LOOKING OUT:

EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH CREATIVE AND CULTURAL ENTERPRISE

Art Design Media Subject Centre

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4.0 THE GOLDEN THREAD: ADVOCATING FOR ENGAGEMENT

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1 A fuller account of the historical development of Arts HE and the creative industries can be found in *Looking Out: Arts HE and the Creative Industries* available to download from the ADM-HEA website.

4.0 THE GOLDEN THREAD: ADVOCATING FOR ENGAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This section draws together the research materials and literature into an explanation of what is being done in Arts HE. This includes the barriers to enhancing effective engagement and the potential any enhancement might have. This applies especially to higher level learning for those already in work. The Golden Thread builds on materials in this report and summarises several of the supporting papers that do not form part of this report. This includes *Looking Out: Arts HE and the Creative industries*, *Looking Out: Discussions* and *Looking Out: Case Studies*. These papers are available to download from the ADM-HEA web site.

4.1 TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ARTS HE

Since the formation of the Government Design Schools in 1837, government intervention in Arts HE has persistently focused on vocational training and to a lesser extent on developing liberal arts education. Governments have returned to these themes successively over the years, which may be an indication that their efforts have not been successful[1]. Higher levels of engagement have not been driven by industry funding of vocational programmes, but through increasing numbers of practitioners being employed as teachers in art design and media courses. This is a process that began in the mid 1950s and became commonplace in Arts HE. After the 19th and early 20th century teacher practitioners steered curricula and pedagogy away from a curriculum led by fine arts with a focus on instruction in drawing moving it towards practice and project-based discursive learning that is the norm today. Practice-based education relies on learning in the studio through projects that simulate those that would be undertaken by artists, designers and media practitioners in professional contexts. It is characterised by discussion, problem finding and problem-solving and the creation of artefacts. This might apply to painting, designing artefacts or models, making films and so on.

Students learn through what is known as 'deliberate practice'. This means learning the skills and techniques

of their discipline as the platform for their creativity. This is done alongside 'reflective practice' where students look back and test each iteration of their idea and output against a range of criteria. Criteria might be imposed within the project brief such as budgetary constraints or 'products' aimed at particular users or audiences. The constraints might also be self-generated as the student develops cultural, ideological or material constraints, targets or solutions. The teaching and the learning are predominantly discursive, rather than instructive. The methods tend to be divergent, moving towards multiple solutions rather than towards instructive and convergent solutions, where learners aim for a single correct outcome. Learning in these contexts is supported by historical and contextual studies and the acquisition of business and professional practice skills and knowledge.

It is curious to note that the move towards extensive employment of creative industry practitioners as teachers coincides with National Advisory Council on Art Education reports.[2] These recommended changes to the existing National Diploma in Art Design making it the equivalent of an undergraduate degree. Many sources cite this as the point at which industry-oriented education was abandoned. In fact, there is little evidence to support the view that prior to Coldstream[3] there were significant levels of industry engagement. Prior to Coldstream and up to the 1950s, through state sponsored art and design education there was an established practice of employing trained art teachers to deliver a highly academic method of drawing instruction. There is little evidence that the National Design Schools produced world-class designers in any great numbers or had any direct effect on the productivity or growth of creative industries.

4.2 ARTS HE AND THE RISE OF CREATIVE INDUSTRY

Emergence of creative industries as a force in the UK economy, coupled with the higher visibility of creative and cultural enterprise in regeneration contexts and in the media has raised interest in creative and cultural sectors. This includes higher levels of consumption of creative industry products, services and events and greater interest working in creative industries. As the creative and cultural sectors are graduate rich, the number of applicants and graduates has been sustained. The figures have risen from around 8000 art and design students in 1970 to around the current 118,000[4] art design and media

2 From the early 1960s to the early 1970s a series of reports by the National Advisory Council on Art Education made recommendations on the future of art and design education. The reports recommended that the National Diploma in Art and Design should include a substantial element of 'cultural studies' to create an equivalence with undergraduate degrees. However, these reports also built on reports by the Council for Industry and the Arts in preceding decades. These noted the distance between education and industry. Notably, a special vocational route equivalent in standard was created. The reports also noted, however, that these vocational routes had proved unpopular with students and had attracted little support from industry.

