



Experiences supporting Open University apprenticeship students: A case study

Focus is on the OU's Digital and Technology Solutions Professional Apprenticeship, starting May/October 2017

Soraya Kouadri Mostéfaoui (TT284 Chair)

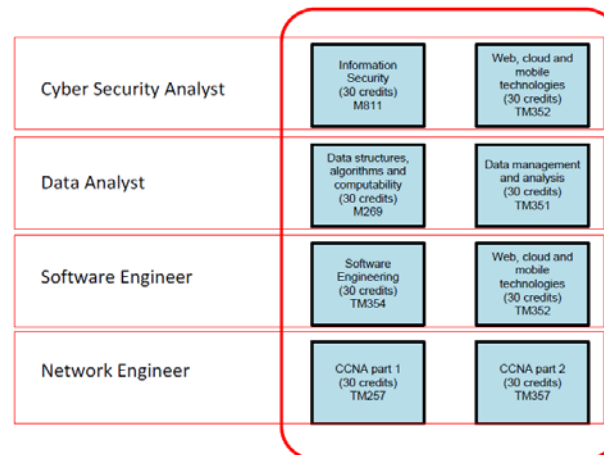
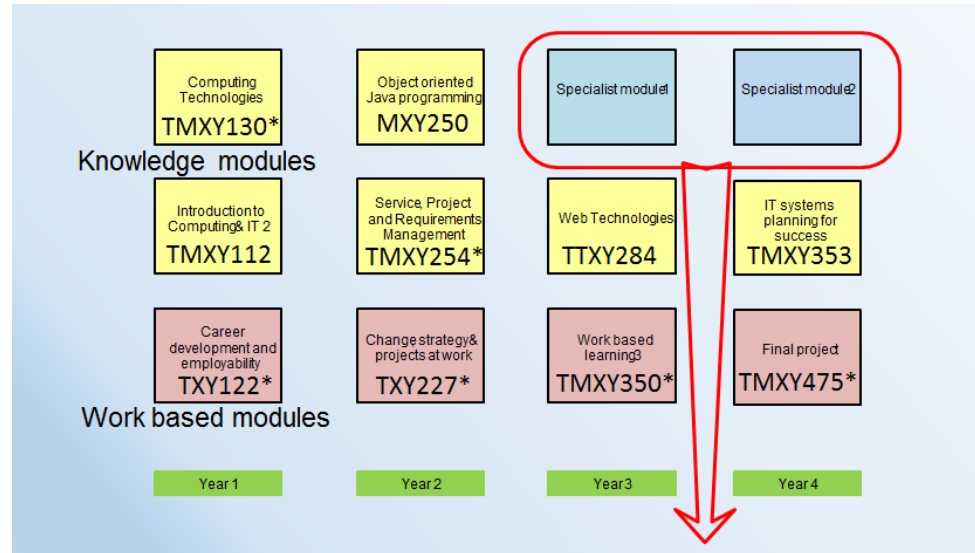
Christine Gardner (Staff Tutor, TMXY130 Chair)



