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Unlocking potential through work-integrated  
learning - developing the role of  
apprenticeship coach to maximise the  
apprentice HE learning experience in the  
workplace

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# Aims



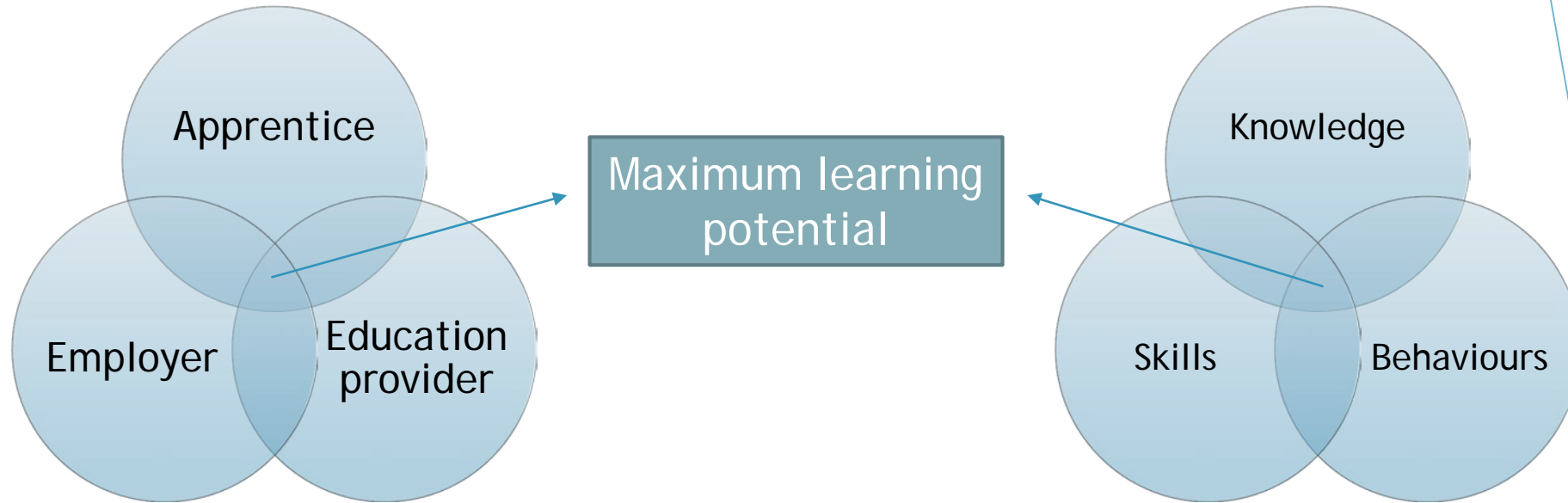
- Distinctiveness of apprenticeships as HE learning experiences
- Coaching to maximise apprentices' HE learning potential in the workplace
- Principles of coaching employed, the practical implications of the coaching relationship and potential barriers
- Practical applications:
  - Clinical Tutor role in Nursing Associate apprenticeship
  - Business Apprenticeship Coach in L&M apprenticeships

# Key characteristics of apprenticeships

- Characteristically:
  - requires both on- and off-the-job learning (80:20)
  - situated in a particular business/organisational and social context
  - visibility of learning processes should be high
- The apprentice must be involved in active learning throughout an apprenticeship... (P50)
- The apprentice must work enough hours each week so that they can undertake **sufficient regular training and on-the-job activity**...(P52)

ESFA [Apprenticeship funding rules for training providers](#) (August 2018 to July 2019)

# Apprenticeship learning is distinct...



'How employers and learning providers develop apprentices is at least as important as what they do...Culture matters.'  
(Lucas and Spencer, 2015, p. 134)



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# Value of apprenticeships

- ▶ focus on learning in, from and for work
- ▶ ability to unlock the potential of individual employees for personal and professional lifelong learning
- ▶ Ability to enhance:
  - the intellectual capital of organisations
  - positively contribute to workforce development and the workplace
- ▶ “Greater than the sum of its parts”



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# Developing a pedagogy of apprenticeships



- Risk in separating 'academic' and 'work-based' learning
- Potential to devalue workplace as rich centre of learning
- View through a lens of work-integrated learning:

*'...a broader term than 'work-based'...to emphasise connectedness of learning as opposed to academic and workplace learning taking place in parallel but independently of each other...'*

