

# Degree Apprenticeships

## The challenges and opportunities for widening access

### Lessons from the Development Fund (DADF)



Georgia Siora  
Managing Director  
[gsiora@w-eed.com](mailto:gsiora@w-eed.com)



# Overview

DADF launched 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 encourage greater social mobility

 **8.8 million**  
DADF funding

**103 higher education  
providers involved**



# Facts – Focus on HE Infrastructure

- DADF was/has been highly popular – 135 applications (two calls)
- **43** projects have involved 103 higher education providers – 47 higher education institutions and 56 further education colleges
- Funded by DADF:
  - Setting up the internal infrastructure to deliver degree apprenticeships i.e. recruitment or secondment of staff; trialling new or upgraded Information Technology (IT) infrastructure
  - Developing new programmes and resources
  - Conducting research to underpin future delivery i.e. investment in better understanding labour market and economic issues
  - Running events and raising awareness – with employers, schools, wider community

# Headline Achievements

Over 1,000 new degree apprenticeship courses developed



4,464 degree apprenticeship starts

- Additional degree apprentices (as a result of new modules and standards development enabled by DADF), including:
  - Public sector, such as nursing, healthcare, and policing
  - Transferable e.g. digital and technology solutions or chartered management
  - Specific industries, like construction/surveying or engineering
- **New curriculum and modules that wouldn't have been developed** without DADF funding
- Engagement and partnerships with new employers that would not have been pursued without DADF funding

# Lessons

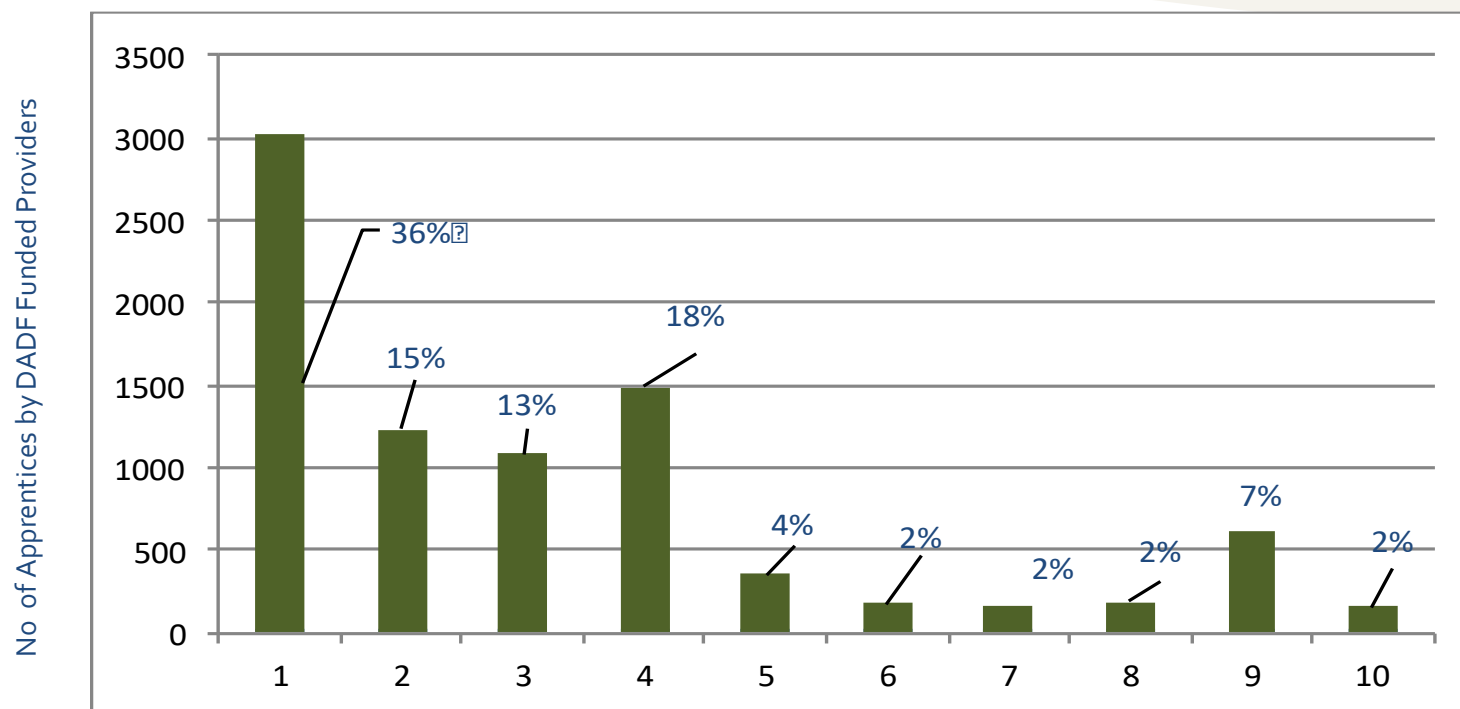
- It takes at least a full year of planning and developmental activities prior to degree apprentices starting
- Without a dedicated resource, provision of degree apprenticeships would remain an ad hoc activity, at best
- Varying approaches depend on a number of factors - **resources to ensure the widespread adoption of good practice would be sensible**
- Employer engagement, raising awareness and securing commitment is not just a provider's task – **it requires coordinated efforts and cross-departmental programmes**
- **Allow time to capture the effects and impact** of degree apprenticeships on productivity and social mobility

