

What are the barriers to effective collaboration?



Introduction

There is broad agreement that collaborations between education providers, support and development agencies and creative industries will deliver the best environment for entrepreneurship education. A debate has developed over the past few years around the relative importance of occupational skills and more culturally orientated academic values in education. This has been sharpened by a number of publications including Sector Skills Council papers, the *Cox Review* and the *Design Skills* consultation. These suggest, to varying degrees, that there is a serious skills gap emerging in the creative industries that needs to be addressed by changes in curricula. From the perspective of higher education, the recommendations from these reports reveal a certain lack of understanding of the purposes of higher education and the mechanisms of compliance imposed on art, design and media departments. In reality there is probably broad agreement by academics and creative industries professionals on what the aims of education should be, it may be that this debate is unnecessarily polarised.

3.1 There is broad support for entrepreneurship education through collaborations

The formation of collaborations and better links between industry and education has been advocated by a number of influential reports including the *Dearing Report* (Dearing/NCIHE, 1997), the *Davies Review* (DfES, 2002), the *Design Skills Consultation* (CCSkills/Design Council, 2006) and the *Leitch Review of Skills* (Leitch, 2006). The Government, through the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF), aims to encourage especially non research-intensive universities to work with employers locally, regionally and nationally (DfES, 2003).

Similarly, creative industries professionals, art, design and media teachers, academic developers, students and graduates all place collaborations at the centre of entrepreneurship education. Several agencies associated with the creative industries, including the Sector Skills Councils, focus their initiatives on building stronger links and collaborative projects for their respective industries, for example SkillSet's Screen Academies are located in higher education institutions that have partnerships with the film production industry. Sector Skills Councils also employ various forms of validation and kite-marking to signpost courses able to demonstrate alignment with industry needs. Finally, the DfES initiated the programme for Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs). In 2005, 74 proposals were awarded more than £119 million of funding based on their existing excellence in their area of focus. The creative arts and design have the greatest number of CETLs. Of these, six are focused on the practice of art, design and/or media and all have a direct focus on higher education engagement with the creative industries. These are: Artswork at Bath Spa University, the Centre for Learning in Practice at the University of the Arts, London, The Centre of Excellence in Media Practice at Bournemouth University, The Centre of Excellence in Product and Transport Design at Coventry University and The Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning through Design at the University

of Brighton (in collaboration with the Royal College of Art, the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Victoria and Albert Museum).

Policy directed at the formation of collaborations with the creative industries to support work-based learning is focused primarily on the acquisition and development of employability and occupational skills and knowledge transfer rather than entrepreneurship education. These may be harnessed to assist in the delivery of entrepreneurship education, but poorly articulated metrics and a lack of longitudinal research on the effectiveness of work-based learning and collaborative programmes to deliver entrepreneurship education hinder an understanding of effective teaching and learning. Given this, there is a danger that focusing too narrowly on collaborative projects as the way of delivering entrepreneurship education may not be as effective as assumed.

Policies have been formed on the assumption that collaborations between industry and higher education in knowledge transfer partnerships will deliver benefits to both parties, particularly in the areas of joint innovation and exploitation of intellectual property rights. However, despite some examples of success there is little evidence to support this assumption. A recent DTI survey shows that 57% of businesses consider themselves “innovation active” (DTI, 2005). But only 12% of these have cooperation agreements in place, around one third include universities among their partners but only 2% of UK businesses identify higher education institutions as important sources of information for innovation. The development of policies and strategies for entrepreneurship education for the creative industries including those urging collaborations must be underpinned by evidence for their effectiveness and be sufficiently refined to deliver learning outcomes focused on enhancing the entrepreneurial capacity of graduates.

3.2 There are concerns that students entering higher education are not prepared for entrepreneurship education

There is a concern that developing entrepreneurship education for the creative industries will be hindered by the way attitudes of students are shaped by secondary education, often perceived by art, design and media academics and creative industry professionals as focused on didactic teaching and learning by rote, at the expense of risk-taking, risk management and creative learning and thinking.

“Difficulties begin before college... young people are not encouraged to take risks, at school they learn to play safe... they never learn the difference between risk and riskiness.” (Creative industry professional, March 2006)

The DfES has initiated a programme for new diplomas for the 14-19 sector in which the creative industries play a key role in developing the curriculum. A diploma in Creative and Media Skills will be available from 2008. It is intended as an alternative to GCSEs and A Levels and will have substantial vocational elements, but the main aim is to provide an alternative route for young people to

further and higher education and close the gap between academic and professional capabilities.

