Evaluation of the Degree Apprenticeship Development Fund

Report to the Office for Students by Warwick Economics & Development

March 2019

Contents

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Abbreviations

AMRC	Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre
ARU	Anglia Ruskin University
AY	Academic Year
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DA	Degree Apprenticeship
DADF	Degree Apprenticeship Development Fund
DfE	Department for Education
DSDA	Data Scientist Degree Apprenticeship
FE	Further Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
IfA	Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education
ILR	Individualised Learner Record
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LTU	Leeds Trinity University
NCOP	National Collaborative Outreach Programme
NCFM	National Centre for Food Manufacturing
NHS	National Health Service
NPIF	National Productivity Investment Fund
NSAFD	National Skills Academy for Food and Drink
NTU	Nottingham Trent University
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
SHU	Sheffield Hallam University
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
WTSI	Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute

Executive Summary

Degree apprenticeships were first launched in 2015 as a key element of reforms to the apprenticeship system, designed to focus on areas where higher-level skills are needed in order to tackle the UK's longstanding low productivity.

The Degree Apprenticeship Development Fund (DADF) was launched in 2016, to boost capacity and internal infrastructure within higher education, to embed high quality degree apprenticeships as an accepted alternative to traditional higher education, to boost productivity, and to enable and encourage greater social mobility.

Warwick Economics & Development (WECD) was commissioned in November 2016 by the then Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to undertake the evaluation of the DADF over the next two years (i.e. to November 2018). The evaluation aims to review the processes involved in the development of degree apprenticeships and the achievements of the DADF-funded projects. Key evaluation findings are presented below.

Key Evaluation Findings

Between November 2016 and November 2018 £8.8 million of DADF funding has supported 103 higher education providers (56 further education colleges and 47 higher education institutions) and has resulted in 4,464 degree apprentice starts (as of November 2018). Further degree apprenticeship starts are also expected in the next Academic Year as a result of activities funded by DADF to date.

£ **8.8 million DADF funding**

103 higher education providers involved

Over 100 new degree apprenticeship courses developed

4,464 degree apprentice starts

Higher education providers have used the DADF funding for staff time, new marketing and learning materials, new/updated/revamped strategies, meetings and events for marketing purposes, and the development of standards.

The evaluation has shown that DADF has been transformational for many higher education providers. For example, the extra funding has provided a focus for targeted activity and a means of attracting senior commitment within participating institutions. In turn, this has incentivised the development of strategic plans and the building of internal infrastructure, both of which would enable the long-term development of degree apprenticeships.

For the majority of higher education providers with DADF funding, new processes to deliver degree apprenticeships have been operating for less than a year, and therefore it is too early to establish the

effectiveness of new delivery models. Nevertheless, the evaluation has found that without a dedicated resource, provision of degree apprenticeships would remain an ad hoc activity at best.

In general, the evaluation has found that without this funding, many institutions would have pursued some degree apprenticeship activity, but activity would have been less well focused, less ambitious and would have progressed slowly. Ultimately, without the extra funding, there would have been fewer resources available to pursue degree apprenticeship activities, resulting in fewer starts at this stage. DADF has, therefore, fast-tracked delivery of degree-apprentice starts.

The evaluation has also shown that the DADF funding has delivered:

- Stronger and wider sector partnerships and knowledge transfer. DADF projects are collaborative and involve partnerships across providers and with employers, enabling a focus on skills needs and the best ways of meeting these needs, which include pipelines from lower levels up to degree level. The main sectors in which these starts have been made include Construction, Health and Science, Business and Administration – and all these have reported skills shortages at critical levels in the last year.

- A means of addressing skills gaps and recruitment difficulties in the provision of public services. Projects have included the development of degree apprenticeships in Nursing, Social Work and Policing, and have the potential to deliver large volumes of highly skilled employees into these, and other key sectors.

- A focus on local needs, through local consultations with employers, skills bodies, trade associations and other stakeholders, enabling a focus on what is needed locally and a better fit with other initiatives, such as the National Collaborative Outreach Programme and local economic and labour market strategies.

Degree apprentice starts have taken longer to be realised than initially envisaged, mainly due to approval of standards taking longer than expected. Nevertheless, many of the DADF projects are optimistic that initial targets will ultimately be met and in many cases exceeded, albeit later than planned. Nearly all DADF projects are expecting that degree apprenticeship activity will be expanding significantly in the future.

The evaluation has also identified a few issues that will need to be considered in future policy development, as follows:

- Development of degree apprenticeships has been slower than originally expected for a number of reasons. In general, it takes at least a full year of planning and developmental activities prior to degree apprentices starting, in particular where new standards and apprenticeships are involved, or degree apprenticeship provision represents a new type of provision for higher education providers. Actions to streamline the process of approving standards, or even to make the timescales firmer and more widely understood, would help providers to be able to plan better.

- Going forward, allocation of resources to ensure the widespread adoption of good practice would be sensible, given the varying approaches so far. Any comprehensive guidance on the administrative processes required to develop degree apprenticeships could benefit future

development. Similarly, events encouraging networking, like the DADF conferences held as part of this evaluation, have proved very useful.

- Employer engagement is vital to the success of the degree apprenticeship agenda. In particular, micro-, small- and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) that account for more than half the UK's turnover and employment have a key role to play in boosting UK productivity and social mobility, and the role of national government is crucial in supporting and encouraging them to engage with degree apprenticeships. Developing relevant initiatives – that take into account factors that affect SME business operations and growth, and also enable SMEs to be directly engaged with degree apprenticeships – is fundamental to incentivise employer engagement, and to ensure the future success of the policy agenda.

- It is too early for the projects to demonstrate how efficiencies in provision can be achieved over time. However, the evaluation has shown that allowing for this developmental period to build up capacity and capabilities to deliver multifaceted policies reduces transactional inefficiencies, and promotes the adoption of more strategic approaches. These include well-evidenced demand assessments, realistic pricing policies, and fit-for-purpose modes of delivery.

- There is some early anecdotal evidence of the relationship between degree apprenticeships and improvements in productivity and social mobility. Given the policy rationale underpinning the provision of degree apprenticeships, it would be beneficial to allow for sufficient resources and time to capture the effects and impact of degree apprenticeships on productivity and social mobility, through a systematic and robust longitudinal study.

1.   Introduction

1.1   Warwick Economics & Development (WECD) was commissioned in November 2016 by the then Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to undertake the evaluation of the Degree Apprenticeship Development Fund (DADF).

The DADF Funding

1.2   DADF was established in 2016 by the then Department for Business Innovation and Skills and the Department for Education (DfE)[1] to be distributed to higher education providers by HEFCE, with key objectives to:

- Create partnerships that would strengthen degree apprenticeship growth;

- Create a stronger market for degree apprenticeships where there was evidence that demand was likely to be high but not yet realised;

- Establish high-quality new degree apprenticeships;

- Establish capacity and expertise to deliver a high volume of degree apprenticeships; and

- Secure the necessary cultural and behavioural changes among higher education providers to embed degree apprenticeships, and to make broader educational opportunities available to learners.

1.3   Section 2 provides an overview of the policy rationale underpinning the DADF funding. In summary, DADF was established to improve the readiness of providers to deliver degree apprenticeships that would meet employer and economic needs, and increase social mobility and diversity in higher education, with funding that would enable providers to form partnerships, build capacity and accelerate development of degree apprenticeships. Around £9.4 million[2] was allocated to achieve these objectives and ultimately deliver provision for 9,700 degree apprentices.

1.4   Funding was initially allocated to 45 projects over two phases of funding as follows:

- Following the first competitive call for DADF funding in May 2016[3], 18 projects were awarded funding and commenced delivering their activities in November 2016 (hereafter referred to as 'DADF 1 projects'). Funding to these projects totalled £4.5 million[4].

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[1] See 'DADF phase 1: Invitation to submit proposals for funding to stimulate development of degree apprenticeships' (HEFCE Circular letter 06/2016), archived at
https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20180405115045/http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2016/CL,0620 16/.
[2] £9,379,147
[3] HEFCE Circular letter 06/2016
[4] £4,478,563

- Following the second call in April 2017[5], 27 more projects received funding. This funding totalled £4.9 million and projects commenced their activities in September 2017 (hereafter referred to as DADF2 projects).

1.5   These 45 projects were selected out of a total of 135 applications during the two competitive calls. Two DADF2 projects decided not to progress beyond the original stages[6], and the remaining 43 projects have accounted for £8.8 million (and potential provision of 9,465 degree apprenticeships, based on the information provided in the their business cases). The 43 projects have involved 103 higher education providers – 47 higher education institutions and 56 further education colleges (more detail about the DADF-funded projects is provided in Section 3 of the report).

1.6   Figure 1.1 (on page 4) presents the logic chain of the DADF funding and summarises the broad policy context and objectives, inputs, key activities and expected outcomes and impacts in the short term and in the future (i.e. beyond the DADF funding period). This logic chain has been created drawing on HEFCE/Office for Students background information related to the funding and its objectives, with the timeline informed by other programmes and WECD discussions with the projects' key stakeholders.

Evaluation Aims and Objectives

1.7   The two-year summative evaluation was commissioned to review the achievements of the DADF-funded projects and assess whether the DADF objectives will be delivered. The specific objectives of the evaluation were to explore:

- Achievements of the DADF-funded project objectives and targets;

- Processes put in place to develop and deliver relevant provision;

- Key success factors and barriers to develop and deliver provision for degree apprentices;

- Potential for scalability of what works and key factors to achieving this;

- Potential for greater efficiency or reduced cost of provision over time; and

- Learners' and employers' perceptions of benefits from their involvement with degree apprenticeships.

1.8   A first interim evaluation report was produced in March 2017, providing an overview of the activities undertaken by DADF1 and DADF2 projects and the contribution made by DADF. The evaluation has also provided frequent independent feedback on these issues to the Office for Students that succeeded HEFCE in April 2018, the DADF-funded projects and the sector through a series of workshops and consultations.

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[5] See 'DADF Phase 2: Invitation to submit proposals for funding to stimulate development of degree apprenticeships' (HEFCE Circular letter 09/2017), archived at https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20180405115210/http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2017/CL,0920 17/.
[6] The University of Derby and the University of Wolverhampton led these two projects respectively.

1.9   This is the final evaluation report presenting the achievements and progress made by all DADF-funded projects in the last two years and an overall assessment of the contribution and value of DADF to the operations and delivery of degree apprenticeships.

1.10   The evaluation findings draw upon:

- Desk-based literature and data review of policy and context relating to the provision and take up of degree apprenticeships at national level.

- Desk-based reviews of documentation produced by the 43 DADF-funded projects. This documentation includes the original business cases in response to HEFCE's competitive call for funding, progress reports produced by all the projects to date and monitoring data provided by the projects about the take up of degree apprenticeships in their respective institutions to date, as well as estimates of starts in the future.

- Four rounds of consultations with all institutions that are leading projects and participation in learning and dissemination events.

- Feedback provided by projects participating in three workshops organised for DADF projects (on 22 June 2017, 4 December 2017 and on 12 June 2018 respectively).

- Feedback from employers and students involved with the DADF-funded projects.

1.11   A list of all consulted at different stages of the evaluation is provided in **Appendix A.**

Structure of the Report

1.12   The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 summarises the policy context underpinning the design and provision of degree apprenticeships.

- Section 3 provides an overview of the DADF-funded projects.

- Section 4 presents the achievements of the projects to date in term of their contribution to degree apprenticeships and degree apprentices, and building up capacity and expertise for their provision.

- Section 5 presents feedback from the consultations with the projects, employers and apprentices.

- Section 6 presents conclusions from the evaluation.

Figure 1.1: DADF Context and Logic Chain

Key Objectives of the Degree Apprenticeship Development Fund (DADF): Improve the readiness of providers to deliver degree apprenticeships that meet employer and economic needs and increase social mobility and diversity in higher education, with funding that would enable providers to form partnerships, build capacity and accelerate development of degree apprenticeships

Context: the Degree Apprenticeships (DAs) public policy: Improving opportunities for higher education academic qualifications through vocational routes and employment, enhancing career pathways and addressing skills gaps, thereby increasing labour productivity and career and employment opportunities, improving economic performance and making a contribution to social mobility improvement

Inputs	Key Activities	Key Outputs	Key Early Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes	Long-term Impacts
£8.8 million DADF funding **43 Projects** **103 higher education providers** involved (**47 HEIs and 56 FE Colleges**)	Pump-prime a new HE market for DAs with: 1) Fit for purpose resources, systems and processes in place to deliver degree apprenticeships 2) Targeted intensive internal and external communication programme to better understand the market and raise awareness of degree apprenticeships	- Development of new DA programmes - Creation of new higher-quality apprenticeships that reflect/meet employers needs - Boost in the number of DAs	- Stronger partnerships between employers and providers and between providers that boost vocational routes to degrees - Increased capacity to deliver degree apprenticeships in the education sector - A cultural and behavioural change amongst DADF providers	- A cultural and behavioural change amongst providers in the sector - Degree Apprenticeships fully embedded in the wider educational offer to learners - Broader degree/vocational opportunities for learners - Improved equality of access to those who would wish to get a degree from backgrounds least likely to do so	(Contribution to): - Skills shortages and gaps reduced - Increased productivity - Improved economic performance - Improved social mobility
1 Year	**1-2 Years**	**2+ Years**	**2+ Years**	**4/5+ Years**	**5+ Years**

2. Policy Context

2.1 This section provides a brief overview of the policy context that underpins the design and delivery of degree apprenticeships and the establishment of DADF.