# Social mobility

- Social mobility an integral part of project plans however it is too early on for most projects to comment on any impacts.
- Activities targeting social mobility include:
  - Methods of assessment which look at aptitude rather than existing qualifications
  - Developing resources explaining further education options and publicising these in events with schools and colleges
  - Innovations in making the linkages with other provision and see DAs as part of the wider offer

# DADF Funded DAs and Providers

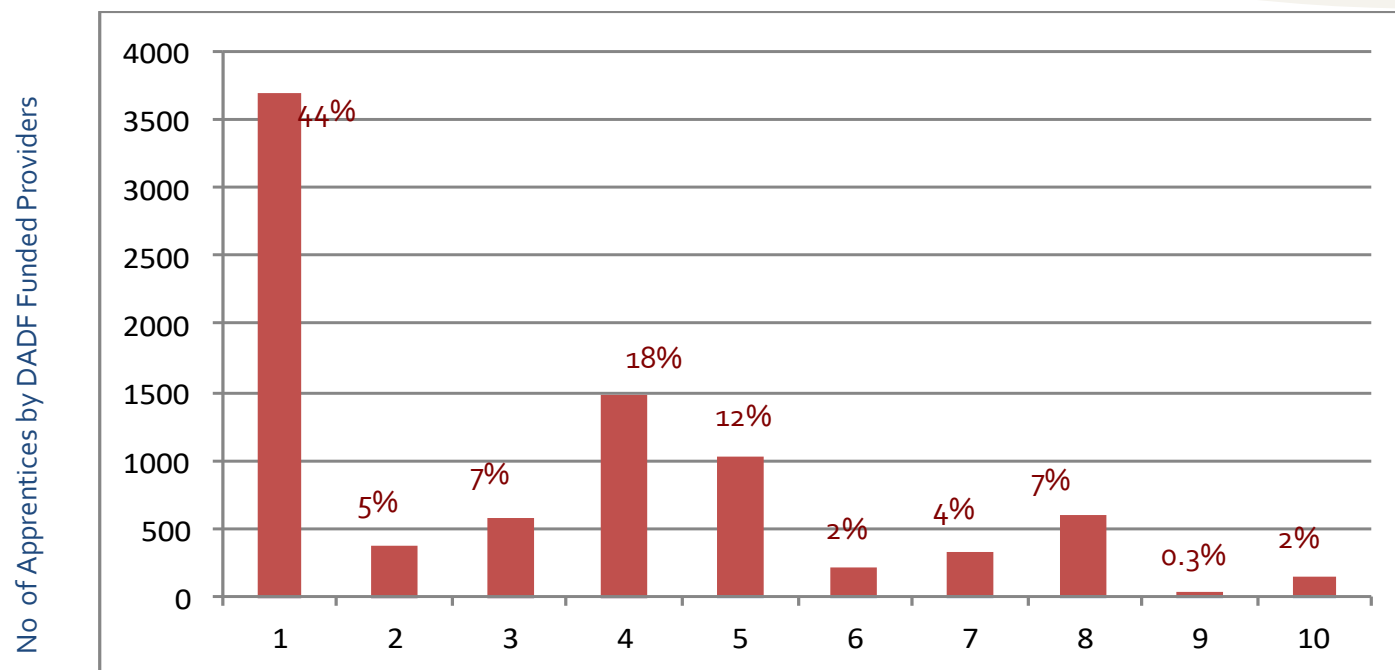
The vast majority of DADF funded apprentices are studying with institutions located in LAs with relatively higher levels of **multiple deprivation (IMD)**



**Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) of Locality of Provider**  
Deciles: 1= most deprived Local Authorities 10=least deprived Local Authorities  
Based on 8430 Degree Apprentices by 36 Providers

# DADF Funded DAs and Providers

The vast majority of DADF funded apprentices are studying with institutions located in LAs with relatively higher levels of deprivation **of Income Deprivation**.



