Juggling hats: academic roles, identity work and new degree apprenticeships.

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Abstract

This study considers new work-intensive learning programmes – degree apprenticeships – in the context of the academic identity of those designing and delivering these awards in UK universities. The sample was balanced between science and social science knowledge areas. Issues were explored with a sample group of 30 academics from 15 universities. These interviews explored issues around the development and delivery of these new academic degrees, including the part played by respondents in developing and delivering the awards. As part of this, respondents gave their perceptions of their university's views of apprenticeships and how they had interacted with apprenticeship partners. Thematic analysis led to a generative model of academic identity, capturing three themes: (i) internal, (ii) autonomy, (iii) external. Results show the ambiguities and uncertainties accompanying changes in academic identity, with positive reinforcement through peer support and recognition and negative reinforce due to lack of appreciation internally for degree apprenticeships and the erosion of trust with colleagues and managers.. Similarly, results showed the importance of personal autonomy in curriculum design and delivery to validate personal worth and the role played by deepening relationships with external partners in both design and delivery. The conclusions outline implications for managers and teachers in the implementation of new apprenticeships.

Introduction

This article explores how changes in the UK higher education system affect academic identity. Specifically, the recent development of apprenticeships at degree level is discussed as a context to consider how academics form and support identity, during the design and delivery of these new workplace integrated degrees. These awards are part of the changes in the academic landscape described by Degn (2015 ,1179) which put pressures put on academic identities through the rise of "entrepreneurialism, accountability and what is increasingly known in academia as new managerialism" (Deem et al, 2007).

As part of this shift to address market needs and increase University-Industry collaboration (Basit et al., 2015), apprenticeships at degree level have emerged, combining practical skills with theoretical knowledge, evidenced through their application in the workplace (Rowe etc all, 2016). These qualifications offer new routes to both undergraduate and master's degrees as part of "one of the biggest changes in higher education for decades" (Rowe et al, 2016, 358) potentially challenging established institutional processes, routines and norms (Degn, 2015). Offered by some universities in the UK since 2015 and increasing in numbers year on year (UK Government, 2017), degree apprenticeships are a form of work-integrated learning which combine a full degree qualification with a paid apprenticeship. Degree apprenticeships include all levels of an undergraduate degree with some at Master's degree level.

Curriculum derives from national standards agreed by groups of providers, recognised professional bodies and employers. Through the current government funding regime, employers gain new employees at a reduced rate in return for allowing them time for formal training, providing a workplace supervisor and giving them opportunities to apply their learning. Hence, these new awards require close partnerships with professional bodies and companies to agree content and assessment, far beyond previous internships and work experience placements. Higher education has "values,

norms, routines and ideas which significantly impact how it is possible to act and think within it" (Degn, 2015, 1, citing Olsen 2005) but these new awards require rapid processes to implement new curriculum together with an accompanying rethink of routines and ideas (Rowe et al, 2016; Mulkeen et al, 2017).
These apprenticeships also require great flexibility in delivery mode together with adaptability in institutional process to validate the degree within the timescales agreed with
Existing research within the work-integrated learning (WIL) context explores professional identity and student identity (e.g., Bowen, 2016), but this paper seeks to bridge the gap in understanding academic identity, via the lived experience of degree apprenticeship providers. These new WIL awards require close partnerships with companies to agree content and assessment, beyond previous internships and work experience placements. Higher education has "values, norms, routines and ideas which significantly impact how it is possible to act and think within it" (Degn, 2016, 1, citing Olsen 2005) but these new awards require a rapid action to implement new curriculum and an accompanying rethink of routines and ideas (Authors, 2016). They also require flexibility in delivery mode together with adaptability in institutional process, to validate the degree. The next section explores the nature of degree apprenticeships and their implications for universities while the section following that places this in the context of existing studies of academic identity.

