‘CREATIVE CONNECTIONS’

Curriculum Enhancement for Further Education Feeder Courses

NALN Project Report by Dr Catherine Hatton

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1 Curriculum Enhancement for FE Feeder Courses

‘Creative Connections’

Executive Summary

This report draws together the work carried out by four specialist Arts institutions: Hereford College of Arts, Plymouth College of Art, Cleveland College of Art and Design and Leeds College of Art, on the NALN funded project to design and develop curriculum enhancement for feeder courses and to examine the effectiveness of the project outcomes. It has broad aims to:

- Give a synoptic appraisal of the original research
- Examine the data from a pilot study using on-line learning materials designed to help students overcome barriers
- Identify barriers to progression and review means of supporting the vocational curriculum in light of the new 14-19 Diploma
- Make recommendations which may be of wider interest to the FE and HE art and design sectors

The key findings of this report demonstrate:

- There are barriers to progression such as the background of students and their lack of familiarity with creative training but that learning tools may usefully aid the transition from FE to HE
- Student learning at this level must be identified as vocational training for creative individuals. On-line learning can assist this by way of providing a flexible learning environment within a structured curriculum framework.
- The learning tools in the pilot study appeared welcoming to students and staff and this together with easy access was important to the success of the resource
- An input of contextual information as a background to creative theory practice may enhance the effectiveness of the on-line resource
- Learning tools must be regularly reviewed to meet the differentiated learning needs of the 14-19 sectors, from schools to HE, and if routinely used, these must be made available to all students by means of a VLE.
- Parity between vocational and non-vocational learning should be supported more by staff working in schools, FE and HE institutions in order to fulfil student potential, and to enable students pursuing 14-19 Diplomas to envision their progress to HE at an early stage
While the pilot study evidenced the potential for good practice, it may be noted that future student learning will be more diverse and therefore developments may need to account for this within both local and national requirements. Stakeholders could work together to provide an effective curriculum to support individual learners towards a seamless transition.

Local agreements must involve a curriculum for training to suit the wider creative industries but with realistic attachments to the local business and skills sectors. The learning tools could assist in this process by widening the development and training potential of the Diplomas.

2 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

In the spring of 2009 Dr Catherine Hatton was commissioned by the APSCAD partnership of colleges to write up the final report on the activities and outcomes of the NALN funded Project: Curriculum Enhancement for FE Feeder Courses.

NALN is an organisation whose aim is ‘to widen participation by increasing the number of learners progressing from vocational programmes, or the workplace, into higher education, and to equip them for lifelong employment in the creative industries’. NALN also works to develop Progression Agreements between its members and local schools and colleges and to build relationships with other lifelong learning networks such as the Sector Skills Councils and arts communities.

This final report summarises the NALN funded action based research and development project into Curriculum Enhancement. This was carried out from 2006 - 2009 and involved the four specialist art colleges which form part of the APSCAD (Association of Principals of Specialist College of Art and Design) Partnership.

The four participating institutions forming part of the APSCAD Partnership comprises a grouping of specialist art and design colleges who deliver both FE and HE programmes. A detailed outline of the APSCAD Partnership together with a background to each of the four participating colleges in the pilot can be found in the internal report, APSCAD Partner Colleges Widening Participation in the Arts: What Works?, written by Richard Spencer (Zennor, 2007, pp13-21). This will forthwith be referred to as the Zennor report. The internal report noted the catchments of each institution; their local learning provision and FE and HE delivery. The common specialist nature of the participating colleges was an advantage of this working partnership as all participants shared similar progression needs.

The NALN FE Project: Curriculum Enhancement for FE Feeder Courses involved looking specifically into developing enhanced curriculum materials and new learning resources for art and design students and staff to
encourage and facilitate progression to HE from Level 3 vocational courses and, in addition, addressing learning barriers to progression. The outcome of this project and the final report set out to deal with findings from the aforementioned pilot study in FE colleges involving an FE Curriculum Enhancement project at level three, to develop learning materials for FE Feeder Courses and aimed to respond to the to the Government White Paper of February 2005 on 14-19 Education and Skills.

Overall, the Curriculum Enhancement Project was developed in four stages. The first two saw the establishment of a steering group and resulted in two documents. The first document comprised the internal report (Zennor, 2007) on the outcomes of action research into widening participation and was carried out across the four colleges with the purpose of informing overall development of the main project. This unpublished internal document outlined the need for specialist projects to develop the art and design curriculum for feeder courses and the role of specialist art colleges to deal with this activity. Secondly, a Consultation Document entitled, Further Education Curriculum Development For Higher Education Feeder Courses, (APSCAD, August, 2007) was written in response to the original internal APSCAD, (Zennor, 2007) report and presented recommendations for curriculum enhancement. Both of these reports dealt with detailed quantitative and qualitative data and provide useful sources of information which may be referred to in this ‘Creative Connections’ report.

The second report focused on NALN consultation activities and workshop findings, highlighting in particular a dialogue between APSCAD partners and external agencies. The resulting Consultation Document gave an impetus for the development of a pilot study. It identified the nature of the on-line learning materials required within the pilot study and how the first stages of curriculum enhancement should evolve. From this consultation, three key themes from the 14-19 Creative and Media Diploma were recommended. These were: ‘Creativity in Context’; ‘Thinking and Working Creatively’ and ‘Creative Businesses and Enterprise’. From these themes, the learning materials were developed by the participating institutions that were to present the learning materials as part of the on-line resource. It appears that the choice of an on-line resource would satisfy the increasing demands and opportunities presented by a creative curriculum as the following statement shows:

ICT significantly enhances the learning opportunities for students in art and design by enabling a dialogue and a critique of visual phenomena to develop. The media can offer new fields of creativity for visual image-makers and provide continuity with the existing curriculum.

(Davies and Worrall, 2006, p.96)

Returning to the development of the pilot, further recommendations from the Consultation Document were that the next phase of the project should develop materials that were diverse and experiential, that the project would foster creative and independent thinking and also promote learning through the acquisition of transferable skills. The Creative and Media Diploma (Level 3) was identified as the level at and criteria on which, learning materials would
be designed for the study. Four institutions took part in the study. These were:
Hereford College of Arts; Plymouth College of Art; Cleveland College of Art &
Design and Leeds College of Art (formerly Leeds College of Art and Design).

The context of this report is also focused in line with NALN objectives seeking
parity between vocational and academic routes into Higher Education through
an understanding of the learner journey in art and design. The visual arts and
performing arts are amongst the least diverse disciplines and HEFCE
performance indicators show that first degree participation by lower socio
economic groups is only 29%. The study on which the report is based aimed
to develop learning materials to assist the routes of such non traditional
feeder courses.

