

Our Degree Apprenticeship Journey

What works for us at Manchester Met

Jonathan Lawson

How is it going?

- Voted top university provider of degree apprenticeships by apprentices (RateMyApprenticeship Awards 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022)
- Rated an 'Excellent' training provider by employers (gov.uk)
- 83% overall achievement, even in the pandemic, 92% merits and distinctions
- 90% NSS, 100% above benchmark on TEF
- First university to be awarded Outstanding by Ofsted on their new Education Inspection framework – Nov 2022
- University Provider of the Year – Multicultural Apprenticeship Awards 2022
- Global interest, advising other countries including New Zealand, Spain, Canada and Australia



Digital degree apprentices at York University, Toronto, with Jane Goodyer, Dean of Lassonde School of Engineering

Where are we now?

2023
(2,500 Apprentices)



April 2023

Over 2,500 apprentices on:

Digital:

- Creative Digital Design (Degree Apprenticeship)
- Digital & Technology Solutions (Degree & Masters Degree Apprenticeships)
- Digital Marketing (Degree Apprenticeship)
- Digital User Experience Professional (Degree Apprenticeship)

Leadership and management:

- Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship – 2.5 and 4 years
- Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care
- Retail Leadership
- Senior Leader (Level 7 PgDip)

Science

- Healthcare Scientist (Degree Apprenticeship)
- Laboratory Scientist – Chemical and Bioscience (Degree Apprenticeship)

Health and care

- Advanced Clinical Practitioner (Masters)
- District Nurse and Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (Level 7 PgDip)
- Social Work (Degree Apprenticeship)



2015
(60 Apprentices)