The degree apprenticeship – university contexts.
Prior to the introduction of degree apprenticeships, universities in the UK had already experienced a period of change in terms of government expectations, targets and funding mechanisms. Political and economic pressures to become knowledge enterprises (Butera, 2000) where knowledge is commercialised and commodified to generate external income and prestige (Jacob et al 2003). Universities were therefore expected not only to address excellence in teaching and research but also to be dynamic and responsive (Clark, 1998; Etzkowitz, 2003) in order to meet broader socio-economic objectives (HEFCE, 2009)

Thus UK policy requires universities to engage in the broader community, business and industry (Competitiveness White Paper, 1998; HEFCE, 2008; Basit et al, 2015). Doing so is expected to address gaps in governmental funding for core activities (Marginson and Considine, 2000) during uncertain times for governmental funding routes. At a regional level, universities are "geographical assets that can attract businesses and provide technical assistance to local industry and ongoing education for the workforce". (Nagle, 2007, 325-6), Hence academics need not only to teach and do research but to engage with business and society, with direct encouragement of "innovative academic behaviour" including "wide ranging partnerships with external bodies and generating non-state funding," (Shattock, 2005, 17). These wide-ranging partnerships are essential for degree apprenticeships. Employers and professional bodies have been key voices in the development of national standards and are fundamental to the successful delivery of these awards (UK Government, 2017). Basit et al (2015) identify the need for the tripartite relationship between the employer, employee and HEI to be successful while Penn et al. (2005) stress the need for stakeholder needs to be articulated and met in this tripartite relationship.

In the case of UK apprenticeships, the tripartite relationship is further complicated due to the close involvement not only of professional bodies but also funding routes, local, regional and national, during the three year evolution of these awards. This is to be expected, given that the status of university degrees "is created through a process of shared cultural understanding among major interest groups" and it is therefore important to engage these

groups as the status of these new awards are likely to be based on social perceptions –"how employers, trade unions, university staff, parents, and students/graduates view the quality and usefulness of the education provided by different institutions" (Isopahkala-Bouret, 2015, 1304). Degree apprenticeships, however, are not only viewed by these groups but shaped, assessed and arguably 'owned' by them too. Degree apprenticeships include all levels of an undergraduate degree (levels 4, 5 and 6) and of a Master's degree (level 7), with curriculum embedded in standards set by recognised professional bodies and agreed with employers. This partnership between academics, employers and professional bodies meets the needs of local funders and of the Apprentices in the way curriculum is provided.

As one example, the Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship is provided by 44 universities offering "the triple guarantee of a quality degree, on-the-job experience and a professional pathway for future development" (The Manager, 2017) This Degree Apprenticeship was developed by a group of employers, in partnership with a number of Higher Education Institutions and the Chartered Management Institute. While the national standards for management have been set, these are interpreted in different curriculum designs, for instance with sectoral pathways, increased online work etc to suit employer needs. These formats may cause some issues during the validation process, given the need not only to address market needs but also to do so quickly to meet demand. Therefore, course directors and course team members need to understand employer needs and work with employers while understanding and upholding professional body values and those of the academic institution (Authors, 2016). It is this pressure that gave rise to the study, to understand how these sets of different demands impact on academic identity for those designing and delivering these awards.

Academic identity

For Alvesson et al (2008, 5-6) individuals at work are social beings in organisational contexts where identity refers to "subjective meanings and experience, to our ongoing efforts to address the questions, 'Who am I?' and—by implication—'how should I act?'". In order to answer these questions, people "make sense of their reality through ongoing identity construction that enables them to extract cues to make events plausible" (Mills et al, 2010, 193). This suggests that identity is constructed rather than fixed, with discourse "balanced with other elements of life history" (Alvesson and Wilmott, 2002, 623). The iterative nature of this process is suggested by Learmouth and Humphreys (2012) where identity work constructs, deconstructs and reconstructs academic identity through an ongoing process of "interpretation and re-interpretation of experiences" (Beijaard et al, 2002, 123). Brown and Coupland, (2015, 1317) define identity work as "activities of formation, maintenance, repair and revision by which people seek to realize desired versions of their selves"

Identity work requires individuals to invest emotional and cognitive effort in making sense of who they are (Beijaard et al, 2002; Elliot, 2014), shaping and re-shaping self-hood (Reedy et al., 2016; Knights and Clarke, 2014, 337). Hence, identity is constructed and reconstructed to deal with changes in role, context and location and to fit with the perceptions and expectations of others. In a university setting, expectations may be related to the different roles academics are expected to play, as researchers, managers and teachers, working to fulfil traditional institutional aims while working at a pace and in ways to suit professional bodies and employers. These expectations are based on individual and collective understanding of what an academic is and what they do. Here we consider academic rather than personal identity, although some studies suggest the two coalesce.