2.2 Degree apprenticeships are available in England and Wales[7], and were first launched in March 2015. On 12 March 2015 the Government announced the roll-out of nine new industry-designed degree apprenticeships, bringing together groups of businesses, universities and colleges to develop practical, vocational degree courses, which would allow people to combine the academic study from a traditional university degree with practical experience and wider employment skills.

2.3 Later in the same year, the Apprenticeship levy[8] was announced, whereby employers with a pay bill of above £3 million per year would be required to pay a levy that can be spent towards apprenticeship training. The Institute for Apprenticeships[9] (IfA) was also launched.

2.4 The first degree apprenticeships were in key economic areas including Chartered Surveying, Aerospace Engineering, and Nuclear, and were first introduced as a key element within the broader apprenticeship agenda aiming to support the successful delivery of the Government's productivity plan.[10] As stated by Terry Scuoler, the then Chief Executive of the Engineering Employers' Federation[11]:

> 'Fast-moving, evolving sectors such as manufacturing increasingly demand higher-level skills. These economically valuable industries can only grow and prosper if highly skilled employees are there for the taking. There has been a noticeable gap in higher-level provision that combines both vocational and academic learning, and degree apprenticeships are the opportunity to fill this gap. For employers and learners alike, degree apprenticeships are a good step forward. Learners earn while they learn to a degree level and employers have access to relevant, responsive, highly-skilled employees.'

2.5 Furthermore, a number of sectors have raised concerns about a lack of relevant skills for the future, particularly as an ageing population begins to retire. Research cited in the Government's productivity plan estimates that by 2022 there will be an additional 3.6 million jobs in medium-skilled occupations, including skilled trades and health care professions.[12]

2.6 The Budgets of Autumn 2017 and 2018 reaffirmed the current commitment to tackle the UK's poor productivity record. The former had a focus on extra funding for artificial intelligence, skills and technology, as the Chancellor introduced measures to boost economic growth: for

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[7] Although applications may be made from all parts of the UK.
[8] Details of apprenticeship funding, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work
[9] Now the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/
[10] 'Fixing the Foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation', HM Treasury, July 2015. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fixing-the-foundations-creating-a-more-prosperous-nation
[11] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-rolls-out-flagship-degree-apprenticeships
[12] Winning the global race? Jobs, skills and the importance of vocational education, J Clifton et al., June 2014.

example, an expansion in the national productivity investment fund (NPIF)[13] which was launched in 2016 (from £23 billion to £31 billion to help kick-start improvements in efficiency levels across the UK), and to develop the National Retraining Scheme, with the Government entering into a formal skills partnership with the Trades Union Congress and the Confederation of British Industry, and taking a first step by investing £64 million in digital and construction training. The 2018 Budget[14] included further infrastructure investment and an increase in the NPIF to £37 billion. Further investment was also announced in cutting-edge industries like artificial intelligence, quantum computing, digital manufacturing and nuclear fusion.

2.7   In parallel, driven by the Government's agenda to build an economy that works for everyone, degree apprenticeships are seen as providing an additional and alternative route to gaining a degree. In April 2017, the DfE's DADF funding letter to HEFCE stated:

'It is our intention that this second year of funding should further improve the readiness of Providers to deliver degree apprenticeships in response to the Government's ambitions to improve vocational opportunities for students, thereby increasing productivity and improving economic performance. In addition, this year, we would also like this funding to increase social mobility and diversity to degree apprenticeship: improving equality of access to those who would wish to get a degree from backgrounds least likely to do so. As with last year's funding we would like this scheme to establish a cultural and behavioural change amongst Providers that succeeds in embedding degree apprenticeships in the universal apprenticeship offer to learners'.

2.8   This approach is seen as particularly beneficial for those who may be deterred from studying through a traditional academic route for a number of reasons, including financial reasons and preferences, and it would be relevant to both young and mature learners. The vocational pathway to higher skills and management roles is therefore strengthened and opened up to all who need (or prefer) to take up employment and advance/build up their career whilst at the same time studying for a degree.

2.9   Within this broad context, among other measures, the Government committed to:

- Increasing the quantity and quality of apprenticeships in England to 3 million starts by 2020 (from an estimated base of 2.3 million starts in the previous Parliament);

- Giving apprenticeships equal legal treatment to degrees, to ensure that apprentices and employers can be given confidence in the brand;

- Setting apprenticeship targets for public sector bodies; and

- Introducing a new compulsory apprenticeship levy to ensure that apprenticeships will be well-funded, high quality, and meet employers' needs. As of 6 April 2017, employers with a pay bill over £3 million each year pay this apprenticeship levy[15].

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[13] See https://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/nov/23/business-leaders-call-for-tarmac-and-telecoms-from-productivity-fund

[14] See https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/budget-2018

[15] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work#pay-apprenticeship-levy

3.   Overview of DADF Projects

3.1   This section provides an overview of the projects that have been funded by DADF over the two rounds of funding.

DADF Project Funding Specification

3.2   The main aim of the first call for DADF funding was to offer higher education providers support that could boost the number of degree apprenticeships starting in September 2017. To receive this funding, proposals had to meet one or more of the following priorities:

- Converting existing and successful closed or sponsored degrees to degree apprenticeships;

- Bringing together employers, professional bodies and providers of higher and further education to design (on- and off-the-job) learning for degree apprenticeships in specific occupational areas;

- Building provider capacity for quality curriculum and assessment design and delivery to meet the needs of employers (for instance designing materials, online delivery mechanisms and staff preparedness); and

- Activities that better match the supply of provision to employer needs by establishing future skills needs of employers (this did not require the predicted volumes to be stated in the bid).

3.3   Proposals for funding needed to include evidence of demand from employers or employer groups for proposed degree apprenticeships, and letters of support from all parties involved in proposed partnerships (including employers, professional bodies, local enterprise partnerships, higher education institutions, etc.).

3.4   It was expected that the majority of investment supported by this first stage of funding would be to enable staff time to be devoted to developmental activities to advance timescales for delivery of degree apprentices.

3.5   For the second phase of DADF funding, the following schedule of activities was expected by higher education providers[16]:

- Designing courses, putting staff in place and improving institutional readiness;

- Mapping curricula against standards[17]; and

- Employer engagement.

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[16] HEFCE Circular letter 09/2017

[17] Standards are developed by employer groups known as 'Trailblazers'. A Trailblazer is made up of a group of employers who work together to design new apprenticeship standards for occupations within their sectors – requiring at least 10 employers including small and medium-sized enterprises involved to form a Trailblazer. Trailblazers were first launched in October 2013 with just eight groups. The IfA is currently supporting development of over 200 standards with a further 360 already approved for delivery (https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/).

3.6 DADF funding in the second year of degree apprenticeships focused on the following areas:

- Expanding Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) provision and gender diversity in STEM;

- Social mobility: promoting degree apprenticeships and increasing starts in deprived areas to under-represented groups on a match funded basis; and

- Better match the supply of provision to employer and learner demand by establishing the future needs of employers (including skills shortage occupations and areas, e.g. with Local Enterprise Partnerships, Midlands Engine and Northern Powerhouse and specialisms represented by professional bodies).

Funding for DADF Projects

3.7 As shown in Figure 3.1, DADF funding represents approximately 55 per cent of the overall project expenditure for these projects: 54 per cent for DADF1 projects and 55 per cent for DADF2 projects, with additional funding provided for the projects by the higher education providers and partner organisations involved in these projects. Additional funding contributions complementing DADF funding are as follows:

- Approximately 39 per cent of higher education providers' own funds, with DADF1 projects relying less on own funds than DADF2 projects (37 per cent contribution of own funds by DADF1 projects compared with 40 per cent by DADF2 projects).

- Around 7 per cent of other funds e.g. from Further Education (FE) Colleges and Local Enterprise Partnerships. For DADF1 projects, external funding accounted for 9 per cent; the equivalent figure for DADF2 projects was around 5 per cent.

Figure 3.1: Funding for DADF Projects

|	18 DADF1 Projects		25 DADF2 Projects		All Funding	
	£	%	£	%	£	%
DADF funding	4,478,563	54.0%	4,366,584	55.2%	8,845,148	54.6%
Own higher education provider funds	3,061,359	36.9%	3,190,136	40.3%	6,251,495	38.6%
Other funds	749,191	9.0%	360,671	4.6%	1,109,862	6.8%
Total funding	8,289,113	100.0%	7,917,390	100.0%	16,206,505	100.0%

Source: DADF Projects' Business Cases.

3.8 Figure 3.2 presents funding by size of overall project, with 'large project' defined for these purposes as representing total funding of £500k or more (including all DADF and non-DADF funds). Data emerging from this categorisation show that:

- DADF funding represents a more significant part of smaller projects, accounting for 67 per cent and 59 per cent of spending of smaller projects across Phases 1 and 2 respectively, compared to 46 per cent and 44 per cent of larger projects.

- The differences above are balanced by 'other' spending accounting for a greater proportion of spending in larger projects, while the institutions' own spending is mostly reasonably consistent across both types of projects.

Figure 3.2: Funding for DADF Projects, by Size of Project
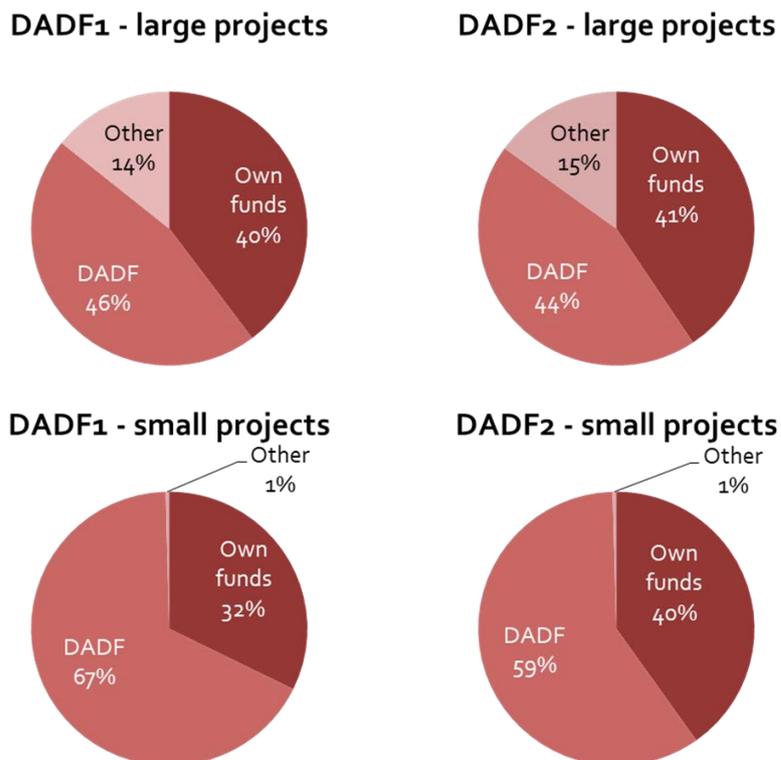
Source: DADF Projects' Business Cases.

DADF Projects – What has been funded with DADF

3.9 Discussions with key staff involved in the DADF projects suggest that the motivation and rationale for higher education providers seeking DADF funding is two-fold: operational and strategic, as described below:

a) **Operational matters** – these relate to capacity or capability issues needing to be addressed to deliver degree apprenticeships or take on more degree apprentices, and include:

- Setting up the internal infrastructure to deliver degree apprenticeships including recruitment or secondment of staff; trialling new or upgraded Information Technology infrastructure to deliver, in an efficient manner, degree apprenticeships alongside existing degree provision; and developing new ways to deliver existing content, for example, blended learning materials.

- Investment in better understanding labour market and economic issues associated with provision of education and training, e.g. skills needs in specific sectors and industries, and the impact of degree apprenticeships on business performance.

- Investment in external resources that can be used to raise awareness, to better target degree apprenticeship recruitment or to overcome specific local barriers (such as geographical isolation).

- Spreading degree apprenticeships from one faculty to others, learning lessons and scaling up.

b) **Strategic considerations** – funding has been sought to support a set of wider organisational aims. University-wide strategic plans involve meeting institutional business objectives, delivering skills that are needed locally and nationally, or focusing on widening participation, and DADF has been seen as a catalyst to encourage any or all of these. Although there has been an increase during Phase 2 in those projects that refer to and focus on addressing widening participation strategic objectives through degree apprenticeships and DADF, tackling specific labour market (local and sectoral) and employers' skills needs remains a priority for the institutions involved.

3.10 The following are typical statements by higher education providers around their motivations for DADF projects:

> [We] have had lots of internal discussions around widening participation and face some specific challenges through being in a predominantly rural area. Developing blended learning methods is seen as a way of helping to increase access to higher education for those who might otherwise not have had the opportunity.

> [We] had a sense of the gaps in skills in health occupations and the changes needed to address these needs over the coming years. Specific funding was the natural way to get things underway quickly.

> [We] already have a diverse base of learners with a good fit to courses that focus on career development. We see the DADF as a chance to develop degree apprenticeships as a complement to our existing degree offer.

3.11 Consultations with key staff involved in the 43 DADF-funded projects and a review of businesses cases, monitoring forms and financial plans submitted by higher education providers reveal a range of activities undertaken within the broad scope of both calls of funding. In line with the funding's remit, three broad categories of activities have been mainly funded by DADF funding:

- Additional staff resources or time dedicated to (further) development of degree apprenticeships.

- New or adapted internal systems to meet the requirements of degree apprenticeships.

- Developing new materials that incorporate and promote degree apprenticeship provision.

- Improving engagement with external stakeholders.

3.12 Each of these is considered below. **Appendix B** also presents a list of all projects and a brief description of all their activities.