Some of our 540+ employer partners

LARGE ORGANISATIONS



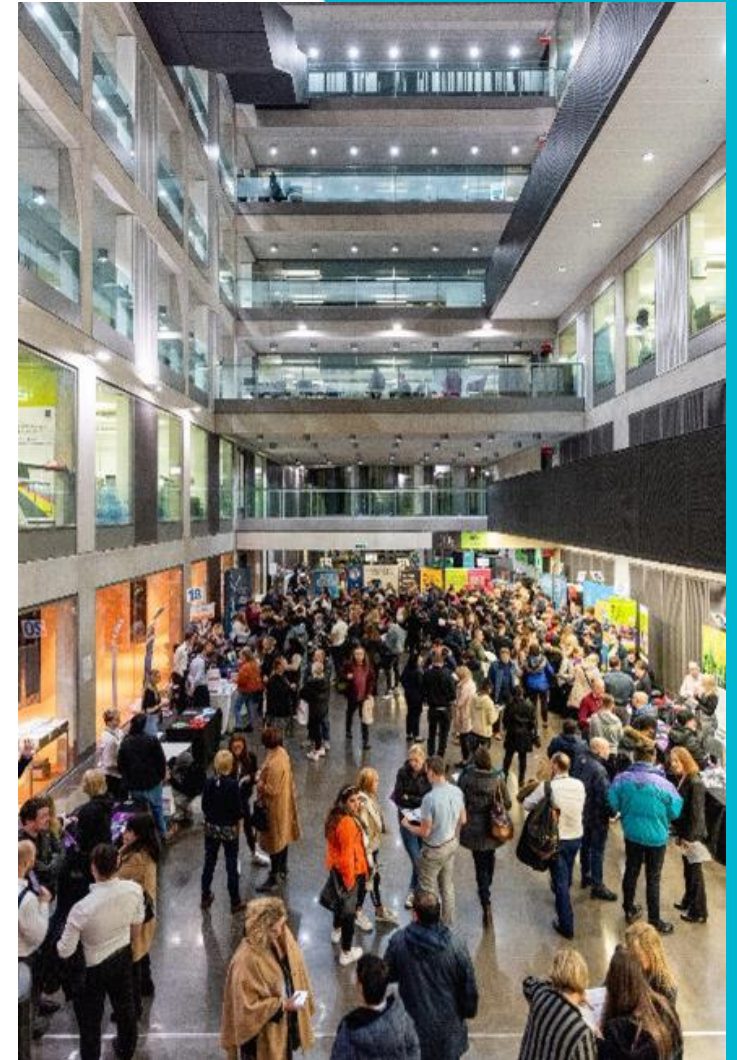
Some of our SME partners



**What are the key
factors for us?**

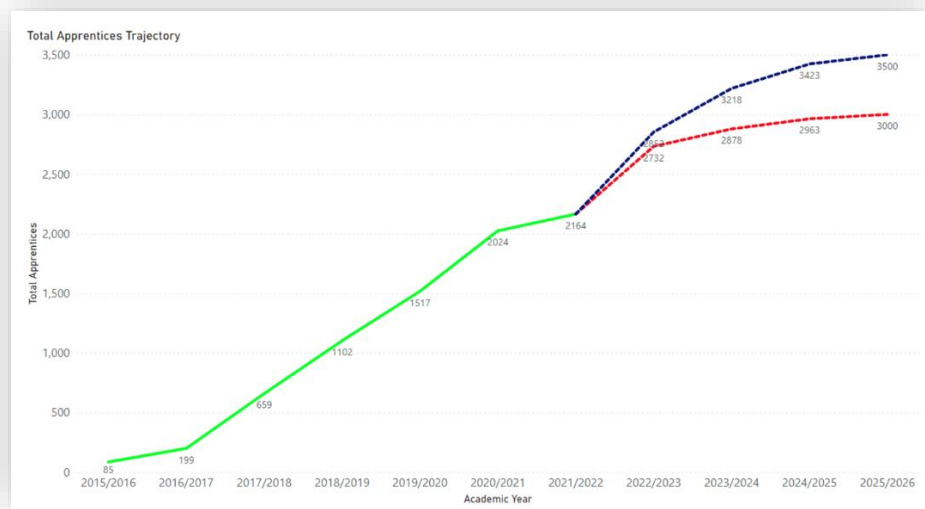
Knowing 'WHY?'

- Belief, from the start, that this is a public good
- Large, popular, diverse university in a great city
- Identity fit – apprenticeships are an intrinsic part of the University's vision, mission and strategy
- Provide new ways of working with employers and alleviating local, regional and national skills shortages
- Self-challenge to innovate: new routes into HE
- Fast-track ladder for social mobility
- A joint vision to 'do it properly'



An entrepreneurial approach

- Risk taking
- High growth mindset
- Senior Leadership support
- Output focussed
- Working alongside the system – integrated into university provision
- Multi-skilled team