3 Better known as the Coldstream report these were actually a series of reports from the National Advisory Council for Art Education (NACAE) published in the 1960s. They made many recommendations but are principally remembered as precipitating the elevation of the National Diploma in Art and Design to an undergaduate degree. See NACAE, (1962). *Vocational courses in colleges and schools of art: second report of the, Ministry of Education*: National Advisory Council on Art Education, London

4 This figure excludes what are generally considered non-practice-based subjects like media, critical and cultural studies, film studies and art and design history. Although many of these courses do have a practice-based element, the actual number of students studying art, design and media subjects is just over 156,00. The later figure is based on the Higher Education Statistics Agency data for 2007/8. The earlier figure is based on data contained in an NACAE report from 1970. See: NACAE, (1970), *The Structure of Art and Design Education in the Further Education Sector*, HMSO, London.

practice (Arts HE) students in 2008. The suggestion that growth in the numbers of Arts HE students is a result of some sleight of hand on the part of HEIs is demonstrably untrue. The quality of information for potential students might still need improvement but there is no shortage of information from reputable agencies and individuals. This indicates that Arts HE graduates should not expect to earn high salaries immediately or walk directly into their dream job[5]. Despite this, the numbers of students on 'creative arts, design and media" and 'mass communications and documentation'[6] has risen most years between 1997 and 2008. The number of applications to art, design and media undergraduate courses has increased by 54% between 2002 and 2008 a rate far higher than the 27.6% rise in overall HE applications in the same period (UUK, 2009c). Between 1998 and 2007 enrolments on the same courses almost doubled from 75,966 to 150,590[7].

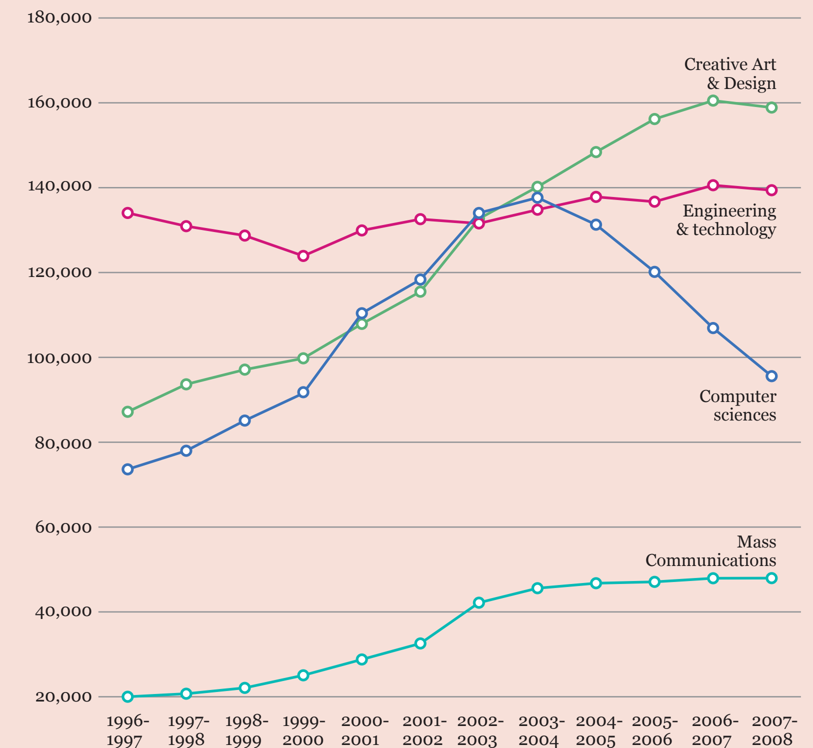
From 1990 to the present, government intervention has returned to urging HEIs to form closer relationships with industry. Arts HE, along with other occupationally related subjects like engineering, business, management and administration has come under pressure to raise the vocational content of

5 Despite discouraging information and misinformation about levels of graduate employability and lifetime earning, there were still high levels of growth in Arts HE courses. The reasons for their consistent popularity for example, are explored in *Looking Out: Discussions*.

6 These are categories used by the Higher Education Statistics Agency to present data on student numbers.

7 Source: UUK, (2009), *Higher Education Facts and Figures: The Creative Sector*, Summer 2009, Universities UK, London. Some of the increase will be accounted for in changes in the way HESA collates data and groups subjects, however the overall rises are well in excess of those for higher education as a whole.

DIAGRAM 4.1: *Rise in HE students in Creative art and design and Media, mass communications and documentation compared with Computer science and Engineering and technology (source: HESA).*



their courses. The result has been to create direct collaborations between HEIs' departments and businesses and organisations beyond academia. This was achieved through joint research and knowledge transfer, through workforce development,

through learning with HEIs, and by collaboration in training and staff development. This particularly applied to higher-level skills like creativity, leadership and innovation. This happened alongside measures to raise the level of occupational skills through education at all levels including schools, further and HE. More recently new education programmes like the 14–19 Diploma in Creative Media and Foundation Degrees[8] have been introduced. Since then, enrolment on Arts HE foundation degrees, as well as student progression from these to undergraduate degrees has been healthy.