This report also refers to the wider contexts of learning in art and design such
as the role of transferable skills and their impact on employment in the
creative industries, and aspects of lifelong learning and widening participation.
However, these are dealt with in some circumstances fairly broadly in relation
to art and design programmes, particularly in order to signify the wider
lacunae in projected destinations within art education. This means that
although such features as transferable skills were not key elements of this
research they do however appear to the participants to be significant aspects
of the provision of vocational learning. In which case, this may therefore
require further in-depth investigation using statistical data from recognisable
FE and HE sources, together with clearly identifiable skill sets. Further useful
research might also involve a focus on issues affecting students and their
progression and participation in art and design education in terms of disability;
part time and adult education and black minority ethnic (BME) students who
all form part of the Widening Participation agenda.

2.1 Aims

The key aims of this report were:

- To give an overview of the original context and aims of the pilot study
- To examine the context of the four case study colleges and evaluate
  their final reflections and data
- To see how the on-line resource meets the needs of: vocational
  learning, transferable skills and the changing 14-19 curriculum
- To make recommendations for future curriculum/learning materials

2.2 Methodology

The methodology for this report aims to draw together material from the four
original stages of the project in order to give a final picture of the effectiveness
of the use of on-line learning materials for students on level 3 art and design
programmes. It focuses primarily on the evaluative data given by the
institutions who were asked to present responses to the pilot, following the
analysis of generic questionnaires given to all participating institutions for staff
and students to complete. The study also uses further contextual information
to present an image of the project in its entirety.
The following list indicates the data upon which this report is based:

- Data from two previous documents both published in 2007. These were noted in this report’s Introduction.
- Student and staff questionnaires/feedback forms from four specialist art and design institutions following their use of the on-line resource between 2007 and 2009. The research comprised 146 respondents (116 FE; 30 HE) of which 119 were students and 27 were staff. Tables of staff/student data were collated by each institution.
- Feedback from Progression Managers at NALN institutions on their responses to the first consultation phase of the project and their thoughts on the next phase. This data was presented in questionnaire format and detailed ideas around the proposed three main themes and their possible delivery methods.
- Four ‘Evaluation and Feedback on Website’ forms comprising data of staff and student responses to the use of the on-line resource. These were provided by the participating institutions.
- Contextual data such as: minutes from steering group meetings and workshops, focus group evaluations, researcher notes from meetings with institutional representatives (who provided important information about the development of the on-line resource), abstracts, discussion papers circulated to steering group members noting evolving ideas around the research project and participants’ continuing aims and objectives. These were further reflected upon by the report writer who discussed details with individual staff in order to create a focus for such supporting material.

The conclusions and recommendations of this report will set out the findings within themes related to the aims of the study. The findings may be viewed in the wider context of art and design learning to enable progression issues to be illuminated and conceptualised more broadly across art and design learning careers. This will give a wider picture of the relationships between FE and HE art and design pedagogy and how and why barriers relating to progression, may occur.

2.3 Scope of Research Activities

As a brief description of the scope of this study, the project partners initially aimed to: identify FE providers offering vocational courses in particular those with WP (Widening Participation) status; identify the key barriers to progression (from FE to HE); and to look at the curriculum and develop new learning materials particularly around the ‘Learning Objectives’ and ‘Content’ areas of the 14-19 Diploma Course Document, to help students overcome those barriers. Focus groups for example, (at Tate Britain 2007) examined in the early stages of the project, issues such as why learners might decide to go on to HE and what could be done to assist their learning.

As the scope of the consultation grew and the aims of the project evolved, target numbers of 12 first year and 12 second year students; 6 HE students
and ten staff overall per institution, were agreed as ideal sample groups to ‘test out’ and respond to some new on-line materials designed to assist this transition. Progress of the research and pilot study was monitored by regular meetings and dissemination via the steering group of the four main participants.

As noted in minutes of meetings held by NALN partners involved in the pilot study, and in the data from Progression Managers, there was a desire to create materials which helped to enhance the learning experience and create a seamless transition from FE to HE. The Progression Managers’ feedback on the first phase had identified a number of characteristics which may have been barriers to vocational learning in their areas such as: the intentions of learners in their learning development; the institutional absences in local areas in terms of a seamless progression for learners; a lack of confidence in the learners; an absence of regular reading habits and educational background. Some of these characteristics appeared to have an institutional focus; others may have been due to the cultural and social backgrounds of students.

Further explanation of perceived barriers can be found in the Consultation Document (pp17-18), and this also noted finances as being a particular problem for students. In addition to this, the Consultation Document gave a broader outline of the general ideas emanating from Progression Managers around vocational learning. A student’s background and issues of confidence and ambition featured strongly within this, although the Consultation Documents also noted there was no evidence to support any single ‘commonly’ perceived barrier, over another. However, Progression Managers appeared to have reflected upon the need for creating stronger routes into HE for vocational learners, particularly with the support of good learning materials. This was clearly taken up as a driving force behind the pilot study.

The steering group held workshops and meetings to discuss the best ways of developing learning materials and what target numbers and levels of students they should pilot. Activities focused around the main themes chosen to represent the Diploma (Creativity in Context; Thinking and Working Creatively, Creative Business and Enterprise). and the development of specific learning tools to allow for particular explorations of learning to be assessed within case studies.

Data was collected and evaluated against the case study material agreed upon but it was the student and staff usage and their responses to the individual learning tools which were recorded. Each participating institution focused on developing one strand for the on-line resource and therefore may have been particularly focused on one area of success or failure, although all were familiar with the general scope of the curriculum. Information and material about the pilot study was circulated regularly for consultation.

The data from the pilot study was gathered from four main sources. These were FE staff; FE students; HE staff and HE students. The largest participant group was that of FE students who represented those who were most likely to
use the resource on a regular basis, or who may be expected to benefit most from using an on-line learning resource. However, as a pilot study designed to enhance learning opportunities, staff were also encouraged to use the resource and to evaluate its effectiveness within programmes of study and how it might have increased opportunities for learning. A lead participant, usually the Progression Manager of the institution, collated the data and forwarded it to the Project Manager.

2.4 14-19 Diplomas

The three themes used in the project were generated from the 14-19 Creative and Media Diploma level three curriculum. The Diploma is a new qualification which covers a range of creative disciplines including those normally delivered in FE art and design institutions as NDs (National Diploma) and on foundation degrees. The Creative and Media Diploma is one of seventeen new Diplomas initiated by the government as part of the major change to 14-19 education. The new Creative and Media Diploma has been developed in consultation with partners including representatives from education, business and industry and skills sector organisations. The emphasis is on practical creative learning and encouraging students to make informed choices about their learning careers. The diplomas are intended to provide accessible routes to employment and higher education, particularly at Foundation Degree level.