Ashforth et al, (2008, 356), for instance, found that occupations are a way for individuals to interpret who they are, serving as "major identity badges for situating individuals in the organization".

In this way people define themselves through a generally understood term, often identifying themselves as their occupation "I am a teacher" (e.g., Thatcher et al 2003). Further Ashforth et al suggest that organizational and wider socio-environmental change may make occupational identity more important. While other aspects of the organization become uncertain, the occupation appears to be a safe fixed point, even though in reality, it may be required to change rapidly, leading to difficulties for individuals in redefining yourself (Ashforth, 2001). People make sense of who they are expected to be through interaction with the situation they are in and with others (Healey, 2002) so using occupation or profession as an identity allows others to know what to expect. Given that academic roles have undergone significant change in the last two decades (ref), academic identity has needed to readjust.

In this process of identity construction, the judgments of others play a large part in how individuals see themselves, either directly expressed or indirectly perceived (Brown and Coupland, 2015), with power relations interwoven with views of selfhood (Brown and Lewis, 2011). Identities are also prey to institutional discourses about worth and value. Laine et al (2016, 509) suggest that
"one's desire to be seen as appropriate in the gaze of the other" determine what is appropriate and that this is "constructed in and through reiterating discursive norms" within a role, field or environment , hence,, "autonomy and choice—or more specifically, the illusion of them—stem not so much from the individual but from reiteration of the conventions". In this way identity work becomes a medium for managerial control in the institution (Alvesson and Willmott (2002)

While Laine et al (2016) base their work on manager identity, this may also be used to understand academic identity, where discourses are embedded in historic dialogue about how things are done and in shared bodies of knowledge about what it means to be an academic, what academic specialty conveys individual legitimacy and what the university is or is about. These are embedded and implicit discourses for identity work rather than being directly expressed (Butler, 1993).

Where occupational identity is subject to rapid change, the status quo is threatened such that individuals perceive their identity as fragile rather than robust (Gautam et al, 2004). While identity is constructed and understood through the stories told to and by individuals (Weick et al, 2005; Degn, 2015), to create and maintain a positive self-image, individuals will draw on memories and experiences selectively, identifying aspects positively as a response to perceived weaknesses or threats to identity (Coopey et al, 1997; Brown et al, 2008; Brown and Coupland, 2015). We therefore base our study on the sense making processes representing identity work for a group of those academics designing and delivering this new WIL curriculum form. We were interested in how they saw their apprenticeship work in the context of their own academic identity and how they perceived potential ambiguities and made sense of them.

Methodology

Although other countries have systems of 'dual learning' and two-tier degree structures with key competencies (Schaeper, 2009), UK universities have very recently developed apprenticeships as an alternative degree route, with traditional timelines for curriculum

development overturned to meet market needs. For this reason, academics in these universities are going through significant changes in curriculum, delivery mode and approach in working with companies and professional bodies. Therefore participants were selected only from the group of staff currently designing and delivering degree or higher level apprenticeships. This necessarily restricted sample size and the disciplines in which participants worked, given that apprenticeships are not currently available beyond intermediate and advanced stages across all disciplines.

This purposive sampling approach used word-of-mouth and links with professional body and academic networks, to ensure participation across disciplines as far as possible (Odena and Burgess, 2015; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Mulkeen et as in Odeal, 2007). In collecting data from this group we sought insights into their individual identity work, recognising that each has their own journey through this process (McAlpine et al, 2010; Taylor, 2008). Over 50 academics initially responded and from these 30 were selected based on similarity in subject areas and stages of the establishment of apprenticeship. Of the 30, 18 were from Health, Technology and Engineering Sciences and the rest from Business, Management and Law. See Table 1 for anonymised details about the interviewees, in terms of their years of teaching, curriculum design experience, and level of qualification, subject area and university.

During two semi-structured interviews plus online or phone follow up, participants discussed apprenticeships around four themes: (a) their definition and feelings about degree apprenticeships ; (b) perspectives on working with companies, bodies, funders and other faculties ; (c) curriculum experiences and their views of it; and (d) experiences with others, students, parents, staff, academic peers. The emphasis for interviews was on the subtlety of micro-level interactions in the everyday practice of university life (Kunitz, 2011), with interviews collecting accounts couched in participants' own words (Marshall and Rossman 1999). For a sample of questions used as cues for discussion, see Appendix 1.