The Apprenticeships Unit

Early creation of central team



Influencing

Working inside and outside



Specialists and new roles



Set up for success, quality

Proactive culture

Hub and spoke model

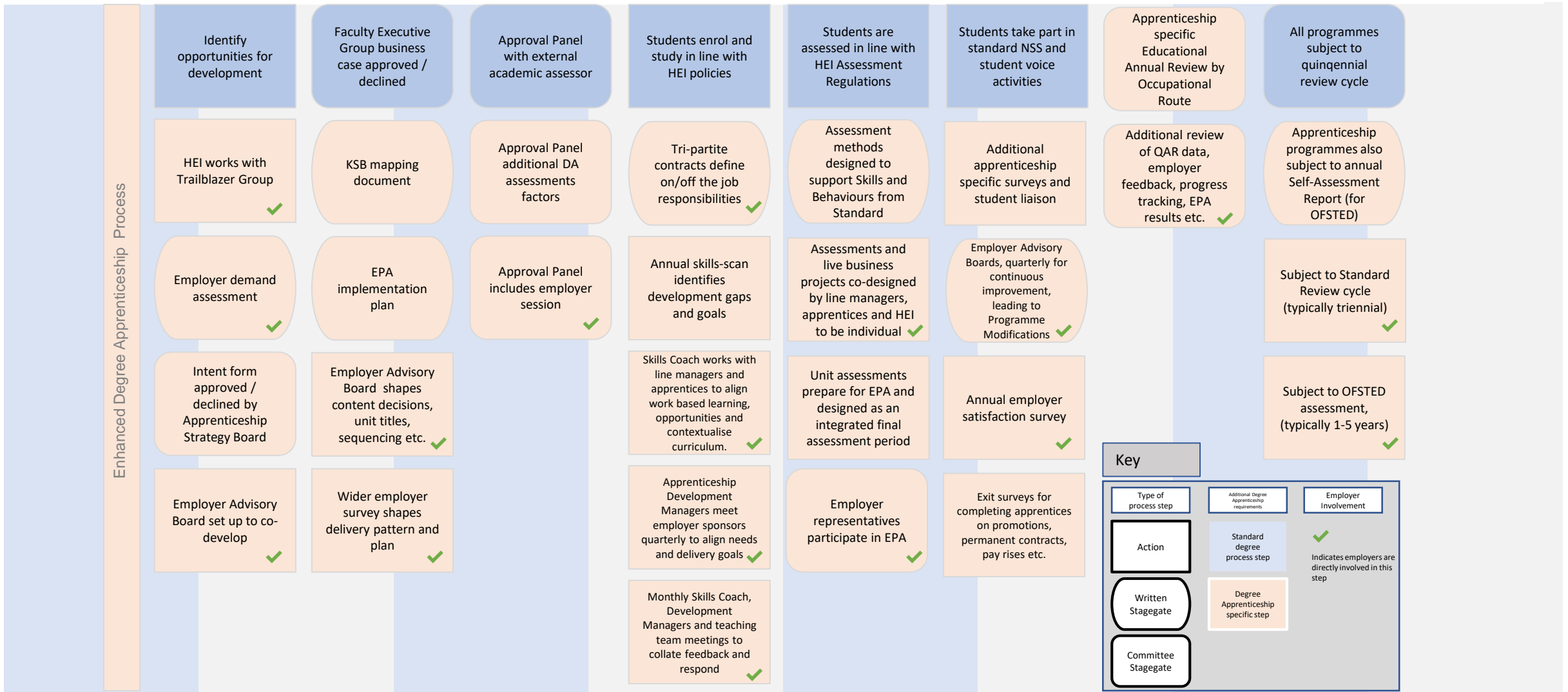
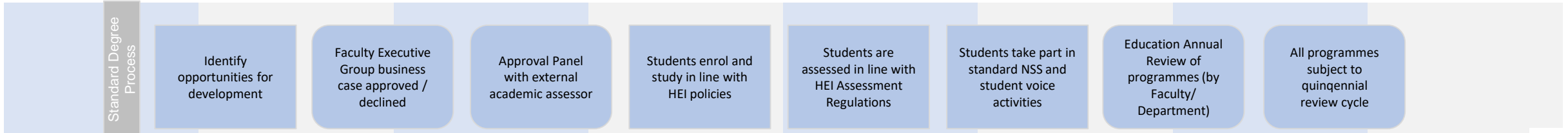
Translational

collaborate
real-world
growing
transforming-lives
achievement
respect
determination
individual
collaboration
apprentice
support
communication
together
social-mobility
everyone
achieve
wider-university
team
success
future-focused
acceptance
inclusive
community
diversity
passion
dignity
faculties
dignity

Employer-led

- Courses co-designed, co-delivered, co-assessed and co-evaluated with employers
- Active Employer Advisory Board for each standard
- Degree Apprenticeship courses are newly validated – no rebadging and are delivered separately from FT programmes
- Bespoke e-portfolio set up and workplace Skills Coaches working alongside academic delivery staff
- Focus on live work based projects with real business benefits
- Delivery models designed to suit specific employer and sector needs





Key

Type of process step	Additional Degree Apprenticeship requirements	Employer involvement
Action	Standard degree process step	✓ Indicates employers are directly involved in this step
Written Stagegate	Degree Apprenticeship specific step	
Committee Stagegate		

Which apprenticeships to deliver?