*(Lester, Bravenboer and Webb 2016 p1)*



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# A 'Signature' Pedagogy of Apprenticeships



Work-integrated learning (WIL) - pedagogical principles or 'signature pedagogy'

- ▶ the learner as an active agent and creator of meaning;
- ▶ the workplace as a legitimate site of learning and knowledge-generation, rather than simply application of theory to practice;
- ▶ and that learning objectives, processes and products are subject of negotiation between learner, employer and education provider; *a 'triadic' learning endeavour*

(Dalrymple et al 2014)



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# University of Worcester - current Higher and Degree apprenticeships



Approved for delivery from May 2018:

- Operations and Departmental Manager (L5)
- Chartered Managers DA (CMDA, L6)
- Senior Leaders DA (L7)
- Nursing Associate HA (L5)
- Teacher Apprenticeship (L6)




# The challenge...opportunities and solutions?

Expectation that up to 80% of apprentice's learning takes place 'on-the-job'



Opportunities to maximise the potential for life-long learning through the authenticity of experiences in the real world of work



Requires re-examining of our learning and teaching strategies and approaches to facilitate, support and develop learning 'in the workplace'

# The workplace as an academically valid place of learning



- Achieving the 'HE-levelness' of work integrated learning both on- and off-the-job
- Critically reflective learning
- Developing organisational culture and approaches to encourage investigation, evaluation, critique and creativity in the workplace
- Capacity for on-going personal and professional development which extends beyond the end of the programme

(Lester and Costley, 2010; Lunt, 2008)

# Barriers and Obstacles

- ▶ Pace - Design; Develop; Delivery; Destination
- ▶ Breaking the mould
  - ▶ Current models of nursing mentorship
  - ▶ Historic models of nurse education (SoNs, Enrolled Nurses)
- ▶ Blended learning
- ▶ Widening participation





# Coaching Principles

- ▶ Safe yet challenging environment
- ▶ Work within the apprentice's agenda
- ▶ Facilitate and collaborate
- ▶ Advocate self-awareness and emotional intelligence
- ▶ Promote learning for experience
- ▶ Model what you coach

## Access to all apprentices

- Requires multi-partner agreements and sponsorship
- Honorary contracts in place to allow working across all organisations