“In 1997, only 15% of schools offered enterprise education. Today, half of all schools do, and by next year every school in Britain will give young people the chance to learn about business, commerce and enterprise.” (HMT, news release, 17 November 2005)

In 2006, Enterprise Summer Schools opened providing support for extending schools’ enterprise programmes beyond the academic year. Local business leaders and enterprise advisors provide 14-16 year-olds with advice to develop their innovation, decision-making, problem-solving, management and leadership skills. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, has endorsed the work of Enterprise Insight’s Make-Your-Mark competition by promising the winners work placements in “top businesses”. In his Budget speech in 2005 the Chancellor promised £180 million to encourage schools to develop entrepreneurship education. The funding, around £17,000 per school in the UK enables them to offer five days of entrepreneurship education to each pupil. Young Enterprise has pioneered education programmes for schools and young people - including modules developed for primary schools - and Project Business, aimed at developing awareness and skills in enterprise in 14-15 year-olds. In 2005 Young Enterprise reported that almost 300,000 young people participated in their programmes, a 40% increase on the previous year.

At this level, policy remains focused on commercial entrepreneurship with the usual stereotypes being offered as models by the media. For example, *The Independent* reported, “Gordon Brown has given schools £180m to foster budding Alan Sugars.” (6 April 2006). In schools there are anxieties over the emerging definitions for entrepreneurship. Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) has claimed that only around half of all schools have a clear definition of enterprise education (Ofsted, 2004) and that in some “enterprise education is broadly defined and seen as synonymous with creativity” and in others have “a much narrower definition offered by a few schools is that enterprise education is all about business start up” (Ofsted, 2005)

3.2 Summary

- Although there are concerns that entrants to higher education have an experience that limits their creativity and willingness to be entrepreneurial, substantial programmes have been initiated to support entrepreneurship education in secondary education.
- These initiatives are, like many in place in the post-compulsory sector, circumscribed by conventional and limited views on entrepreneurship.

3.3 The culture of higher education may hinder the formation of effective collaborations

There is considerable distance between the cultural values of higher education, practice in art, design and media, and culture and practices in industry and commerce. The management languages, structures and infrastructures of higher education institutions are a factor, but the importance placed on cultural rather than commercial achievements in academic contexts is of equal importance. Key papers on entrepreneurship education draw attention to this issue. For example, Prof. Alan Gibb (Gibb, 2005) identifies cultural differences between academic environments and an entrepreneurial environment. He notes that academia, particularly business schools, values “order, formality, transparency, control, accountability, information processing, planning, rational decision making, clear demarcation, responsibilities and definitions”, but that entrepreneurship thrives on “informal, personal relationship, trust building, intuitive decision making, somewhat overlapping and chaotic ‘feeling’ world of the entrepreneur.” Gibb is critical of a model that depends on the development of entrepreneurship education within the context of business schools and advocates locating it within the contexts of disciplines where the pedagogies and practices for entrepreneurship will be shaped by disciplinary practice. Gibb suggests that the status of teaching for, rather than about, entrepreneurship needs to be given enhanced status in higher education institutions.

Despite an apparent growth in entrepreneurship education in art, design and media departments from virtually none in 1999 (Levie, 1999), to substantial provision across the UK, there are major cultural barriers to developing effective entrepreneurship education. The DCMS identifies a resistance on the part of academics to entrepreneurship education, claiming that some academics see entrepreneurship education as a threat to “the once in a lifetime opportunity that students have to exercise total creative freedom without having to focus on the commercial applications of their work” (DCMS, 2006). This aligns with views expressed by many students, who identify cultural achievement as more important than commercial success. There is substantial evidence to suggest that across all stakeholder groups, including creative industries professionals, entrepreneurship, or at least the development of business skills, is seen as the binary opposite of creativity. However students participating in programmes that include entrepreneurial development see entrepreneurship as a driver for rather than a brake on their creativity. Despite this, there must be concerns that even where there are highly evolved entrepreneurship education programmes in place, the dominant cultural values of academia may impinge on entrepreneurial outcomes from projects.