- Addressing local, regional and national skills shortages
- Clear and quantifiable employer demand
- Aligns with University and apprenticeship strategy
- Subject area where the university has expertise and staff resource
- Demonstrable career progression routes for apprentices
- A true apprenticeship and reasonable funding band so that we can resource
- No near competitor could do it better



Aligning with the needs of the labour market

ADDRESSING SKILLS GAPS

Major national skills shortages:

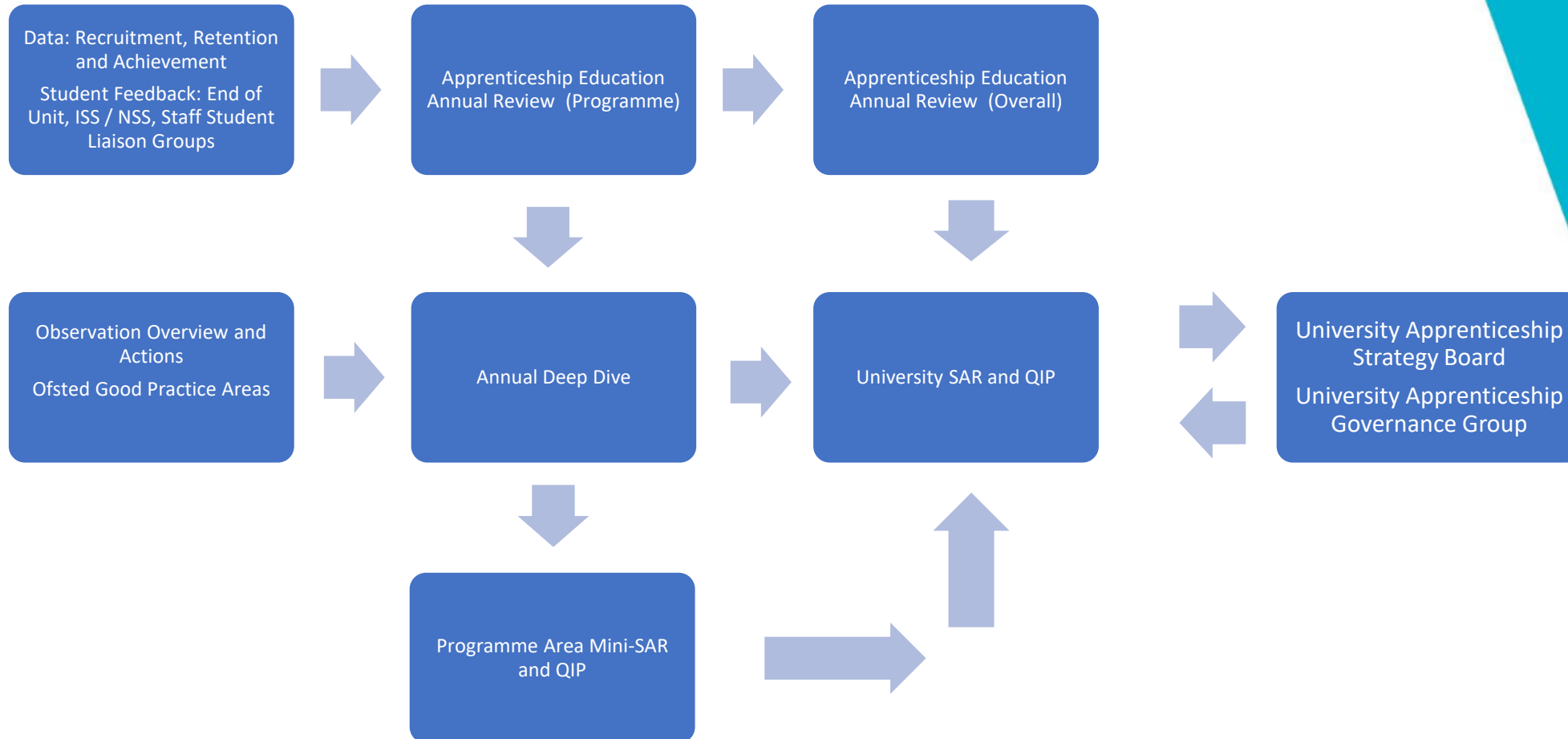
- **Digital** – ICT Professionals, business analysts and architects, programmers and software developers, cyber security specialists, web developers...
- **Health** – nursing, all medical professionals, all Health professionals, health and social care managers
- **Social Workers**
- **Chemical and biological scientists**