This study is therefore based on in-depth, semi-structured interviews averaging 120 minutes in length and subsequent telephone calls or emails to follow up points or check the meaning intended in interviews lasting between 30 and 45 minutes. Transcripts were collected at participants' own universities or at events to suit their needs to generate suitable data (Taylor, 2008). They were then analysed using thematic analysis using NVivo software, in an iterative process, where transcripts were read and re-read in turn by the authors until text was categorised and all themes were compared against each other (Odena 2013). Seven final themes emerged, listed in Appendix B.

Results and discussion

As in Odena and Burgess (2015), this qualitative study combines the results and discussion in one section, in which participant experiences are contrasted with relevant literature on academic identity. The interviewees reported issues and described experiences and feelings with three emergent themes which will be related to relevant literature to show how they contribute to understanding of academic identity in the context of rapid change and degree apprenticeships. A generative model of academic identity construction emerged from the analysis and is included in Figure 1. The model contains elements that appear to be key for participants' construction of academic identity in this new context, described as explicit drivers and (usually) unsaid factors. , leading to uncertainty and ambiguity around identity formation and rewriting.

First of all, participants all expressed positive views of the degree apprenticeship. This included enhanced employability that apprentices would have in working while studying

and the importance to the University of engaging in these new opportunities. The language used to describe the design and development of the award indicated tensions, however. This included a lack of choice in getting involved with apprenticeships. Three explained that they had been "drafted in "others that they had been "identified as the person and that was that". Typically participant 17 explained

> "It was presented as a great opportunity to continue the sort of work I'd done before but there was no choice actually, the School needed someone to pick this up and I was identified"

Further, participant 29 felt that once you were identified, you then took over the pressures of a structure others had put in place, with time and internal processes to validate awards had suddenly become elastic to ensure contracts were met

> "No one would choose the way these have been set up, there are three committees involved and the employers. The employers always want things instantly and the committees want to explore every comma and you're in the middle … then there are senior managers pushing you to do more quicker for less…. certainly I would make it all much simpler if I had any say in things"
>
> "We validate these in super quick time now because they use a template and just drop bits in, it's worrying for me because I still feel quality is important and this feels like we're paying lip service to it" (Participant 3).
>
> "It's not like a normal degree, there isn't the same depth or creativity about it … it's drafted by business development people filling a template in" (Participant 11)

Thus, more than half felt that others set the structures, content and the timeframe, but participants recognised their own efforts in delivery of apprenticeships. Each referred to the need to 'make things work'. Making things work despite the pressures was seen as a positive thing, as a form of self validation.

> "It's been very chaotic, we've a new Dean who's very inexperienced so keeps muddling in and out when you need them to leave you alone, there are business development types and heads of departments all butting in … so the agreements made are unrealistic … so you're under more pressure than you need to be"…"still we have made it work, I led on getting the delivery sorted and it's worked very well" (Participant 8).
>
> "I feel very good about the way I've managed to make it work because it was a mishmash thrown together to get through the degree validation process very quickly" (Participant 9)

Here the descriptions of their involvement with apprenticeships showed power relations embedded in views of selfhood (Brown and Lewis, 2011; Brown and Coupland, 2015). This had necessarily led to uncertainty, with accompanying stress which participants described as related to anxiety re task fulfilment. Participants were concerned about having enough time "to meet everyone else's needs" (Participant 1); about having the right skill set and knowledge base, especially for working with employers (e.g., Participants 2, 3, 11, 14, 21, 22).

> "I'm not sure how long I can keep this up, it's really hard to present a positive face to students and employers when time and quality pressures are so high" (Participant)
>
> "I'm worried sometimes that I'm putting in all this effort to make them work but I'm not sure if they will be around in ten years .., governments change their

minds after all and these awards came from politics rather than universities"(Participant)

"I'm uncertain about my own capabilities and energies in pulling these together, it's very stressful and I feel like I'm bluffing most of the time in discussions with employers and senior management" (Participant)

This uncertainty also underlay ambiguities for participants in terms of their 'real' role. Those with previous curriculum design experience expressed feelings about being undermined in this experience as the process was driven by those internally and externally who lacked depth of experience and knowledge in designing and developing curriculum content. There were also comments about shifting roles. Participants discussed the ongoing identity construction on order to fulfil changing institutional expectations over time (Learmouth and Humphreys 2012; Mills et al, 2010). Here though reconstruction of identity was not to realize desired versions of themselves but to fulfil roles required for their university and faculty (Brown and Coupland, 2015). Ambiguities came in what participants felt what expected from them.