Linking academic research with high esteem and career progression in higher education is a major factor and is exacerbated by a sector that has been slow to recognise alternative paradigms for research. The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), initiated in 1992, is now a major source of funding for many higher education institutions. Prior to 1992 it was assumed that art and design

entrepreneurship thrives on “informal, personal relationship, trust building, intuitive decision making, somewhat overlapping and chaotic ‘feeling’ world of the entrepreneur.”

STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN PROGRAMMES THAT INCLUDE ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT SEE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A DRIVER FOR RATHER THAN A BRAKE ON THEIR CREATIVITY.

schools were primarily focused on occupational and vocational training that was not linked to applied research. In fact, submissions in 1992 and 2001 included a substantial element of applied research undertaken in the context of the professions and industry and the number of active researchers in art and design submitting to the RAE 2001 was second only to history submissions. The academic research community has expressed reservations about the status of this research, identifying it as “professional practice” rather than scholarly activity. And since the 1992 RAE there has been considerable debate around the status of applied and practice-based research. Building a scholarly infrastructure to underpin research became a key direction for art, design and media schools. The formation of the Arts and Humanities Research Board (now the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)) has added impetus to the development of research capacity in art, design and media. The debate around distinctions between scholarly research and applied research continues to develop but the languages of articulation have become steadily more academic. The AHRC does not believe creative output in the creative and performing arts should be allowed to stand on its own as a record of research activity and has recommended that it “should be required to be presented in verbal or written form” (AHRC, 2003).

The view that research outcomes have value only if undertaken in the scholarly rather than professional contexts and are required to be articulated in the appropriate academic language remains highly contested. However these recommendations may have contributed to steering research in art, design and media departments away from applied research towards research that develops academic knowledge and privileges cultural over commercial capital. This has precipitated a reorientation of the research towards a specialised academic language. Another contributing factor may be that the principal lines of research funding in art, design and media have not supported commercial or applied research and development. Unlike the research councils supporting research in the sciences and technology, the AHRC has remained unconvinced of distinctions between professional practice and applied research and has not funded research aimed at developing IP for commercial or proprietary enterprises. However the AHRC’s draft strategy for 2007-12 makes it clear that one of the purposes of academic research is “to develop stronger links between arts and humanities research and users such as the creative industries” (AHRC, 2006).

Academic values seem to prevail despite the strong historical association of art, design and media schools with the creative industries and substantial activity related entrepreneurship education. There is no argument that research is not valuable, rather that one of the unintended consequences of an emphasis on scholarly infrastructure and conforming to appropriate languages of the academy has been to distance academic communities of practice from the broader communities of practitioners. Teachers are likely to find using metrics for evaluation and assessment that are orientated towards the ‘real world’ problematic and students readily learn to align their own performance indicators to academic contexts. There will be a tendency for graduates to apply the same or similar performance indicators developed through their learning experience to their

post-graduation careers. The consequence for forming effective collaborations is heightened difficulties in communication between potential collaborators, since even applied research may seem opaque in its processes and outcomes to non-academic audiences. Clearer articulation and communication of the types of research undertaken in art, design and media are essential, but there is also a need to articulate research in ways appropriate to communities of practice and audiences engaged in the delivery and use of its outcomes.

“[There is a need for] Greater equality of status and career paths to those who focus upon research and development as opposed to solely research and publication.”
(Gibb, 2005)

This is a key challenge for ensuring the success of entrepreneurship education in art, design and media. The status of applied research and development must be raised to be at least equivalent to other academic research. If policy-makers are serious in their intention that research enhances the value of education both in terms of the learning experience of students and in the wider value of higher education to the economy and society, then a typology that recognises the value of applied and developmental research and orientates support towards this activity must be developed.

3.3 Summary

- There are considerable barriers to building effective collaborative programmes, particularly differences between values in academia and extra-academic environments.
- The academic community, including students, tends to place a higher value on cultural achievement than on commercial success.
- Despite the research culture in art, design and media being substantially focused on applied research, it is increasingly articulated through an academic language that may not be appropriate to other audiences and collaborators.
- Research focusing on the development of IP and of practice appears to be held in lower esteem by the wider academic community than fundamental academic research.