Keeping going over time!

- No apprentices below Living Wage
- Separate cohorts
- Closing what isn't working
- The “ten commandments”
- University Apprenticeship Strategy Board
- Governance structures modified for apprenticeships

Annual Quality Cycle



Individual Progress Tracking

2d-Students - Progress by Cohort (latest review)

← 1668
Total

RAG
All

Programme Manager
All

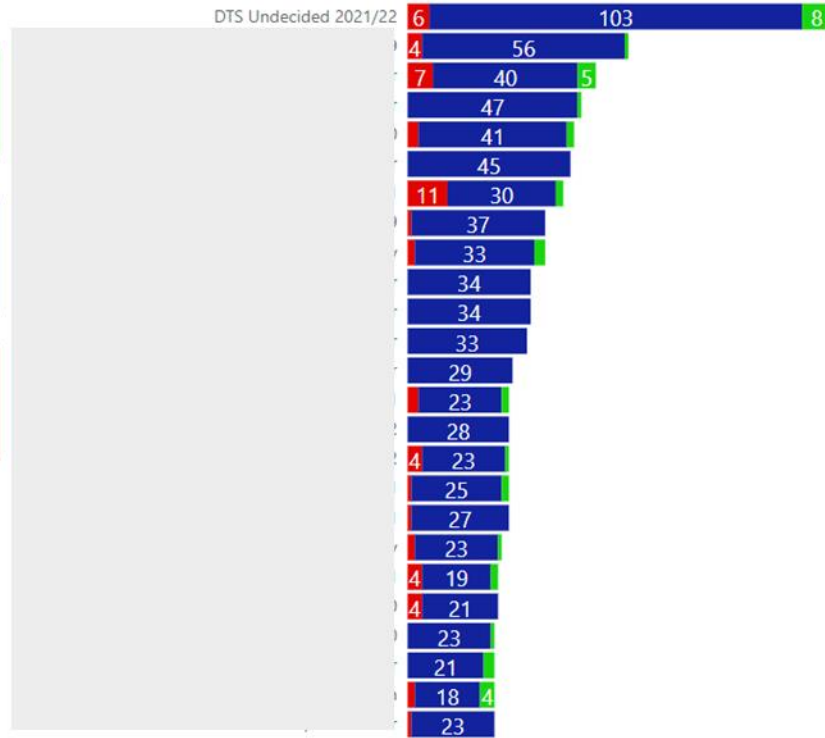
Skills Coach
All

Year, Month
All

5%
Exceeding

89%
Meeting

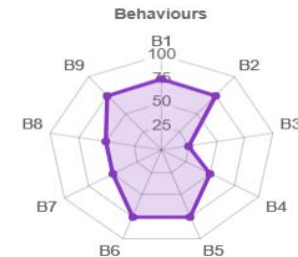
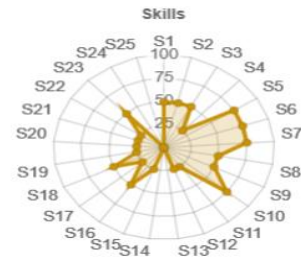
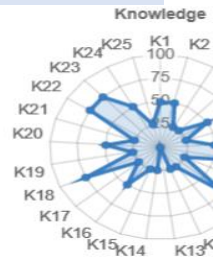
6%
Below