The Foundation Degree in art and design is also a fairly new mode of learning development and contains a flexible approach to vocational and academic learning at HE. It aims to reflect industry practices and is a natural destination for students entering HE from the 14-19 Diploma. The Creative and Media Diplomas have been standardised by frameworks such as those of Skillset and the Foundation Degree Frameworks.

Awarding bodies OCR, Edexcel, AQA and City and Guilds have developed learning specifications and strategies for the implementation of the 14-19 Creative and Media Diploma at levels 1, 2 and 3 from September 2009.

2.5 The Three Key Themes

The three main areas identified in the 14-19 Diplomas by the four participating institutions for the development of resources were:

1) Creativity in Context
2) Thinking and Working Creatively
3) Creative Business and Enterprise

Learning tools for the pilot were organised with these themes in mind.

2.6 Learning Tools were identified by the partner institutions as follows:

1) Creativity in Context:
   Create your own Blog - Leeds College of Art
   Plagiarism and Copyright - Plymouth College of Art
2) **Thinking and Working Creatively**
Nine Downloadable Films - Hereford College of Arts
Design and Shine - Cleveland College of Art and Design

3) **Creative Business and Enterprise:**
Prepare yourself for Business - Plymouth College of Art
Innovation and Enterprise resource - Leeds College of Art

### 2.7 The Website: ‘Creative Connections’

The online learning site has adopted the working title of ‘Creative Connections’ and the resources are now available on the NALN website or by following the link: [www.fe-art.co.uk](http://www.fe-art.co.uk)

The learning tools were designed to exploit a diverse range of needs at level 3 although some materials and the design of the on-line resources may have been developed with specific learning outcomes in mind. The designers and producers of the learning resources were tutors or practising artists or designers who had worked closely with students at level three.

The website has a clear functional appearance which enables easy access to the themes. It has a home page with the main themes visible so the user can click on one of the themes to access further information. There is choice in the manner in which the site may be navigated. In the data analysis, the use and evaluation of such things as: the site’s access, the clarity of text and image, relevance to art and design studies, amongst other things, will be explored in more depth.

The website was intended as an on-line media resource which meant students required access to information technology and it presupposed that institutions would be providing this. This type of provision is in line with the expected educational standards at FE and HE levels and qualifies the general research strategies into general education and learning made by agencies such as JISC and the HE Academy.

By level three, students would be expected to have already developed their IT skills to the extent of understanding and using an on-line resource regularly as an aid to learning. Also, within the ‘hidden curriculum’ of outside learning and through social networking activity, today’s learners may be expected to have become conversant with certain aspects of on-line communication such as blogging, although this may not be the experience of all students. One of the on-line resources encouraged students to create a blog account ([www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)) where all their work could be stored.

Access to the website may have been easier for students who had good links to an intranet and updated computer facilities in the college where they studied, rather than those who did not have the same facilities. Some art and design programmes such as graphics and media areas could be using these types of resources more readily as a part of their curriculum activity, and
therefore students following such courses may have enhanced IT skills compared to students on other art and design programmes. The specialist versus generic content of a website therefore may be a factor to consider closely where evaluations of outcomes of the use of an on-line resource occur.

In the Consultation Document and the meetings it appears that it was felt by participants that the next phase should focus on curriculum development and enhancement and for the learning materials to remain a key focus within this. There were questions in the consultation around whether there might be a stress on stand-alone, on-line materials providing a generic focus for independent learning, or that there was a specific link from the learning tools to briefs. Transferable skills and embedding these into the curriculum was also seen as significant. The decision to develop on line learning materials under the three diploma lines was also endorsed by the Sector Skills Council in their feedback to the Consultation Document.

3.0 DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis is based on information outlined in the Methodology section of this report which may be seen in two distinct phases.

Firstly, in the numerical statistics presented by four art colleges. This came from the FE and HE student and staff questionnaires following their use of the on-line resource. Information was provided from the ‘Evaluation and Feedback on Website’ forms presented by participating institutions.

Secondly, the Feedback from Progression Managers at NALN institutions and Contextual Information which will include material from the two previous documents, in particular the Consultation Document, where necessary.

The analysis attempts to examine and explain findings from the two phases of the project.

3.1 PHASE ONE: Data from the questionnaires

The following is an examination of the data from the first phase and is shown under the key headings of students and staff. Small anomalies in the presentation of data may have affected the exact figures to one or two respondents, but where data appeared to be missing general averages were estimated from background data given by institutions involved in the project. A balance of information was derived from the overall literature supplied by the participating institutions. The annexes at the end of this report (Annex 1, Annex 2) record additional data with more detailed descriptions of comments made by participants but the following is an overview of the data results.

Student responses

The data from students came after they had used the on-line resource as a part of their existing studies at similar levels (National Diplomas; year one
degree) to the final stages of the 14-19 Diploma. All students were asked the same questions but responses have been examined at both FE and HE levels.

**Student FE**

The FE student data confirmed that students found the site either interesting or at least partially interesting. Most FE students found the site both interesting and easy to navigate. There were hardly any students who did not find the use of the site interesting at all.

In terms of the analysis of the individual questions in the student evaluation, there was more variety in the responses. Looking particularly at responses to individual aspects of the site such as ‘Cheating and Copying’, here FE students were more focused on the ‘good’ rather than ‘very good’, or ‘needs more work’, answers. They appeared to have noticed differences between the parts of the site and gave strong answers as to how useful these parts were to them. Responses to ‘Create your own Blog’ suggest an uneven return with some focused data on either ‘needs more work’ or ‘good’. Written responses also highlighted certain issues related to the blog which may explain this. These will be discussed later in the report.

One piloted theme came out well and was noted as either ‘very good’ or ‘good’ by the majority of FE users. This was ‘Design and Shine’ where over 70% found it ‘good’ or ‘very good’, although one institution’s results and comments suggested there were difficulties opening this part of the site.

The ‘Enterprise Game’ appeared less popular with more than a third of FE students suggesting it ‘needed more work’. In some cases no responses to this were given indicating it had not been used. ‘Prepare Yourself for Business’ and ‘Copyright’ achieved similar results to one another with more than 50% in both cases finding these elements either ‘good’ or ‘very good’. The ‘Download Films’ area of the site had more average results with more than 50% in the mid range of ‘good’ or above with slightly more leaning towards to ‘needs more work’ than ‘Very good’. One particular institution emphasised it needed more work which may have been due to problems encountered opening the site.