**Index of Income Deprivation** of Locality of Provider

Deciles: 1= most deprived Local Authorities 10=least deprived Local Authorities

Based on 8430 Degree Apprentices by 36 Providers



# Opportunities

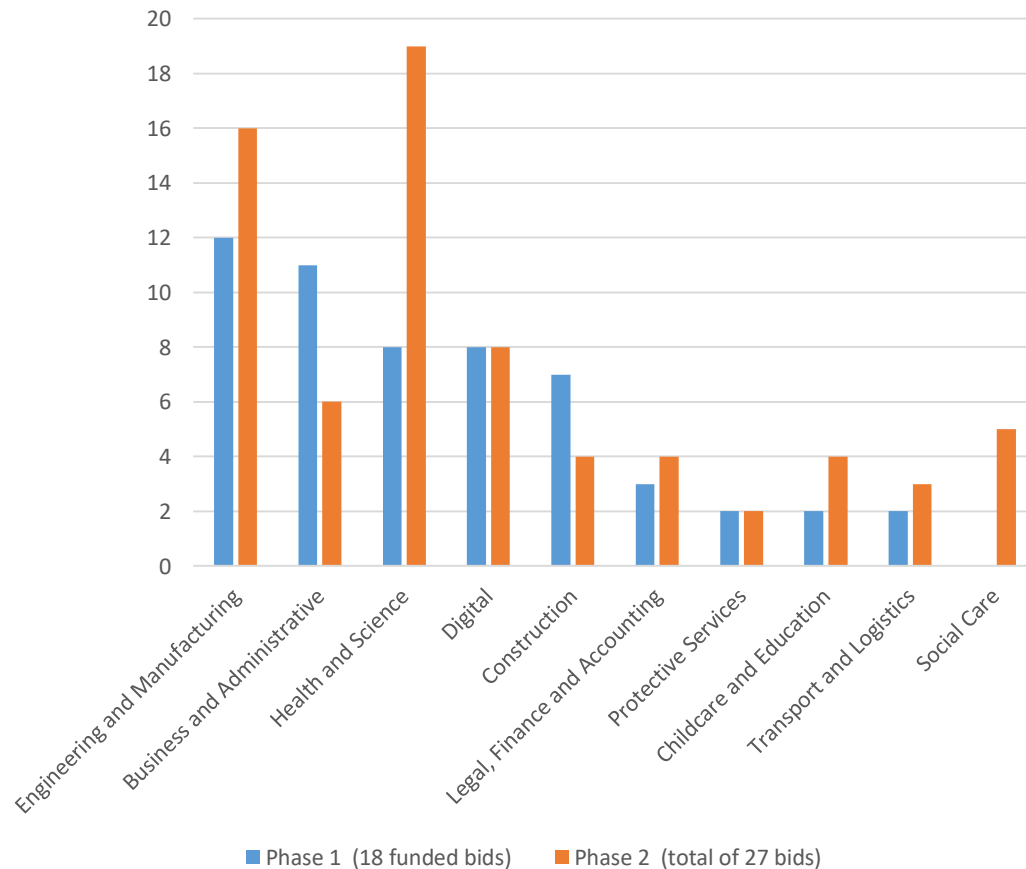
## ✓ The Skills Challenge

- By 2022, two million more jobs will require higher level skills
- Almost a quarter all vacancies are 'skills shortage' vacancies
- Worst skills shortages: engineering, nursing and social care, construction, digital, leadership and management
- Employers report lack of broader employability skills

