Case study



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Degrees of development

The University of Central Lancashire is an international, multi-campus university that can trace its roots back to 1828. The institution leads the way in modern learning offering a range of Higher and Degree Apprenticeships, allowing learners to gain an academic qualification and a degree whilst they work, alongside undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses.



Moon Yates
Delivery Lead - Higher Education
Email moon.yates@waterstons.com

Results

Comprehensive research and insights that enable the University to make evidence-based decisions regarding degree apprenticeship programmes, whilst also developing a strategy to enhance and guide the approach for both new and existing degree apprenticeships.

Objective

The University of Central Lancashire required a partner to deliver a comprehensive report identifying key opportunities for developing new degree apprenticeships, serving as the strategic foundation for decision-making and guide priorities throughout the next academic year.

The university has a vision to strategically deliver 50 apprenticeships by academic year 2027-2028, ensuring supply meets demand and that the right students (including those students who may not ordinarily enter higher education) are able to access them.

Waterstons was selected to research and advise due to our extensive experience and understanding of the higher education sector, and our strong track record in requirements gathering and business consultancy projects.

Activity

We conducted research into the regional and national landscape of skills and employment, specifically regarding degree apprenticeships, as well as competitor activity and opportunities in this field.

Stage one

The project began with an initial review of the University of Central Lancashire's work in the degree apprenticeship area, including an exploration of their vision and future plans for these programmes. We engaged with key stakeholders to understand the current decision-making process for these courses, and to identify effectiveness and any challenges that have arisen.

Stage two

We undertook research to create a report that provides relevant information to enable the university to build its strategy.

This included:

1. An assessment of the regional employment picture with a focus on where there is existing or potential job growth.

2. Identification of existing and future skills gap within the region that degree apprenticeships can support with addressing.

3. Assessment of competitor activity in this area to identify existing opportunities or areas where competitors may already be capitalising on available opportunities, and analysis on whether current programmes suggest a lower barrier to entry for accessing potential markets.

4. Identification of regional employers for partnership opportunities with the University, including expansion of existing provisions or the introduction of new degree apprenticeships.

5. An overview of the degree apprenticeship landscape for the University of Central Lancashire, including our recommendations of new degree apprenticeships and sector strategies.

Ready to grow your educational offerings? Contact Moon Yates at moon.yates@waterstons.com to see how we can help.