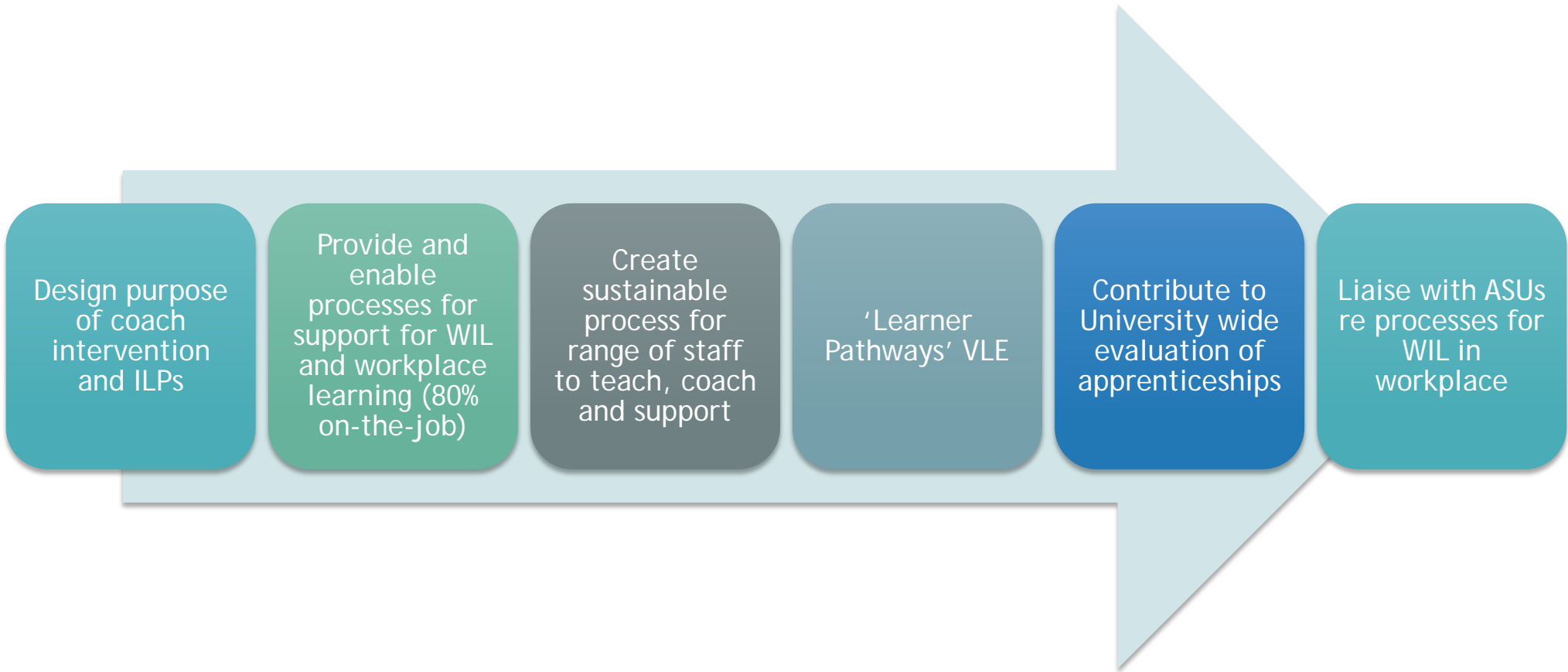
## Unlock learning in the workplace

- Learning in context
- Application of theory to practice
- Exposure to learning which may not occur academically
- Preparation for qualification
- Provides safe learning space whilst not reducing workforce

# The Clinical Tutor role

# Business Apprenticeship Coach Responsibilities

## - Set Up Phase



# Business Apprenticeship Coach - Ongoing



Manage WIL processes - integrating WPL and CBL (80% + 20% = 100%...and more)



Prepare apprentice and contribute to recommendation to employer for EPA



Guiding apprentices to completion



Create and manage a HE learner centred experience



Monitor and keep evidence of off-the-job training and (where appropriate) facilitate Maths and English completion



Liaison with programme leader and module tutors to support apprenticeship programme development

Regular 1:1 coaching support against ILPs and components of Standard

Group Action Learning Sets

Quarterly reviews and liaison with workplace mentors



# Business Apprenticeship Coach - Role

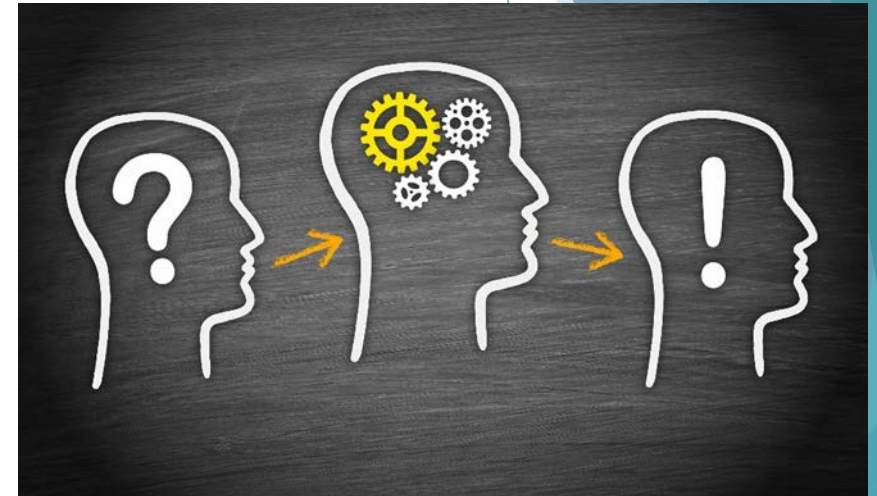


- Relationships
- Communication
- Making connections - capturing and maximising potential from 'informal learning'
- Support
  - Employer - managing expectations, reputation
  - Workplace Mentor - identifying learning opportunities
  - Apprentice as learner

# Business Apprenticeship Coach - Role

## Apprentice Learner Journey:

- Diversity of job role and experience
- HE study skills and learning needs
- Confidence building
- Individual learning plans and reviews - K,S&B
- Identifying on-the-job learning opportunities
- Keep on track and building towards EPA
- Project support in workplace
- Stretch and challenge:
  - integrating theory into practice,
  - critical reflection and developing reflexivity - so what?



# Conclusion - Top Tips



Communication - with employers, apprentices and educators



Coach vs training



Be clear about the apprentices/employer expectations...book quarterly reviews, project meetings etc in advance



Set the coaching tone at the start of the relationship

# Any Questions?

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