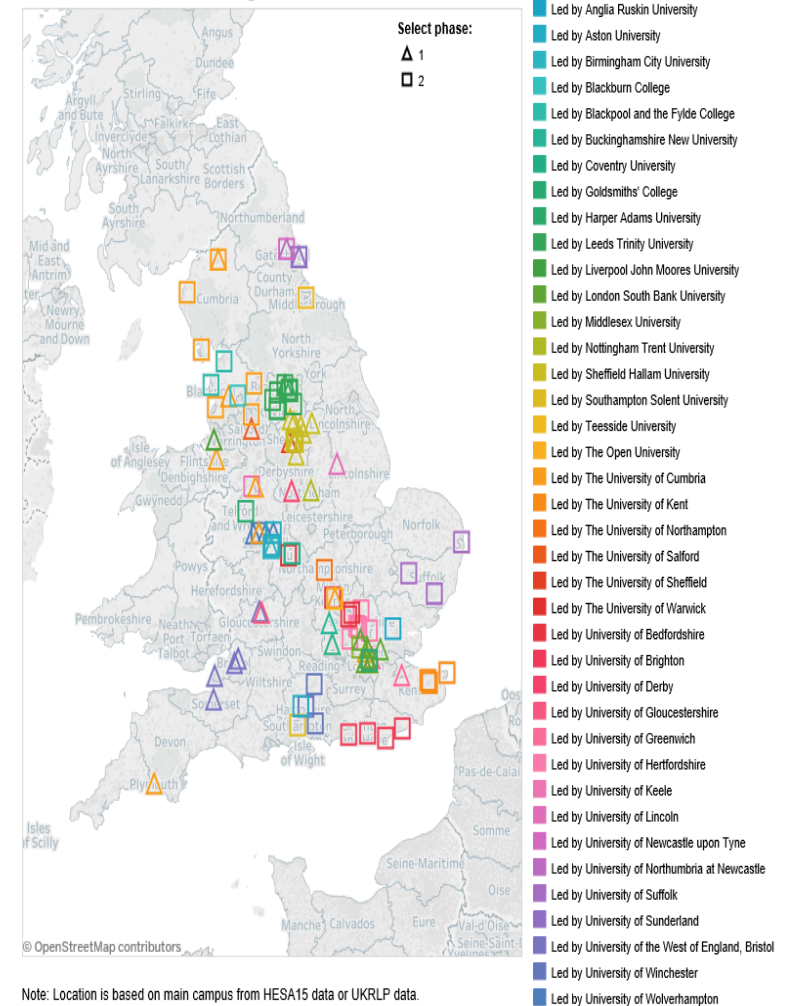
## ✓ The Productivity Challenge

- Results from a series of experiments carried out by economists at the University of Warwick show that happiness made **employees** around 12% more **productive**, while unhappy workers showed to be 10% less **productive**
- ✓ **Progression** – access to pathways to ambition; beyond first step to employment, T-levels and what next
- ✓ **Industrial Strategy** – alignment and skills for growth

# Occupations supported through the Degree Apprenticeships Development Fund (DADF)



Providers that received funding in Phase 1 and/or 2 of DADF



# Examples of DADF Employers' Feedback

- Upskilling of existing staff
- Enabling recruitment in non-urban areas
- Fostering retention and loyalty among employees

*"It provides us with employees that have specific knowledge of the industry"*

*"At the end of the programme we will get someone who is fully trained, with exactly the same degree as a graduate, with a sense of loyalty to the company"*

# Challenges

## High Level

- Consistent policy - guidance need to be clearer and more coordinated (not just as a stand alone intervention)
- Better understanding of what degree apprenticeships is about and how it links to other provision and policies
- More relevant data needed to inform decision making, planning and meeting demand

## Specific

- Off the job training requirements are challenging for HEPs but needed
- Goal for an apprentice=occupational competence – what assessment would make you feel confident that your employee is competence? Is this what HEPs are asking?

# From wider access to social mobility...

- Widen access
- Widen participation
- Widen progression
- Widen success at the exit point of learning place – reduce 'awards' gap?
- Widen success in the workplace – and create role models

*We want to reduce the social mobility 'Power Gap' where those from better off backgrounds not only earn more money but control the levers that shape our society. **Social Mobility is securing the first stable job when your family has experienced generations of worklessness.** It is about being able to live where you grew up if you choose and not being held back in life because there is a lack of opportunities in your region. It is having access to better and cheaper transport services that integrate the places left behind with the places forging ahead. **State of the Nation 2018-19: Social Mobility in Great Britain***

Thank you