4.3 ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIVIDUALS, BUSINESSES AND ORGANISATIONS

This research shows that engagements between art, design and media departments and creative and cultural businesses and organisations are far from rare. They are widespread and cover all subject and practice types. Engagement is happening but perhaps not in the way it is generally conceived. Teacher practitioners with a foot in creative and cultural businesses, organisations and their commercial activities, or in social and not-for-profit sectors, are at the centre of learning in Arts HE and curriculum development. Participation in work placements and work simulation has become normal for most Arts HE students. Even though placements are the norm in Arts HE courses, many of these may be too short or lacking in authenticity to be really effective[9]. Industry practitioners are employed as teachers and external examiners. Individuals, businesses and organisations, including professional bodies are engaged in liaison panels and validations to bring current industry knowledge to the curriculum. There are significant examples of joint research and knowledge transfer projects, but these are short term and small-scale. A large number of initiatives and projects engage creative businesses and organisations with HEIs to deliver CPD and enhanced higher-level skills. These offer design and other specialist media skills which support creative and innovative thinking[10]. However, many of these projects and initiatives are dependent on funding and lack sustainability.

Recent research has shown that despite positive feedback and measurable enhancements, business collaboration with university design services rapidly declines when the subsidies that were available at start-up are ended. This may suggest that businesses and organisations are unable or unwilling to meet the full costs of workforce development even when their

8 The 14–19 Diplomas are a vocationally orientated alternative to GCSEs and A levels. They are not considered as routes into the workplace but as new entry-level qualifications to HE. Foundation Degrees (FdAs) are two-year vocational programmes required to have significant elements of work-based learning, equivalent to the first two years of an undergraduate degree. Applications for consortia to deliver the Diploma in Creative Media were higher than any of the other diplomas

9 Recent research shows that students who have undertaken work placements are more likely to get jobs in their discipline than those who have not. However, it is unclear whether this is a result of enhanced attributes or networking. The latter is known to be factor in encouraging businesses and organisations to offer placements. See: Ball, L. Pollard, E. Stanley, N. (2010). Creative Graduates: *Creative Futures, Creative Graduates* Creative Futures Higher Education Partnership and the Institute for Employment Studies, London.

10 See *Looking Out: Case Studies*, available to download from the ADM-HEA web site.

benefits are proven[11].

It is also worth noting that the pedagogies that have evolved over several decades in Arts HE have been widely adopted in other disciplines, because they appear to offer the most favourable contexts for learning higher-level skills. In particular, the literature on entrepreneurship education towards achieving higher levels of creativity advocates many of the practices that are conventions in Arts HE[12].

In addition, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that teachers and senior managers are enthusiastic and willing to extend and intensify collaborative education that enhances graduate attributes and behaviours. It shapes the curriculum, generates 'new lines of learning' appropriate to workforce development and explores opportunities for research and knowledge transfer. Finally, despite the impression sometimes given of an industry in crisis, it is unreasonable to suggest that the presence of large numbers of graduates in the workforce did not play a part in making the creative industries one of the fastest growing sectors in the economy for twenty years or that it will cease to be a factor in future growth.

Looking Out suggests that there is engagement, but that it has taken a shape that differs from engagement in other disciplines. The type of engagement is also different from how government, sector agencies and business might conceive it. The outcome appears to be that engagement in Arts HE has failed to register or appear in evaluations. In this way the engagement actually in place appears to have failed to make an impact on emergent national and regional policy, and on HE institutional strategies.

4.4 LIMITATIONS TO MORE EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

The debates and pressures have become more complex, more intense and immediate and potentially more enriching. There are clearly frustrations on all sides with the pace of change. There are genuine problems that militate against effective engagement between art, design and media departments, institutions and colleges and the creative and cultural sectors. Despite evidence of considerable levels of engagements, there are a number of factors limiting their expansion into workforce development. This limits the impact on the curriculum, the core aims for employer engagement. These limitations are both intrinsic and extrinsic:

- The culture, language and management processes of

11 See Richards, C. (ed), (2009). *Advancing By Design with the West Midland Universities*, West Midland Higher Education Association/HEFCE, Bristol.

12 There is resonance between pedagogies described as ideal for encouraging entrepreneurial attributes in graduates and those already in place in Arts HE, see in particular Gibb, A. (2005). *Towards the Entrepreneurial University: Entrepreneurship Education as the Lever for Change*, NCGE Policy Paper 3, NCGE, Birmingham and CIHE, (2008) and *Developing Entrepreneurial Graduates: Putting entrepreneurship at the centre of higher education*, Council for Industry and Higher Education, London. It also worth noting that several HEFCE funded Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning are based on bringing Arts HE approaches to learning for non-art, design or media students. The InQbate Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Creativity and The Reinvention Centre for Undergraduate Research employs these methods.

the HEI are a disincentive to engagement. Although this factor affects engagements with all types of businesses and organisations, it is particularly critical in forming relationships between Arts HE and creative industry where scale and organisation cultures are fundamentally different.