Two more general questions asking about the overall content and visual appearance of the site concluded that most (over 60%) FE students saw both the content and visual appearance similarly, as being either ‘good’ or ‘very good’ with the overall content scoring slightly higher than the visual appearance of the site.
Student HE

The HE student respondents were a smaller group (34) than the FE participants but their views appeared to be fairly clear. In response to whether the site was interesting a clear majority indicated it was although around 25% suggested it was not by answering ‘no’ or only ‘partially’. A much clearer majority (over 80%) found the site ‘easy to navigate’ by answering ‘yes’.

In terms of the other questions there was a similar spread of responses to the FE although ‘Prepare yourself for Business’ ‘Copyright’ and ‘Enterprise Game’ had slightly fewer favourable responses from HE students than for other areas of the site, with up to a third feeling these areas needed ‘more work’. A markedly low number of respondents (around 10%) felt the ‘Enterprise Game’ was ‘very good’ but slightly more considered it was ‘good’ rather than ‘needs more work’.

The HE student data suggested ‘Design and Shine’ was very popular with most respondents (over 70%) from three colleges who found it either ‘very good’ or ‘good’. However, one institution responded either negatively or respondents did not give an answer when questioned about this part of the resource.

‘Cheating and Copying’ and the ‘Create your own Blog’ also appeared to gain positive responses with a similar cohort responding well, answering that they felt it was ‘good’ or ‘very good’ in each case. The ‘Download Films’ appeared to have been well understood by HE students whose responses (over 65%) indicated these were ‘Good’ or above good.

In terms of the site’s content and visual appearance, the visual appearance averaged out as mainly ‘good’ or ‘very good’ (50-60 %), with the content being slightly more highly rated than this (over 75 %).

Staff responses

The staff questionnaires focused on the same areas of the site as the student questionnaires and highlighted the same resources. It contained additional information about using the site as a learning resource which addressed three of the four themes of the 14-19 Diploma in Creative and Media, the three themes being: Creativity in Context; Thinking and Working Creatively and Creative Business and Enterprise. This was outlined in the introduction to the questionnaire.

Compared to the student questionnaires, the staff one was identical except for the introduction and for two additional questions about the ‘Blogging Project’ and ‘Innovation and Enterprise’ These were asked towards the end of the questionnaire with the addition of a final question about whether, on the whole, the learning resource would be advised or encouraged with their students. There was also scope in the questionnaire to respond further with ideas for improvements to the resource and for ideas about the potential
application for its use in the curriculum (see Annex 2). The following is general data analysis of staff responses to these questionnaires. 17 FE staff and 9 HE staff gave responses. One institution did not present HE staff data.

**Staff FE**

The majority of FE staff (over 70 %) found the learning resource ‘interesting’ or ‘partially interesting’. None of the FE staff respondents gave a response that it was not interesting at all by answering ‘no’. About 80% found it ‘easy to navigate’; 20% did not. In terms of an overall view of the site’s content, the results showed around 75% of FE noted these were either ‘good’ or ‘very good’. On visual appearance of the site, there was a broad spectrum of responses from institutions, with individual institutions making clear responses across the range of options from ‘very good’ to needs ‘more work’.

In terms of the individual resources there were two clear positive results. Both the ‘Download Films’ and ‘Design and Shine’ gained mostly ‘very good’ or ‘good’ results from FE staff (around 90% for the Download films and for Design and Shine). Others were slightly less positive, in particular Copyright; Cheating and Plagiarism and Preparing for Business where there was a sizable number thinking these needed more work, although there were also fairly clear responses in terms of the ‘good’ aspects.

Create your own Blog and the Enterprise Game had focused results on good without many very good however; one institution did not give any responses to the Enterprise Game which may have affected the results. A sizable number (30-40%) of responses showed it was felt they felt more work was needed on these parts of the site. Again, issues relating to the on-line nature of the resource and its access may have affected this result.

In the additional questions which were about Create your own Blog and Innovation and Enterprise, again similar results were ascertained amongst the majority of users (just over 60%) emphasising the ‘good’ aspects rather than ‘very good or, ‘needs more work’. When asked whether they would advise or encourage students to use the site most respondents (80%) agreed they would, with over 50% noting ‘sometimes’ and 30% ‘often’.

**Staff HE**

Three out of the four participating institutions returned HE staff data, therefore the following analysis is based on the material made available. The majority of HE staff responding (90%) found the site ‘easy to navigate’ but there was a mixed response to whether it was interesting or not. Here, almost half felt it was interesting but just under half found it was only partially interesting or was not.

In terms of its content and visual appearance, there was a mixed response. Again these figures do not include one institution’s HE tutors’ responses which may affect the overall picture. It appeared generally that HE staff may have felt both these areas needed more work but there were good, and some
felt very good, aspects to them. HE staff may have seen the resource as a little unfamiliar to their areas.

The responses to the resources were interesting. The following gained mostly 'good': 'Design and Shine'; 'Download Films' and 'Cheating and Plagiarism' each with over 50% focused in this response, and some very good, although Download Films did not achieve any responses at 'very good'.

Other results were more mixed with more of an even spread of results across the board for ‘Prepare for your Business’, ‘Copyright’, ‘Create your own Blog’ and the 'Enterprise Game', although the Enterprise Game did not achieve any 'very good' responses at HE.

In the additional questions about the 'Blogging Project' and 'Innovation and Enterprise', HE tutors responses were mainly in the mid range of responses of (40-60%) 'good', with fewer at either 'very good' or 'needs more work'. A more focused response was given to the question, 'On the whole as a learning resource you would advise/鼓励 your students to use', which was predominantly 'sometimes' (over 75%).

3.2 PHASE TWO: Institutional responses and contextual data

This was additional data provided by the participating institutions and skills sectors as noted in the Methodology section of this report. It involved documentary analysis of contextual data; Progression Manager Reports and data from previously written sources such as the Consultation Document. This may be seen as supporting material to the pilot. Other Contextual Information involving small documentary records derived from interviews with Progression Managers, and from individual communications with tutors and course leaders around the general activities of the piloted schemes, may also be reflected upon here as part of an investigation into a general institutional response to the pilot.

This data focuses on the two major aspects of the study which are: responses to the main themes of the pilot, and barriers to progression.

Consultation Document

'There is no real evidence from FE students to support that there are commonly perceived barriers to progression. Qualitative research findings did not reflect that barriers to progression were purely based on financial constraints’ (p.17).

