: an empirical investigation of stakeholder perceptions of challenges and opportunities, *Studies in Higher Education*, DOI: 10.1080/03075079.2017.1365357
- QAA (2018) Quality Assuring Higher Education in Apprenticeships: Current Approaches. Retrieved on 30 Sept. 2019 from <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/quality-assuring-higher-education-in-apprenticeships.pdf>

Further research on the influence of apprenticeship delivery features on mental health and wellbeing of apprentices is needed