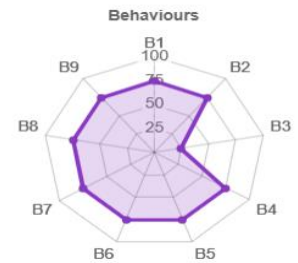
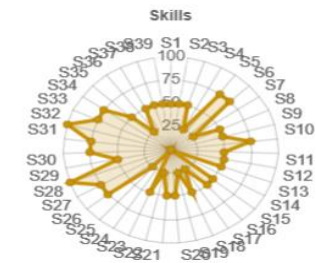
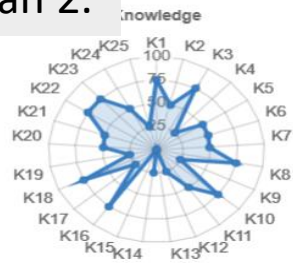
MMUID	First Name	Surname	SkillsCoach	Programme	Current Progress	EPA Target	RAG	Progress Justification
					Meeting	Distinction	Green	Martin is confident of achieving at this level.
					Meeting	Distinction	Green	Louis is confident of achieving at this level
					Meeting	Distinction	Green	Josh's second year marks suggest that a first class degree is definitely achievable. He is also making good progress towards his EPA
					Meeting	Merit	Green	Jon is aiming for a first class degree as he may want to do the Masters degree at a later stage.

Individual KSB tracking

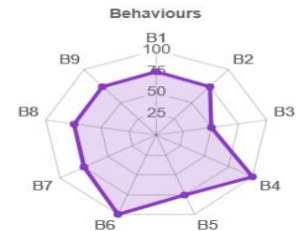
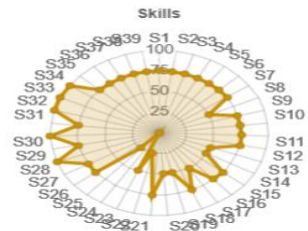
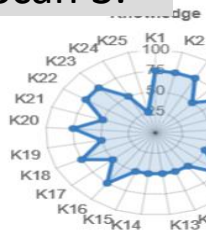
Skills Scan 1.



Skills Scan 2.



Skills Scan 3.



Playing our part in the community

- Working with government bodies
- Being a national and international ambassador
- Sharing the journey
- Helping others
- Working with the local community and wider skills/education landscape
- Building ladders of opportunity



Outreach

- Dedicated Outreach Officer
- Open evenings three to four times per year attracting up to 1,000 students and parents
- Supporting parents to dispel myths and perceptions
- BBC Radio documentary, press, media
- Speaking at employer conferences to graduate recruiters, etc.

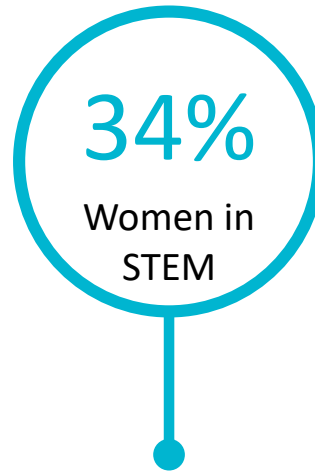
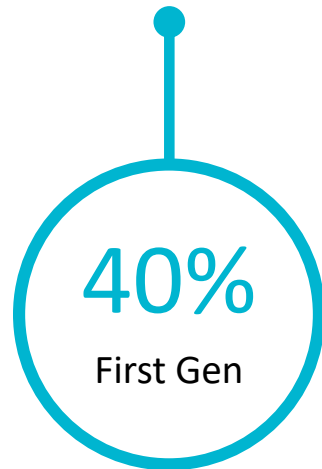
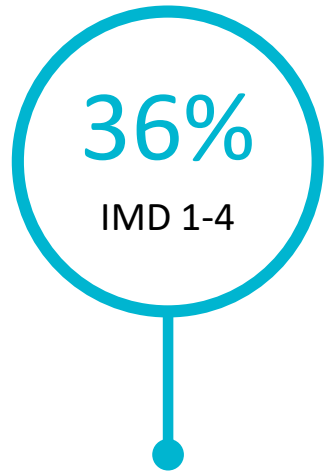


