

BACKGROUND

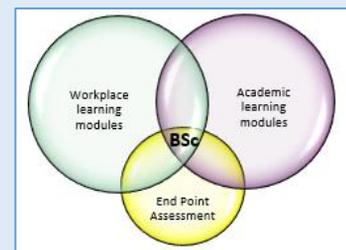
- Since the standard was approved in April 2019 (1), apprenticeships offer an employment based route into the profession.
- The principle differences between the apprenticeship and traditional undergraduate routes are:
 - Apprentice learners are employees of a department.
 - The employer procures the service of an education provider rather than the education provider seeking placement sites.
 - The apprenticeship includes an independent End Point Assessment(EPA).
 - The primary mode of delivery for an apprenticeship is workplace learning.
- Key similarities between this and the traditional undergraduate route include:
 - Both qualifications are degree level.
 - Both programmes require approval by the HCPC, and SCoR approval is highly recommended.

THE DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP

- Any apprenticeship standard is comprised of a series of profession specific duties which are further broken down into a series of Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (1).
 - For integrated standards such as diagnostic radiography, an apprentice needs to evidence achievement of each of these before being able to undertake the independently assessed End Point Assessment (2).
- Funding requirements stipulate that apprentices *must* spend at least 20% of their employed time undertaking off the job learning activities (3).
- Apprentices are supported by both a Workplace Mentor and an Academic Mentor.
- Regular tripartite review meetings to monitor progress are also mandated (4).

AN APPROACH TO PROGRAMME DESIGN

- The University of Exeter degree apprenticeship in diagnostic radiography launched in March 2020 (5).
- The design is such that there are clearly defined ‘academic’ and ‘workplace’ modules.
 - Academic modules teach the underlying theory
 - Workplace modules include the linking of theory to practice as well as the acquisition of radiographic skills.
 - An employer negotiated module is included in the final year, this enables apprentices to gain experience in a specific area of practice that feeds into the employer’s workforce needs.



IMPLICATIONS FOR DEPARTMENTS

- Apprentices spend 80% of their time working and learning in the employing department.
- Apprentices in the workplace will, initially, have significantly less background knowledge than traditional undergraduates who might have received 1 – 2 terms worth of education before their clinical placement.
 - This may apply at each stage of the programme.
 - The approach to teaching clinical skills will need to take into account that exposure to an area of practice may occur before the apprentice has a full grasp of the related theory due to 80% of the apprentice’s time being spend in the workplace.
- As the apprentice is an employee, annual leave, sickness and other absence, mandatory training and any performance issues are the responsibility of the employer rather than the education provider.



SUMMARY

- There is a change in emphasis in some of the key pastoral, disciplinary and other managerial aspects between degree apprenticeship and conventional undergraduate programmes.
- However, the role of the Education Provider remains the same as for undergraduate programmes:
 - To provide the necessary theory to be linked to practice, but for example by distance learning.
 - To provide a robust assessment strategy that enables the apprentice to meet the requirements of the award.

References

- 1: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/diagnostic-radiographer-integrated-degree/>
- 2: https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/media/3393/st0619_diagnostic-radiographer_l6_for-publication_05042019-1-pdf_.pdf
- 3: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-off-the-job-training>
- 4: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/857046/1920_Employer_Rules_Version_2.0_FINAL.pdf
- 5: <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/degreeapprenticeships/employers/diagnostic-radiographer/>