"The employer work I did before was not seen as having the same value as a PhD or peer reviewed papers but now I've been forced back into that space..."

"When I started work here my job involved teaching, it's what the university does really well. But of course, the new vice chancellor and dean came with ambitions for us to become known for research, so we all got on PhD treadmills… now it's back to teaching again but only this context gets any attention from senior managers… we'll have to see how long this lasts…"

"I'm not sure about taking on this work, we're a research university and I feel like we (those in teaching) are seen as second class"

In coping with these uncertainties and these ambiguities, participants recognised that they were 'rewriting themselves' 'reinventing themselves' 'slipping into new roles' or 'slipping back into old roles' in order to make sense of what they were doing and to ensure they made sense to other people. In this way, colleagues in their own institution and peers from other institutions might make sense of their value and of the worth of their roles in delivering degree apprenticeships. If they could not do this how could they legitimize their roles or feel authentic in carrying them out? Those with first degrees were most concerned since they already felt their roles were not valued in changing institutions, as their role was that of teacher rather than researcher and their industrial experience not as valued as higher qualifications.

"I joined from industry and they made a lot of me but now I'm under constant pressure to get a doctorate and be scholarly rather than applying experience"

"It's a game of catch up now. We aren't a research university but to hear the new VC you'd think we were Oxford. So no new appointments without PhDs and all of us unworthy teachers need to prove ourselves, not in the classroom but through theory"

"….we are second class. Though my teaching scores are first class I don't have a PhD, and it's clear I won't get any further… so doing apprenticeships is fine for us as it's not interfering with important things like research"

The process of rewriting yourself was something needed internally and externally

> "You have to keep relocating yourself in ways people can understand... students and employers have their own idea what apprenticeships are so you have to fit in with that but establish the place of the university in them"
> "People here… don't really understand what we are doing, I've been asked why I've got involved with apprenticeships as they are seen as vocational awards, so you have to explain what they are, then what that means to you as an academic.. But this means we've shifted from normal practice … we are out of sync with our colleagues..."
> "Things change, reinventing yourself is what you do without thinking about it. The organization changes direction and you have to shift with it… its difficult though because most people don't get what these awards are about or why we are doing them as a university"

This was especially true since apprenticeships were equated with vocational awards or with simpler curriculum. Participants were anxious about their worth being equal to an ascribed worth for Apprenticeships.

> "There have been comments about them dumbing down traditional degrees... the implication is that if they aren't worth as much as normal degrees, neither are we, delivering them… I'm overcompensating with trying to publish more papers…"
> "Some people think these aren't the same standard as traditional degrees, so you're always stressing the rigour and the depth… if these aren't legitimate degrees neither are the delivery team…"

These quotes illustrate how the/ ambiguities related to this new curriculum required identity work to recover status or value. Because other colleagues judged the curriculum
As low worth, participants felt that they were seen similarly, whether as teachers or researchers.

Juggling hats – identity work needed to be a 'proper academic'

Participants described processes to support an academic identity that they felt to be threatened (Brown and Coupland, 2015); they discussed relocating, redefining or rewriting yourself both for internal and external audiences.

> "You have to keep *relocating* yourself in ways people can understand – students and employers have their own idea what academics should be" (Participant 7)
> "People [in the university] … don't really understand what we are doing, I've been asked why I've got involved with apprenticeships as they are seen as vocational awards, so you have to explain what they are, then what that means to you as an academic. But this means we've shifted from normal practice … we are out of sync with our colleagues so we have to *rewrite* ourselves back into their story." (Participant 9)
> "Things change, *reinventing* yourself is what you do without thinking about it. The organisation changes direction and you have to shift with it… it's difficult though because most people don't get what these awards are about or why we are doing them as a university" (Participant 14).