3.4

3.4 Structural and infrastructural factors impede effective dialogue between academics and creative industry

Most agencies and reports discussing collaborations and work-based learning focus on placement learning, where the student learns in a place of employment, or on industry contribution to curriculum delivery. Although many creative industries professionals report good relations with teachers and departments there is a view that knowledge implicit in industry is not being brought to bear on the curriculum and that the creative industries lack sufficient purchase on, or limited access to, the agencies and processes that inform curriculum development. Creative industries professionals are concerned that efforts to engage them in collaborations, either through teaching on courses or in joint projects are hampered by limited opportunities for consultation at developmental stages and that they are expected to cleave to academic values with little or no opportunity to shape the curriculum. Despite high numbers of part-time or visiting teachers in art, design and media departments, many of whom combine teaching with professional practice and may themselves be entrepreneurs, there remains a belief that the majority of teachers are disconnected from the creative industries and have a weak understanding of contemporary professional practice.

“Teachers are no longer in touch with industry, tutors need up-to-date relevant knowledge about industry and business creation.” (Creative industry professional, March 2006)

There is a view among creative industries professionals and art, design and media teachers that effective collaboration will build an ecology where teachers and creative industries professionals contributing to subject and sector-focused entrepreneurship education will be involved in a knowledge transfer process. In a well-formed collaboration between a higher education institution and the creative industries it may not be necessary for teachers to undertake CPD in industry if they are participating in joint delivery of entrepreneurship education that has a strong relationship with and attention to learning applied to real-world situations.

The Sector Skills Councils aim to provide employers with a voice in the curriculum development process. Employers are taken to mean sole-practitioners, freelancers and the managers of micro-businesses. These agencies have undertaken significant work in articulating the concerns of industry sectors in respect of all levels of education. The atomised nature and diversity of the needs of creative industries sectors and the range of destinations for students on art, design and media courses, even within identifiable vocational areas has provoked considerable debate within the sector about the appropriateness and feasibility of orienting qualifications to specific industries. This is compounded by a lack of confidence that industry views of education are based on a coherent understanding of the purposes and aims of higher education. This may reinforce the impression of many creative industries professionals that higher education and

knowledge implicit in industry is not being brought to bear on the curriculum and that the creative industries lack sufficient purchase on, or limited access to, the agencies and processes that inform curriculum development.

teachers in particular have lost contact with the disciplines outside the academic context. However there are powerful counter arguments: each of the three Sector Skills Councils most closely related to the creative industries have called for forms of benchmarking validation of courses or professional accreditation:

“Our proposal is to benchmark and celebrate the creative and professional performance of UK designers and design businesses through an internationally recognised, widely-owned professional accreditation system.” (CCSkills/Design Council, 2006)

There are benchmarks already applied to all undergraduate courses and these form part of the quality assurance processes undertaken by all higher education institutions, for example the Quality Assurance Agency Subject Benchmark Statement for Art and Design states:

“Graduates in art and design will have developed skills in communication and expression... be able to use visual languages to investigate, analyse, interpret, develop and articulate ideas and information.” (QAA, 2002)

The Benchmark Statement goes on to provide detailed descriptions of learning outcomes “informed by professional practice in their discipline(s)” including “relationships with audiences, clients, markets, users, consumers, and/or participants” and that graduates will have “relevant technical knowledge and practical skills, and will be able to: employ materials, media, techniques, methods, technologies and tools associated with the discipline(s) studied with skill and imagination whilst observing good working practices” (QAA, 2002).

The benchmarks may be proving inadequate to the task of equipping graduates with the skills perceived by creative industries employers as absent or underdeveloped, but adding another layer of compliance in the form of professional accreditation is unlikely to add to the quality of learning and teaching. The only sub-sector of the creative industries with mandatory accreditation is architecture. The Architects’ Registration Board Registrar is appointed by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and all architects practising in the UK must be registered with ARB (or their EU equivalent agency). The ARB is responsible for prescribing all UK degree and postgraduate courses that lead to qualifications for professional practice.

“The prescription of qualifications is... to protect the consumer and to safeguard the reputation of architects. [ARB] publishes criteria, which set out the minimum levels of awareness, knowledge, understanding and ability that students of architecture must acquire in the process of qualifying as an architect.” (ARB, 2002)

The prescription process, undertaken every four years by UK schools of architecture, is in addition to validation, also every four years, by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and periodic QAA review. The QAA bench-

marks for Architecture are aligned with ARB and RIBA criteria. These validations consume considerable time and resources that are drawn away from the teaching and learning facilities. The value of these processes and the extent to which they do in fact “protect the consumer and safeguard the reputation of architects” is highly contested by higher education and the profession.