- The key message on workforce development is not being heard at the level where engagements are formed. Teachers and teacher practitioners see engagements as delivering enhanced student experiences and graduate attributes, but have not yet perceived an opportunity for or the benefits of workforce development.
- The scale and type of engagements lack visibility within the institution and to agencies outside the institution. This is limiting their impact on institutional strategic development and on the formation of the structures sustaining and supporting further development.
- There tends to be an over-simplified view of the ideal model for employer engagements. This favours a simple service delivery model with high levels of scalability and replicability. This inevitably drives HEIs and supporting agencies towards large-scale homogenous sectors. There is a disincentive towards investing in a sector whose key characteristics are small scale, with a high degree of differentiation and rapid change.
- Despite the frequently quoted importance of creative industries to the economy as a whole (and particularly now during recession) they remain at the margins of the policy landscape. Contributing factors include; a focus on technology-driven over technology-exploiting sectors of the knowledge economy, a focus on the centrality of financial sectors in the UK economy, and the persistent impression that the creative industries are a luxury in the economy. The foregrounding of the digital industries illustrates this last point well. Digital industries operate in the 'comfort zone' of policy makers and key agencies implicated in economic development. They have a recognisable and consistent business model, they have a manageable scale, technology is highly visible in their enterprise, the product is tangible, and so on.

At the same time, there is evidence of real achievement and progress. Alongside the barriers to change, there are genuine and substantial opportunities along with evidence of benefits from greater engagement

between institutions, departments and colleges and the communities beyond the institution.

There is little evidence to uphold the commonly expressed view that students' experiences are dissociated from the world of work. There is evidence that graduates are concerned about their prospects of employment, but it is difficult to connect these in any causal way. Employer engagement now means a range of things to different stakeholders, this range is reflected in this report. At the level of our survey and discussions with teachers, employer engagement most commonly means work placement or engagements that shape the existing undergraduate curriculum. There is evidence that it also means 'knowledge transfer' and 'collaborative research work'. But, it rarely means re-orientating, or creating new curricula aimed at a learner that has experience in their field of practice, that is: workforce development for learners already working in creative industry. There is little evidence that the core message is having effect: that employer engagement with creative and cultural businesses, organisations and individuals should impact on strategic development at institutional scale, across HE and the creative and cultural sectors. What emerges is a significant effort to engage businesses, organisations and individuals in HE for the purpose of enhancing the curricula and graduate outcomes. However, it is not yet evident that the vision of employer engagement will lead HEIs to offer new education and learning experiences to a new constituency, audience or consumer group attracting contributions in funding from creative industry including its non-commercial sectors.

The importance of this cannot be understated. Significant growth in undergraduate provision, often seen as the core business of the HEI, is over. Not because there are not enough 17–19 year olds who might choose HE, but because there is a cap on the number of undergraduate places. Student fees not withstanding, governments remain committed to a substantially state-supported HE system. An increasing proportion of HEI income comes from sources other than the HE Funding Councils' the per capita funding for undergraduate places. However, a substantial proportion of funding is still from the public purse in the shape of Research Council funding, Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF), or initiative funding from the funding councils for programmes in England (like the Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning or the Workforce

Development Programme)[13]. Many HEIs have been energetic and proactive in reducing their dependence on public funding by developing partnerships with businesses and other institutions like the NHS or with overseas universities. This further reduces the proportion of undergraduate funding in the income column of their financial plan. The cap on the total number of state-funded places slowed the rise in HE students and the 'HE as mass education' project. This was done in part to control public spending, but also as a device to direct applicants to subjects seen as important in particular the so-called STEM subjects: science, technology, engineering, mathematics and modern languages.

Growth in student numbers has shifted HE from an elite to a mass education system. This has presented particular challenges to subjects which require specialised spaces or through custom and practice were used to relatively low student to staff ratios. Along with the sciences, medicine and other technology-based subjects, this included art, design and media practice. Arts HE departments have assisted in reviewing pedagogy, curriculum and delivery through a range of staff development, pedagogic research and development initiatives. These have addressed working in larger class sizes, reviewing learning teaching and assessment and investment in e-learning and physical learning environments. Higher than average inflation costs, declining quality and volume of estates and premises, reduction in capital investment and an expansion in monitoring, validation and quality assurance processes has diverted spending on students (staff, books, equipment and so on) to marginal costs in management and administration. This, in turn, has sharpened the division between HE and the world of work. The language of management and quality assurance is opaque and lacks relevance for audiences outside of HE, and for many teachers. It slows or gives the perception of slowness for potential non-educational partners and discourages them from engaging. In the vocational subjects, including Arts HE a belief has been fostered that too many graduates, are 'delivered' to a shrinking and more demanding employment environment with inappropriate exposure to professional practice learning. Despite these challenges and statements by some agencies and the media (including the specialist HE media) that Arts HE subjects are less 'valuable' than others, as well as clear evidence that the life-time earnings of arts graduates are significantly lower than

13 See HEFCE, www.hefce.ac.uk/econsoc/employer/ (accessed 03.02.10)

graduates in other subjects, admissions to the subjects remains buoyant with significantly more applicants than the number of places available.