The process described is captured as Figure 1. This shows participants' views about the pressures they felt they were under and the fluctuations they were subject to. Being a 'proper academic' meant being subject to continual pressures from the perceptions of others, with 'the academic image', based on historic and societal depictions. They also identified 'compulsion' and institutional rules, needs and discourse as defining an academic but as

being subject to change which might be out of kilter with the perceptions of internal colleagues and external contacts (Brown and Lewis, 2011). While these images of the academic might be at variance with the participants' current roles, these factors were felt to be out of their control in changing perceptions.
Figure 1 about here

Those employer, colleagues and senior manager views of the proper academic were felt, however, to be open to change. Shown by double-headed arrows in Figure 1, these are the relationships that were focussed on during identity work as these views might be changed in the participants' favour. As suggested by Gautam et al (2004), they actively sought to support their identity as academics rather than being seen as vocational teachers, as 'proper academics'. These overlapping sets of differing perceptions led to participants shifting their behaviours, aligning with the situation in an attempt to live up to the image held by each group. Not surprisingly, this was described as stressful and as producing considerable anxiety.

Figure 2 shows the views of participants about the effort required to establish and to retain legitimacy as an academic in the context of new apprenticeships delivery. In the centre of the figure is 'rewriting identity' with both recognised pressures and unsaid issues acting to pressure the academic to carry out identity work. Through this though, the participant might achieve validation and redefine themselves to be accepted as authentic and legitimate in their role as an academic.

In order to legitimize activities, some participants had started research into aspects of the awards, or begun studies towards their PhDs in areas around apprenticeships. Others had spoken to their department and other departments about what Apprenticeships meant and how they were being delivered, others were keen to portray what they were doing in context – and their range of activities – in order not to be stereotyped as only able to deliver work-intensive learning programmes. Hence these academics occupied an uneasy no mans land between 'proper activities' such as research, and 'improper activities' linked to vocational training and the world of work. Their work was judged by colleagues within their institution and by academics from other institutions but due to their apprentices work, they were also judged by professional bodies and employers. These multiple overlapping groups had different expectations of what academic should be, by "juggling hats" (Participant). Most of the time this was done "without doing it deliberately" (Participant).

In discussing identity construction and reconstruction, Degn (2015) suggests that these impact on the organisational context, producing a 'new reality' to deal with for colleagues. Here, however, participants felt separate - that they occupied an uneasy no man's land between 'proper activities' such as research, and 'improper activities' linked to vocational training and the world of work. The worth of their work was judged by colleagues within their institution, by academics from other institutions and also by professional bodies and employers (Laine et al, 2016).

Participants were much more concerned about internal perspectives however as these determined "whether people think of you as an academic" (Participants 23, 8). These multiple overlapping groups had different expectations of what an academic should be, and it was only by "juggling hats" (Participants 1, 16, 22) that participants were able to manage their roles. "You switch identities to keep everyone happy … without doing it deliberately"

(Participant 13). This was necessary because “People expect you to behave a certain way so you have to just meet their expectations” (Participant 19).

Conclusions

This study considers new degree apprenticeships in the context of the academic identity of those designing and delivering these awards in UK universities and the identity work they carry out to support their persona in different contexts. Exploration showed a complex situation, with ambiguities and uncertainties embedded in what was acknowledged to be a constant rewriting of their performance of academic identity, as seen in Figure 2. Both internal and external factors led to identity work in reconstructing identity, all to achieve validity and legitimacy in their roles as academics. Their degree apprenticeships teaching meant that they needed to overcompensate by engaging in extra research in order to gain validity they felt they had lost, to be a ‘proper academic’ (Figure 1 and 2).

By juggling hats and depicting the kind of academic that the participants felt others required in different situations, they had managed the ambiguities but at a personal cost in terms of stress and anxiety. These had resulted not from the nature of degree apprenticeships, but from the way in which managers had introduced them, together with the pressures to do so quickly and meet employer needs while reducing the power of the individual academic to shape the content of the awards. Hence, results also showed the importance of personal autonomy in curriculum design and delivery to validate personal worth. This shows implications for managers in the introduction and implementation of new apprenticeships, with participants feeling compelled rather than motivated to be course leaders or course teachers. It also has implications for the well-being of academics managing to ‘juggle hats’ in order to meet multiple needs.