Changing lives and society

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

First in family to take a degree: powerful vehicle for social mobility

Increased from 10% in 2015/16. National apps figure 11.8%



Greater uptake by disadvantaged students than the national average

More female students on STEM programmes

Higher achievement rates than national average (64%)

Hearts and minds

- Finding and inspiring those who share the passion
- Developing a university-wide community of practice
- Championing issues and innovations
- Collaboration and shared success
- Celebration



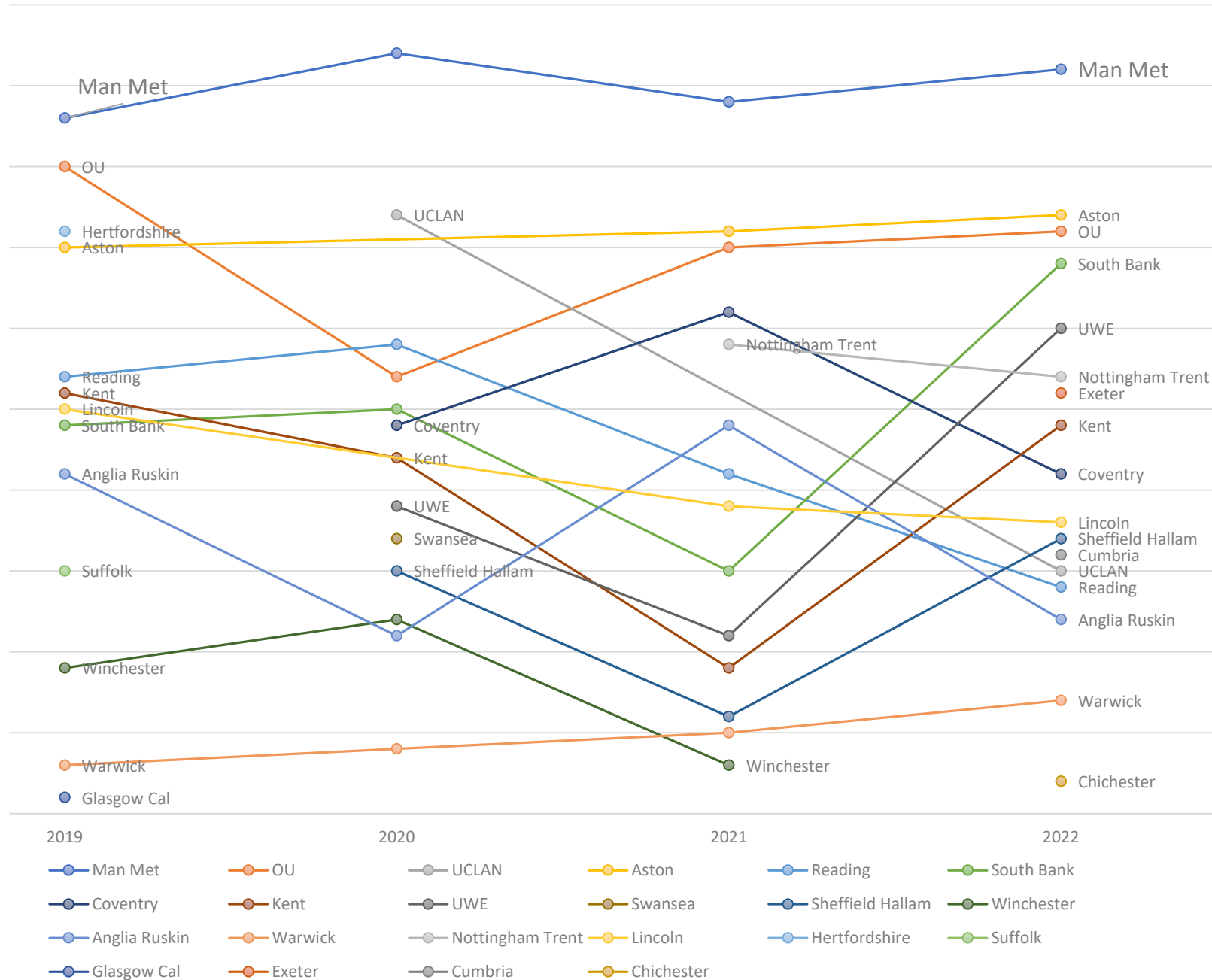
The external perspective

How we approach external perspectives

- We are already (very!) self-critical
- We focus on employer and student feedback first
- We use RateMyApprenticeship and .gov employer and student ratings, in addition to our own surveys, evaluations and feedback mechanisms
- We compare metrics to Accountability Framework but this is less helpful in decision making
- Using awards to benchmark
- We would welcome more transparent data at Standard level
- Our Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan aligned to these perspectives



RateMyApprenticeship top 50 rankings 2019-2022



OFSTED OUTSTANDING | Full inspection 2022

FOR DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS



Highlights include:

- ★ Quality of **teaching** and **academic support**
- ★ The **inclusive** and **respectful** learning environment
- ★ Highly effective **careers advice** and guidance



[WATCH THE VIDEO >](#)



This rating clearly demonstrates that we deliver programmes of exceptional quality at scale. Our apprenticeships are designed in close partnership with employers. This ensures they meet their workforce needs, while developing every student to achieve their potential and advance in their career of choice.



Liz Gorb | Director of Apprenticeships

Our Ofsted Experience: surveys said...

★ APPRENTICES

Most enjoy time at university, they feel supported by staff and there is strong communication. An overwhelming number feel part of the University community and comment that they feel valued.

★ EMPLOYERS