Higher levels of participation in HE will grow, not out of expanding undergraduate provision but developing new courses for workforce development in partnership with 'employers'. The beneficiaries such as employers, businesses, organisations and the new work-based learners, rather than the state, will bear the cost of these new courses. This will not only provide the HE sector with a new and sustainable source of income, but will directly address the low level of higher-level skills in the workforce identified in the Leitch Review[14]. It will focus HEIs's attention on developing new educational 'products' that have relevance for learners and employers. They offer opportunities for sharpening the employability quotient through knowledge transfer from work-based learning to undergraduate programmes. At a time when the recession is driving cuts to public spending, including a £670 million cut to HE alone this year, employer engagement and workforce development is likely to rise in importance across the HE sector.

The barriers to achieving this are substantial, especially in art, design and media subjects. Some of these barriers might include persuading individuals, business and individuals in the creative industries that it is the right time to invest in workforce development, as well as persuading them that Arts HE colleges and departments are the right place to make the investment. There are few opportunities for developing partnerships at the scale of provision in other subjects. Very large employers like the NHS or Railtrack, or more homogeneous sectors like engineering and financial services, are able to identify skills sets in management, clinical or technical activities[15]. Many of the general lessons learned from these can be applied to Arts HE.

The pace of change in creative and cultural sectors affects the commercial sustainability of employer engagement initiatives. It limits the shelf-life of course content for workforce development. As well as this, the variety of business types, activities and skill-sets at one particular location might limit opportunities to develop economies of scale. Other barriers are common across the HE sector, for example; businesses and organisations continue to be discouraged by the real or perceived inability of institutions to respond quickly. Nor do they think they can demonstrate the flexibility needed by businesses and organisations for work-

14 Leitch, S. (2006). *Leitch Review of Skills: Prosperity for all in the global economy, world-class skills*, HM Treasury, London.

15 The Confederation of British Industry recently published a document celebrating a series of successful engagements between industry and HE. Although it is refreshing to see that there are examples of effective engagement, it is noticeable that none of the examples are drawn from creative or cultural sectors or had characteristics that might offer a good model for the ways in which the bulk of the creative industry sector might form an effective engagement. See: CBI, (2009), *Stepping Higher: Workforce development through employer-higher education partnership*, Confederation of British Industry, London.

based learning. It is expected that they should be able to guarantee the appropriate levels of customer service that are expected in commercial contexts. There is some justification for this; HEIs would prefer to adapt and deliver existing courses, or parts of courses, minimising marginal development costs and citing accreditation and awards as potential 'Unique Selling Points' (USP). However, work-based learners and those paying for workforce development are unwilling to commit to courses that are not directly focused on their business. They are unwilling to fund personal development over occupational learning. Accredited courses, particularly those leading to postgraduate awards, are not designed with work-based learners in mind. They often require commitments in time and resources that are inflexible and impractical for work-based learners[16]. At the same time and, also with some justification, HEIs and curriculum developers point to the rhetoric of demand-led learning. The Leitch Review of Skills suggested that employers have been poor at predicting their needs for the future. They tend to fall back on generalised demands for instrumental and occupational skills that are more appropriately delivered by non HE providers and in non-educational contexts.

There are strong arguments for purpose-designed workforce development programmes, but there are difficulties for the institution when it comes to defining the appropriate course content. Finally, there is a need to demonstrate that those who teach the workforce have industry standard skills themselves. There will be a need to invest in new equipment and facilities, or form more complex and productive partnerships with the workplace to co-deliver work-based learning.

16 Example: a typical masters degree comprises 180 credits broken into smaller units of modules. A part-time student may take up to 90 credits per year, but fewer is more common. To get a masters degree would take at least two but more often more years of study. The question remains: what proportion of the learning in Masters Degrees, or even in a few modules, are relevant to workforce development needs?

DIVIDED BY A COMMON LANGUAGE

There are clearly frictions between the organisational cultures in HEIs and those in creative and cultural sectors. Different organisational behaviours, resulting from relative scales is a factor. But, even large scale organisations in the creative and cultural sectors, for example national galleries, museums and the BBC, have pointed out that it is difficult to gain access to HEIs except through personal networks. As this report suggests, policy documents focus on large scale employers and homogenous sectors as case studies of successful employer engagement. These offer little encouragement for small-scale, diffuse creative and cultural businesses and organisations to engage in the policy debate. This also applies to key agencies, like the Confederation of British Industry. Governments appear to assume that innovation and high growth is technology-led, despite there being evidence to show that innovation for the application of technology is as important as the invention of technology itself, this is something the creative industries has been very good at.