While the study has particular relevance within this context of new degree apprenticeships, it raises more general questions about the impacts of policy changes and governmental pressures on academic identity and the efforts to create and retain an academic identity (identity work). Becoming more attuned to the market means that university adopt different process and structures and make new demands on their staff, as seen in the perspectives of the participants. Here the demands of partnerships and workplace learning were coupled with negative views from colleagues and mixed messages from managers leading to everyday stress and uncertainties – and to increased identity work to retain legitimacy as an academic

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Appendix 1
Participants were asked questions on apprenticeships around four themes: (a) their definition and feelings about degree apprenticeships ; (b) perspectives on working with companies, bodies, funders and other faculties ; (c) curriculum experiences and their views of it; and (d) experiences with other staff. Questions were asked as cues for discussion since these were semi-structured interviews., These included:

1. Tell me about your role with the degree apprenticeships in xxxx at your university
2. What would you say a degree apprenticeship represents? To you, to students, to fellow staff?
3. What do you think about them? Good points? Bad points?
4. How did the degree apprenticeships at (your institution) come about? What sort of a process accompanied the development of the award?
5. How did design and validation happen?
6. What was your role in this? How did that happen? How do you describe yourself now?
7. How did you feel about being involved then / now?
8. How does it relate to you other teaching / research / managerial roles?
9. What's it been like to work with xxx (relevant employer) xxx (relevant professional body) xxx (funded)
10. Tell me how any issues are resolved
11. Tell me about fellow staff who aren't involved, what's their view of these apprenticeships?
12. How do senior staff describe these awards and what's their involvement so far?
13. What do you know now that you wish you'd known earlier?
14. How do students on / not on the apprenticeships see them?
    Plus follow up questions during the interviews to understand stories told or points made by participants.

Appendix 2. Themes from data analysis.
Uncertainty – stress related to task fulfilment and uncertainty about have no the right skills / time and approaches to make them work, how will this affect my ability to carry out research?
Ambiguity – related to curriculum and it's worth, related to the importance that the university / senior staff placed on degree apprenticeships ; being accountable for these awards but having little power in their design and delivery processes
Compulsion – a lack of choice to get involved and to develop the award in the time and way they'd prefer, having to work to committees or business development leads
Validation – making it work despite the university/ the partner needs and demands / the difficulties involved
Rewriting yourself – trying to help colleagues and external academic networks to make sense of what you do now / rewriting yourself to ensure your academic identity was recognized despite apprenticeships/ trying to explain what it means now to be an academic or what universities are for
Authenticity / legitimacy – what it means to be legitimate in a role, as an academic and a degree apprenticeship designer/ provider/ advocate, authenticity as an issue

Judgements of others – managers and senior managers and changing requirements, doubts about the consistency of current views when other agendas emerge (e.g., TEF, REF2020, university ambitions to move the league tables)

Table 1 Details of respondents

Respondent	University	Subject area	Own qualification	Years of teaching	Curriculum design experience	Prior Company experience
1	A	Science & Tech	Bachelors	12	1	Yes
2	A	Science & Tech	Doctoral	6	0	No
3	A	Business related	Masters	13	2	No
4	A	Business related	Masters	15	2	No
5	B	Science & Tech	Postgrad	1	0	No
6	B	Science & Tech	Bachelors	11	0	Yes
7	B	Business related	Masters	8	1	No
8	B	Business related	Doctoral	5	0	No
9	C	Science & Tech	Postgrad	3	1	No
10	C	Science & Tech	Postgrad	7	1	No
11	C	Science & Tech	Doctoral	5	0	No
12	C	Business related	Doctoral	3	0	No
13	C	Business related	Doctoral	4	0	No
14	D	Science & Tech	Doctoral	9	1	No
15	D	Science & Tech	Postgrad	18	0	No
16	D	Business related	Postgrad	12	1	No
17	D	Business related	Postgrad	6	0	Yes
18	E	Science & Tech	Postgrad	9	0	Yes
19	E	Science & Tech	Bachelors	11	1	No
20	E	Science & Tech	Bachelors	8	1	Yes
21	E	Business related	Postgrad	8	0	No
22	E	Business related	Postgrad	3	0	No

23	F	Science & Tech	Postgrad	14	1	Yes
24	F	Business related	Bachelors	12	2	Yes
25	F	Business related	Masters	21	3	No
26	G	Science & Tech	Postgrad	19	2	No
27	G	Business related	Masters	20	0	No
28	G	Science & Tech	Doctoral	4	0	Yes
29	H	Science & Tech	Postgrad	11	0	Yes
30	H	Business related	Bachelors	2	0	No