Additional Staff Resources

3.13 Activities related to additional staff resources and internal systems featured quite strongly as one of the uses of the funding. The funding has enabled specific resources to be dedicated to setting up the infrastructure needed to start and support the delivery of degree apprenticeships. This has taken the form of new recruitment or freeing time that staff can devote to the development and provision of degree apprenticeships.

3.14 As shown in Figure 3.3, 57 per cent of DADF funding (58 per cent and 56 per cent in DADF1 and DADF2 projects respectively) was allocated to direct staff costs, i.e. for dedicated staff and/or to buy and release staff time. This is directly aligned with the DADF-funding expectation that the majority of investment supported by this fund would enable staff time to be devoted to relevant developmental work, in order to advance timescales for delivery. Other types of expenditure include:

- Direct non-staff costs that represented 10 per cent for DADF1 projects; the equivalent figure for DADF2 projects is 20 per cent. These represent costs on developing relevant materials, and an increase could reflect material needed for new courses and modules introduced.

- Overhead costs for DADF1 projects have been around 32 per cent while the equivalent figure for DADF2 projects is 23 per cent.
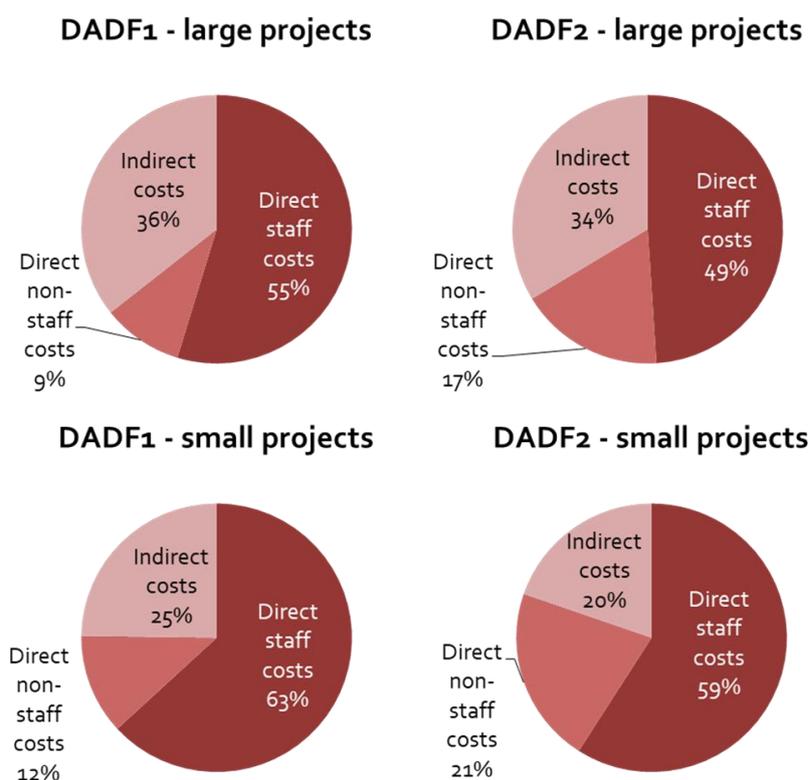
Figure 3.3: Allocation of DADF Funding

		Direct staff costs	Direct non-staff costs	Indirect costs
DADF1	£	4,857,157	887,364	2,656,830
	%	57.8%	10.6%	31.6%
DADF2	£	4,305,351	1,545,081	1,773,745
	%	56.5%	20.2%	23.3%

Source: DADF Projects' Business Cases.

3.15 As shown in Figure 3.4, data by size of project show that:

- Use of DADF for direct staff costs tends to be higher for smaller projects, with 63 per cent and 59 per cent across the two phases respectively, compared to 55 per cent and 49 per cent for larger projects.

- Indirect costs tend to be higher for the larger projects (36 per cent and 34 per cent compared to 25 per cent and 20 per cent respectively). Direct non-staff costs account for a slightly higher proportion of costs for smaller projects.

Figure 3.4: Allocation of Funding by DADF Projects, by Size of Project

DADF1 - large projects

Indirect costs 36%
Direct staff costs 55%
Direct non-staff costs 9%

DADF2 - large projects

Indirect costs 34%
Direct staff costs 49%
Direct non-staff costs 17%

DADF1 - small projects

Indirect costs 25%
Direct staff costs 63%
Direct non-staff costs 12%

DADF2 - small projects

Indirect costs 20%
Direct staff costs 59%
Direct non-staff costs 21%

Source: DADF Projects' Business Cases.

3.16   To enable a well-resourced tailored provision, a number of projects have allocated DADF funding to develop hub-and-spoke business models (as shown in Figure 3.5), by establishing a core degree apprenticeship (DA) function (or enhancing existing ones) expected to accommodate most degree-apprenticeship functions, with content being the responsibility of the different academic Schools/Faculties/Departments (spokes).

3.17   The core function is responsible for: employer and learner/provider engagement; employer and learner support; partnership and external relationship development; reporting processes; data collection, management and reporting; internal and external strategic alignment; and overall apprenticeship management and reporting. The function of the hub has been to establish or further develop core functions appropriate to degree apprenticeships. Specific degree apprenticeship programmes are developed in collaboration with specific academic departments, e.g. engineering, construction and health. In addition, the hub uses this experience and expertise to liaise with and support non-degree-apprenticeship faculties and departments that are keen to develop degree apprenticeships, and those who are furthest away from development. The hub-and-spoke model also places DADF projects and degree apprenticeship delivery at the centre of the provider's governance structures.

3.18   Examples of this approach include the London South Bank University that has established a School of Apprentices, the University of Salford that has a central university degree apprenticeships team, and the University of Sheffield that has set up an apprenticeship hub.

These provide a one-stop-shop for employers, apprentices and university staff, along with enabling further expansion across the institutions.

Figure 3.5: Degree Apprenticeship (DA) Delivery Model

3.19 DADF funding has been also used to develop an existing team further. An example of this is provided by the work of **Buckinghamshire New University**. As stated by the University:

'In keeping with most universities, we had no specialist sales, prospecting and bidding capacity that would be suited to bringing in apprenticeship business. We have developed and have added to internal staff inside the apprenticeship hub and have developed a partnership with Golley Slater to create a sales pipeline involving currently over 100 employers and we are confident that this can deliver on-going starts and success for years to come'.

Introducing New or Adapting Existing Internal Systems

3.20 DADF funding has been used to set up new or adapt existing management systems and processes to accommodate provision for vocational routes to higher education degrees. For example, DADF funding has been used to develop new systems to manage reporting requirements and to monitor and record progress of degree apprentices; these are sometimes run as separate systems alongside the systems that deal with traditional degree learners, usually with an intention to bring these two together at a later stage.

3.21 In general, the main priority for Management Information Systems has been being able to report both Higher Education Statistics Agency and Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data returns, with this process being much easier for some higher education providers than for

others. ILR returns were a particular issue for DADF1 projects, but less so for DADF2, because of the higher level of existing usage. Feedback provided suggests that some early guidance on how to customise systems would have been helpful, and could have avoided duplicating work streams across many different institutions.

3.22 A number of higher education providers have used DADF funding to deliver additional staff training and development activities to raise awareness of degree apprenticeships within their institutions. For example:

- The **University of Salford** has introduced face-to-face and online staff development for degree apprenticeships, with three workshops delivered to over 60 academic and professional service staff.

- The **University of Wolverhampton** has delivered a series of Training and Development activities to raise staff awareness, and provide tools for use by staff engaged in apprenticeships to over 200 staff.

- **Blackburn College** has provided cross-college staff Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions that have improved understanding and ability to respond to the requirements of degree apprenticeship delivery.

3.23 Another organisational area that needed development and resourcing is around finances and internal costing models. Higher education providers have developed different ways of costing degree apprenticeships, although usually with some reference to either the equivalent undergraduate course or to the funding band maximum:

- In some cases, higher education providers are using an adapted version of the model used for undergraduates, considering additional factors such as academic time for reviews, End Point Assessment, professional membership rules and central resources taken up.

- An alternative approach is to follow the band maximum, but where possible to offer more. Examples of this could include running a mentoring course for employers, tailoring courses towards particular employers or negotiating a bulk discount.

3.24 Feedback from the consultations indicates that procurement processes for large-scale public sector contracts has brought in extra pressures on resourcing costs.

Development of New Materials

3.25 Additional resource has been needed to incorporate degree apprenticeships into existing content, or to create new methods of delivery (as the examples below illustrate). Blended learning is featuring in a number of projects, and its provision has in general required new/additional resources. Examples of activities funded by DADF are provided below:

- Creation of online learning materials to allow for a new delivery model **by Nottingham Trent University (NTU)**. NTU employed an instructional designer to work with the course team. As a result, online materials have been developed for the first modules that are being taught. NTU has also developed an e-portfolio to monitor and calculate off the job learning and to provide ease of reporting on the development of Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours.

- E-learning development by **Northumbria University**. A new Learning Technologist is in post and the University is committed to funding up to a further four posts in 2017/18 onwards to support blended learning opportunities.

- The **University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University** have created a promotional video with the aim of showing the value and availability of degree apprenticeships across the Sheffield City Region to both employers and potential apprentices.

- The **University of Sheffield** has also produced a degree apprenticeship prospectus.

- **Sheffield Hallam University** has also created a Teaching Essentials Toolkit for academic staff to help in the delivery of apprenticeship programmes along with developing and launching an online mentoring resource for employer mentors.

- **Buckinghamshire New University** has developed an apprenticeship module framework and supporting mentorship modules.

- The **University of Greenwich** has developed an Employer Toolkit for apprenticeships.

3.26 Some activities, and consequently some of the materials produced, particularly for DADF2 projects, are specifically aimed at raising awareness of degree apprenticeships. For example:

- **Coventry University** launched web-based degree apprenticeship advertisement functionality through its recruitment hub 'thefutureworks'[18].

- **Leeds Trinity University (LTU) in partnership with other West Yorkshire higher education providers** delivers the Go Higher West Yorkshire website for employers requiring information about degree apprenticeships. LTU has also developed 'Headstart', an interactive resource for young people and their key influencers to help them understand the pre-requisites for a degree apprenticeship, how to access them, and the skills needed to successfully complete one.

3.27 With the support of DADF, institutions have been able to produce a variety of resources, including both promotional resources and resources available for wider sector use, which have raised the profile of degree apprenticeships more widely. Websites and YouTube content are widely developed to promote degree apprenticeships in a way more likely to appeal to some of the target audience, compared to traditional prospectuses.

Strengthening External Engagement

3.28 In order to plan ahead, institutions need to better understand and meet the needs of their potential markets. In some cases this involves carrying out new market research. For example, **Birmingham City University** has been one of the first DADF projects to use the funding to undertake an independent regional assessment of demand for degree apprenticeships in collaboration with other higher education providers in the West Midlands. This and other activities have led to the development of degree apprenticeships that cover specific key skills shortages in a variety of sectors across the region.

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[18] http://www.thefutureworks.org.uk

3.29 DADF funding has been used to expand existing networks of employers and key stakeholders. Often existing groups or networks, including Trailblazers, represent a useful starting point for understanding what employers' skills needs are. However, significant additional engagement has been needed to both raise awareness of degree apprenticeships and better understand the nature and extent of potential demand. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in particular represent a significant part of the labour market, and DADF has funded additional engagement activities undertaken by the DADF projects to better understand what their needs are.

3.30 All these activities tend to be resource intensive at these early stages. For example, the **University of Sunderland** has found a low level of employer awareness of, and readiness for, degree apprenticeships, and has aimed to tackle this through one-to-one meetings and various events; the University spends a lot of time explaining to employers the rules around levy payments, or in the case of non-levy employers, a lot of other details. Engagement with employers has been based partly on existing networks like Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses, but also with new employers reached through tailored publicity or marketing activity.

3.31 With the support of DADF, higher education providers have been able to host and participate in many events (e.g. employer events, national events, skills and industry events, apprenticeship events). These have helped to increase awareness of degree apprenticeships, along with engaging employers and potential apprentices. For example, the **University of Hertfordshire** hosted the first Hertfordshire Apprenticeship Show in collaboration with the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The event brought together employers, the University, training providers, and learners to promote apprenticeship vacancies and raise awareness of degree apprenticeships. Due to the success of the show, the plan is to hold it as an annual event hosted by the University.

3.32 During Phase 2, a better understanding of widening participation and social mobility issues has been at the core of activities including engagement with schools. This has featured strongly in a few projects and often goes hand in hand with activity to set up a pipeline, often working with local FE colleges, for setting up progression pathways that will ultimately lead to Levels 6 and 7 provision. For example:

- A partnership between **LTU, Leeds University, and Barnsley and Bradford colleges** (the Professional Skills Partnership) was created in response to Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust's request for a training provider capable of offering training across a range of levels and qualifications.

- **Buckinghamshire New University** has developed pathways from Level 4 up to Level 6 spanning five identified high skills demand sectors, with plans to develop more.

- The **University of Lincoln** has developed four Foundation degrees mapped to Level 5 standards to help fuel progression from its own FE provision at Level 3.

3.33 Furthermore, institutions are involved in communicating lessons learned from the process, given that through the DADF, institutions have built up a good understanding of the processes

involved in developing and delivering degree apprenticeships, enabling them to provide help and support to the rest of the higher education sector. For example:

- **Sheffield Hallam University** has delivered FE engagement programmes and curriculum development workshops with six FE colleges, as well as providing support and advice to seven other higher education institutions (HEIs).

- The **University of Derby,** following its success in bidding for DADF, was invited by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)-led Apprenticeship Advisory Board to support the development of the QAA Positioning Statement on degree apprenticeships.