Finally, the language of policy suggests that the workforce development initiative is resolutely focused on employers and commercial sectors. This is not an academic issue or a point of semantics. There is sufficient evidence that the persistent use of terms like 'employer' engagement, consistently places large-scale employers or homogenous sectors in the foreground. This focuses attention on commercial sectors over social enterprise, public sector funded organisations and the not-for-profit sectors and distances Arts HE from the policy initiative. The language promotes and sustains a 'not-for-me' culture in Arts HE, in a sector that has high levels of sole-practitioners, freelancers, micro-businesses, high levels of activity and workforce in non-commercial sectors, the highest levels of graduates in its workforce and arguably one the greatest demands for higher-level skills in the UK economy. We have shown that there are adequate and appropriate means of measuring value, including contingent value measurement to evaluate non-commercial enterprise[17]. It would take little effort to examine and articulate alternative business models and strategies that would underpin the value of engagements that are multiple, differentiated but small-scale. Demonstrations that these engagements are valued, and have value, would place concerns about language at the margins of the debate and focus efforts on productive processes and outcomes.

17 See *Looking Out: Discussions*. Contingent value is an alternative to monetary value and its evaluation can be applied to those things where utility in terms of conventional metrics in the economy: revenue, new products, exports, Gross-Value Added (GVA) are inappropriate or marginal. Hasan Bakhshi (et. al.) argue that measurement of contingent value uses robust research tools and is appropriate to value of arts and other cultural enterprise through devices like evaluating users and stakeholders 'willingness to pay' for these when presented with alternative choices like school or hospital beds. See: Bakhshi, H., Freeman, A. and Hitchen, G. (2009a). Measuring Intrinsic Value: How to stop worrying and love economics, Mission Models Money, London.

In order to refocus HEIs' executive and senior management on integrating pre-existing small-scale projects into strategic planning, the support for not-for-profit industry and social enterprise needs to be recognised formally. Other models that are more effective in engaging individuals, sole-practitioners, freelancers and micro-enterprises need to be formally recognised too. Small scale projects' potential to affect structural change must be recognised and supported by HE Funding Councils and by agencies outside HEIs. This especially applies to those that are consulted by the governments to shape policy. This includes, for example, the Sector Skills Councils, the Confederation of British Industry and the UK Commission for Employment and Skills. Without the weight of these agencies behind developments, it is unlikely that there will be sufficient scale and visibility to affect fundamental structural change in policy language in HE culture and practices. Nor will there be any visibility to affect creative and cultural sector perceptions and willingness to engage.

This research has shown that there are significant levels of engagement. However circumscribed this engagement is, it can be developed to provide credible and valuable employer engagement leading to increased work-based learning provision in HE. It can also enhance attributes and skills in graduates emerging from Arts HE. It does, however, require the players at all levels to step-up and commit to forms of engagement that are feasible and practical for Arts HE subjects and occupations. These players might include the government, their agents, governance in HE, in art, design and media departments, businesses, organisations and individuals in the creative and cultural industries. This should also include recognition that the language and substance of policy, funding regimes and the cultures of institutions, need to accommodate ways in which the subjects are taught and learned, as well as recognition of the ways in which creative and cultural enterprises operate.

Work placements are common in art design and media programmes. The length of a work placement may be a factor, but it is not the only factor in determining their effectiveness. Even where these are short, they can offer authentic learning experiences. There is a need for greater clarity and commitment when it comes to businesses' and organisations' expectations from this type of engagement. This also includes employers' responsibilities to work-based learners. Employers, businesses and organisations

need to take greater responsibility for shaping post-graduate work experiences. Work-placements are not just about parity of experience for students, and the responsibility of employers taking on work placement students, but about how a business or social enterprise can benefit from this engagement. The Cox Review[18] and Advancing by Design[19] suggest that all kinds of business benefit from design-based approaches. Design students and non-design enterprises can join in mutually productive relationships. This feature is possibly unique in HE and it means that high quality ideas emerge out of students working with cutting edge teachers and teacher practitioners. It needs to be built into the model for engagement.

This research has shown that delivery of HE in art, design and media depends on teacher practitioners. As a result of typical part time/fractional employment and teaching/practice portfolio careers, there are far more teachers in Arts HE studios, workshops and labs than the statistics suggest[20]. In one typical faculty delivering a broad range of art, design and media subjects from fine arts to crafts design, industrial design to web design and sonic arts to interior design, the actual number of teachers was 50% higher than the FTE in design and 100% higher than FTE in fine arts and media subjects[21]. This means that the 'official' number of teachers in the subjects, presented by the Higher Education Statistics Agency is misleading. Not only are there substantially more teachers than data suggests, but they have substantive engagement in their practice. As well as teaching they are connected or work in key roles in creative and cultural sectors, businesses and organisations. This hidden, loosely bound community of teacher practitioners are responsible for curriculum development and development of new curriculum initiatives. They are often appointed to deliver specialist learning, for example in professional practice and business development, and are almost always seen as bringing practice-based knowledge to the curriculum and student learning experience. Importantly, having twice as many individuals for half of the time may mean the same amount of contact time for students, but it significantly increases the knowledge pool for learners and researchers. However, teacher practitioners are often distanced from senior management and disconnected from executive branches and strategic development in their HEI.