'It was apparent from the discussion in the focus groups with students that whilst many students are keen to travel to another part of the country to participate in Higher Education study, the opportunity for internal progression offered by the Colleges is attractive and important' (p.16).

'The main theme that has emerged from the research is the difference in the students that have followed the traditional A level route versus the non-
traditional pathway in terms of the ability to undertake independent learning, when faced with a Higher Education environment’ (p22).

‘In contrast there were other participants that stated that students from non-traditional pathways were more able to work independently in a studio environment’ (p.22).

Recommendations from the Consultation Document were that there was a focus on curriculum development in the areas of: learning materials which exploit a diverse experiential range and transferable skills both of which should be embedded in all art and design courses, with the pilot study focussing on the three themes of the 14-19 Diploma by linking these to learning Objectives and Course Content at Level 3 (p.23).

NALN Progression Managers and Sector Skills Responses to the Consultation Document

Progression Managers (PM) from wider NALN art and design institutions and skills sector organisations (SSC) were asked about their perceptions of the barriers of FE to HE student progression and also about their responses to the Consultation Document. This resulted in limited data due to a low response. However, the data reflects some useful information (before the pilot version was set up) and may reveal some of the commonly held perceptions of Progression Managers and Sector Skills representatives around such things as barriers and general concerns around such issues highlighted in the Consultation Document.

The main barriers to progression include educational background, reading habits, lifestyle, and perceived lack of integration into HE culture (CSM).

Course tutor lack of recognition of the significance of vocational qualifications as opposed to foundation programmes where the non-vocational route is easier to support students in, is a factor (PM & SSC).

Concerns noted over availability of sector jobs for school leavers and increasing financial constraints for students.

There is a need to develop teaching and learning environments which embed and are conducive to personal learning and thinking skills ( especially re Diploma in Creative and Media level 3).

Learners who achieve the Diploma at level 3 will be very well prepared for further work in specialist creative and media subjects as well as for work and further study in a range of sector areas (SSC).

There is a need for seamless and continuous delivery of qualifications by institutions, particularly in local contexts.

More recognition required of the transferable skills found in art and design training and of the high quality designers (graphics) who benefit industry
Opportunities for independent study are emphasised in the report (Consultation Document).

Agree with the conclusions, would need to strengthen partnerships between education and industry and promotion of multi disciplinary courses (SSC).

Progression may be occurring from FE in one institution to HE at another therefore barriers to progression cannot be pinpointed (PM).

There may be too many bodies awarding their own versions of the qualification, which may affect the market.

More discussion between HEI’s, FE, schools and sixth forms to examine alignment and progression issues and possible duplication of provision is needed (LCA).

Queries around the proliferation of Foundation Degrees (More than 400) and the true level of employer engagement in the design and delivery of these qualifications is also an area of interest (SSC).

**Progression Manager Project Reports**

The following are details of Progression Managers’ responses to the Curriculum Enhancement Project, taken from the project reports they submitted after the pilot study:

‘There is growing recognition amongst staff to include more business and enterprise skills into the FE curriculum’ (LCA).

‘I think that one thing we did find from the research was that specialist colleges do prepare their FE students very well for progression and that the receiving HE programmes understand that students from diverse backgrounds need a greater deal of support and that support is built into the ethos of the college’ (CCADD).

‘The views of the students were as diverse as they were. Aspects of the design which some did not ‘like’ others did, however, there were a number of constants’ (PCA).

‘These new learning materials are a useful resource which are of particular use to staff new to this area and to specialist staff who lack training or experience in business and enterprise’ (LCA).

‘The technical aspects of the website are rather challenging and may need to be reviewed’ (PCA).

‘When incorporated into a course VLE project the pilot appeared to be more successful, producing more detailed and analytical written commentary by students than paper based submissions and learner work was more accessible to staff’.
Other Feedback (curriculum leaders and tutors)

‘Overall pretty good, the films could have an independent value of their own and the check list for creative processes was also a thorough item, very useful to HE’ (Head of Cultural Studies, HCA).

‘Critical thinking skills were further developed’ (LCA).

‘Encourages entrepreneurial skills and realisation of self employment’ (CCADD).

‘I believe there was enough positive feedback from the students themselves to suggest that there is a role for such resources within the current curriculum’ (HCA).

‘Not all students have internet access at home’ (LCA).

4.0 SUMMARY OF PILOT STUDY AND ITS MAIN THEMES

Bearing in mind the sample group sizes and the variation in participation numbers between colleges, there was an overall picture emerging from the results of the evaluations from the pilot study. This indicated the following:

It was noted that differentiated learning occurred between media and art and design students in the ways the resource was use. Media and graphics students appeared to have a relatively quicker grasp of the functions of the resource than art and design students at FE.

From this pilot study there appeared to be a general desire on the part of both students and staff for learning tools such as those developed for this project to work and for such curriculum aids to be made appropriate to their learners. This came out of the responses to the questionnaires. Staff for example felt it was a good resource for less independent learners and students appeared comfortable at FE and HE levels to contemplate using an on-line aid to their studies. A brief summary of the main themes and outline recommendations from the pilot can be seen below:

Creativity in Context
New features of curriculum support such as ‘blogging’ aids that were designed for this theme in the pilot study appeared helpful and well understood by both staff and students. Some concepts such as plagiarism were understood better by staff than students and a concern was raised about the idea of the term ‘cheating’ being used which may be off putting to students.

The learning tools were seen to be helpful when easy access when able to be easily accessed and when not too much text was used. A fuller resource may have been expected in line with individual course requirements but as this was intended only as a part of a piloted case study it may not have been used to its optimum potential which would be much wider if it was used more regularly.
**Thinking and Working Creatively**

Users appeared to have a good understanding of the significance of these areas to learning and explorations of concepts of creativity were expected to be implemented within the resource by its users. However, this factor was a slightly weightier concern for HE students, Progression Managers and curriculum leaders than for FE students. However, for all participants, the download films and particularly 'Design and Shine', were some of the most successful parts of the project.

**Creative Business and Enterprise**

The business aspects of courses at both FE and HE were felt to be important to art programmes although there were different perceptions of how such areas could be made more accessible using an online resource. Responses showed that there was an expectation that these areas must be made applicable to courses. An improved search engine with a home button on each page and more 'follow off' pages was suggested by students. Some aspects of the business site may have been found too advanced for FE students.

### 5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following brief statements outline some broad recommendations made from features expanded from the data analysis. This is in addition to the findings in the Executive Summary found at the beginning of this report.