There is, however, no reason for any new accreditation schemes for the creative industries to be based on the model for architecture. There are many professions, for example doctors, nurses and dentists, lawyers and engineers that require forms of accreditation as a condition of practice. However these are based in Statute Law and it is unlikely that any “widely owned professional accreditation system” (Design Council/CCSkills, 2006) will be a statutory obligation. There is a need to demonstrate clear benefits to practitioners, consumers, audiences and clients before voluntary commitment is assured. It is difficult to conceive of any new additional accreditation system that will not add to the burden of existing quality assurance processes already undertaken within higher education. The costs will be absorbed by higher education departments but ultimately by art, design and media students, many of whom will not be seeking to practice in the creative industries professions or in the UK. Alternatively, will the creative industries contribute to the cost of sustaining accreditation if it is undertaken outside the higher education institution and beyond academic qualifications? In terms of promoting entrepreneurship in the creative industries the question will be: will accreditation offer any measurable enhancement of entrepreneurship capacity? In his seminal book *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* (Schön, 1987), Donald Schön suggests that professionalisation is far from a developmental process. Instead, professionalisation and professional bodies tend to be mechanisms for codifying knowledge and enforcing orthodoxy, inhibiting the development of entrepreneurial behaviours.

“Higher education may be the most heavily audited of all public subsidised sectors, including the health sectors.” (Senior academic manager, March 2006)

A substantial proportion of teachers’ work is related to quality management, assurance and enhancement. Activities include internal and external audit, course monitoring for single modules, whole courses, schools and faculty. It is informed by student feedback, external examiners’ reports and admission, progression, assessment and retention statistics. The processes generate reports and action plans for each cycle of a course. In addition, module descriptions, course documents and programme specifications are generated to agreed, comparable formats to ensure there is an appropriate balance of workload in relation to credit value. Periodic review in the form of internal validation is undertaken. The QAA operates periodic institutional review that ‘drills down’ from institutional to delivery level. The processes are evidence-based, requiring comprehensive recording of data that is made available to validators, assessors and reviewers. Course teams interpret and reflect on the data to demonstrate its use to enhance students’ experiences. Institutions maintain sizable Quality Units to

manage and assist academic teams and a significant proportion of staff development budgets is allocated to training personnel in the delivery and maintenance of quality assurance processes. That these processes have been consistently used to score the performance of courses and institutions and form league tables was not the intention of the administering agencies has not prevent this from happening and concerns about the impact of these, on student recruitment and other aspects of institutional financial planning have further focused the attention of senior academic managers on quality assurance.

Quality assurance processes have required teachers to develop specific professional skills that relate only to higher education management and are disconnected from the development of industry-based or subject-specific skills. This has an effect on career paths in higher education, the more senior a faculty member becomes the more involved they tend to be in higher education sector-specific activities. Junior members of staff, more directly responsible for teaching delivery are often protected from this work by their managers increasing distance between the teaching and management of academic programmes. This limits succession planning, restricting entry to senior levels where greater impact on the evolution of teaching and learning strategies, policy development and budgetary management are initiated. It is also likely that the compliance culture discourages academics from seeking out collaborations with industry if there is a perception that equivalence of student experience cannot be assured. Although this may be contested there is a need for research into the effects of the audit and compliance processes on collaborative ventures, as it appears from an outsider perspective that development and delivery of curricula are increasingly disconnected from real-world issues.

Quality assurance is intended to encourage institutions to be more transparent about the intentions, process and outcomes of education. Higher education has grown from providing for relatively small proportions of the population, to a mass education system where the direct contribution by students to the cost of their education is set to rise. These circumstances alone demand greater transparency and accountability, but there have been unforeseen consequences. The module descriptions that build on the QAA Subject Benchmarks, course documents and programme specifications are intended for multiple audiences: for students, potential students, their parents and sponsors, as well as for academics and academic managers. Employers and graduates are expected to use these documents and assessment transcripts to record and validate learning outcomes but there is little evidence to show that they have any real meaning for anyone beyond their authors and commissioners. It is likely that assessment is shaped by the language of quality assurance contributing to the greater emphasis on the academic values inherent in the system. Students learn quickly how to manage the system and will align themselves to those values, thus contributing to the perception in the creative industries that the curriculum is increasingly unrelated to commercial and social enterprise contexts. The documents used to express student and graduate achievement, the module descriptors that describe the aims, outcomes and assessments of their production, and the transcripts that