Employer engagement in terms of work-based learning for undergraduates is well understood and this aspect has strong traditions in Arts HE. However,

18 Cox, Sir G. (2005), *Cox Review of Creativity in Business: Building on the UK's Strengths*, HMT, London.

19 Richards, C. (ed), (2009). *Advancing By Design with the West Midland Universities*, West Midland Higher Education Association/HEFCE, Bristol.

20 Higher Education Statistics Agency staff data expresses the number of teachers, not as individuals, but as Full Time Equivalents. That is, two teachers on 0.5 (2.5day/week) contracts are counted as one teacher.

21 In this particular situation 'media' included sonic and acoustic arts, popular music, illustration, graphic design including digital design and photography.

the message on workforce development appears to have failed to penetrate through to operational levels of the institution, yet all the evidence suggests that teacher practitioners initiate substantial engagement activity. The implication is that this activity flies below the radar of senior management and fails to impact on strategic development. It has low visibility to external audiences, particularly to agencies aiming to promote and support employer engagement. It is dependent on personal networks, making new initiatives difficult. These networks are not appreciable by those not already 'in the loop'. Employers often do not know who to approach in the institution and central offices in the HEI are often unaware of what is happening at local level;. The organic formation and occasional deviance from the institution is also why these initiatives work. They are behaving like creative and cultural businesses and organisations in what the Think-Tank Demos calls the "flea circus of activity"[22]. The agility, flexibility, connectivity and the deviancy of these projects, and their ability to negotiate or circumvent the top-down imperative of the institution needs to be harnessed to expand and intensify their impact.

The HEI, supported by other agencies and assisted by new funding regimes needs to support, expand and integrate the diffuse, micro-activity developed through local networks into strategic planning. Support needs to be in the form of cultivating the environments and cultures in which this activity thrives, by offering lines of communication open to new partners and learning from these initiatives in order to amplify their effects. Most importantly, the HEI (and related agencies) must find ways in which this can be done without absorbing the culture into the bureaucracy or inflecting limiting languages of HE management and quality assurance.

The professionalisation of HE teaching[23] resembled the debate about professional validation of design and media courses which although not a new proposal has been recently rehearsed at length. Unlike validations and accreditation by organisations like the Architects' Registration Board, General Medical Council, Royal College of Nursing, Law Society and so on, it was expensive to deliver, but offered no public or consumer protection and no real membership benefits. However, the important corollary of professionalised HE teaching, the Post-Graduate Certificate Higher Education (PGCHE) has been developed into coherent programmes for enhancing teaching. The accredited qualification or courses leading to the qualification is offered by most, if not all, HEIs. It is undertaken by

22 This aspect is discussed in Looking Out: Discussion. See also: Tims, C and Wright, S, (2009), *So What Do You Do? A New Question For Policy in the Creative Age*, Demos, London.

23 The Institute of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (ILTHE) was formed in 1999 following recommendations in the 1997 Dearing Report. It aimed to establish a credible national standard for teachers in HE and the intention was that all HE teachers would become members, having demonstrated achievement with these standards. Membership was never mandatory.

all new teachers and HE teachers with many years of experience have benefitted from these programmes. Teachers successfully completing the PGCert are eligible to become fellows of the Higher Education Academy which in 2004 replaced ILTHE as a the 'badge' of competence.

A significant number of those completing the PGCHE choose not to become fellows. The PGCHE's presence as a requirement for appointment and career progression is attested to in the survey of Arts HE teacher vacancies undertaken as part of this project[24]. Holding a PGCHE or willingness to undertake the course has become a common feature of many job descriptions. It is likely that it also effects career progression as a visible example of teachers' abilities to manage both the practical demands of teaching and of meeting HE employer expectations for management, administration, quality assurance and their willingness to commit to CPD. It is not possible to say whether the PGCHE is demand-led, or if teachers are pulled into the process as part of HE strategic development. Early complaints from teachers that PGCert courses were generic and failed to take account of disciplinary difference have been met head-on and have faded, at least in art, design and media, as course design has responded to include aspects of disciplinary practice.

The independent art and design schools pioneered the discipline based PGCHE. The University of the Arts London through its Centre for Learning and Teaching in Art and Design (CLTAD), and as the UKs largest employer of art, design and media teachers, has developed a discipline focused PGCHE offering a course available beyond the University. Their positive experience of tailoring the PGCHE to disciplinary practice has been taken up by others including polytechnic institutions. This research has not attempted to evaluate the value and effectiveness of PGCHEs in driving up teaching quality. It is unclear whether larger numbers enrol on these programmes in the belief that it will improve their teaching practice, or because completion of courses is part of a compliance structure and an expectation of employers. The Looking Out focus groups suggest that new teachers and particularly teacher practitioners do find the PGCHE valuable in helping them to learn how to develop courses, manage quality assurance and reflect on their teaching practice. However, almost all teacher practitioners involved in the Looking Out focus groups claimed that programmes focus too heavily on 'teacherliness' at the expense of