3.34 The following example represents an all-round approach to build up the systems and processes to deliver degree apprenticeships, which has been wholly enabled by the DADF funding.

Leeds Trinity University (LTU) and Go Higher West Yorkshire

The project is led by LTU and delivered with Go Higher West Yorkshire, a partnership of higher education providers in West Yorkshire. The project is split into five strands, as follows:

Strand 1: Raising awareness with under-represented groups. Building on the National Collaborative Outreach Programme in West Yorkshire, this strand aims to promote degree apprenticeships as an alternative means of reaching higher education for those who would not traditionally tend to consider it. There is a focus on areas where higher education participation is low, with development of ways to engage with young people at school or college as well as building awareness through teachers and through sector specific approaches.

Strand 2: Employer engagement and market building. This strand involves working with the Leeds City Region LEP to develop new recruitment systems to enable those in disadvantaged groups to progress through to degree apprenticeships. This strand also fosters the building of supportive employer networks for mentoring and to enable dissemination of information through web based activities or events.

Strand 3: Programme development. This aims to build pathways for a number of professions enabling those in disadvantaged areas and/or under-represented groups to progress and reach their potential. Collaborative groups have been set up for each of the occupational areas covered by the standards being used or developed and this strand involves engaging with professional bodies and helping staff to build new qualifications.

Strand 4: Institutional preparedness. This strand aims to share experiences across the partnership organisations, building on the experiences of LTU. This includes the recruitment of specialist consultants to run events designed to share experiences and sharing knowledge to enable partner organisations to build their own expertise and capacity.

Strand 5: Evaluation. The project also includes an evaluation element to understand more about the drivers and barriers to social mobility. This involves different elements of evaluation – covering the young people and the way in which higher education interacts with them, the effectiveness of employer engagement and the longer-term impacts of the project, for example through linking data to future outcomes.

4. DADF Outcomes and Impacts to Date

4.1 The key aim of DADF has been to pump-prime a new higher education market for degree apprenticeships. As shown by the logic chain of the funding in Figure 1.1, on the way to reaching this ultimate objective, a range of additional objectives would be met. These include: development of new degree apprenticeship programmes that reflect and meet employers' needs; boosting the number of degree apprenticeships; building stronger partnerships between employers and providers and between providers; and securing the cultural and behavioural changes among universities and colleges needed to fully embed degree apprenticeships and make broader educational opportunities available to learners.

4.2 Some of these aims may take longer to fully materialise, e.g. cultural and behavioural changes among higher education providers. Others, such as new degree apprenticeship programmes and additional degree apprentices, are already emerging within the lifetime of the funding. This section presents key DADF outputs, outcomes and impacts to date in relation to:

- Degree apprenticeships and degree apprentices – that highlight the contribution of DADF to boosting degree apprenticeships and degree apprenticeship starts.

- Building greater capacity for degree apprenticeship provision – that illustrate the contribution made by DADF in transforming thinking in the sector and paving the way to achieving the higher-level impacts expected by the introduction of the degree apprenticeships, i.e. contribution to productivity improvements and social mobility.

## Boosting Numbers of Degree Apprentices and Degree Apprenticeships

Degree Apprentice Starts as a Result of DADF

4.3 As of November 2018, there were 4,464 degree apprentice starts[19] from the two phases of DADF. As shown in Figure 4.1 the number of degree apprentice starts to date as a result of DADF is lower than initially planned (based on original project bids). Policing accounted for approximately four in ten of the intended degree apprentices funded by DADF (see paragraph 4.11). These did not materialise as planned, given that it has taken nearly two years for the standards to be agreed and approved (but procurement is currently underway and could lead to significant extra numbers). This has had a clear distorting effect on numbers.

4.4 The evaluation has shown that it would take at least a full year of planning and developmental activities prior to degree apprentices starting, in particular where new standards and apprenticeships are involved, or degree apprenticeship provision represents a new type of provision for a higher education provider. Accounting for this length of time in assessing the outcomes of DADF projects presents a different picture, and indicates that the original target of degree apprentices to be delivered with the support of DADF funding will be exceeded. For example, Figure 4.2 shows originally intended starts compared with actual starts for DADF1 projects over a two-year period, i.e. Academic Year (AY) 2017/18 and AY 2018/19 (including those relatively firm plans for starts in 2018/19). In this case, the actual numbers of starts is

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[19] All projects were contacted and asked to complete returns clarifying numbers. These figures include a very small amount of estimation for the small number of cases where returns were incomplete.

higher than the original plans. The same analysis for DADF2 projects would include data for AY 2018/19 and AY 2019/20; the latter could not be provided within the timeline of this evaluation, and therefore this analysis has not been undertaken.

Figure 4.1: Numbers of All DADF Degree Apprentice Starts vs Original Bids
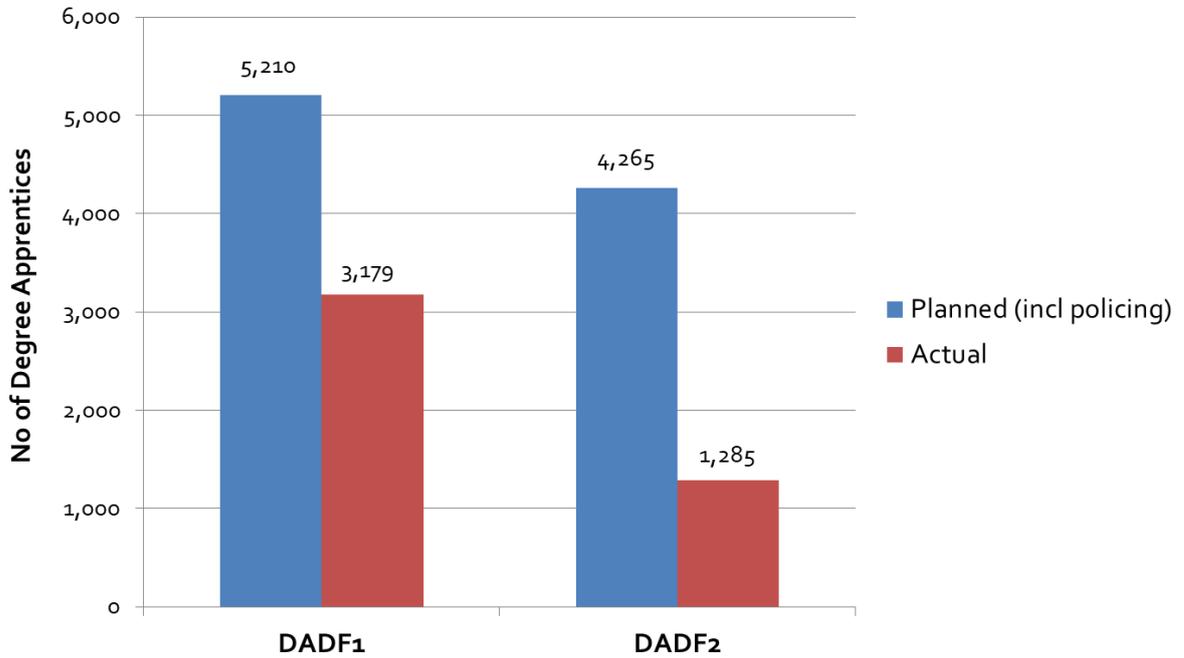
Source: Project Bids and Project Outcomes Reported by the DADF Projects, November 2018.

Figure 4.2: DADF1 Numbers of Starts vs Original Bids Over a 2-Year Period
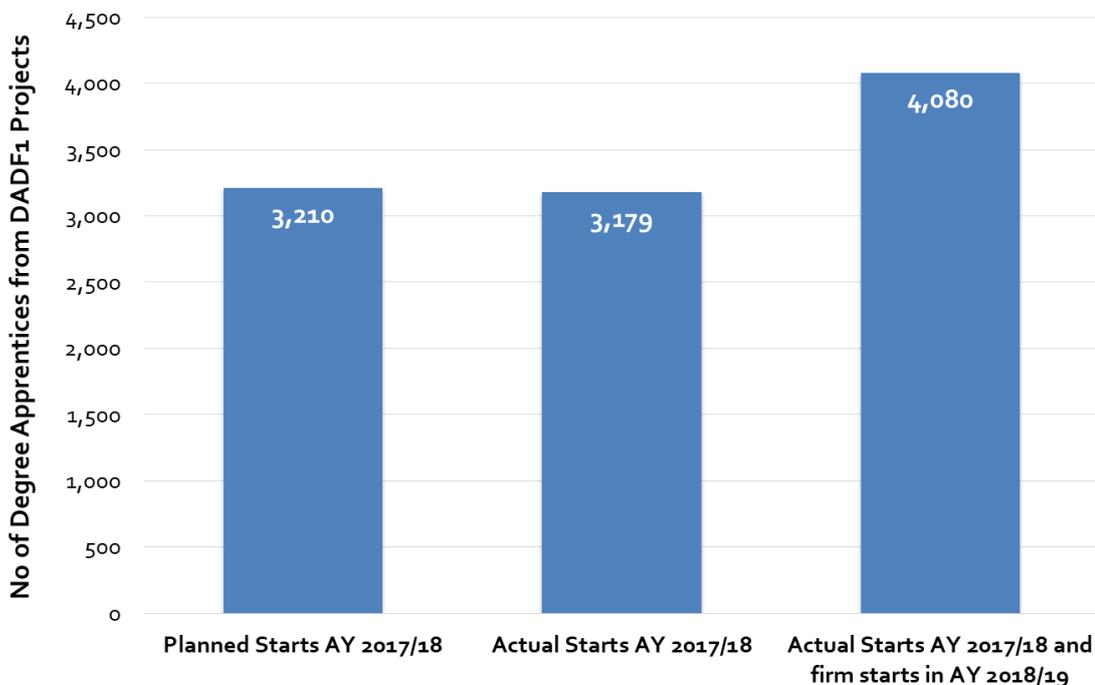
Source: Project Bids and Project Outcomes Reported by the DADF Projects, November 2018. Figures exclude planned starts for Policing.

4.5   The DADF projects represent a subset of the wider degree apprenticeship activity. To set this wider context, Figure 4.3 shows the number of apprentice starts by level of apprenticeship, for each of the last four years up to the end of the AY 2017/18. Levels 4, 5 and 6 and above, comprising a tiny proportion of the overall total, have seen an increase in the overall total. On the other hand, numbers of starts at Level 2 have been falling, with the number of starts in 2017/18 at only just over half of the number in 2014/15.

4.6   There were 6,370 starts at Level 6 in 2017/18; this is nearly four times higher than in the previous year – starting, however, from a low base. Numbers at Level 7 have increased even more quickly, with 4,500 in 2017/18 compared to negligible numbers previously. It should be noted that some of these starts at both Level 6 and Level 7 are not 'degree apprenticeships', but are higher level apprenticeships without a degree (for example, the increase in Level 7 starts is almost entirely due to such a course – Accountancy / Taxation professional – that delivers chartered status, but with no degree).

Figure 4.3: All Apprentice Starts by Level
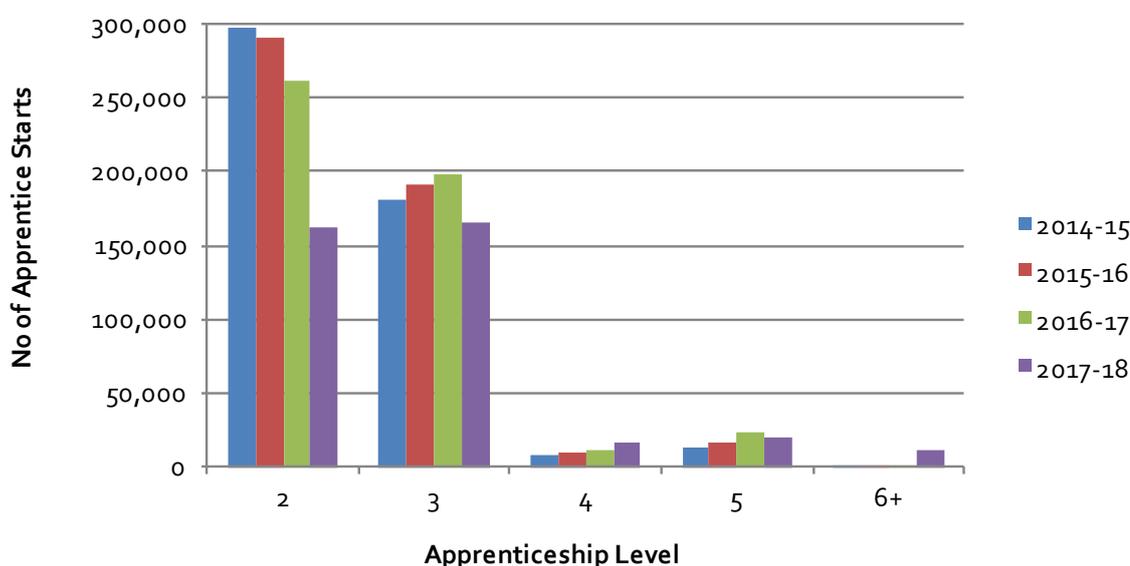
Source: FE Data Library, November 2018, DfE[20].

DADF Degree Apprenticeships

4.7   As of November 2018, DADF-funded projects are delivering or developing a wide range of degree apprenticeships. These range from roles in the public sector, such as nursing, healthcare, and policing, to those that apply to a wide range of organisations, like digital and technology solutions or chartered management, as well as those geared towards particular industries, like surveying or engineering.