Rationale

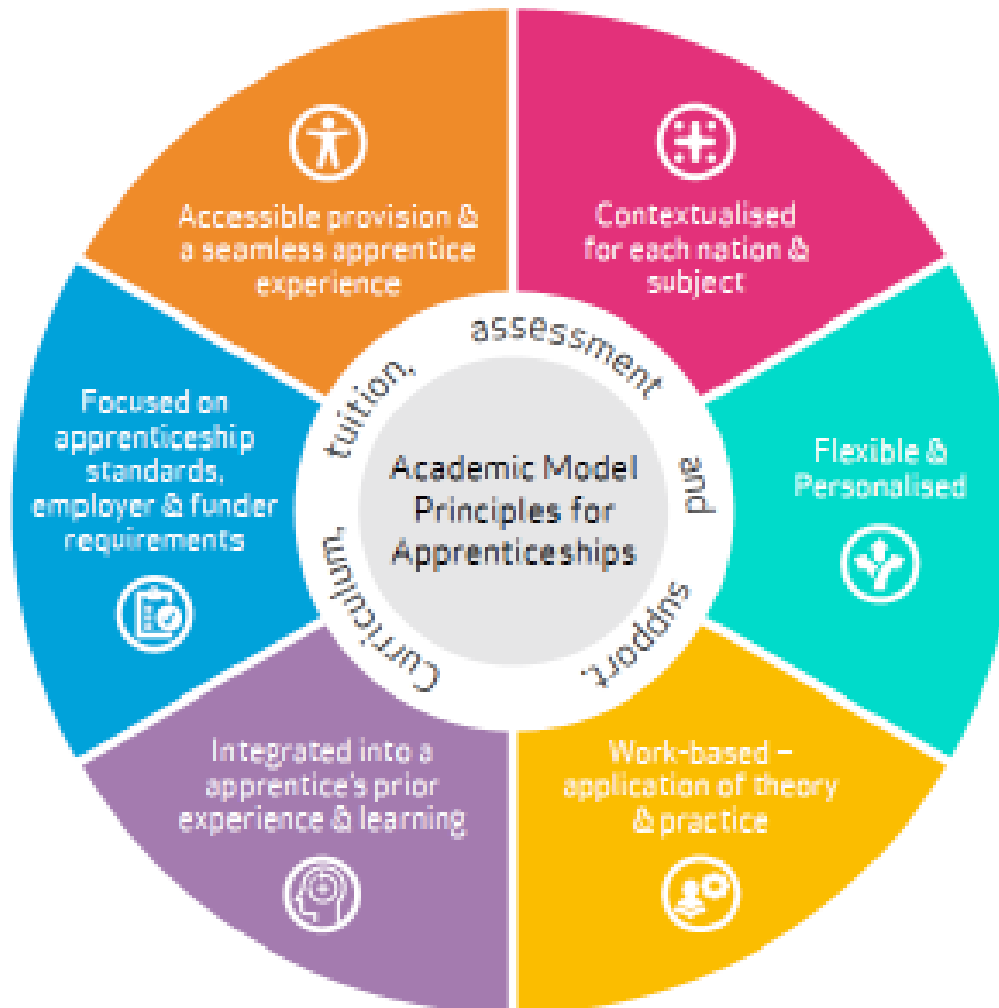
This research seeks to address the fundamental question as to whether Degree Apprenticeship students in England and Graduate Apprenticeship students in Scotland need a different support strategy by identifying current issues that they may face during their apprenticeship journey.

Programme – Computing & Communications (England)



Practice Tutor
Academic Tutors

Academic model for the OU apprenticeship Programme



Research questions

- **Apprentice tuition support**
 - Support from subject-specific tutors
 - Support from practice tutors
- **Apprentice employer support**
 - How the OU can/should work alongside employers to improve support
- **Apprentice assessment**
 - Work-based assessment (relevant to the students' work place)

Students' Perspective

- **Online survey** – low response rate 8 students (%)
 - 75% have never studied online or at distance;
 - 88% satisfied with the support from module tutors;
 - 100% satisfied with the support from the practice tutors;
 - 88% satisfied with the support from their employers for their DA studies
 - 100% satisfied with the support from the Open University

Students' Perspective

- 100% the assessment relates well to the module content of TMXY130
- 100% the assessment relates well to the module content of TXY122
- 63% TXY122 'Career development and employability' is relevant to their current job role
- 100% TMXY130 'Computing Technologies' is relevant to their current job role

Student perspectives...module feedback

Student experience data for module TMXY130 'Computing Technologies' was mainly positive overall with very good overall pass rate.

I really enjoyed the NetCad side of things and completing the packet tracer activities.

Really interesting stuff.

I wasn't as keen on the maths modules and often found the materials didn't explain some of functions very well, perhaps more examples would be useful.

Tutor perspectives...practice tutors

Student/tutor difficulties:

Difficulties with possible deferral

Getting study time off from employer (government guidelines can be misleading)

Compiling an eportfolio

Assignment dates can clash with other commitments

Can be difficult for Practice Tutors to see whole student picture

Tutor perspectives...module tutor

- Some key points from TMXY130 debriefing:

Students generally higher standard and more motivated than previous modules.

Not much use of forums.

Needed to emphasise need for workings and presentation for some .

Lots of questions from students early on.

Interesting because more technical than previous modules

Better retention.

Summary

- **Apprentice tuition support**

Support from subject-specific tutors is very good according to student feedback.

Students are very motivated.

- **Apprentice employer support**

How the OU can/should work alongside employers to improve support can be gained via feedback from practice tutors, gives a wider overview of apprentice experiences.

- **Apprentice assessment**

Some assessment methods are more relevant than others.

Next steps

- Conduct further research via surveys and interviews, with both students and tutors. Initial cohort was very small.
- Consider the inclusion of Welsh apprentices, alongside English and Scottish apprentices, in the research.
- Compare national perspectives.

Questions



Soraya Kouadri Mostéfaoui (TT284 Chair)
Christine Gardner (Staff Tutor, TMXY130 Chair)