#### 5.1 The Curriculum

Evidence of the 'creative process', as implied by an online resource named ‘Creative Connections’, in the use of learning materials does help to enhance learning in this field and make courses stand out. FE and HE students found the site interesting thus indicating it had in some way been a useful addition to their studies.

HE staff felt the online resource was good for independent learners therefore a recommendation would be that it should be expanded as a learning tool.

Emphasis on 'applied learning' throughout the course is important in order to help students see the relevance of the Diplomas to their future careers.

An acceptance of the power of visual culture on contemporary students' lives (as noted by Freedman and Stuhr, 2004) may broaden their experiences and capabilities provided by the 14-19 Diploma training. Theories and practices of visual culture embedded in the Diploma could enable the development of a new and vibrant skills base for the creative and media industries.

Further work – for example in Contextual Studies resource building may be useful in a future online resource model as this is an area students often find difficult at this level.
In terms of the curriculum levels and use of text and language, the data showed there were both positives and negatives relating to both these areas. Therefore, any future resource design may require specific attention to the relationships between text, language and curriculum alignment.

Cheating/plagiarism an issue for all participants in some way and information about this in a resource would be very helpful.

Outcomes – do they all need to be vocational or indeed be called vocational? There may be additional outcomes possible for the differentiated learner and these may enable wider employment and education opportunities.

There are Principles of Learning (OCR) but the diploma a-creditors may still be external. This could be an issue for centres and newly constructed diploma courses. Assessors need to work to locally and nationally based agendas where a variety of circumstances may dictate the learning process.

IT and transferability of skills are important and must be stressed within the curriculum.

Tutors and students need to identify industry related skills and build these into course programmes and briefs. Staff may need to widen their expectations of the curriculum and not focus exclusively on older models of creative practice.

5.2 Breaking Down Barriers

Effective on-line resources can be useful in breaking down barriers in terms of vocational/non-vocational learning. They may assist learners to develop transferable skills. This enhances creative learning by forming attributes such as negotiating and communicating skills thus making students’ work and ideas more employer friendly.

Barriers were overcome by the use of the resource. It appears to have helped to broaden creative research and the resource was good for both staff and students to use in small case studies. A similar version in the future could be rolled out nationally.

Cultural and social capital, are issues relating to the conceptualisation of learning demonstrated by students and staff in the art institution. The 14-19 Diplomas (as with any FE curricula) are as much about social development as academic and vocational development and therefore sensitivity towards a student’s background and the impact of this on his or her learning must be recognised by staff.

Issues over how students may be ‘constructed’ as learners (re: Atkinson in Hardy, 2006) could be a helpful further form of research relating to the 14-19 Diplomas. What types of students do we envision with this form of training?
A lack of functional/interpersonal skills would negate the vocational side of 14-19 programmes therefore a good translation of these within the 14-19 Diploma programme is needed.

In terms of the 14-19 Diplomas, schools, colleges and business organisations must work together on the units and development of briefs. A well organised curriculum is essential to the success of the Diplomas, otherwise barriers may not be overcome.

Institutional absences such as an effective VLE may cause barriers and where this is the case, senior managers need to address their resources and the support given to staff and students involved in the 14-19 Diploma.

In the broader scope of this research, NALN Progression Managers noted the lack of recognition by course tutors towards the significance of vocational qualifications (as opposed to the foundation route into HE). Tutors may be making assumptions about students and their progression. More staff training around these issues may be beneficial to student progression.

Staff must be aware of the ‘pedagogised identities’ (Atkinson, 2002) they may create for learners in both traditional and non-traditional routes in art and design education and training. More open responses to student identities and needs, from a schools based setting into HE, should be integrated into staff support and careers advice. Staff may need continuous training on this until the Diplomas are firmly established.

5.3 **Widening Participation**

Recognition of the difficult transition from school based learning to more independent learning, where attributes such as research skills are needed could be developed more in the consciousness of school leavers. Schools may be able to play a part in this development.

Schools could encourage research in the form of more access to galleries and businesses to prepare students.

Further work on the resource could take into account the variety of learners’ approaches (including dyslexic students who may favour a wider on-line resource).

Hidden curriculum issues – other ways of learning about creativity may enter into how the resource was used. A broad interpretation of the Diploma briefs should be encouraged where possible to allow for wider translations of creativity and business and new skills to emerge. Diversity/BME contexts of learning for 14-19 year olds may require further research in order to embed equality into the curriculum and future career opportunities.

Create you own Blog may be a good idea with which to encourage students to participate.
Non-traditional routes are becoming more popular as noted by the Richard Spencer internal report (Zennor, 2007, p. 65). Flexibility as a feature of new 14-19 Diplomas can feed into this trend.

Recognition of the social difficulties of transition to HE are illuminated by the following statement which is a conclusion to an article on non-traditional learners which may aid an understanding of some current WP issues:

> The transition (from HNC/HND to degree) also entails some adjustment, or even transformation in relation to self role, social connectedness and academic competence, especially for those encountering a change of learning environment and a change of learning and assessment styles.” (Elliot D.L., Brna P., 2009, p.115).

Provision for part time learners and learners with disabilities requires attention, particularly regarding the WP agenda. There may be a substantial number of 14-19 year olds who require modified learning contexts for a variety of reasons, as would be the case in schools based learning. There is no reason this situation would differ at college level. A good on-line learning resource would enable more learners to enter this form of education. Therefore, on-line resources need to be well organised, relevant to courses and made available to all students and staff from the start of the course.

5.4 The Future

Art and design education and training needs a seamless link between schools, colleges and higher education institutions, especially in local areas. There will however be a requirement for both specialist and generic resources as the situation will differ from one institution to another.

A Level and Access course students were not piloted as part of this project but there may be generic links between these and vocational courses. Many A Level art and design programmes offer both practical and academic curricula and are therefore closer in many ways to the Diplomas than universities understand them to be. A resource to support the Diplomas developed with a good balance of theoretical and practical foci might also help avoid stereotyping.

Adequate resources must be available for students, especially to access art libraries and computer suites for creative research and on-line learning.

Communication between 14-19 Diplomas, Access courses, ND and A levels about resources and specialist areas would be helpful in developing the learning process. There may be opportunities to share resources in institutions.

The Diploma’s parity with other HE progression routes is an important factor in the experience of students and staff.
The standardisation aspect of the 14-19 Diplomas may be problematic at times regarding the ‘creative’ aspect of an arts based curriculum. As with the National Curriculum, schools, colleges and universities need scope to develop imaginative strategies for teaching their students. A seamless transition from schools to colleges and beyond is also necessary which may create issues where institutions have their own approaches. Developing broad themes in concert with partners, as in this pilot project, may be one way of ironing out any perceived difficulties.