4.8   The 18 DADF1 projects originally set out to deliver 125 degree apprenticeship courses in total (representing 48 unique standards). Chartered Manager was the most common individual course. Digital and Technology Solutions Professional was also included in nine of the DADF1 bids. Construction courses were also very common in original bids, but many of these have had

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[20] Starts data are also available on a national basis, published every quarter by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-apprenticeships).

to convert to other subjects or have been scrapped due to the lengthy delays in approval of standards. Of the 125 courses intended, 12 were at Level 7.

4.9 The 23 DADF2 projects originally set out 153 courses (representing 71 unique standards), with 38 of them at Level 7. As a result of the criteria in Phase 2 of the funding, there are very few DADF2 projects covering Chartered Management. Much more common among DADF2 projects are those for public sector roles, with 15 projects anticipating some sort of public sector coverage, most commonly nursing related subjects. Engineering related subjects were also common, being included in 13 DADF2 projects, covering a wide range from civil engineering to electrical or manufacturing engineering.

4.10 Figure 4.4 shows the distribution of courses according to broad sector, and indicates that the occupational/sectoral distribution of degree apprenticeships has changed between DADF1 and DADF2 projects. For DADF1 projects, Engineering and Manufacturing is the most common route for degree apprenticeships followed by Construction. In Phase 2 of the funding, Engineering and Manufacturing is still the most common route followed by Health and Science. Other notable differences between the two phases of funding include:

- Development of Social Care degree apprenticeships in Phase 2 of the funding, which was not part of DADF1 projects.

- A relatively large increase in Childcare and Education apprenticeships in Phase 2.

- A reduction of DADF-funded degree apprentices in Business and Administration among DADF2 projects (the DfE funding letter discouraged bids during the second phase of the funding that included building capacity in Level 6 Chartered Management).
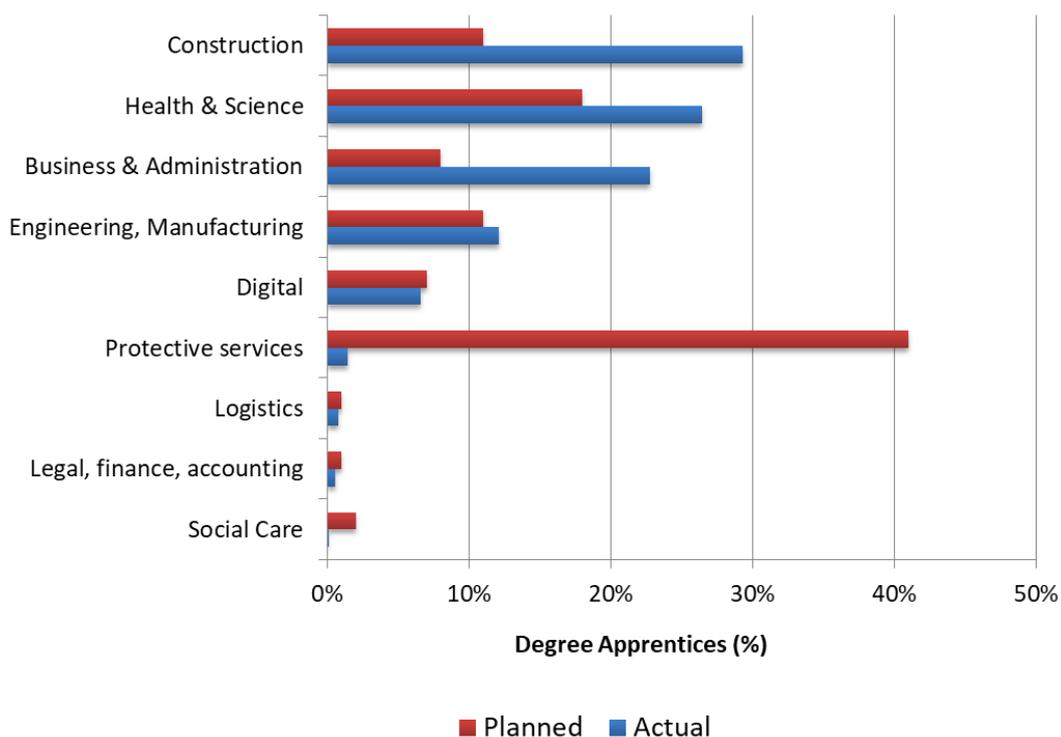
Figure 4.4: Degree Apprenticeships supported by DADF - by Sector
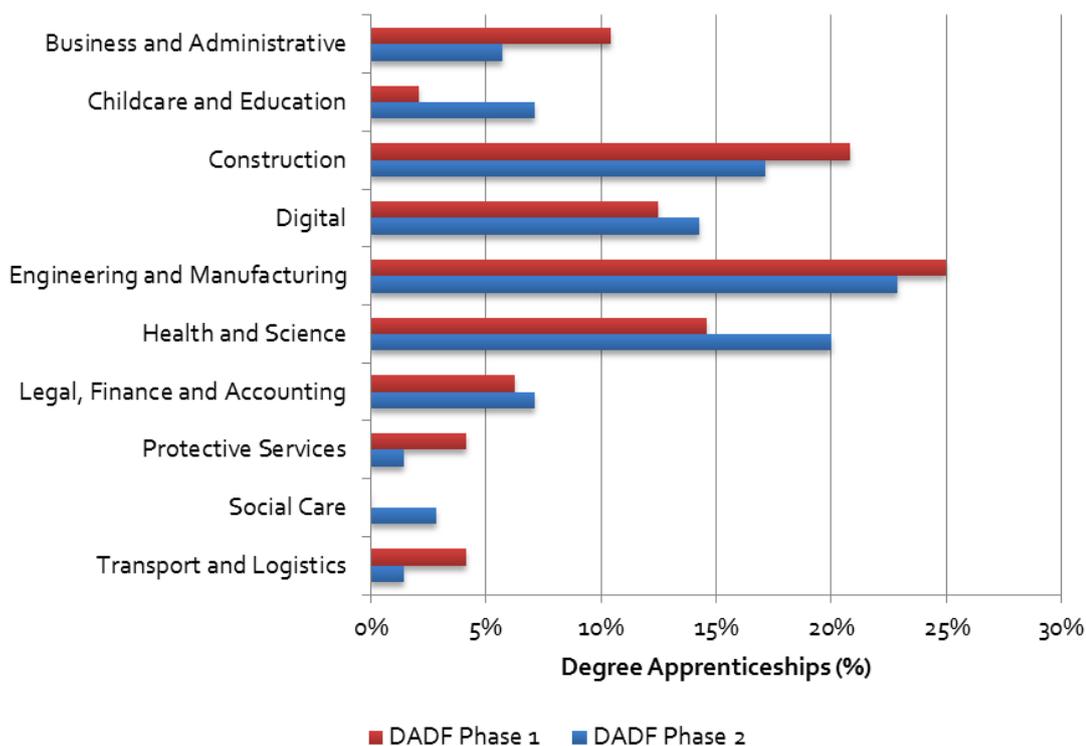
Source: DADF Projects' Business Cases.

4.11 Figure 4.5 presents learner numbers (i.e. degree apprentices) by sector, for both phases of DADF, and compares to actual outcomes as of November 2018. Policing (within Protective Services) accounts for approximately four in ten of the intended degree apprenticeships funded by DADF and only now large-scale tendering exercises are underway. If these potential starts were included, then the profile of actual starts would match the intended starts fairly closely.

Figure 4.5: Degree Apprentices Supported by DADF (All Projects), Original Plans Compared to Actual Outcome, by Sector

Source: Business Cases Outcomes Reported by the DADF Projects, November 2018.

Building Greater Capacity

4.12 Improving the readiness of higher education providers to deliver degree apprenticeships has also led to wider sector collaborations and knowledge transfer within and across institutions, closer working relationships between providers, employers and professional organisations, and institutional practices with some clear linkages to supporting future improvements in social mobility and economic or business activities. Examples of these are provided below.

Wider Sector Engagement and Knowledge Transfer

4.13 The nature of DADF-funded projects has enabled the transfer of knowledge, expertise and experience related to degree apprenticeships within institutions, between the institutions involved, and at times beyond those involved directly in the delivery of degree apprenticeships. The following two examples illustrate the impact of DADF on organisational expertise within a higher education institution, including providers not previously involved with degree apprenticeships.

Newcastle University set up a relatively small-scale project in Phase 2 of DADF to tackle a specific local skills gap, which was mainly intended to develop the internal infrastructure needed to deliver degree apprenticeships and to demonstrate the feasibility of expanding provision further. This is often a harder task for a Russell Group institution where there is less tradition of involvement in vocational teaching. The project worked across many different areas of the University to put a team in place to combine the best subject knowledge along with knowledge of teaching methods and this team worked with industry to set up the Power Engineer degree apprenticeship. Local events have been well supported and have involved both the Vice-Chancellor of the University and the local MP. The project has led to further interest across the University in launching new courses.

The **University of Brighton** project 'Building Ladders of Opportunity' intended to meet the needs of the local and regional construction industry. This included working with employers to identify, clarify and stimulate demand and use this activity to shape the development and launch of a construction sector degree apprenticeship offer. The project faced barriers, mainly around delays to the apprenticeship standard approval, meaning there have been no starts on the courses planned through DADF, i.e. Construction Management and Chartered Town Planning. However, both courses have been developed ready for delivery. For example, a part-time work-based pathway through the BSc Hons Construction Management has been developed which is accessible from the workplace and fully mapped to the apprenticeship standard. This means that once the Degree Apprenticeship is approved for delivery, employers will be able to use the pathway. These activities by the DADF project have supported the rapid growth and take up of apprenticeship development across the University. For example, the process that has been put in place for developing a revised apprenticeship approvals system and undertaking market assessments, has had a positive impact in the University being able to bring other Degree Apprenticeships online in a timely fashion. The University has 145 apprentices enrolled in Health and Science, and Education routes, with other planned starts in further routes such as Digital, Business and Administration, and Social Care.

4.14 For many projects, collaboration with other providers and relevant professional bodies has been built in from the start and featured in project bids, while in others opportunities for collaboration have become more evident as projects got underway. These collaborations can increase capacity for delivery as the following examples demonstrate:

The **University of Lincoln** set up a project in Phase 1 to tackle a skills gap within the food industry, in partnership with Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) and the National Skills Academy for Food and Drink (NSAFD). The project was intended to set up new qualifications in a sector where there was a perceived skills gap at higher levels and to do this by joining up two well established centres of excellence: SHU is home to the National Centre of Excellence in Food Engineering and Lincoln University is home to the National Centre for Food Manufacturing (NCFM). As the project has gone on and standards have been approved, Lincoln and Sheffield Hallam have become more independent in this area but are both benefitting from the early collaboration as this gave impetus to engagement with employers and has created demand nationally.

As stated by the University of Lincoln:

'The project has been a catalyst for enhancing networking opportunities for both universities and employers. There are many examples of where the project has achieved this but of particular note is the collaboration between the four universities engaged in the development of the Food Engineering standard. Lincoln and SHU are working with Harper Adams and Wolverhampton universities to develop a standard curriculum with employers. SHU as the National Centre for Excellence in Food Engineering have routinely shared their exemplary food engineering knowledge to develop capacity in the other three institutions. The Trailblazer Group itself is comprised of a mix of employer members brought together through their association with the individual universities.

We have sought to ensure that the knowledge and experience gained by the project's team has been shared across our institutions and the NSAFD's employer network to yield wider benefit. At Lincoln the NCFM team are supporting the implementation of Degree Apprenticeships across the institution, e.g. in nursing. We have recently hosted a number of high-profile visits and have given presentations to several bodies with interests in higher level skills including to our two local LEPs, County Council and Local Council officials and our local MP, all of whom are very encouraged by the developments.'

As also noted throughout this report, the **University of Cumbria** led a large-scale collaborative project to develop a degree apprenticeship in Policing in Phase 1 of DADF. The consortium of nine providers worked alongside the National College of Policing and an employer group led by Thames Valley Police to form a Trailblazer board to develop new standards. This project is a clear case where, in order to meet a potentially very large demand, a consortium approach is needed, delivering degree apprenticeships in different locations nationally with providers most of whom had previously had some involvement in policing training. The links to the College of Policing and the employer group are also a key part of the delivery of this project that could result in several thousand degree apprenticeships over the next couple of years, in a major transformation to police force recruitment.

Improving Economic Performance and Productivity

4.15 Improving productivity has long been an aim of the UK Government, with most measures lagging well below international competitors. Degree apprenticeships aim to help improve productivity by equipping the workforce with high-level skills that can support more productive jobs. Improving productivity was a strong theme in launching DADF and, as such, features strongly in projects. Most of the projects involve at least some element of addressing skills gaps in the local labour market. In general, the consultations with the DADF projects also indicate that all higher education providers involved in DADF are fully aware of relevant strategies and work undertaken locally by LEPs or Combined Authorities or Chambers of Commerce. In some cases, this has been a major focus with a specific emphasis on working with others locally and addressing a certain perceived deficiency. Examples of higher education providers involved in provision of degree apprenticeships aiming to tackle local skills needs and gaps are provided below.

The focus of the project led by the **University of Bedfordshire** is on STEM apprenticeship education and training relating to clearly identified industry needs and specific skills gaps in the South East Midlands and other areas adjoining the University's campuses, in relation to cyber security, food science and technology, computing and construction quantity-surveying.

Investment in Higher and degree apprenticeships forms a vital part of the University's vision for high-level skills growth in response to related sectors' employer demand, and the four new degree apprenticeship areas for development of standards correlated closely with the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership Skills Strategy or with local authorities' skills priorities.

