

Case Study

Apprenticeships Lifecycle

Who We Worked With

University of the West of England (UWE)

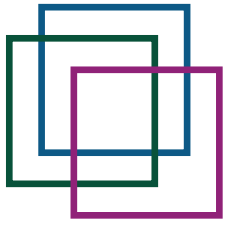
The Situation

Apprenticeships are a growing area of delivery for many SUMS members. Alongside the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and other professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, Ofsted has become involved in assuring the academic quality and other relevant standards of higher degree apprenticeships. Compliance or non-compliance with any or all of these regulatory bodies will have significant financial and reputational impacts. Both expansion of provision and compliance require a strategic cross-institutional approach to provision of apprenticeship programmes.

What Happened

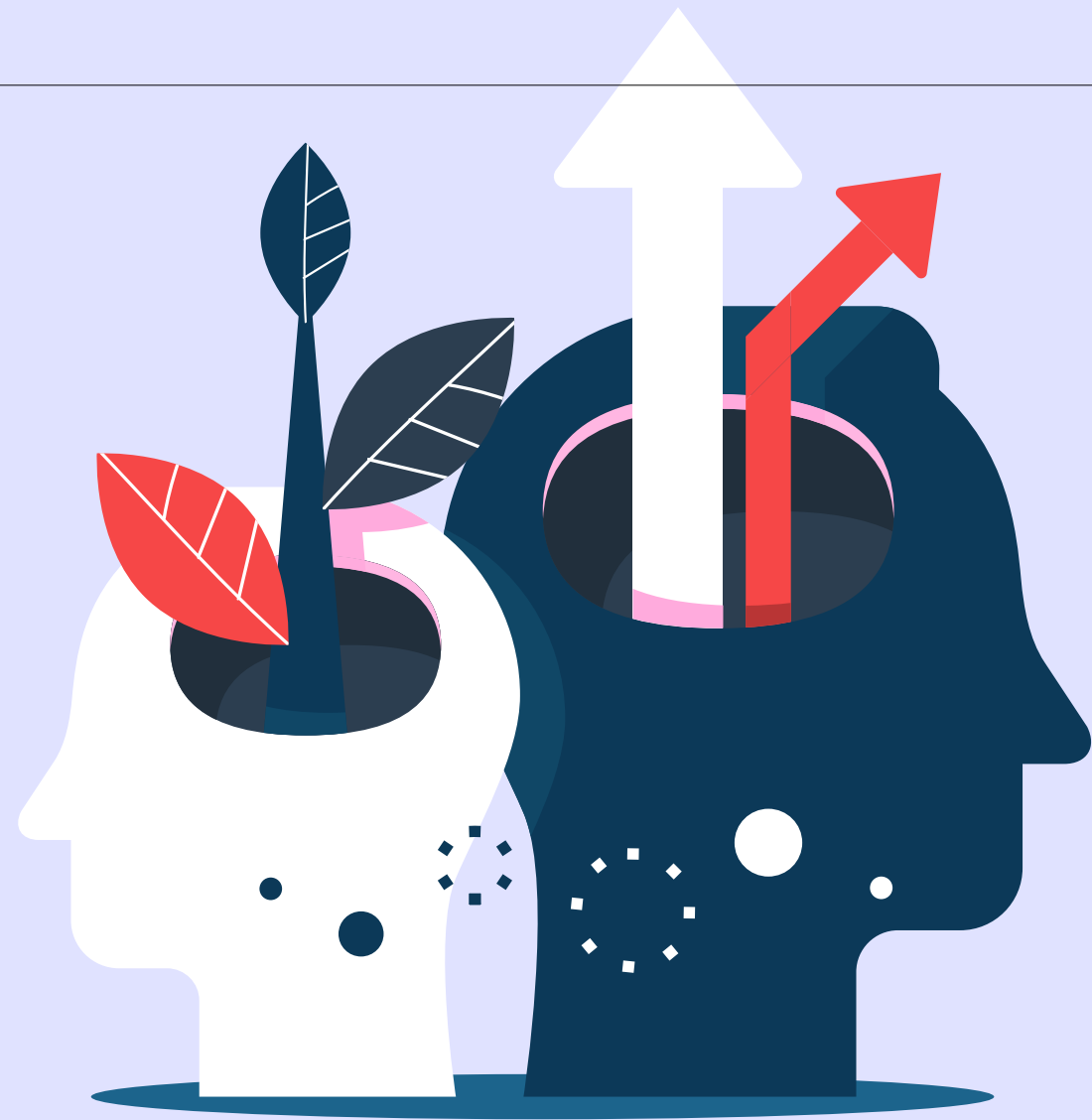
The UWE Strategic Programmes Office asked SUMS consultants to review its apprenticeship offer. While there were pockets of knowledge and experience across the institution, it became apparent that the many staff did not adequately understand the similarities and differences between standard students and apprentices, and between degree programmes and apprenticeships to support their part of underpinning delivery model.

To inform this work, SUMS drew up an apprentice lifecycle, interweaving ESFA and Ofsted compliance requirements with the standard learner lifecycle. This enabled conversations with stakeholders to fully understand the specific requirements for apprenticeships. It highlighted the



SUMS group





“SUMS’ support was invaluable in helping us better understand the regulatory complexities of the apprenticeship lifecycle in relation to our operating model and set the groundwork to take our apprenticeship offer to the next level across the University. The holistic approach that SUMS was able to provide by then supporting with the procurement process meant we had continuity and HE-specific expertise throughout the project.”

DAVID BARRETT

DIRECTOR OF APPRENTICESHIPS, UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND (UWE)

importance of data in decision-making and the impact of the multi-way relationship between the learner, their employer and the HE provider.

These discussions led to a better understanding of how the institution could enable growth in its provision of apprenticeships by moving to a more strategic, cross-university approach that incorporated administrative and financial processes, systems and data.

The apprenticeship lifecycle asset and SUMS’ insight into the risk of non-compliance fed into a business case for funding to put a change programme in place. As part of this programme, the SUMS consultant, bringing in expertise from SUMS Group procurement division SUPC, then supported the internal team through the procurement process for an apprenticeship management platform. The

consultant helped deliver tender documents that addressed the user journey, business and information requirements and integration planning.

The Difference It Made

The team at UWE was able to think about how they could improve support for apprentices and apprenticeships across the institution. They were able to look at where processes could be integrated and where differences between apprentices and standard learners are material and require specific support. They have also been able to consider aspects of internal capabilities, data, information and risk. These considerations are all adding up to a more strategic approach to apprenticeships that will drive growth and improvements to learner experience and outcomes.