An effective on-line resource may be useful in dispelling myths around vocational/non-vocational learning in art and design. By encouraging learners to experiment more it will broaden the WP aspect of the 14-19 Diploma in Creative and Media.

Progression Agreements between schools, colleges and universities are significant and providers may need to be aware of the effects of these on students’ families, as financial hardship may continue to be a barrier to progression. This is particularly difficult where students have to leave home to study.

Colleges need to be more involved in interviewing students progressing from schools so that parity with HE is achieved and the vocational aspect of the 14-19 Diploma is not diminished. The Diploma must be seen as a specialist route into applied learning and HE and certainly not for ‘weaker’ students but one where real skills are promoted and developed both academically and practically.

Continuous updating of the 14-19 Diplomas and their effectiveness may be reassuring. Schools, HE providers and businesses need to become familiar with the opportunities and possibilities on-line resources provide and keep up to date with these and their developments as a curriculum resource.

Debates around the academic rigour of the 14-19 Diplomas and other concerns over their effectiveness can suggest their weaknesses outweigh their strengths. Various reports have examined a wide variety of the Diplomas (Nuffield, 2007; Tomlinson Reform Group, 2004; NFER, 2009) However; some of these concerns may have been due to worries over the workability of a single national framework for such a large cohort of students that the 14-19 Diplomas will represent.

With a better understanding of the need for vocational routes into HE and employment and the design of carefully directed programmes meeting individual, local and national needs, there may be no reason why the 14-19 Creative and Media Diploma cannot work well, both as a progression route to HE and in terms of creating opportunities to develop professional practice in a wide range of creative and media situations.
Annex 1  Students’ Additional Data

Students’ Additional data (from the responses found in the questionnaires)

This was data supplied in the questionnaires where scope for individual commentary was recorded. Examples are recorded here to give a sense of how students conceptualised and used the site.

FE

What did you like best about the site?

The home page and illustrations

Easy and fun to use

Explanation of briefs

Interactive side

Downloadable films

Exercises were fun

Animated introduction

Style of drawings

Overall ‘look’

Copyright quiz

Content was good

What did you like least about the site?

There’s a lot to read/overload of text/ text is too small

Links to the business page not relevant to the group

Confusing links/Prompt for blog led to external website/variations in style re other linked pages

Slow navigation and confusing

More illustrations could help
HE

What did you like best about the site?

‘Design and Shine’ was very good
Download films/graphics were informative
‘Thinking and Working Creatively’ was relevant to the way we work
Straight forward with easy navigation
Colourful/ interesting design/engaging to use
Straight forward blog

What did you like least about the site?

Enterprise game
The graphics on the left were a bit ‘schooly’, telling you to be creative which is not creative
Videos could be more exciting
Navigation is slow
The amount of text
Applications open on a different tab which is not apparent if you are on the home page
Pop up windows for each section – it would be better if all had some windows

‘Do you have any other comments about the site? (Students continued)

FE

Use less text and make it more relevant to the learning groups especially media, photography and moving image programmes
‘Cheating and copying’ need attention
Make more links back to the home page
Main aims are OK but parts of the content could be better
The website could easily be expanded upon/ more follow on pages to make it more interesting

Put in more examples of how to do your work

It is a good resource for studying an art related course

May be good for pre-ND students (is a bit basic)

**HE**

A search engine is needed within the site/ home buttons on every page needed/more comprehensive index could make navigation easier

It may require better access for students with learning difficulties

Business pages relate to Yr 1 / 2 degree students – good information but too much to take in

‘Copyright’ needs to be more exciting

Good ideas but not as exciting as it could be- more interactive elements could help

Blogger brief – could be more generic for artistic community

Layout – there are issues for the ‘creative’ person as it doesn’t need to be step by step

More interactivity needed
Annex 2  Staff Additional Data

Staff Additional Data (from the responses found in questionnaires )

This was data supplied in the questionnaires where scope for individual commentary was recorded on what staff liked best and liked least about the site. Staff comments included the following:

FE

What do you like best about the site?

Is welcoming

Generally very visual, accessible, straightforward, good for visual learners.

Great links to websites

Students got most from it after formal demonstration of navigation and content

Design and Shine- accessible to FE

Easy to find and use once you have been through it

Some fits in to curriculum very well

Potential application to Units 10, 2 and 7

What do you like least about the site?

Videos seemed slightly dated; a bit thin as a resource

Could be developed further

Preparation for business – too wordy for ND students

A broader range of tutorials would be better

Limited information on site navigation

The graphic interface slowed down navigation

HE

What do you like best about the site?

Useful as a one-stop resource
Design and Shine’ also useful to Yr 1 BA
Good breakdown of what the design process is
Good for independent learners
Valid idea once teething problems are sorted out
Strong concept
Encourages entrepreneurial skills and realisation of self employment

What do you like least about the site?
Disjointed overall design
Varying levels or target audience
Introductory overview needed
Not quite appropriate for HE
Downloads uninspiring
Some errors for instance in blogging notes
Looks a bit ‘Primary school’/ Graphics have FE or ‘school’ feel
Could not open some elements- frustrating
Annex 3  Data Sets

Students

Student Feedback

- Site interesting (FE, HE)
- Site interesting (FE, HE)
- Easy to Navigate (FE, HE)
- Easy to Navigate (FE, HE)

Student Feedback - The Site

- Overall the content is:
- Overall the content is:
- Visually the whole site is:
- Visually the whole site is:

Very Good, Good, Needs more work, HE
Staff Feedback - Staff Resources

Staff Feedback
On the whole as a learning resource would you advise/encourage your students to use this?
Annex 4: Case Study

A case study into the validity of the instructional download films aimed at level three learners carried out by Darren Williams, ND Tutor, HCA. 2009.

Twelve Hereford College of Arts students currently enrolled on the first year of a level 3 National Diploma course in Art and Design were chosen as representatives from a cohort of 110 to participate in an activity taken from the National Arts Learning Network (NALN) ‘Creative Connections’ online resource (fe-art.co.uk) aimed at Further Education students in order to aid progression to Higher Education.

The twelve learners chosen were indicative of the wider learning group with previous learning achievements ranging from 8 GCSE level A-C grades to those having progressed onto the ND from First Diploma, having failed to secure 4 GCSE level A-C grades at school. There was also an equal representation of male / female students.