The University of Kent set up an early programme of employer engagement to support their DADF2 project, intended to tackle a local skills gap. The skills gap was already evident in construction-related areas and, with new major infrastructure projects planned locally, was likely to get worse in the absence of action. Early stage activity in the DADF project involved extensive consultation with local employers and sector events, such as the Kent Construction Expo and a local 'Constructing Excellence' event. The engagement activity identified a number of local employers, and set up a group along with local authorities, the Kent Construction Group and employers to develop relevant courses. Working with these other stakeholders, the University developed courses in Quantity Surveying, Architect and Architectural Assistant and Town Planner.

4.16 The following examples also shows that degree apprenticeships are seen as providing opportunities for addressing skills gaps and upskilling in science and innovation and emerging new skills required by key sectors and businesses operating in these areas of the economy.

Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) has worked with the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute (WTSI) and the Tech Partnership to develop a new Bioinformatics Scientist strand of the proposed Data Scientist degree apprenticeship (DSDA). This project was prompted by a clear skills gap, with little in this area anywhere in the world and with Cambridge as a natural home for new and innovative skills. A Trailblazer facilitated by the Tech Partnership is in place for DSDA. WTSI are very involved with the project – the project manager is also seconded to the University from WTSI. The Steering Group also includes other employers such as Global Genecorp, GSK, Congenica, Eagle Genomics, and Cancer Research Technology, etc. This group is chaired by the head of the Department at ARU, and reports to the Dean of Science and Technology, with plans originally approved by the Vice-Chancellor.

The **University of Sheffield** successfully bid for a project in Phase 1 of DADF to work with SHU and Sheffield's Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) to address a gap in high-level skills in engineering. The AMRC is one of the seven world-class centres of innovation forming the High Value Manufacturing Catapult, intended to be a major catalyst for future growth in UK manufacturing. Learners have access to state of the art manufacturing facilities – tools, machinery and laboratories – so they can learn how to use such machinery with their employers and can help these businesses to be more productive. There is also access to other specialist resources such as the University of Sheffield's Diamond building and SHU's Materials and Engineering Research Institute. The benefits from the project are intended to support economic growth in Sheffield City Region and more widely (e.g. the Northern Powerhouse initiative).

4.17 A range of employers is engaged with DADF-supported degree apprenticeships, including SMEs and large corporates, as illustrated by a few of the names of businesses involved in DADF listed below.

4.18 At this stage, however, it is too early to quantify the extent to which DADF will enhance productivity for those employees that are participating in the programme. To aid this assessment, **Harper Adams University** has devised a 'Productivity Tool' designed to enable employers to see increases in productivity that potentially could come from degree apprenticeships. This is a systematic process of identifying the relevant measures within a business, and the relationships between them that are indicative of changes in productivity. Businesses can use the tool to measure the productivity of their apprentices. This is a novel approach designed to capture the specific contribution of apprentices, rather than relying on the wider productivity of the business as a whole.

Supporting Social Mobility

4.19 Social mobility was one of the explicit criteria for funding DADF2 projects, and it features more strongly in those projects than DADF1 projects. Desk-based review of the DADF-funded projects' business cases and consultations with the higher education providers involved in these projects provide some information about activities that promote widening participation and social mobility. For example, the evaluation has shown that, in addressing social mobility issues, DADF projects have been involved with two types of learners:

a. There has been a lot of activity in raising awareness at schools and colleges, aiming to offer an alternative to the negative image of building up debt that some young people have, especially in deprived areas.

b. A lot of the early interest in degree apprentices has come from employers who have existing staff who are good at their job, but who never reached degree level. In some of these cases, individuals undertaking degree apprenticeships means they are reaching levels of attainment that would not have been a realistic option otherwise.

4.20 The first of the above activities tends to focus on areas relatively local to the higher education providers that are traditionally of low higher-education participation. Often the target groups

are those learners who would never have considered degree-level education as they would have written it off as being too expensive (including the opportunity cost of three years when they would not be earning any substantial income). By liaising with schools and colleges, producing accessible and appropriate guidance and information, and by holding events, projects have been able to generate significant interest from young people and their parents in these areas. An example of this work is provided below.

The **University of Northampton** has a programme of provision of learning for cadets, which fits well with the University's wider work on social innovation and change. Cadets tend to be young individuals predominantly from relatively deprived areas with low higher education participation, and the role of the University is to match up cadets with appropriate employers while also developing a number of degree apprenticeships to cater for the local employer demand generated by this activity.

Furthermore, to reach this target group of young individuals, the University has developed new recruitment and assessment methods. For example, the University now routinely uses apps and a website, and this online platform enables cadets to take an online test and to express their preferences so they can be effectively matched up to appropriate vacancies on the National Apprenticeship Service vacancies list. As a result of the success of this approach, the University now aims to create a method that can be replicated elsewhere to enable social mobility within this group of young people nationally.

4.21 In many cases, the DADF projects have worked closely with other widening participation initiatives. Some examples of these projects include:

- The **University of Northampton** project works specifically with Widening Participation teams and National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP)[21] and helps local FE colleges to build up pathways to help learners' progress.

- **Sheffield Hallam University** has been developing an innovative and collaborative approach to engaging and supporting learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, again working with NCOP teams to set up degree apprenticeships that could be life changing for some.

- The **University of Sunderland** has been doing a lot of work on Widening Participation, working closely with NCOP and the North East Collaborative Outreach Programme, by going into local schools, many in very deprived areas, and helping the learners to understand the skills they need to fulfil their potential. These visits include sessions on communication skills, debating and mock interviews.

- **Leeds Trinity University** has set up a programme to develop routes to degree apprenticeships for under-represented groups and disadvantaged groups locally.

4.22 The second type of promoting social mobility is less obvious, and it is primarily associated with widening access and participation in higher education. Participation in DADF projects benefits existing employees by enabling them to reach a higher level of qualification. This, in turn, would potentially lead to employment benefits associated with social mobility such as faster career progression and higher salary. Some examples of this type of activity undertaken by DADF projects are described below:

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[21] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/national-collaborative-outreach-programme-ncop/

- Many higher education providers among the DADF-funded projects are setting up nursing degree apprenticeships, and in most cases, these are offered primarily to existing staff. In many cases, employees are able to progress from junior roles like support work through to more advanced roles such as Nursing Associate at Level 5 and ultimately Registered Nurse at Level 6 and possibly beyond.

- The **University of Bedfordshire** has set up a number of degree apprenticeships that are primarily recruiting existing staff, giving them a chance to progress further than they would otherwise have done. The University has also partnered with a private provider to deliver Level 2 English and Maths where necessary so that prior qualifications are not a barrier.

4.23   In general, however, assessing the contribution and effects of DADF on social mobility is not possible at this stage. It needs to be noted that DADF2 projects (that have focused on social mobility) have been in operation for just over a year. Therefore, it is far too early to identify and capture the impact of DADF (and degree apprenticeships in general) on the trajectories of social mobility.

5. Consultations and Feedback on Degree Apprenticeships

5.1 One of the objectives of the evaluation was to explore learners' and employers' perceptions of benefits from their involvement with degree apprenticeships (see paragraph 1.7 in Section 1 of this report). The evaluation also aimed to explore funded projects' perceptions of key success factors and barriers to develop and deliver provision for degree apprentices. This section provides an overview of this feedback provided on these issues by higher education providers, employers and learners.

Feedback from Higher Education Providers

5.2 Higher education providers involved in the DADF-funded projects are positive about their involvement in the development and delivery of degree apprenticeships. Nearly all projects are expecting that degree apprenticeship activity will be expanding significantly in the future. There has also been consensus among the DADF projects that numbers will grow in the future as the process of spending levy funding becomes more familiar for employers.

5.3 Most providers expect expansion to come through: a) offering more degree apprenticeships as standards are approved and internal validation gives clearance to set up more courses; and b) recruiting larger numbers to existing courses. Many higher education providers currently have strategy documents that include ambitions for growth in degree apprentices, some aiming/targeting for a certain percentage of intake of learners as degree apprentices.

5.4 One particular expectation for an increase in numbers is from public sector degree apprenticeships. For example, many National Health Service (NHS) Trusts have been wrestling with the difficulties of funding backfill for staff pursuing the Registered Nursing degree apprenticeship (as the DADF projects cannot fund this element) and as ways of dealing with this emerge, numbers may grow quickly. Similarly, as large-scale procurement in Policing completes, large numbers will be recruited. Other public sector routes like Teaching and Social Work may be a little further behind; nevertheless, higher education providers perceive these as offering the potential for significant numbers over the next few years.

5.5 For the higher education providers involved in DADF projects, the DADF funding has positively impacted upon their developing and delivering degree apprenticeships to date. Across both phases of DADF funding, higher education providers stated that, had they not had the DADF funding, their activities would have been less well targeted, less ambitious and would have progressed slowly. Key benefits of the DADF funding that have been highlighted by higher education providers are summarised below (and have been discussed in more detail in the previous sections of the report):

- Without this development funding, materials used would have been less sophisticated or less well tailored to the skills needed locally.

- DADF funding has been useful in providing a focus to enable those involved to demonstrate that there is commitment behind the development of degree apprenticeships.

- As well as providing an internal focus, the publicity around the awarding of DADF can be useful externally, to help to raise awareness and to foster employer engagement.

- In some cases, without DADF, none of the planned activity would have happened, especially where DADF has been primarily used to recruit or buy out staff time for the various activities needed to design and deliver the degree apprenticeship provision.

- The skills gap would still have been addressed but it would have taken longer, would have been less comprehensive and some of the good intentions would have been lost as things moved on.

- Without the extra funding, there would have been less business engagement, lower conversion rates and so on, resulting in fewer starts. DADF has effectively allowed projected learner numbers to double across all degree apprenticeships offered.

5.6 Higher education providers also identified a few barriers that impacted on their timely development and delivery of degree apprenticeships. These are summarised below.

Standards

5.7 The most common difficulty faced by projects has been delays in standards being ready. Delays in standards have two main implications for providers:

- Firstly, because of the lead-in times needed in some cases to develop courses and to secure internal validation, the launch of courses has to be delayed. This can be mitigated to some extent where providers have more than one intake during the year, but still many rely on having approvals all signed off in time to recruit for September.

- The second implication is simply down to the uncertainty of planning future course development and the risk of putting everything in place and having employers ready, only to find that standard delays mean shelving plans and disappointing employers.

5.8 However, higher education providers have used a range of techniques to deal with delays and uncertainty. Where possible, existing standards have been tailored towards the originally intended standard, while in other circumstances, alternative provision has been planned instead.

Non-Levy Contracts

5.9 For some higher education providers, their plans relied on being able to market to SMEs; many providers pointed out that the vast majority of businesses they deal with locally are non-levy employers. The process for bidding for non-levy contracts, however, has been lengthy and frustrating for some providers, and further delays to the tendering process announced over summer 2018 led to further difficulties in some cases. In response, many higher education providers have concentrated on large employers; in quite a few cases, this has not affected plans too much, but in some cases this has been a major blow to initial plans.

Future Policy

5.10 The main concern on the part of DADF-funded providers is over the review of funding bands, with a consistent message coming from the sector that they consider some areas to be in danger of becoming no longer viable, should funding bands become squeezed. While some

accept that there may be scope to reduce some bands, especially if volumes can be increased, nearly all providers felt that future delivery of degree apprenticeships in their institutions potentially could be jeopardised.

5.11 One further issue raised by many providers was the apparent move towards degree-level qualifications that would not contain an actual degree. Many providers felt this undermined the aim of parity of esteem between degree apprenticeships and regular degrees. The consensus was that a degree apprenticeship with no degree is less attractive to the learner, as it is potentially not transferable to a different job or profession.

Awareness of Degree Apprenticeships

5.12 Many providers have found a widespread lack of awareness, whether in schools, colleges, with young people, parents and amongst employers, even large levy-paying ones. This has meant extra resources to ensure they could attract enough learners and employers and ongoing efforts to try to ensure continuing interest.

Employers' Responsiveness and Readiness

5.13 In a couple of cases, higher education providers have dedicated resources and time to work with specific employers, that have then gone onto select different providers during their procurement processes. Other issues include:

- Employers not always ready as yet to utilise their levy pot, or commit to taking on apprentices;

- Employers only willing to take on a small number of apprentices (which means a relatively high cost per unit for providers); and

- Difficulty in synchronising development of degree apprenticeship programmes with employers' recruitment timelines.

Employers' Perceptions of Degree Apprenticeships

5.14 Consultations were held with a number of employers of degree apprentices. In some cases, these were staff that had a responsibility for degree apprentice recruitment and development; in other cases, they were the managers of degree apprentices. Both public and private sector businesses were represented, and employers interviewed covered a range of sectors. The main messages emerging from these discussions are summarised below:

- Degree apprenticeships offering better tailored recruitment: compared to a graduate recruitment scheme, degree apprenticeships offer a means of recruiting staff with skills that are tailored to a specific industry, rather than those who have acquired more general degree-level qualifications but then need to be trained again for the particular industry. As stated by one employer: 'It provides us with employees who have specific knowledge of the industry'.

- Upskilling of existing staff: by doing this, employers believe that they are getting the most out of their employees and can expect them to take on more demanding and more

productive tasks. For example, employees are often expected to move from doing smaller routine tasks to planning and managing projects as they progress through their degree apprenticeship and they can expect a significant pay rise once they complete it.

- Enabling recruitment in non-urban areas: especially in more rural locations, recruitment can be a challenge. In these cases, employers believe that degree apprenticeships can offer a means of recruiting young people locally who would not have considered a degree otherwise (often due to the costs involved in traditional undergraduate study).

- Fostering retention and loyalty among employees: employers are fully aware of the investment they are making in their employees when they take on a degree apprentice and mostly expect this to translate into employee loyalty.

