A study of the career patterns of graduates from UK degree courses in art, design, craft and media

HEA Conference 2010

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‘These are genuinely individualistic knowledge workers who progress from one creative project to the next and nearly half are portfolio workers - a source of creativity in its own right.

All understand the need to continue learning; all valued what they had studied. What the report captures is the vigorous, if risky, world of creativity and those dedicated to work in it.’

Will Hutton (2010) Creative Graduates Creative Futures, Foreword
Unique study

- Partnership of 26 institutions
  (design, sampling and administration of survey)
- 27,000 graduates
  (census of art, design, craft & media graduates)
- Surveyed Sept to Dec ‘08
  (postal survey, online survey, telephone support)
- 3,500 respondents (14%)
- Qualitative follow-up autumn ‘09,
  reporting spring ‘10
Profile - personal characteristics

- Male: 20%
- Female: 70%
- Disability: 10%
- BME: 0%
- 1st gen HE: 0%
- 25 or under: 30%
- 26-27: 40%
- 28-29: 50%
- 30-39: 10%
- 40+: 0%

*CREATIVE GRADUATES*
*CREATIVE FUTURES*

*ies*
*CHEAD*
council for higher education in art and design

*University of the Arts London*
Work placements

**Extent**
- Requirement: 25%
- Voluntary: 20%
- Any: 45%

**Usefulness**
- Very: 48%
- Fairly: 37%
- Not very: 11%
- Not at all: 4%
Course activities

- PPD
- Teamwork
- Teaching by practitioners
- Peers/self-evaluation
- Business/enterprise activities
- External/live project work
- Careers education and guidance
- Collaboration across courses
- Shows/exhibitions
- Exchange/int'l experience
- Contextual critical studies
- Field trips/study visits
- Volunteering
- Competitions

Mean score of usefulness:

- PPD: 3.6
- Teamwork: 3.5
- Teaching by practitioners: 3.4
- Peers/self-evaluation: 3.3
- Business/enterprise activities: 3.2
- External/live project work: 3.1
- Careers education and guidance: 3.0
- Collaboration across courses: 3.0
- Shows/exhibitions: 3.0
- Exchange/int'l experience: 3.0
- Contextual critical studies: 3.0
- Field trips/study visits: 3.0
- Volunteering: 3.0
- Competitions: 2.7

% experiencing course activity:

- 70%
- 30-70%
- <30%
Skills developed (a)

- Creativity/innovation
- Visual skills
- Presenting your work/ideas
- Research skills
- Critical thinking
- Collaborating with others
- Making/technical/design skills
- Flexibility/adaptability
- Self-management

The chart shows the percentage of graduates who developed each skill fairly well (grey) and very well (purple). The skills range from 0% to 100% with categories indicated as 'Fairly well' and 'Very well'.
Skills developed (b)

- Problem solving: Fairly well
- Self-confidence: Very well
- Initiative/risk taking: Very well
- Project management: Very well
- Written communication: Fairly well
- Using IT/software: Fairly well
- Understanding client needs: Fairly well
- Networking: Fairly well
- Entrepreneurial skills: Fairly well
Implications for pedagogy

- Learning environment encourages creativity
- Students develop important employability skills
- Curriculum provides different learning contexts
- Creative practice at the heart
Creative career patterns

Activities since graduation and at time of the survey

98% 89% employed/working
74% 58% permanent work
49% 6% temporary contracts
50% 20% fixed term contracts
45% 23% freelance work
25% 18% running own business

Note: multiple response question
Creative career patterns

Activities since graduation and at time of the survey

42% 9% unpaid/voluntary work
72% 39% further study and informal learning
32% 5% unemployed
8% 5% maternity/caring
18% 2% time out

Note: multiple response question
Creative careers 1999 - 2009

Almost double working in creative industries sector

Note: all those reporting work activity (Table App.C6.1; D&R Table 5.2)
Creative career patterns

Portfolio working is an established working pattern

- One: 52%
- Two: 30%
- Three: 13%
- Four plus: 5%

Note: all those reporting work activity
Creative career patterns

Part-time working is a key feature of creative careers

- In main job/work activity:
  - 75% full-time
  - 25% part-time

- Across all combinations of work/jobs:
  - 79% working part-time in at least one of their jobs/work activities
Creative career patterns

Unpaid work contributes to career progression

42% worked unpaid since graduating

23% unpaid at the time of the survey in one of their jobs/work roles
Further study

Creative graduates are lifelong learners

72% had undertaken some form of further study
- 54% formal study, education and training
- 33% short courses
- 51% creative practice/studio work
- 35% independent study/informal learning
Postgraduate study

Creative graduates place a high value on postgraduate study

28% had studied at postgraduate level:

- <1% Doctorates
- 13% Masters
- 10% PGCE
- 4% PG dip and other
Motivation for further study

- Develop skills and knowledge
- Access to job opportunities
- Interest/personal fulfilment
- Develop creative practice
- Obtain professional qualification
- Improve earnings in LT
- Develop contacts/networks
- Time to decide on a career
- Request of employer
- Nothing else to do
Creative career patterns

Graduates are satisfied in their working lives

My work is relevant to art, design, craft, media
I feel I am able to be creative in my work
I am satisfied with my work
I have career opportunities open to me
Related to degree subject
I have autonomy and independence in my work
I feel underemployed in my work

Note: graduates in work
Creative career patterns

Proximity to career goals

- not at all close: 8%
- not very close: 12%
- fairly close: 28%
- very close: 19%
- in my chosen career: 32%
- n/a: 2%
- not at all close: 8%
Questions and challenges

- Introducing new models for employer engagement?
- Connecting creative learning with personal fulfilment?
- Encouraging research culture and preparing next generation of teacher-practitioners?
- Building students’ confidence for creative careers?
- Funded internships and improved pay levels?
- Relevant support for transition to creative careers, self-employment and lifelong learning (CPD)?
architectural draftsman/modelmaker painter + teaching + outdoor activity instructor garment technologist project manager/creative producer + curator + project manager charity + catering + voluntary work for development agency radiology assistant + designer-maker teacher + freelance artist artist + art workshops + art college dyslexia tutor curator + sculptor creative practitioner + creative consultant + visual artist exhibitions + education co-ordinator + sound artist commissions picture library administrator painting and decorating + photographer/artist textile craft + jewellery/silversmithing footwear designer and pattern technician costume maker + wardrobe mistress accessories designer + mentoring + learning support web content manager costume assistant studio booking interior designer sculptor + digital sculptor + photoshop painter prop maker/carpenter conservation - 2 jobs assistant producer + filmmaking photographic rental team + photographer pattern cutter + sales assistant design manager costumier (2 jobs) illustrator + artist film editor + painter + director digital planning graphic designer programme manager + associate lecturer theatre maker + retail manager part time + puppeteering artist filmmaker + artist facilitator + gallery assistant customs officer forensic photographer + photographer accounts clerk park ranger interior graphic designer + artist and glass painter creative design executive + freelance graphic designer stone mason + bespoke design council work + wetland related artwork

www.creativegraduates.com