Most responses were affirmative – with 79 individual comments about what we do well, inc: strong communication, feeling very informed about apprentice progress, high quality programmes which support CPD in the business and that the expertise of tutors is strong.

★ STAFF

Provided very positive feedback, commenting on the supportive environment with a strong team ethos, excellent well-being in place, 'learners are at the heart of everything we do' and there is a strong focus on the student experience. 'Everyone is respectful of everyone else, and this is excellent for morale.'

Our Ofsted Experience: Key takeaways

- Inspectors impressed with **quality and content** of the education provision being delivered to apprentices.
- Leaders plan an **ambitious curriculum for apprentices**, well designed around the needs of employers, with effective challenge and oversight from governors.
- Lecturers use **questioning skilfully** to develop students and apprentices' knowledge and that apprentices are well supported by lecturers and skills coaches to meet the demands of whichever programme they follow.
- Apprentices enjoy and have **positive attitudes** towards learning at the university: "Apprentices and students enjoy studying at the university. They talk enthusiastically about the **highly inclusive and supportive environment** that provides a safe and positive place to learn."

Our Ofsted Experience: Key takeaways

- Leaders have a **clear oversight of the quality of education** and that they work with a range of stakeholders, such as employer advisory boards, to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Apprentices improve their **confidence and resilience**.
- They conclude that the **supportive, inclusive environment** and the highly effective careers guidance and advice, contribute to apprentices and students completing their programmes and that they are then exceptionally well placed to progress onto further study or to secure promotions in their workplace
- **Outstanding doesn't mean perfect!**
- SAR and QIP accurately identified strengths and areas for improvement. We are now working on these intensively to embed and improve consistency across our large programme.

QUESTIONS



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