record the level of achievement lack relevance and meaning for the external audiences for whom they are intended. This may explain why the students' portfolio containing the products of their creativity, remains the key instrument for students to communicate their skills and abilities to extra-academic audiences. However it is important to also note that the emphasis placed by both policy and the creative industries on products, on improving supply rather than increasing demand is also a factor. Although creative industries professionals and policy makers are concerned by students' predisposition towards academic values, industry itself highly values and celebrates awards and peer recognition as performance indicators.

3.4 Summary

- Complex quality-assurance regimes have contributed to the development of an audit and compliance culture and the formation of specialised languages and processes that appear remote, opaque and irrelevant to audiences beyond academia.
- Academics are increasingly focused on developing specialised higher education professional skills that may contribute to perceptions that they are remote from their relevant creative industries professions.

3.5 The debate is cast as: academia versus industry

There is no question that a large number of creative industries professionals believe education is not properly equipping graduates with the skills necessary to enable them to work effectively in industries. It is also clear that the majority of these perceptions form around recruitment to existing businesses. There is no argument that the creative industries have grown rapidly over the last decade to become a major contributor to the UK economy. The quality of the creative output is not contested, and “the skills gap is running at a lower level across design than across business as a whole” (LSC, 2003). Creative industries professionals report little difficulty in recruiting suitable employees, assuming that weaker applicants find work elsewhere. They do however report receiving a growing number of CVs either for advertised posts or speculatively, from graduates seeking employment, and find difficulty in determining which of these come from suitable applicants (Design Council, 2006). From the higher education perspective, industry demands for the closure of courses to limit the number of graduates suggest a lack of understanding of the policy agenda for education and how higher education is constituted.

Since many new graduates will set up their own businesses soon after graduation, equipping them with higher aptitudes for management, leadership and business development may assist in building a more entrepreneurial industry. However, linking these closely with employment skills, particularly if new recruits are not in a position to effect changes in business development in their place of employment, suggests a conflict of views on how entrepreneurship education should develop.

From the further and higher education perspective, the views of industry appear restrictive and limited to advocacy of occupational skills. Industry is not the commissioner of higher education and the HEFCs have been tasked by government to increase participation in post-compulsory education. Participation now stands at 49% and art, design and media subjects have proved to be popular and have assisted in achieving this. The creative industries have acknowledged that they have poor CPD programmes, but appear to expect education sectors to address this shortfall. The Design Skills Consultation and Skillset note that diversity in design education is a major issue but while art, design and media education may have a poor record of achieving widening participation targets it is investing considerable efforts to address this. Meanwhile greater diversity in the workforce is acknowledged as an important factor for future development of the creative industries and yet the number of black and ethnic minorities in the workforce is lamentably low at only 9% in new design business (CCSkills/Design Council, 2006) and only 7% in audio-visual industries. Although black and ethnic minorities make up only 8% of the UK workforce they are 35% of the workforce in London where more than half the audio-visual industry (Skillset, 2006) and 31% of design businesses are located (Design Council, 2005).

There is an apparent discrepancy in the data relating to the destinations of

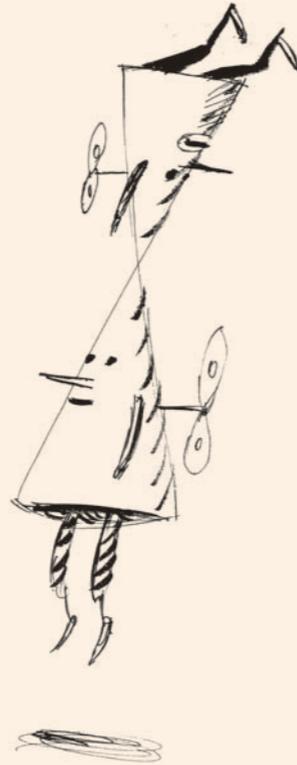
graduates. The last available longitudinal report, *Destinations and Reflections: Careers in Art, Craft and Design* (Blackwell and Harvey 1999) found that of the 2,000 graduates surveyed, 80% found occupations in a related industry. The Higher Education Statistics Agency shows that 16,000 graduated from design-based courses in 2004 and design consultancies reported that in 2004-5, 39% of posts were filled by recruits directly from colleges and universities, but there were only 6,700 jobs in design (CCSkills/Design Council, 2006). It may be that this shortfall is accounted for by art, design and media graduates' predisposition for self-employment. For example, Skillset records that up to 90% of the workforce in film production are self-employed or freelancers, and across the full range of audio-visual industries the average is 50%. CCSkills suggests 41% of those working across its footprint are self-employed and the Crafts Council claims that 87% of those working in the craft sector are sole traders (Crafts Council, 2004).