The aim of the sessions was to ascertain whether the download films based on ‘The power of the paper clip’, under the section of the website, ‘Thinking and Working Creatively’ were seen as a useful resource to the level 3 learners for which they were produced.

The twelve students were divided into two groups of six randomly, with three Media Arts and three General Art and Design (GAD) pathway students in each group.1

Of the nine download films available, ‘Graphic Logo’ was chosen for the following reasons:

- The activity related well to both Media and GAD students- utilising both 2D and 3D processes.
- Tasks were highly structured and would provide a range of visual outcomes.
- There was an opportunity for collaborative working within the activity.
- Designing a logo for ‘Thinking and Working Creatively’ was a conceptually broad activity and yet timely: being completed within an hour timeframe.

Session 1 (Film shown as intro to activity)

The six students were divided into two groups of three within their pathways and asked to work on separate paper covered tables. The resources provided imitated those specified by the download (paper clips, marker pens, paper).

Having watched the five-minute film, the students set about their task of generating a logo to represent ‘Thinking and Working Creatively’. Minimal tutorial input was given in order to allow the learners their own interpretations of the activity.

Over the first half of the hour-long session, the GAD student group (2 female/1 male) produced many sculptural, mainly figurative forms (Fig.1,
attached) by manipulating the paper clips available. In contrast, the Media students (3 male) generated mainly two-dimensional simple abstract shapes (Fig.2).

Observing the groups, it became apparent that the Media table was more overtly engaged and involved, displaying a greater concentration level and commitment to the task than the GAD group. There was also a greater level of interaction between the individuals leading to a greater number of experimental pieces being produced.

Both groups were prompted to move into generating drawings on the large communal paper provided, based on their previous paper clip manipulations. Once again the Media groups outcomes displayed an abstract sensibility (Fig.3), while the GAD table continued along the figurative path (Fig.4). In the final fifteen minutes of the designated hour-long session, the students generated a series of final logo designs and were asked to indicate their preference. True to form the outcomes from the Media students (Fig.5/6) tended towards abstraction with the GAD student outcomes being much more figurative (Fig.7/8).

At the end of the session the learners were asked for their opinions regarding the film and whether they felt it had been a useful tool at the outset of the task. All the learners agreed that the film had been helpful in clarifying the task. The Media trio were certainly more vocal in their praise for the visual narrative provided, stating that it was, ‘more precise in understanding what you are being asked to do.’

Session 2 (No film intro to activity)

For the second session conditions and resources were reset exactly as they had been for session one. A table of GAD (3 female) students and a table of Media (2 Male/1 female) participated.

Instead of the film being shown as an introduction to the session, the students were given verbal instruction from a tutor regarding the task of creating a logo for, ‘Thinking and Working Creatively’.

The groups were given the same time period as those in the former session in order to generate ideas through paper clip manipulation. As this evolved it became apparent that the GAD table were generating some elaborate sculptural forms that bridged figuration and abstraction (Fig.9/10). Meanwhile the Media students were also producing elaborate sculptural forms (Fig.11) but not in as great a quantity. It was clear from their body language that two of the three Media students were struggling to motivate themselves and adhere to the task, while all three GAD students were clearly engaging with the activity.

The groups were then prompted to move onto generating marker pen drawings influenced by their physical manipulations of the paper clips. Interestingly there was much correlation between the groups with both figurative and abstract possibilities being considered (Fig.12/13).

There was less verbal interaction present between individuals within each group when considering the possible marker pen designs, than observed between the groups in session one. This may have been due to the make-up
of the groups themselves and previous interaction or lack of between particular individuals, although outside of the activity itself, group interaction was noted as positive and vocal.

During the final 15 minutes, the students were given the task of generating final logo designs and asked to indicate their preference, as did the previous group. The outcomes of this final task within the GAD group certainly showed some sophistication and related strongly to the creative process that had been undertaken (Fig.14), whereas the outcomes produced by individuals within the Media Arts group (Fig.15) appeared more naïve with connections made from task to task visibly tenuous.

Once the activity had been completed the students were shown the ‘Graphic Logo’ Film and asked their opinions as to the merit of such a resource, and whether watching the film before beginning the activity would have been of value.

The response to the above question was mixed; the media trio felt unanimously that watching the film would have allowed them to better understand the scope of the activity, there was some concern as to what was expected of them and that by watching the download these fears would have been dispelled. Two of the three learners within the GAD group had the opposite perspective, stating that they would have found the film limiting. They felt that whereas they were able to generate detailed sculptural forms from which to develop ideas, the film privileged the manipulation of paper clips into letterforms, thus stifling the other innumerable possibilities available to the creative individual, or in the words of one participant, ‘It would have limited my ideas.’

Reflecting upon the two sessions held and the range of outcomes, it is worth noting the diversity of students within ND level 3 learning groups and the cognitive gap between the most and least able. The sessions themselves provided a ‘snapshot’ into the wider debate of how people learn and confirmed the value of differentiating when delivering creative activities. The tutors’ knowledge of their students is paramount in deploying learning resources in a targeted fashion, allowing the most able more autonomy within tasks while supporting others with the aid of learning resources such as the download film discussed within this case study.

Returning to the initial aim of this study: to discover whether those learners for whom the download films were produced saw them as a useful and valid learning resource, the evidence suggests that the downloads do have a partial role to play. Comparing the outcomes between both groups it is difficult to differentiate, as there were some strong outcomes from both sessions while weaker outcomes were also evident from within each session. This suggests that the film was of limited value to the most able individuals who are adept at generating ideas independently, however it was deemed a very useful and relevant resource by those within the groups who struggle with thinking creatively, yet are able to work creatively once the initial conceptual barrier is overcome.
In conclusion to this small case study, it is worth reiterating that this provides only a snapshot into the value of the instructional download films for level 3 learners, yet I believe there was enough positive feedback from the students themselves to suggest that there is a role for such resources within the current curriculum. How and when such resources are deployed within formal sessions by tutors is altogether another matter, and is highly dependent on each tutor’s particular approach to curriculum delivery.

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1 Following two terms involving a general introduction to Art and Design, students choose one of the two pathways available at the beginning of the summer term of Year 1. Media Arts (Graphic Design, Photography, Moving Image, Illustration) General Art and Design (Painting, Printmaking, Sculpture, Textiles, Ceramics)
REFERENCES


Useful Websites
www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19
www.fe-art.co.uk  ‘Creative Connections’ on-line resource website
www.heacademy.ac.uk
www.nfer.ac.uk/research
www.nuffield14-19review.org.uk
www.naln.ac.uk
www.ocr.org.uk
www.skillset.org
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