24 See Looking Out: Discussions, available to download from the ADM-HEA website.

the relationship between teaching and professional practice. This research could find no evidence of any systematic attempts through the PGCHE or other staff development vehicles aimed at the professional practice of teacher practitioners to develop the professional practice, as opposed to the teaching practice of teachers practioners employed with the express intention of bringing up-to-date industry based knowledge to curriculum. HEIs appear to have not yet recognised that employing teacher practitioners is a form of employer engagement. Given the size of the teacher practitioner constituency HEIs might want to investigate shaping staff development towards the enhancement of teacher practitioners' professional practice. Factors worth considering include their purchase on the curriculum, their need to keep up-to-date and enhance their professional practice knowledge in order to underpin their value towards student learning outcomes. HEIs might therefore want to articulate an appropriate business model and evaluation that demonstrate the wider benefits to external, professional practice.

4.5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Importantly, the most distracting debate on the push-pull of whether or not Arts HE should deliver vocational learning has moved on. It has shifted from seeing HE as a simple service provider delivering graduates to the consumer and the employment market.

It accepts that the educator's job is to provide an education to the student and not provide the employer with a trained employee. The character of the creative industries, their current and potential engagements indicate that these will be enhanced and sustained by a 'systems of innovation' approach[25]. Rather than the linear approaches of supplying educational services to industry-based clients and consumers, the engagements will build on networking and exchange. These exchanges and networks form feedback loops of benefits to collaborators in joint projects for learning and the co-production of knowledge[26]. There are a number of advantages to this approach as a business model with a core deliverable of workforce development.

In the conventional model, the consumer, who is an employer, pays fees to an HEI to deliver an educational service or product. In this case, knowledge and skills are commodities. In the 'systems of innovation'

25 Freeman, C. (1995) *The National System of Innovation in Historical Perspective* Cambridge Journal of Economics, 19(1) p5–24.

26 A useful explanation of this is given by the Science and Development Network. Even though their briefing discusses the approach to science and technology, it takes little imagination to see how it also applies to creative industries workforce development. In particular the quote "An innovation system is a network of organisations within an economic system that are directly involved in the creation, diffusion and use (of scientific and technological) knowledge, as well as the organisations responsible for the coordination and support of these processes." http://www.scidev.net/en/policy-briefs/the-system-of-innovation-approach-and-its-relevanc.html

approach, knowledge and skills are currency in the system. For example, teacher practitioners participating in staff development focus on enhancing professional knowledge transfer. In the 'systems of innovation' approach it is not possible to predict the collateral benefits but one can imagine the end result of understanding processes and enhancing knowledge exchange could be that new knowledge and new applications are created. This form of activity is already in place in the way creative industries operate in the 'flea circus of activity'. This approach has other advantages; it harnesses existing structures including the HEIs staff development strategy and the networking capacity of operators in creative practices. It is also small scale and replicable in terms of structure instead of content, making it adaptable and transferable geographically. It can be used between regions and across HEIs and departments with varying portfolios of courses. Importantly its small scale limits risk, allowing for several projects with variations and building on optimum outcomes for the participating network. Finally, there are thousands of potential participants already in place: the teacher practitioners.

The pedagogies of Arts HE in the UK have evolved over several decades. They are being adopted across the HE sector as favourable contexts and vehicles for learning higher-level skills. The appropriateness of vocational skills possessed by Arts HE graduates remains contested but the agenda is shifting. The direction is leaning towards providing higher-level graduate skills based on those most needed by creative industry. These skills have been identified by a succession of reports and research as those most likely to aid and sustain growth in the knowledge economy. Some of the emerging language is reminiscent of the 1980s when Arts HE was under pressure of reduced funding and rising intake[27].
The difference between now and then is that creative and cultural industries have emerged to be a significant force in the UK economy. Structural changes in HE in the same period and significant levels of research and development should enable senior managers and executives in Arts HE to better articulate the economic, social and creative value of Arts HE.

The range and breadth of engagement with businesses and individuals from creative and cultural sectors is substantial, it tends to be small scale but it is widespread. The challenge is to capitalise on this to both shape the strategic development of the institution. This strategy needs to be articulated in forms that

27 The *National Advisory Body for Public Sector Higher Education* (NAB) came into being in 1982, tasked with reporting to the Government on the rationalisation of higher education. Arts HE, in particular, was closely scrutinised reulting in the closure and merger of colleges and departments of art and design.

will be acknowledged in the policy landscape as valuable and effective in delivering benefits to HE and wider communities in commercial and non-commercial contexts. The greatest potential appears to be in harnessing teacher practitioners to this task. The teacher practitioners offer an established line of communication to professional practice and they are likely to support efforts to turn some of the staff development already offered by the institution towards raising the level of professional practice skills of their own employees, to participate in joint research and in knowledge transfer projects.