5.15 In addition to these benefits, employers consulted have highlighted some other issues, as follows:

- More flexibility or other incentives may be needed for businesses that are less used to having apprentices, and, in particular, those that are not used to coping with employees having time out of the office.

- Mostly employers see degree apprenticeships as a worthwhile investment. One of the perceived risks, however, is paying for training with no guarantee that the apprentice will remain as an employee at the end of their apprenticeship.

Learners' Perceptions of Degree Apprenticeships

5.16 The evaluation also sought views from degree apprentices to explore what they thought of degree apprenticeships, how they found out about them, what alternatives they might have pursued otherwise, and how they feel they are managing so far. The main messages from this feedback are summarised below:

- Degree apprenticeships offering a realistic opportunity for degree-level study: for many degree apprentices, this was their only realistic opportunity to reach a degree-level qualification. In some cases, family responsibility meant that going to University and not earning for three or more years was far from realistic; others had passed the point at which they might have considered doing a traditional degree, and were now studying with an existing employer at a level that would not have been possible in any other way.

- Degree apprenticeships enabling an ideal work and study balance: most of those interviewed for this evaluation found that the combination of studying while working could be difficult at times. Mostly they were confident that they could cope, and they enjoyed the challenge, but at times – especially around exams – it could be stressful. Having a good relation with the employer was important as some allowed additional study leave or flexibility where needed.

5.17 It is also worth noting that almost without exception, degree apprentices mentioned that their degree apprenticeships were something that came about by chance. Often this was via friends or relatives, but hardly ever from a careers adviser or 'Information, Advice and Guidance'

services from schools or colleges. On the other hand, existing employees mostly found out about the possibility through their employers.

6.   Conclusions

6.1   DADF was established to improve the readiness of higher education providers to deliver degree apprenticeships that meet employer and economic needs (and that ultimately contribute to both), improve productivity, and increase social mobility and diversity in higher education and the labour market.

6.2   This evaluation has found that:

- DADF has been instrumental in the development of degree apprenticeships among higher education providers that received this funding. Much of these would either not have taken place without DADF or would have proceeded much more slowly.

- Many providers now have the right infrastructure in place to be able to scale up existing activity and to launch new courses for young learners continuing their education and for those mature learners returning to education, and good practice is starting to spread across the sector, mostly a direct consequence of DADF.

- For example, DADF funding has enabled closer partnerships between employers and providers. Most additional employer engagement would not have been undertaken without the DADF funding. The funding has also enabled partnerships to be built between higher and further education providers.

- Public sector procurement processes are now becoming common, and should lead to large numbers of degree apprenticeships over the next couple of years. This is likely to encourage providers to increase capacity and to consider degree apprenticeships as an integral part of their future strategic plans.

- It is too early to establish the impact of DADF or degree apprenticeships on either business performance and productivity or on social mobility. However, there is evidence that degree apprenticeships are delivered at large in areas where there are labour market failures (at sector or business/organisational level); all things being equal, addressing these failures would most likely lead to improvements in productivity.

- There is also some evidence that degree apprenticeships are a driver of social mobility, although at present this evidence is relatively weak. Higher education providers are working with other initiatives like NCOP to ensure that synergies between different policies are exploited. This should help social mobility, as degree apprenticeships become more widespread as an option for those who would not otherwise have considered higher education.

- However, a range of factors, some of which have been external to the projects that received DADF funding, has hampered degree apprenticeship progress. In these cases, higher education providers have persevered with developing and delivering degree apprenticeships because they have received funding through DADF.

- For example, delays in standards and difficulties with non-levy tendering in particular have been frustrating for many providers, and delivery of outcomes has extended beyond the

timescales initially envisaged for many projects. While some of the initial difficulties faced by providers have now lessened, their main reported concern over future degree apprenticeship activity is that revised funding bands will create new challenges and may make some courses not viable.

- Until the policy environment reaches a relatively stable state, it may be difficult for the degree apprenticeship market to work as efficiently as could be the case. Going forward, higher education providers will be less willing to devote resources towards it until they are confident that future changes will not have the potential to undermine their plans.

- The evaluation has also found that although a lot can be achieved within a relatively short period of time, allowing for a developmental period to explain, better understand, set up and feed back on such a transformational policy would have reduced transactional inefficiencies and promoted more strategic approaches to be adopted, e.g. well-thought demand and feasibility assessments or pricing policies and business models.

Appendix A – List of Consultees

Organisation	Contact(s)
Employers	
2 Sisters Food Group	Janette Graham, Apprenticeship Programme Manager
Bakkavor	Cian Short, Group Apprentice Manager
Polypipe	Mark Benson, Manager
Uniserve	Neil Roll, Apprenticeship Manager
West London Mental Health NHS Trust	Ali Webster, Head of Staff Development
Learners	
Harper Adams University	Jason, Food Industry Technical Professional Degree Apprentice
Royal Mail	Ian MacDonald, Supply Chain Professional Degree Apprentice
Wavin	Kim McMahon, Maintenance Engineering Degree Apprentice
Projects	
Anglia Ruskin University	Jon Bouffler, Director, Learning Development Services Tom Taylor, Head of Degrees at Work Suparna Ghose, Principal Consultant – Strategy and Partnerships
Aston University	Sheila Rattu, Degree Apprenticeships Projects Manager Sasha Manley, Degree Apprenticeship Lead Ian Nabney, Executive Dean, School of Engineering & Applied Sciences
Birmingham City University	Resham Gill, Higher Apprenticeships Manager Sarah Felton, Widening Participation and Partnerships Manager
Blackburn College	Stefano Pacelli, External Funding Manager Catherine Pearson, Bid Manager Nick Sutcliffe, Executive Dean (Higher Education) Nicola Clayton, Director Business Development/Engagement Ruth Yates, Head of School (Business, Law and Education) Dr Katrinna Macfarlane, Head of School (Health, Science and Technology)
Blackpool and the Fylde College	Cheryl Dunn, Vice Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement Linda Smith, Head of Management Information and Funding Candice Downie, Head of Higher Education
Buckinghamshire New University	Steve Dewhurst, Director of Strategic Development and Planning Julie Irwin, Assistant Director – Learning & Teaching Sean MacNey, Pro-Vice-Chancellor

Coventry University (CU)	Aidan Friend, Chief Operating Officer
	Chitro Ghose, Programmes Manager
	Kerry McGreavy, Apprenticeship Manager
Harper Adams University	Andrew Jones, Director of Learning, Teaching and International
	Zoey Sermon, Apprenticeship Development Officer
	Clare Keegan, Business Development Manager
Keele University	Lou Taylor-Murison, Development Manager – Engaged and Experimental Learning
	Dawn Johnson, Head of CPD, School of Nursing and Midwifery
	Terry Dray, Associate Director Employability and Employer Engagement
	Hugh Morgan, Employer Engagement Manager for Apprenticeships
Leeds Trinity University	Ian Rowe, Director of Knowledge Exchange and Business Development
	Nadira Mirza, Project Manager – Driving Social Mobility through Degree Apprenticeships
Liverpool John Moores University	Dr Edward Harcourt, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (External Engagement)
	Dr Jo Pritchard, Degree Apprenticeships Project Manager
	Professor Andy Ross, Academic Lead on Digital Apprenticeships
London South Bank University	Alison May, Apprenticeship Manager
	Neeta Barot, Business Development Manager
Middlesex University	Darryll Bravenboer, Deputy Director, Institute for Work-Based Learning
Newcastle University	Stuart Edwards, Dean of Undergraduate Studies
	Dr Neal Wade, Academic Lead
Northumbria University	Sue Graham, Head of Local Growth
Nottingham Trent University	Felicity Miller, Head of Apprenticeships and UK College Partnerships
	Eunice Simmons, Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor
Sheffield Hallam University	Conor Moss, Director of Education and Employer Partnerships
	Mark Rayner, Degree Apprenticeship Development Manager
Southampton Solent University	Michelle Jones, Director of School, Sport, Health and Social Sciences
Teesside University	Laura Woods, Director of Academic Enterprise
The Open University	Kate Fawcett, Head of Operation, Social Work
	Mick McCormick, Head of Social Work
University of Bedfordshire	Mary Malcolm, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

	Eamonn Keenan, Head of CPD and Short Courses, Innovation & Enterprise Service
University of Brighton	Victoria Faulkner, Head of Apprenticeships
University of Cumbria	Julian Parker-McLeod, Principal Lecturer Criminology, Policing & Social Sciences
	Louise Nelson, Head of Department, Nursing, Health & Professional Practice
	Peter Train, Apprenticeship Development Manager
University of Derby	Gaynor Davis, Head of Strategic Bid Support
	Jane Lowe, Acting Head of Apprenticeships
	Jessamie Self, Project Manager
	Kirsty Tallis, Project Manager, Operations – Apprenticeships
University of Gloucestershire	Sarah Limb, Programme Manager Higher and Degree Apprenticeships
	Wendy Monteith, Curriculum Advisor
	Zoe Boucher, Higher & Degree Apprenticeship Manager
	Dr. Polly Pick, Director of Business Engagement and Partnership
University of Greenwich	Dr Christine Couper, Director of Strategic Planning
	Rosie Fean, Project Manager
	Rajitha Milsted, Apprenticeships Coordinator
	Javier Bonet, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)
University of Hertfordshire	Julie Newlan, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Business and International
	Kate Byford, Head of Degree Apprenticeships
	Frankie Taylor, Project Support Officer
University of Kent	Scott Wildman, Director Centre for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships
	Hannah Sullivan-Guckian, DADF Project Manager
	Donna Jones, Project Officer
University of Lincoln	Val Braybrooks, Dean, The National Centre for Food Manufacturing
	Sharon Green, Deputy Head (Apprenticeships and Business Partnerships) National Centre for Food Manufacturing
	Mark Swainson, Deputy Head of the National Centre for Food Manufacturing and Lead for Higher Education and Research
	Justine Fosh, National Skills Academy for Food & Drink
	Dr Martin Howarth, Director of the National Centre of Excellence for Food Engineering (NCEFE), Sheffield Hallam University
University of Northampton	Simon Denny, Director of Research, Impact and Enterprise
	Simon Longhurst, Apprenticeship Manager

University of Salford	Paul Ward, Head of UK Partnerships
University of Sheffield	Dr Tony Strike, Director of Strategy, Planning and Change Jackie Toyne, Project Manager
University of Suffolk	Mohammad Dastbaz, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Karen Hinton, Head of Student Recruitment and Market Development Ellen Buck, Head of Learning Services Corinne Longland-Malam, Business Development Manager – Apprenticeships Cara Shirley, Business Development Manager – Apprenticeships
University of Sunderland	Tim Pain, Assistant Director, Enterprise & Innovation Directorate Nigel Pearson, Business Development Manager (Faculty of Education and Society)
University of the West of England (UWE), Bristol	Dr John Lanham, Assistant Vice-Chancellor, Director UWE Strategic Regional Partnerships Katy Sensier, Project Officer – Research, Business and Innovation
University of Warwick	Sam Hardy, Business & Regional Partnerships Lead
University of Winchester	Neil Marriott, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Stella McKnight, Director for Employer Partnerships David Way, Visiting Professor, Faculty of Business, Law and Sport
University of Wolverhampton	Jackie Dunne, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Michele Roberts, Head of Apprenticeship Hub Sharon Thompson, Apprenticeship Development Manager Alison Felce, Head of Work-Based Learning Michelle Lowe, Strategic Lead, Director of Education

Appendix B – DADF-Funded Projects

Lead Higher Education Provider	Key Project Activities	
	DADF Phase 1 (2016/17)	**DADF Phase 2 (2017/18)**
1. **Birmingham City University**	- Release two senior lecturers from each of the four faculties to develop new degree apprenticeships - Convert existing degree programmes to apprenticeships - Intensive employer engagement - Work actively with professional bodies - Build on partnerships with other HEIs and FE colleges - Support two new Trailblazers - Create four new university wide operational groups to focus on overcoming key operational barriers - Produce staff guides and process charts for introducing DAs to widely disseminate to other HEIs	- Further accelerate the delivery of degree apprenticeships - Review of internal process and develop new in-house skills and systems to align to national apprenticeship processes - Provide a targeted marketing campaign communicating with disadvantaged groups, SMEs and other stakeholders (taking account of social mobility within postcodes) - Working with Skills Engine, STEAMHouse and the wider West Midlands business groups e.g. Midlands Engine, to help identify opportunities for early to mid-career individuals to progress to an apprenticeship - Building from the 'employer champion', to put in place a recognised communication channel for employers
2. **Buckinghamshire New University**	Draw together expertise and increase capacity through a central institutional strategic team, to provide assistance with: - The rapid development of quality curriculum - Designing content including on-line delivery, assessment design and delivery processes and systems to meet the needs of regional employers	
3. **Leeds Trinity University**	- Work with employers to create a new Trailblazer and DA for Supply Chain Managers - Map existing degree programmes against DA standards	- Awareness raising with under-represented groups - Employer engagement and market building - Programme development - Institutional preparedness

Lead Higher Education Provider	Key Project Activities	
	DADF Phase 1 (2016/17)	**DADF Phase 2 (2017/18)**
		• Evaluation
4. **Liverpool John Moores University**	Support a dedicated project team to: • Extend the capacity of one faculty and develop the capability in another • Lead and manage internal and stakeholder engagement • Review and adapt existing processes to develop capability within central University service departments	
5. **London South Bank University**	• Develop degree apprenticeships to meet existing standards • Work with five FE partners to create broad and inclusive progression routes for apprentices and provide new employability pathways and create a more market-focused, responsive and accessible offer to employers	
6. **Northumbria University**	• Conversion of existing full-time and part-time provision so it can be delivered through the degree apprenticeship route • Building on existing employer relationships and market knowledge • Working with Trailblazer groups to develop new degree apprenticeship standards • Developing technology-enhanced learning products for blended delivery	
7. **Nottingham Trent University**	• Develop new methods of delivery for existing courses to suit degree apprenticeship standards • Extend the use of NTU's Student Dashboard to develop new metrics to monitor learner engagement	