Despite the number of graduates in the creative industries, the impression is often given that qualifications - and by implication formal education - have little effect on performance. For example, the Design Skills Consultation maintains that the mere 41% of designers holding a degree is evidence that higher qualifications are held to be “relatively unimportant”. However, in other contexts, the higher number of graduates in the creative industries compared with other sectors of UK industry is cited as a factor in development (NESTA, 2003).

Policies aimed at industry development have been somewhat divergent. Those aimed at developing entrepreneurship have been sector-wide, focused on business start-up and have ignored or marginalised enterprise in social arena, not-for-profit enterprises and sectors capitalised through public subsidy - areas where creative entrepreneurs are likely to be active. On the other hand policies aimed at specific sectors, in particular the creative industries, have concentrated attention on development of occupational skills and employment. There is no question that occupational skills are not considered important in higher education but the trend has been to set occupational skills in opposition to so-called academic skills. There is also little question that the higher values placed on cultural achievements by academics and students are a barrier to forming effective collaborations for entrepreneurship education. A polarised debate over the acquisition of occupational skills and academic values is unhelpful if the aim is to form useful collaborations. It is already the case that joint projects between individual creative enterprises and art, design and media departments are formed, teacher-practitioners are appointed to academic posts and creative industries professionals do contribute to curriculum. However, policy that assists in strategic development of entrepreneurship education, successful at a local level, is not being formed. And opposing positions appear to hinder the development of strategies to assist in forming collaborations aimed at enhancing entrepreneurship education across art, design and media higher education.

3.3 Summary

- Reports that higher education is performing poorly in terms of delivery of occupational skills for creative industries rely substantially on the perceptions of employers and there is a lack of evidence-based research to underpin their views.
- Based on reports from the creative industries, they have poor CPD processes and a poor record of supporting diversity in employment.
- There is evidence to suggest that the creative industries lack the capacity to create sustainable growth in some areas. Skills in business development, leadership and management need to be effected in students and graduates but also in existing owner-managers of creative enterprises.
- National policy has provoked a polarised debate between higher education and the creative industries over occupational skills and academic development.



Collaborations between the creative industries and art, design and media departments are likely to be an important aspect for entrepreneurship education. Teacher-practitioners represent a significant proportion of teaching teams, there are knowledge transfer partnerships and industry-sponsored projects. And according to the Design Skills Consultation, 29% of their survey sample had undertaken work placement. Many art, design and media departments appoint creative industries professionals as external examiners, who assist the department in maintaining an industry focus. Despite this there are significant barriers to further development of collaborations between higher education art, design and media departments and the creative industries.

Research in art, design and media generates a significant proportion of income for departments and is a valuable resource for academic development. However, the wider academic community has influenced the ways in which research is articulated and this has distanced the research outputs from audiences and partners who may be contributors and beneficiaries of the research. Over the last decade, quality-assurance processes have been coincident with the development of this emerging refocused research activity. Compliance and audit impinging on education operates at all levels, from executive management to individual teachers. This represents a significant proportion of the workload of teachers but it has propagated a language that is opaque and lacks relevance to observers and audiences outside of the higher education system. There is little doubt that these processes are a hindrance to effective collaborative projects.

Finally, although there are numerous examples of collaborations, in terms of strategic development the distance between higher education and the creative industries is sustained by policies that have focused debates on a contest between occupational skills and the wider aims of academic programmes. In terms of entrepreneurship education, graduate entrepreneurs will be highly skilled in their practices but will also have well-developed reflective skills, and highly attuned skills in management, leadership and business. To move forward in this debate it is necessary to set aside an argument about which is more important, the distinctions between vocation or academic development, and accept that to achieve sustainable growth in the creative industries both are equally important.