Lead Higher Education Provider	Key Project Activities	
	DADF Phase 1 (2016/17)	DADF Phase 2 (2017/18)
	facilitating retention • Ongoing stakeholder/employer engagement across the University	
8. Sheffield Hallam University	• Develop and deliver degree apprenticeships in Sheffield City Region's priority sectors • Collaborate with employers, Sheffield City Region LEP, FE colleges and the NHS • Create integrated pathways between FE and higher education through coordinated investment in business engagement, culture change and the introduction of new degree apprenticeships	• Pilot an innovative and collaborative approach to engaging and supporting learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, enabling access to the opportunities degree apprenticeships represent, increasing their social mobility and capital • Work in close partnership and in full alignment with the regional NCOP programme
9. The University of Sheffield	• Work with SHU to develop apprenticeship engineering provision within the region and beyond • Develop the curriculum for the new DAs with employer input	
10. University of Cumbria	• Produce 'a national framework for delivery and quality assurance', allowing for a network of HEIs to deliver degree-level apprenticeships for the Police Constable Standard, on behalf of police forces within England • The development of an academic framework to allow the delivery of degree apprenticeship programmes producing suitably qualified police officers is overseen by the College of Policing; ensuring standards are met and maintained • The creation, in partnership with the employer group, of a suitable end point assessment for the Police Constable degree apprenticeship	The project brings together Further Education Colleges and NHS organisations working with the University to: • Identify ways in which the partnership can collectively increase access to higher education and progression to nursing degree apprenticeships • Develop delivery and learner support solutions which reduce barriers to participation in nurse training and address nursing skills shortages • Focus on learners from communities which face challenges related to their location (including remote, rural, coastal and city conurbations)
11. University of Derby	• Develop a portfolio of five new degree apprenticeships • All DAs developed to include online study support	

Lead Higher Education Provider	Key Project Activities	
	DADF Phase 1 (2016/17)	DADF Phase 2 (2017/18)
	materials • Development of an online portal to facilitate employer access to assessment and monitoring date on apprentice progress	
12. University of Gloucestershire	• Design and development of four degree apprenticeships across two schools • Support to build up the University's capacity to design and deliver Higher and degree apprenticeships as a mainstream, embedded part of the University's portfolio offer	
13. University of Greenwich	• Employer engagement to increase understanding and capacity to take on and manage apprentices, especially in the SME sector • Build systems and processes to facilitate a flexible and responsive learning environment that enables apprentices to enjoy a quality learner experience • Develop a range of specific proposals particularly in STEM and healthcare to provide a rapid deployment of significant DA numbers in important sectors of the local economy • Develop new apprenticeship programmes against existing standards or to work closely with already established Trailblazer groups • The project looks to develop Trailblazers in three areas: Paramedic Science, Community Sport, and Transport and Logistics	
14. University of Lincoln	Facilitate the launch of the first DAs for the Food Manufacturing sector through a collaborative partnership between the University of Lincoln, Sheffield Hallam	

Lead Higher Education Provider	Key Project Activities	
	DADF Phase 1 (2016/17)	**DADF Phase 2 (2017/18)**
	University, and the National Skills Academy for Food and Drink	
15. **University of Salford**	• Expand the University's portfolio of degree apprenticeship programmes across the institution • Employer co-design and delivery of degree apprenticeship programmes • Build staff capacity and capability • Demand led curriculum planning	
16. **University of Sunderland**	• Develop the provision of new degree apprenticeships • Create a Degree Apprenticeship Hub • Release academic staff time to work on the development of apprenticeship provision with employers • Mentoring for employer staff to support their role as apprenticeship supervisors	• Development of additional innovative degree apprenticeships with employers to fill skills gaps • A Degree Apprenticeship Progression Programme, opening up degree apprenticeship opportunities to target groups with low higher education participation rates, addressing barriers to participation, and collaborating with employers on a new Employer Compact to identify degree apprenticeship opportunities for individuals
17. **University of the West of England**	• Extend employer engagement in apprenticeships through shared marketing and promotion • Accelerate collaborative curriculum/assessment development with higher education, FE and employers • Facilitate process and support system development	
18. **University of Wolverhampton**	• Create 'Apprenticeship Champions' in each of the four faculties within the University • A new Apprenticeship Programme Board to oversee all apprenticeship progress, developments, risks and evaluation • Provide additional capacity both within the academic teams and across the corporate services departments	

Lead Higher Education Provider	Key Project Activities	
	DADF Phase 1 (2016/17)	**DADF Phase 2 (2017/18)**
19. **Anglia Ruskin University**		• Working with the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute (Sanger) and the Tech Partnership to develop a new Bioinformatics Scientist strand of the Data Scientist Degree Apprenticeship (DSDA) • Engagement and outreach to develop the demand for apprenticeships amongst employers and the supply of apprentices into the bioinformatics sector • Develop on-programme support for employers and apprentices, based on feedback from employers • Programme design: consult with the sector to ensure the delivery of the standard matches employer needs
20. **Aston University**		• Supporting SMEs: creating a training programme and resources for SMEs to help them to become involved in degree apprenticeships by showing them the benefits that apprenticeships can bring, and supporting them to create programmes within their businesses • Increasing awareness and inclusivity of degree apprenticeships with potential apprentices from hard-to-reach groups: designing and implementing initiatives to raise awareness and increase the attractiveness of degree apprenticeships in hard-to-reach groups • Increasing inclusivity through persuading universities to use strengths-based assessment to select potential apprentices
21. **Blackburn College**		• Building the College's capacity to deliver six degree apprenticeship programmes • Business liaison work with employers • Collaborative development of the delivery programme
22.**Blackpool and the**		• Broaden the scope of degree apprenticeship provision

Lead Higher Education Provider	Key Project Activities	
	DADF Phase 1 (2016/17)	**DADF Phase 2 (2017/18)**
Fylde College		within Blackpool, the Fylde Coast and Lancashire • Support the Lancashire LEP strategic priorities and developments through the provision of degree apprenticeships specifically tailored for the advanced manufacturing, construction, energy and health and care sectors • Support local and regional employers in understanding and recognising the opportunities associated with levy for employees at all levels and career stages • Develop capability and capacity in work integrated learning pedagogies • Work with curriculum departments/faculties to ensure target numbers are achieved through close engagement with employers • Review and modify institutional infrastructure, processes, systems and monitoring capabilities to enable and enhance successful degree apprenticeship delivery • Engage with providers of career information, advice and guidance to promote the opportunities presented through degree apprenticeships • Coordinate the development of high quality digital learning assets to deliver enhanced learning that meets employer and learner needs
23. Coventry University		• Create DAs that align to Trailblazer needs, developing curriculum content at Level 6 and 7 • Improve employer capability to assist with the training of skills and knowledge through the partner support services framework

Lead Higher Education Provider	Key Project Activities	
	DADF Phase 1 (2016/17)	**DADF Phase 2 (2017/18)**
24. **Harper Adams University**		• Grow provision for a block release course, developed to meet industry working patterns • Deliver three new degree and postgraduate apprentice courses • Work with new industry boards • Recruit experts to design and develop new curriculum (and distance learning materials) • Form a cross-University Apprenticeship Group to embed process and procedure • Design a productivity benchmarking tool for apprentices • Develop the marketing and technology strategy to support a large-scale UK industry launch for Harper Adams University apprenticeships, using the University's skilled marketing and business development teams
25. **Keele University**		• Develop internal and external awareness of the opportunities presented through degree apprenticeships, creating opportunities and facilitating social mobility • Engage employers through existing relationships and networks and, developing new employer links through engagement in regional activities • Develop an apprenticeship curriculum offer from level 4-7 in nursing and health for delivery from 2018 and a plan for development around key areas of institutional expertise • Initiate, with employers, Trailblazer activity in areas critical to the development of advanced skills for the

Lead Higher Education Provider	Key Project Activities	
	DADF Phase 1 (2016/17)	**DADF Phase 2 (2017/18)**
		pharmaceutical industry • Conduct research identifying higher skills requirements in the LEP aligned to institutional expertise, and identify opportunities to be proactive in developing a flexible apprenticeship curriculum
26. **Middlesex University**		• Develop new curricula and innovation in on- and off-the-job learning, teaching and assessment • Engagement with a broad range of London-based public sector employers and relevant professional bodies • Organise and deliver a series of development events and workshops designed to identify and address challenges and barriers to public sector employer engagement with degree apprenticeships • Establish working groups that include employers, Middlesex work-based learning and professional practice expert teams to focus on specific aspects of development
27. **Newcastle University**		• Develop the approach to and materials for the Power Engineer Integrated DA • Redesign the University's traditional modes of delivery of modules which are not suited to the needs of employers and apprentices
28. **Southampton Solent University**		• Increase the capacity and capability of health and care organisations in Wessex to be involved in the delivery of health education degree apprentices • Deliver career development pathways that support the recruitment, development and retention into the Nursing profession in health and care organisations

Lead Higher Education Provider	Key Project Activities	
	DADF Phase 1 (2016/17)	**DADF Phase 2 (2017/18)**
		across Wessex • Deliver nursing career development pathways that promote social mobility
29. **Teesside University**		Working with the Tees Valley Combined Authority and the North East Chamber of Commerce, putting measures in place to optimise provision and take-up of DAs in key STEM sectors by: • Engaging directly with employers to improve perception and understanding of the value and agility of DAs in addressing STEM skills needs; and to enhance understanding of specific needs and address barriers to recruitment • Developing responsive and proactive DA provision and optimising DA systems and processes • Increasing market knowledge and the ability to respond to future STEM skills needs through DAs • Raising awareness and demand on the part of potential and prospective degree apprentices, particularly in harder-to-reach and less well-off groups, working particularly with the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP), with whom the University are already engaged
30. **The Open University**		• Review available data on current composition of the social work workforce and build a clear picture of where particular demographic groups are under-represented relative to the wider population • Identify good practice in the field of targeted recruitment, carrying out a literature review together with surveys/focus groups of employers and members of under-represented groups

Lead Higher Education Provider	Key Project Activities	
	DADF Phase 1 (2016/17)	**DADF Phase 2 (2017/18)**
		• Produce a best practice guide, to be made freely available to all social work employers and apprenticeship training providers to support the recruitment of under-represented groups to the new Social Work DA • Develop and produce online resources
31. **University of Bedfordshire**		• Specify, develop and approve new degree provision for apprenticeship standards in four occupational areas • Release experienced staff to carry out the necessary development
32. **University of Brighton**		• Work with employers to identify, clarify and stimulate demand and use this activity to shape the development and launch of a construction sector degree apprenticeship offer • Work collaboratively with FE college partners to build a strong pipeline, developing and promoting coherent ladders providing flexible work-based pathways from level 2, through to Advanced and Higher Apprenticeships, flowing freely onto the degree apprenticeships • Curriculum revisions and associated approvals events to develop part-time pathways that integrate increased levels of work based learning and incorporate more practical project work and work practice evidence in assessments • Business engagement activity to help shape degree apprenticeships to meet employer demand
33. **University of Hertfordshire**		• Address specific operational barriers by forming six Apprenticeship Planning Groups to identify and address

Lead Higher Education Provider	Key Project Activities	
	DADF Phase 1 (2016/17)	DADF Phase 2 (2017/18)
		issues preventing degree apprenticeship growth • The Apprenticeship Planning Groups are to be supported by an Apprenticeship Advisory Group, chaired by Hertfordshire LEP and drawing from other stakeholder groups across the county, to provide guidance and background data; maintain consistency; analyse outputs and ensure key priorities and issues are being addressed
34. University of Kent		• Programme development: four new degree apprenticeship programmes • Outreach: a second strand of the project would seek to promote degree apprenticeship opportunities to young people, in particular those from disadvantaged backgrounds • Employer engagement: the project plans to conduct some employer research to formalise these discussions, as well as assess attitudes and awareness around degree apprenticeships
35. University of Northampton		• Engage with young people who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education in order to inform, motivate and inspire • Engage with businesses across Northamptonshire to develop a framework for degree-level apprenticeship delivery that enhances the economic growth of the county by addressing skills gaps and growth areas
36. University of Suffolk		• Develop a blended learning offer for degree apprentices • Create a more flexible mode of learning by offering teaching across a range of platforms, including mobile
37. University of		• Running a series of workshops with employer partners

Lead Higher Education Provider	Key Project Activities	
	DADF Phase 1 (2016/17)	DADF Phase 2 (2017/18)

Warwick		to develop the curriculum for each degree apprenticeship standard
		• System and Operational Readiness. This includes:
		  o Establishing a cross-institutional eLearning platform
		  o Establishing a central employer portal and associated systems
		• Widening Participation and Diversity – aimed at cohorts of learners with very different social characteristics to those that Warwick traditionally attracts
		• Trailblazing new standards in Chemical Sciences and Tunnelling

38. **University of Winchester**		• Build a pipeline between those who are currently failing to progress to degree apprenticeships and employers who are seeking higher skills and a broader pool of applicants • Build the capacity locally to ensure the FE and higher education sector works together to deliver collectively and collaboratively the higher skills needs employers need and in the ways that suits them best • The new Centre for Apprenticeship Research and Knowledge Exchange to be a centre for excellence in understanding and sharing knowledge and experience about improving social mobility through progression to Higher and degree apprenticeships